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A Hybrid Approach to Relocation

Blending technology and access to experts provides the ideal transferee experience.

Relocation remains an important part of the talent ecosystem, allowing top performers to grow skills while providing organizations the opportunity to seamlessly fill important roles. But as workforce preferences have evolved, driven by demographic and technological advances, expectations of transferees have changed as well. Here, Anthony Horton, CEO of Corporate Relocation International (CRI) details how organizations can experience the best of both worlds through a hybrid approach that blends technology with a human touch.

Q **As the relocation industry has evolved in the last few years, what do transferees want from their organizations?**

A They want easy and effortless, particularly in lump sum or managed cap scenarios. Transferees want clarity on what their benefits are and then options provided for support. That means when they need an app to facilitate a portion of the move, the app is simple and logical, not adding work to an already stressful process. For example, when a DIY app is the only solution their organization provides, they often feel that the work is just being downloaded onto them. Transferees want the support provided by their organizations to include direct, on-demand access to an expert who can help them. Most transferees are savvy with technology and can use apps like Google in the Cloud to find out the basics of what they need for their relocation. It's when they need consultation that DIY apps often fall short.

Q **How has technology impacted the relocation experience?**

A Technology has made comparing the services and fees of different providers in the value chain much easier and transparent. It also facilitates booking and using these services with efficiency and ease. Where it falls short is providing guidance and knowledge specific to an individual transferee's situation and

personalized needs. The service side of employee relocation has often taken a hit as a result. Relocating is a high-personal, highly-stressful and complex experience for any transferee. With fewer channels to consult with a certified expert, many employees feel that they are 'left on their own' to figure out their relocation. For example, there are many apps or cloud-based solutions that provide pages and pages of information on communities. Often it is way too much for a transferee to sift through and research. One breakthrough technology that solves for this Pivt, a partner of CRI. Pivt applies social networking to the information and support equation. This provides the ability to connect with other transferees in a given area in order to get real advice and information on their destination. More of these types of solutions are needed.

Q **What is a hybrid approach to relocation?**

A To us at CRI, a hybrid approach provides a tech solution that is easy to navigate, but also enables the transferring employee to connect directly with an expert who can address their individual needs. It's the best of both worlds!

Q **What are some benefits to a hybrid approach?**

A The main goals that a hybrid approach addresses are;

- an easy and effortless transferee experience that starts with the type of technology employees are accustomed to using in their day-to-day lives;
- the ability for the transferee to benefit from the upside of technology where they can compare and book services simply and with transparency; and
- on-demand availability of relocation experts to communicate with in order to provide consultation when and where the transferee requires support.

Q **Do you have an example you could share?**

A One firm that has had remarkable success with a hybrid approach is Virtual Moving Technologies (VMT). CRI partners with VMT to provide a truly app-enabled solution with the expertise of a human touch. Employees who are moving their household goods are able to complete a survey and a home walk-thru via an app on their phone that is provided by VMT. It is easy to use by leveraging the video camera in a user's phone so it can be used when convenient for the transferee. A live VMT representative can be scheduled to provide a guided survey. This is the ideal hybrid approach, where technology is maximized with the ability to connect with an expert while also benefiting from a live interaction through an app.