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## **SWPP Announces Adelina Petrov as 2008 Workforce Management Professional of the Year**

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE – April 3, 2008 – The Society of Workforce Planning Professionals (SWPP) today announced Adelina Petrov as winner of the 2008 Workforce Management Professional of the Year Award, which recognizes a workforce management professional who has shown outstanding leadership in the industry.

“We are so pleased to recognize Adelina with this distinguished award,” said Vicki Herrell, SWPP Executive Director. “Her workforce management knowledge, coupled with her excellent leadership and communication skills, have helped her achieve great results for her organization. She is truly a wonderful representative of workforce management professionals around the world.”

Petrov was chosen from five finalists by the SWPP Board of Advisors. The other finalists included Liz Beardsley of Delta Air Lines, Tony Capuro of Prime Therapeutics, Taras Chmil of Siemens, and Tony Graczyk of Principal Financial Group.

As Director of Sales and Operations Analysis for International Cruise & Excursions, Inc. (ICE), Adelina Petrov understands the value of statistics. At ICE, she has put her analytical expertise to work to help generate results that have not only saved the company 2.5 million in the last year, but have also enhanced the ability of ICE’s approximately 550 inbound and outbound contact center agents to do what they do best: sell. ICE, a private cruise and vacation club, provides vacation fulfillment services and its profits are made through commissions on booked cruises, resort vacation packages and related services. Because the contact center plays such a central role in ICE’s business strategy, the company embarked on a key initiative last year to improve in this area. Since Petrov came on board at ICE in 2005, this has been her primary mission.

From day one at ICE, Petrov immediately recognized the missing piece of the performance puzzle: workforce management. There were simply no processes or tools in place to measure and effectively manage the performance of the company's pool of agents, a pretty big gap considering that the agents are the primary drivers of ICE's sales. Petrov was familiar with what workforce management could do from her previous 10 years of experience in the airline industry. However, getting management buy-in on a workforce management system in an organization that's never used one before was tricky. Up until Petrov's tenure at ICE, contact center staff scheduling at ICE was done on Excel spreadsheets, and insight into key performance metrics was non-existent. Petrov sold management on the new initiative by presenting a crash course on "Workforce Management 101," detailing how measuring and improving those key workforce metrics would translate into large cost savings as well as increased revenue generating potential. Her preliminary estimate was that ICE would save approximately a million dollars a year by deploying a workforce management system and supporting processes.

Once she had management buy-in, Petrov took the lead in managing the entire project from start to finish, from selecting vendors through deployment. By deploying a new system and processes for workforce management using Aspect's eWorkforce Management solution, ICE is now able to forecast the level of resources that will be required in the contact center on an intra-day basis, test various "what-if" schedule and staffing scenarios, and then execute schedules to the forecast. The result has been reductions in under- and over-staffing, as well as the elimination of overtime costs. But the improvements don't stop there. Armed with real-time agent adherence information from the system, ICE has overhauled the company's supervisor bonus to include an incentive for adherence improvements. Supervisor bonuses are tied to the schedule compliance average achieved by their team and agents are rewarded with specific incentives for reaching their targets. For example, the most profitable customer calls (i.e., those that have the potential to generate higher commissions for agents) are routed to the agents with the best performance from the week before.

Petrov's original ROI estimate didn't quite come in where she expected, however. The

company ended up with an annual savings of more than double her prediction. Several key improvements contributed to this achievement. New compensation plans were established to re-focus on productivity. The business process was revamped to combine sales and customer service calls handled by the same agent. The costs related to overstaffing and overtime were greatly reduced, as well as potential lost revenues that could be impacted by understaffing. And once ICE was actually able to measure adherence, it found that it was significantly below where the company would have liked it to be at 78 percent. After five months of using the new workforce management system to closely track schedule adherence, combined with targeted incentive programs to keep agents and supervisors motivated to do better, ICE was able to bring schedule adherence up to 91 percent, then further to 92 percent in another several months, and then to where it stands today at 92.5 percent. As a result of improved performance and efficiencies, ICE operated the first quarter in the year post-implementation with less full time agents compared to the previous year on the same call volume and average handle time. This translates into a cost savings of approximately \$2.5 million dollars.

A scientific approach to forecasting has also resulted in optimized schedules that have contributed to service level consistency. Agents have been empowered to perform better and achieve higher commissions and, as a result, attrition has declined from 11 percent to 5 percent per month. ICE's initial investment in its workforce management system repaid itself within four months. Finally, and most important, greater performance of the contact center equals greater performance when it comes to sales and revenue generation. ICE's revenue generated by vacation sales grew by 22 percent in the first quarter of 2007 compared to the previous year.

Jeremy Rowley of ICE says, "Adelina is always looking forward to the next challenges. Her next dream is to optimize the outbound part of the call center workforce and to help us find the best e-learning tool to further increase agent productivity and enhance the company bottom line. She is joining efforts with the rest of the management team to continue providing a superb customer experience and preserving the core value of ICE as a great place to work."

The SWPP Board of Advisors selected the five finalists from nominations submitted on the SWPP website. The Workforce Management Professional of the Year award was announced at the 2008 SWPP Annual Conference on March 27, 2008 at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, TN.

### **About SWPP**

The Society of Workforce Planning Professionals (SWPP) is an organization devoted to facilitating education and networking opportunities among workforce planners across all industries. Membership in SWPP is available to all workforce planning professionals and other interested parties from consulting and vendor organizations. Both individual memberships and corporate membership options are available, with full benefits and costs outlined on the organization's website at [www.swpp.org](http://www.swpp.org).

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