

professional-interviews/deborah-fogarty)

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Ferne Sapp
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Jackie Friedman
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Jeannie Lippard
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Membership and enrolled to earn my ACC. I started booking friends and family and then through natural organic networking my business grew in leaps and bounds. I love working for myself and setting goals and seeing it all come to fruition. My specialties are Yoga/Wellness Cruises, Craft Beer and Wine cruises and Corporate Incentive cruises. The travel industry is one of the most viable successful industries to be in.

Name a “highlight” in your career.

I had one of my most successful cruise groups this year – I call it my labor of love – as I found a bottle of wine in my local Total Wine, thought it was one of the best wines I had ever tried and looked up the winery online – reached out to the person I thought most appropriate (never thought I would hear back). The SVP of marketing sent me a case of wine the next day and flew out to meet me. I created a cruise that became a wine club member and corporate incentive cruise for the winery and their wholesalers. This cruise also put me over the top revenue wise and I won the Nexion Circle of Excellence award as a “top producer” months before the deadline to achieve it.

Please give us a list/tips of your best practices when it comes to selling cruise vacations.

I always buy all of my clients a bottle of wine (if they don't drink an onboard credit) to thank them for their valued business. I email and text them before and after their vacation and often will go to their homes or meet them at Starbucks (if they are local) with my laptop and help them plan their vacations in person. My motto is above and beyond customer service for all and I take that to heart and will always do what it takes to keep my clients coming back and refer their friends and family to me.

What is your biggest challenge when selling cruise vacations and how do you overcome it?

When clients “price watch” their cruise that they have booked with me and don't understand that though there are often “specials” as time goes on the price of the cruise has almost always gone up even if there are new “deals” out there. I always call the cruise lines when this happens as I want my clients to be happy no matter what – my answer is usually as I suspected – but once in a while the price has gone down and they can get into the new pricing – I will always move the client into the new pricing if it's available – but takes away from my own ROI and time.

Are you CLIA Certified? If so, what designation and how has that certification impacted your career?

Yes, I am an Elite Cruise Counselor (ECC) – it has definitely helped me talk the talk and learn the cruise industry inside and out as I worked so hard to achieve each status – first ACC, then MCC and ECC.

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Paul Parker
(<https://cruising.org/travel-agent-center/become-a>

How has your CLIA membership and/or professional development helped you in your career?

The courses and stringent guidelines that were in place when I achieved each level helped me to understand the industry – especially the courses on group sales. Going to trade shows and ship inspections also helped so I could see what I sell (or sell what I see). Since I'm lucky enough to live in South Florida and have great relationships with all of my local business development managers I often schedule private ship inspections with prospective groups or high-end clients for luxury lines and that helps to seal the deal.

Please add any additional thoughts about your role working with the cruise industry and selling cruise vacations that may not have been covered above.

Having a relationship with my local BDM's with the cruise lines and having met most of the executives locally has made a huge impact on my career as I have lots of amazing people in this industry that believe in me and it makes a difference every day.

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professional-
interviews/paul-parker)

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