

In order to make most efficient use of business resources and talent, and to respond to today's business dynamics, companies are increasingly moving their employees where and when their skills are needed. What challenges does that present to companies?

With **Lee Curtis**, President of BridgeStreet Worldwide

Working with relocation firms throughout the world, we have seen a significant increase in international moves - across all locations, including the European Union, Asia and the Middle East. As the pace of globalization increases, more and more corporations are attracting the very best talent from overseas.

We see this movement both for inbound and outbound relocations. Outbound relocations from the US to international destinations are seeking a consistent product, local knowledge and not just a place to stay, but the comfort and convenience of a place to live for an extended period. Individuals and families relocating from abroad into the US are typically arriving on late flights and are in need of meet-and-greet services, housing and community orientation programs and translation assistance.

BridgeStreet has expertise in total housing solutions for global moves; we understand that moving to a foreign city can be jarring. Our local staff help step relocating employees through a holistic process from pre-arrival check-in to meet and greet upon arrival to customized amenities and service packages that meet the cultural and lifestyle needs of today's business travelers and relocating families.

Many corporations are using one relocation company for domestic moves and a separate firm for international relocations. Since BridgeStreet has worldwide relocation expertise, we handle both domestic and international temporary housing. For example, in Paris we provide relocation firms and corporations with total destination management services - temporary housing, permanent home purchase and sale with all the services in between like airport pick-up and customized tours. Providing the whole service/product package of temporary housing internationally speaks directly to the rise in globalization of the workforce.

Increasingly, global corporate housing companies are required to manage the inventory of smaller temporary housing vendors in secondary markets. This requires us to increase our expertise in vendor management as well. BridgeStreet has developed proprietary, web-based tools to not only manage the temporary housing process, but also to hold the various vendors to quality, price and service standards. Providing relocation companies with the best possible pricing while ensuring quality accommodations is a process that BridgeStreet has mastered through experience and technology.



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Requirements of employer and employee

Relocation clients come to us with three basic needs:

Understanding the relocation process

Our Global Reservations Center has teams of associates who specialize in specific types of housing needs. Typically, a relocating client is assigned an account representative who has managed relocations in the past. We then present housing location options and step them through the details of their stay. Our staff empathizes with relocating employees. Although BridgeStreet handles a small element of the relocation process - we take it very seriously. We understand the emotional and monetary needs of the relocation process and our staff truly care about the individuals going through the process. Relocation firms turn to us because they know BridgeStreet has a culture of caring.

Handling the details

Our relocation clients want very specific tracking information. Knowing where their employees are at all times and ensuring their comfort is important to our clients. Our web-based systems give real-time feedback to relocation firms about where their employees are located and the housing services that they have received. Additionally, clients can access account details such as billing information, guest requests and employee satisfaction levels.

Happy and productive employees

Human resources have taken on a new value in today's global economy. As knowledge workers move easily across borders and projects, meeting their accommodation needs is a basic service a corporation can deliver to its employees to ensure their happiness while on remote work assignments. Comfort is king here and it takes on many manifestations for us, as a temporary housing provider - from our luxury bedding program, SleepEasy, to customized kitchen/houseware supplies based on employee lifestyles needs, BridgeStreet has learned to ask upfront what employees need to feel totally at home throughout their stay with us.

With over 30 years of experience in running relocations, large corporate project moves and anything in between, BridgeStreet Worldwide has excellent systems in place to provide high quality housing, as well as a host of complimentary services, during any relocation. ■