

Education New Zealand Specialist Agent Groups

During 2006/2007 Education New Zealand (ENZ) went through various rounds of industry consultation, seeking advice and suggestions on how industry would like us to promote New Zealand Education offshore. One constant piece of feedback we received was the important role that agents play in recommending students to study in New Zealand, industry didn't want agents to be forgotten. ENZ organised three retreats for agents in June 2007 in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Seoul, we approached these events as a reward for Vietnamese and Korean agents who had been loyal to New Zealand Education. The retreats were out of town weekends away which included sessions of New Zealand Education presentations; presentations by Immigration New Zealand and sometimes Tourism New Zealand were also incorporated. Team building and social activities were also key elements of the retreats, to try to build up a group of key agents who felt rewarded and could network with each other. The retreats were a real success; we received very positive feedback from agents, they felt appreciated by the New Zealand industry and were keen for the retreats to become regular fixtures. Education New Zealand held an Agent Training Seminar in Taipei in October 2007. The one day programme attracting about 30 agents was held at a downtown location, this was more of an informal agent training than a team building retreat.

Coinciding with these events was an awareness of the British Council Agent Training Programme, Australia's PIER online agent training course, and other similar certification processes that our competitors run. After chatting with many agents, we realised the benefit that they place on having their knowledge and experience officially recognised. Education New Zealand were not looking to get into the business of endorsing agents or policing agent issues, but we were keen to assist our industry with the process of choosing a new agent or investigating an unknown agent. Providing publicly available lists of Specialist Agents helps to cut out the guesswork for industry while supporting agents by providing them with student and institutional referrals.

A research project was undertaken by ENZ in late 2007 which included further consultation with industry and agents, some competitor analysis, and focused on developing the existing retreat format into a more structured training programme. In May 2008 the agents' website (agents.newzealandeducated.com) went live and the first New Zealand Specialist Agent Training Programme was held in Hong Kong. The programme has since been rolled out in many of our key markets in various cities around the world, including Beijing, Sao Paulo, Bangkok, Seoul, Berlin to name but a few.

The full day programme includes presentations by Education New Zealand/NZTE and Immigration New Zealand to provide general information about and an update on various issues and policies around New Zealand Education. The day is wrapped up with a one hour test, which the agents have to obtain a mark of at least 75% to pass. ENZ then checks that at least 3 industry members support the agent and finally the agent pays an administration fee of NZ\$200. When all steps are complete the agent becomes a New Zealand Specialist Agent, they are awarded Specialist certificates and logos and given access to the secure password only section of the agents' website. An introduction of the new Specialist Agents, including a brief profile, their logo and contact details are uploaded to our websites for students and industry to access. Our student



website, www.newzealandeducated.com is geo coded so that international students are able to easily locate the Specialist Agents in their country.

ENZ's fortnightly E-Newsletter features regular updates to the Specialist Agent programme and the development of new groups. There are numerous Specialist Agent groups on and offshore; details of the offshore agents can be found at

<http://agents.newzealandeducated.com/New-Zealand-Specialist-Agents.html>

details of the local agents are available at

www.educationnz.org.nz/marketing-resources/specialist-agents

Although not part of the above Specialist Agent Programme, we have an existing list of Indian agencies on our website at www.newzealandeducated.com/nzsai. The New Zealand Specialist Agent Group for India (previously known as NZIER) has been established through a different process which has involved Immigration New Zealand officials determining the quality and quantity of student visa applications, this is due to the special nature of this market and large number of agents working in India, more information about the special process for India is available within the Code document at the top of this page www.newzealandeducated.com/nzsai

Or alternatively the list can be found from the agent website at

<http://agents.newzealandeducated.com/New-Zealand-Specialist-Agents.html>

So far the New Zealand Specialist Agent Programme has been a huge success; we've received very positive feedback from the involved agents and industry. It is our hope that this programme will continue to roll out on a regular basis through our key markets.

How to contact new agents

For those seeking agent lists from markets where New Zealand Specialist Agent Groups have not yet been established or in addition to the existing lists, we recommend institutions look at the local Agents Association's website for each market, as follows. Most of these websites have contact lists of agent members:

Brazil

BELTA (Brazilian Educational and Language Travel Association) www.belta.org.br

Chile

AREI (Association of Representatives of Education International) www.areichile.cl

Japan

JAOS (Japan Association of Overseas Studies) www.jaos.gr.jp

Korea

KOSA (Korea Overseas Study Abroad) <http://kosaworld.ismine.net/>

Spain

ASEPROCE (Asociación Española de Promotores de Cursos en el Extranjero) www.aseproce.org

Taiwan

TOSA (Taiwan Overseas Study Association) www.tosa.org.tw

Thailand

TIECA (Thai International Education Consultants Association) www.tieca.com

Vietnam

VIECA (Vietnam International Education Consultants Association) www.vieca.org.vn



How to meet new agents

The most cost effective way to get in touch with agents is via email. To further develop relationships, we recommend meeting face to face. The annual PACE Programme provides many opportunities for interaction between industry representatives and New Zealand's top education agents at events such as Agent Workshops and Fairs. More information about PACE activities can be found at this link www.educationnz.org.nz/marketing-resources/dt-register

For further information, please contact sarah.cox@educationnz.org.nz

