

Twelve months that changed the world.

Richard Thompson Travel Counsellors



World Summit on Accessible Tourism
Destinations for All
Brussels 1-2 October 2018



travel counsellors



My credentials

- Four decades of industry experience
- Personal life-changing injury insight
- Founder of leading accessible tour operator

My credentials

- Founder of UK charity, Sportability
- Founder of the online Good Access Guide
- 10 years experience making travel accessible and inclusive within non-specialist company

Who are Travel Counsellors?

- 7 international operations
- 2200 personnel worldwide
- 400,000 customers per annum

Our Global HQ - Manchester, England.



- 350 HQ personnel
- Support 1000 'TC's

Why are we not more 'well known'?

We don't advertise.

Our 7 international operations

- UK
- Belgium
- Netherlands
- Ireland
- UAE
- South Africa
- Australia

Multi award winning company



Why doesn't everyone make travel accessible and inclusive?

- Fear
- Misconceptions
- Market not worthy of investment
- Too risky
- Too difficult



How can we effect this change?

- We are Travel Counsellors
- Travel Counsellors has the only one of me

How can we do this?

- We are not specialists
- It's what we do every day already
- We have leverage

The process of effecting change

- Socialisation
- Harmonisation
- Normalisation
- Globalisation

Socialisation - Educate everyone

- Lead and support personnel
- Travel Counsellor agents
- Suppliers
- Customers

Harmonisation - partnering for success

- Educate, influence, collaborate
- Design-out restrictive practices
- Standardise processes
- Develop accessible product

Normalisation - Striving for normality

- Strive for excellence but avoid the ‘special’
- Embrace the market as societal. Not specific.
- Trade in access, inclusion and aspiration.



Globalisation - changing the world

- Establish effective model
- Embed this across global operations
- Learn, share, grow



So have we changed the world?

- Accessible and inclusive now a pillar of corporate development
- Pan-company awareness and ambition
- System and process tailoring



Thank you for attending.

Let's meet again in 2020!

Richard Thompson

Making travel accessible.

Everywhere. For everyone.

