



# WEX streamlines Best Western's charge card – benefiting members and guests

When Best Western Hotels & Resorts was looking to simplify the operation of its inhouse charge card offering, the best solution was obvious; partner with their trusted existing supplier – WEX.

For many years, Best Western ran its own successful charge card program to meet the needs of corporate customers. However, when the increasing popularity of the program started to impinge on the primary roles of their inhouse accounts team, BW's Senior Sales Manager, Kim Savery knew that a more efficient process was required to advance the charge card program.

"Our clients had become reliant on our charge card program. But after a rapid growth phase, it became a major financial program, which is not our core business," Mr Savery said.

Best Western Hotels & Resorts is a global hotel brand headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona with a global network of 4,200 hotels in more than 100 countries.

"We realised that a supplier specialising in this type of business would administer it more efficiently. The burden of handling the program fell on our accounts department, so handing it over to the experts was the logical thing to do."



**Kim Savery**  
Senior Sales Manager, Best Western Australasia

BW needed to find a charge card provider quickly, one that could be trusted with the important task of replacing an already successful charge card program and extend its value further.

"We had an existing relationship with WEX – a payment solutions provider for small to large organisations – through their Motorpass members, who are able to use the WEX Motorpass cards to stay at BW. Given our experience with WEX and their level of professionalism we recognised straight away that this was going to be a perfect fit for what we needed," Mr Savery said.



Once BW started discussions with WEX, BW began to understand that this newly branded BestPay charge card was not only going to alleviate the workload for the BW's accounts department but also far exceed the functionality and reporting capabilities of the old charge card.

"Based on our customers' feedback we knew exactly the type of charge card we were looking for and WEX was able to customise the card to meet those requirements and brand the card as a BW program," Mr Savery said.

The new BW BestPay card needed to have the flexibility to work for all their customers who required various options to align with their company travel policies.

"Some companies only want their staff to be able to pay for accommodation as there may be a separate allowance offered for food and beverages while others want the complete solution – accommodation, food and beverage," Mr Savery said.

The old BW charge card had had limitations, including its paper-based monthly statements and an inability to deliver end-to-end transparency on every traveller's activities. The new fully customised online statements now allow larger organisations access to additional information, such as costs per division, making it easier to align with cost centres and keep budgets in check.

"Our clients can now see at a glance if there are any discrepancies that should be scrutinised," Mr Savery said. "For example, if an organisation has 10 employees with BestPay cards, WEX will generate an online statement itemising the activity of each individual card holder. Our previous system could not do that."

BestPay is now an integral part of sales and marketing initiatives at BW. The BestPay program is promoted at every opportunity and was recently opened-up to inbound tour operators.

"Previously, we offered inbound tour operators BW vouchers, which were not as convenient," Mr Savery said. "Now an overseas tour operator can sell BW hotels to their travellers, use the BestPay card for payment of accommodation and receive detailed documentation via the monthly statements. So far, the operators we have approached have, almost without exception, jumped at the chance of utilising the BestPay card."

Over 60 corporate customers have now signed up to the BestPay program since its inception six months ago. Some of these customers include large state government departments which need to be completely transparent and accountable for how they are spending taxpayers' money.

"BestPay has a broad appeal, with large to small businesses coming on board and several government departments," Mr Savery said. "It is early days for this program, and we are currently in discussion with WEX about innovative ways we can further expand the program. Currently we are internally reviewing how we can link it to other BW programs such as our award-winning Best Western Rewards Loyalty Program."

"The BW BestPay card encourages travellers to stay at BW by eliminating the up-front payment and reimbursement process. Everyone involved in the BestPay program benefits – the traveller, the traveller's employer and BW. It creates more revenue for the hotels while providing a far more streamlined end-to-end customer interaction."



"BestPay is a straightforward payment solution. It is a locked down product that only caters for clients staying at BW. The application form is simple, with only three boxes to tick – accommodation, food and beverages. Cash advances are not an option, which is another important feature for our customers."



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