

## UNDER A CLOUD OF VOLCANIC ASH, TRAVEL AGENTS TO THE RESCUE

The cloud of volcanic ash resulting from the eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajokull volcano has left hundreds of thousands stranded at airports across Europe -- and disrupted the travel plans of millions more worldwide.

Forced to alter their plans on short notice, travelers turned to Liberty Travel for assistance.

"This is where the value of our business model really shines," said Billy McDonough, President of Liberty Travel, referring to his company's 160 store locations and more than 800 Vacation Experts -- experienced travel agents who handle vacation bookings and -- when events like the Eyjafjallajokull eruption occur -- provide assistance to travelers when they need it most.

Shortly following the volcanic eruption, Liberty Travel's phones began ringing with calls from travelers whose near future travel plans have been disrupted, as well as those currently overseas and unable to return home.

"We even received calls from travelers who hadn't booked with us originally, but got a hold of an agent's contact information from other travelers who were in the same place and the same situation."

"Obviously, we do everything we can to help anyone who calls us. Flying was completely out of the question from some airports, but were able to assist many travelers in finding affordable accommodations. They may not be able to get home, but at least they can be comfortable and maybe even enjoy a few days in the city they happen to be in."

Some travelers were willing to explore other means of getting home, whether it was a cruise ship, or traveling over land to an airport where they had a better chance of getting a flight home.

"These are options not everyone is willing to try, but options Liberty Travel's agents are well-prepared to handle."

McDonough added that any travelers who need assistance are encouraged to call Liberty Travel at 1.888.271.1584.

For travelers whose plans have been (or might be) disrupted, Liberty Travel recommends referring directly to airline's websites for the most up-to-date notifications. If a flight is cancelled, travelers are advised to contact their travel consultant.

"We will do our utmost to rebook your flight or holiday to a future date. If a reasonable alternative cannot be found, we are working with our suppliers and will do everything possible to get you a full refund," McDonough said.

"Our hearts go out to everyone that's been affected by the event, especially those who have been evacuated from their homes. For travelers who have been affected, I'm glad Liberty Travel is in a position to help."

ENDS

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