

Kuoni goes back to the shop floor

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Management at leading luxury tour operator, Kuoni, have been sent 'back to the shop floor' as part of an initiative to work with and support their chic new travel stores around the UK

Kuoni's management team were assigned a Kuoni store to work in for the day so they could experience what it's like to be one of their Personal Travel Experts. The initiative aimed to connect management with customers 'face to face' to further ensure Kuoni is meeting customers' holiday needs and expectations. The management also wanted to support the high street teams by swapping desks and business meetings for direct customer contact so they could share their travel knowledge.

Over the past three years Kuoni has invested heavily in a high-street retail presence, opening 21 boutique Kuoni travel stores. Each individually designed store is inspired by a wide range of exotic destinations and chic, stylish hotels. The stores showcase authentic artefacts from all over the world to give customers an immediate sense of foreign lands the moment they walk in. These include a knitted 'meet and greet' desk, eastern European rugs, Saki barrels, and oriental lamps based on traditional mosque lamps.

Mark Duguid, Kuoni head of market management (interim) commented: "Our knowledge, experience and the variety of destinations we've travelled to were a real asset when we went 'back to the floor'. We all enjoyed engaging with customers and exchanging personal travel stories and experiences. There was a real buzz around the stores with managers participating by giving out leaflets and goodie bags throughout the day. Many new ideas and insights have come out of the initiative and we're looking forward to making our store experiences even more unique and fulfilling for customers."

Dagmar Marrocco, Kuoni market manager commented on her day at the Kuoni Solihull store: "For me being in the shop brought the product to life. It reminds you that we don't just sell a commodity. Our holidays fulfil dreams and are memorable experiences. Working on the shop floor is unpredictable - one minute it's quiet and the next the shop is full of clients and the phones are ringing off the hook."

Fiona Harris, Kuoni's PR director who worked at High Street Kensington commented: "Its dynamic working on the shop floor. You never know who may walk in. It helps to be a good listener and combine this with good travel and destination knowledge."

Mark Duguid added: "For me, working in the Bristol store, it was clear to see that our customers have an enormous affection for the brand and with it, very high expectations, which I am proud to say, were met in every case. Being able to handle any and every type of enquiry was something I was not prepared for. I was very impressed by the breadth of knowledge held by our Personal Travel Experts.

"I now appreciate the small details really do make all the difference."

About Kuoni:

Kuoni was established in 1906 in Switzerland by Alfred Kuoni, a visionary adventurer and explorer of his

time who opened some of Europe's first travel agencies. Today it has branch operations in over 40 countries offering Thailand holidays (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/holiday/asia/thailand/pages/default.aspx>), Mauritius holidays (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/holiday/indian-ocean/mauritius/pages/default.aspx>), Maldives holidays (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/holiday/indian-ocean/maldives/pages/default.aspx>), Antigua holidays (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/holiday/caribbean/antigua/pages/default.aspx>) and New York holidays (<http://www.kuoni.co.uk/en/holiday/north-and-central-america/usa/new-york/pages/default.aspx>) among many others. For 105 years Kuoni has been creating holidays with a spirit of adventure and has been recognised consistently, winning coveted awards such as The World's Leading Tour Operator for 11 years in a row at the World Travel Awards, Best Large Tour Operator at the 2011 Daily Telegraph Ultratravel 100 Awards for five consecutive years and scored most highly in the Which? top 20 travel company survey 2011. Kuoni has also been voted Britain's Best Long-haul Tour Operator by travel agents for the past 29 years.

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