



FUZION TRAVEL | Building value through co-working at INNOV8HQ

World Travellers are passionate people who believe in the magic of travel. Their lust for travel comes from the cultures, the landscapes, the experiences, the people we meet and the stories that bind them together. Their representatives are avid travellers and love to share our travel experiences with you. Every World Travellers store is owner-operated by real Kiwis who belong to the fastest-growing travel cooperative in New Zealand. They are well-established travel professionals who have developed their own unique brand dedicated to world travellers just like you.

In Dunedin FUZION TRAVEL is the official World Travellers store for all your travelling requirements, whether it be a small trip to visit family, an annual winter escape to Australia or Pacific Islands or your once in a lifetime bucket list experience they have it covered.

Jodie McSkimming manager of sub brand 'Jodie McSkimming FUZION TRAVEL' for the last 3 years is a seasoned consultant with over 15 years in the sector. Her life-work mantra is to "take the hassle out of time-consuming itinerary research so you get the best

value." Over time Jodie has become a specialist in family holidays leveraging market trends like the Pacific Islands as the desired destination for younger families and Vietnam and Hawaii for teens. A rising trend is larger intergenerational family groups heading to the Pacific islands often to celebrate grandparent birthdays.

As testimony to her skill, she has amassed almost 2000 bookings in the last 3 years, an average of 50 per month making her easily one of the most wanted travel support wāhine in Otago! We recently caught up with Jodie between bookings to get her insights on building business value through relocation to a co-working space.

Why did FUZION TRAVEL consider relocating to a coworking space?

JMc "I started my travel brokerage working from my home office which was mainly phone and online client contact. However, as the business grew and offering evolved I found myself doing more and more meeting with clients in cafes. To deliver the best client experience it became clear fairly fast that I needed a central, social and modern environ-

ment to work out of without the burden of high rent. Some of my clients and prospects were located in the Vogel Street precinct so that became an obvious location to explore.

What were FUZION TRAVEL's biggest challenges in relocating to a co-working space?

JMc – "There weren't really any challenges it was a no brainer, if anything with the growing popularity of the Vogel Street precinct its success has put some stress on parking"



What due diligence to complete to scope your relocation options?

JMc - "3 years ago when considered relocation the whole concept of co-working space was very new for Dunedin. I viewed the two co-working spaces operating at that time. My main focus was finding the right location and a floor plan that created a sense of community. Both spaces were modern and professional, but contrasting in location, levels, floor plans and vibe."

Why did you end up choosing INNOV8HQ as your co-working home?

JMc - "INNOV8HQ offers everything on one level with a good range of mixed spaces which creates an instant community feel, plus it's an awesome place to host client events. Heidi Renata, the co-owner and resident CEO has created a unique culture at INNOV8HQ. I can only describe it as her contemporary blend of Otago and Māori culture. As a female business role model, she

provides daily validation that we have an important place in the modern business world. 123 Vogel Street and the surrounding precinct was also a big factor in my final choice. It's the cool trendy part of town which aligns with the FUZION TRAVEL brand."

The FUZION TRAVEL Difference in Relocating

JMc - "I'm more of a doer than a talker. Work ethic, service and follow-up with clients are baked into my work mantra. A common theme with client feedback that FUZION TRAVEL put themselves in the client shoes more so than the bigger travel agencies. With a competitive market, I've consciously worked hard to make prompt client follow-up a differentiating factor for FUZION TRAVEL and it's paying off. In terms of the value to the INNOV8HQ community, I'd like to think my actions speak louder than words, things like consistency, resilience, hosting new

prospects and clients in the space, supporting and socialising with residents when I can."



CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 UPDATE

How has COVID-19 impacted Fuzion Travel and service delivery?

JMc - "This pandemic impacted my travel business hugely. With the NZ and 72% of the world's borders closed for the short medium term, air travel has ground almost to standstill with very low number of flights allowed. Once lockdown was officially announced most travel clients went into panic mode wanting holidays cancelled immediately. Some of these were big trips which has involved working closely with clients over 12 months to get their experience "just right". Having these dreams shattered and my efforts thwarted has been emotionally, mentally and physically challenging. Adding the stress is the constantly changing airline policies. The global airline industry wasn't prepared for a pandemic of this scale and speed. Every week and often daily there have been changes as the sector tries to recalibrate making it very hard to provide an efficient and equitable outcome for clients. Traditionally travel Insurance companies do not cover pandemics so there are a lot of people out of pocket and I've heard some real nightmare stories from friends across the sector.

So far I've been successful in getting full refunds or future travel credits for my clients. I've lost count of the client gifts, emails and phone calls of gratitude which is incredibly humbling. In a challenging situation like this it is good to see we have each others back. INNOV8HQ have been amazing throughout this whole ordeal. I heard from both Heidi and Steven Renata when everything turned pear shaped checking that I was ok and offering their support if I needed it. They then went one step further and offered me 90 days free rent to use over the next 12

months which blew me away. Heidi even took my pot plant from my desk home and kept it alive for me! It's incredible to know they believe in me as a human being first and my business. The good news is that as we navigate away through Level 2 I'm already receiving requests to put together domestic travel packages so watch this space!

So 3 years down the track what are the key results?

JMc - "On a personal level knowing I'm going into INNOV8HQ is great motivation to get dressed up, socialise with the residents and have some fun. All of this increases my wellbeing and helps make me more productive. Residency gives me a great opportunity to share services with my fellow residents (and vice versa) which often lead to referrals. One of the cool things that happened recently was Heidi arranging an Indigenous Conference with INNOV8HQ as a key venue and nominating FUZION TRAVEL as the official travel partner! My regular clients love coming to INNOV8HQ and with great cafes nearby it's a great 2 for 1 scenario.

I've grown the business to a monthly average of 50 bookings which is huge, part of the success comes from having INNOV8HQ as my prospecting venue. It is a game-changer. People are impressed by the location and when they experience the co-working space they feel relaxed and respected, half my job is done! Local business proximity is another benefit which has helped in me pick up travel requests from other businesses within 123 Vogel Street and the wider precinct."

INNOV8HQ Co-working Profile

INNOV8HQ Ltd is Dunedin's premier co-working space designed to support and grow

start-ups, SMEs and regional corporate teams. Founded in 2016 and wholly owned by the local Renata whanau it is located in 123 Vogel Street - the innovation hub of Dunedin's business precinct. INNOV8HQ is home to 12 resident businesses representing 10 sectors and a growing cohort of non-resident co-workers, training and event guests. The space offers over 373sqm of resident space, 100sqm of hot-desk space, 20sqm of meeting room space, 11sqm kitchen and 9sqm of fully equipped rest facilities.

Co-share services range from 10GB fibre capacity with 1GB wireless WIFI, online web service support to printing, photocopying, and refreshments. Residency 24 hour access is secured via SAITO swipe technology and building access managed by Dunedin Security.



"It's been a real pleasure watching Jodie's business grow over the last 4 years. She is an icon in the space and extremely popular as a travel consultant and is our resident travel consultants, so it's huge value for our residents being able to use her too" Heidi Renata, CEO and Co-Owner INNOV8HQ

