

Co-op Value exceeds all expectations with £1m turnover in first month of trading

/EINPresswire.com/ UK (Submitpressrelease123.com - press release) The Co-op value website, soft launched to The Midcounties [Co-op Travel](#) in January, has proved so popular with its shop network that sales have exceeded the initial target by 400% - with a turnover in excess of £1 million in its first month of trading.

Sales have actually outperformed those of vertically integrated operators. Co-op Value is the agent website launched in partnership with On Holiday Group.

Alastair Rowland, Group General Manager, Travel Services, for Midcounties, said: "Staff love the simplicity of the booking process and product filters, which allow agents to instantly refine searches to take into account hotel reviews from 10 million customers. This has allowed agents to quickly focus down on the best value holidays, through this combined price and quality search."

Midcounties Coop also reports that the new site has delivered higher margins due to a combination of a non-discounted everyday low prices approach and exclusive hotel discounts that have been contracted for the site.

Alistair said: "By offering a full range of low cost carrier flights, the Co-op Value site has a much lower average flying cost than the traditional tour operators, which when combined with great value hotels, means our staff can undercut the prices of the traditional operators, while still making a very healthy non-discounted margin.

Alistair emphasised the importance of maintaining strong relationships with the major tour operators, but also the importance of alternative options. He said: "Independent retailers have to accept that the major tour operators have sufficient in-house distribution via shops and the internet to allow them to only work with independent retailers that add value due to the strength of their retail network in specific geographical areas.

"Midcounties is in a strong position because of the complementary nature of its network to the majors' own retailers, but even we have to make it clear we have alternative products that we can switch-sell to if the majors do not play fair on commission or discount levels compared to their own shops. The development of Co-op Value therefore gives us a key tool in this

commercial negotiation.”

The Co-op Value site operates in the same way traditional tour operators do, with partner On Holiday Group providing full operational support, a 24-hour duty office, technology and dedicated contracting resource.

Alistair added: "I think tour operations like Co-op Value will rapidly grow, since they allow agents to tailor-make holiday requirements, but still call upon the tour operating skills of the On Holiday Group team when it comes to delivering the tour operation and negotiating extra discounts from hotels to be featured at the top of our destination searches, email shots and window displays.

“It is not a full replacement for the major tour operators, but does allow our agent to offer quality holidays that earn good commission levels.”

Ends

Notes to Editors

The Midcounties Co-operative has been named ‘Co-operative of the Year 2012’, recognised for its excellence, innovation and ethics in business by Co-operatives UK.

It has headquarters in Warwickshire, with trading outlets in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Shropshire, West Midlands, Worcestershire and the surrounding counties.

The Society’s trading groups are food retail, funeral, travel, pharmacy, childcare nurseries, employee benefits and energy. Midcounties is the largest independent co-operative society in the UK and has more than 470 branches and 245,000 active trading members. It is also in ‘The Sunday Times Best 25 Big Companies to Work For’ list for the second year running.

The Society's mission statement is 'To be a successful consumer co-operative working towards creating a better, fairer world, and to enhance the lives of our colleagues, members, customers, and the communities we serve'.

About Co-op Travel

Co-operative Travel offer a variety of holidays, flights and hotels. They are providers of great holidays such as [late ski deals in 2013](#) and much more!

For more details call Nigel Pipkin at Seal on 0121 616 5800.

Visit www.midcounties.coop

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