

LOOK INSIDE: U.S. Woman-Owned Companies Report \$8.9 Billion In 2007

WOMEN BUSINESS

July/August 2008

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**TRAVELING
FOR BUSINESS**

AND REVERSE THE
EFFECTS OF AGING?

**7 WAYS TO
UNDERSTAND
FEMALE
BUYING HABITS**

AND INCREASE YOUR
BUSINESS

**FIVE
SECRETS**

TO LONGEVITY IN
BUSINESS

**AND THEY
TOLD ME, "IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE ..."**

**Inspiring Young
Women to Reach
For Their Dreams**

**No.1 For The Second Year In A Row Omega Travel
And Skyrocketed By Over A Billion!**

GLORIA BOHAN founder of
Omega World Travel

MAY/JUNE 2008

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Inspiring Young Women to Reach High for their Dreams and Start their Own Business

Gloria Bohan founded Omega World Travel in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1972, and since that time has transformed her one-person office into a travel agency with sales revenues in excess of \$1 billion a year, approximately 200 company-owned offices and more than 1,000 employees worldwide. Omega is ranked the second largest privately-owned travel agency in the United States by Business Travel News (June, 2008) and is on Travel Weekly's 2008 Power List of the top U.S. travel agencies. Omega is the largest travel agency founded by, operated by and majority-owned by a woman.

THE BEGINNING

"As a start-up business, Gloria knew that she had to seek out underserved markets. Wherever a customer expressed a need, she was ready to fill it. When clients asked her to provide service to new locations, she did. Within ten years, Gloria owned 15 travel offices. As she expanded beyond her initial small-town location, Gloria realized that the travel business was different from town to town and that no two customers were the same. She and her staff became aware of regional nuances and customized Omega Travel's solutions to meet local business needs."

Gloria is very much a hands-on owner; Gloria manages the day-to-day operations including strategic partnerships,



e-commerce execution, and the long-term direction of the organization.

AN INNOVATIVE, TREND-SETTING COMPANY

Omega World Travel, considered in the travel industry as

an innovative, trend-setting company, is now headquartered in Fairfax, Virginia. Ms. Bohan, a hands-on owner, has continually diversified Omega, which now serves every major area of corporate, leisure and government travel. Omega's full service, on-site corporate and on-site government offices are located in cities throughout the United States and abroad in the United Kingdom; Okinawa, Japan; Guam; Kuwait; and Bahrain.

In addition to its smaller, local offices, Omega has augmented its service locations with high-touch, high-tech customer service centers in select areas of the U.S. that provide the highest quality reservation services to Omega customers 24 hours a day.

Omega has been at the forefront of travel services on the Internet and in late 1997 launched Cruise.com which has since become one of the Internet's largest cruise sellers. Most recently, Cruise.com was honored as the 2008 Agency of the Year by Vacation.com, receiving the Chairman's Award for the highest preferred supplier sales.

gious Travel Agent of the Year Award. The distinction acknowledges her great contribution to the travel industry and her outstanding influence and professional activity to advance the status of travel agents. Also in 2004, she received a "Businesswoman of the Year" award from Office Depot. In 2003 she was presented an Entrepreneurial Visionary Award from the Women's Business Center in recognition of outstanding women of extraordinary accom-



EDUCATION AND INCENTIVES ARE A MUST

For her staff, Ms. Bohan has established in-depth training programs, incentives, and bonus programs. She points out; "Education and incentives are a must for keeping service and motivation high. My goal is to make every employee think like a salesperson and have them offer clients the best deal and to be totally responsive to their needs." Ms. Bohan says that working with people and building a successful workforce has been the real satisfaction for her. "You have to love what you're doing and reach out to others to achieve success and happiness."

SUCCESS

Gloria Bohan has been recognized many times over for her business achievements. In 2004, she was recipient of the American Society of Travel Agents' (ASTA) presti-

plishments. Ms Bohan also has received the Entrepreneur of the Year Award in April 2000 from the Business Women's Network and the National Foundation for Women Legislators for her success in growing a business that is known worldwide.

RANKED ONE OF THE TOP 500 WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES IN THE UNITED STATES

In addition, Omega World Travel is ranked one of the Top 500 Women-Owned Businesses in the United States by Working Woman magazine (June 2001) and Gloria Bohan has also been named one of the 100 Most Powerful Women in Travel by Travel Agent magazine (August 26, 2002). In the past, Ms. Bohan has been named one of the 25 Most Influential Leaders in the Travel Industry by the travel trade publication Tour and Travel News and one of the



Most Powerful Women in Washington by Washingtonian Magazine. She was also named Woman of the Year by The Network of Entrepreneurial Women. In 2005, Enterprising Women Magazine inducted Gloria Bohan into the Enterprising Women Hall of Fame, recognizing Ms. Bohan for her outstanding lifetime accomplishments and the significant contributions she has made to advance the growth and development of women-owned enterprises. DiversityBusiness.com (formerly Div2000.com) honored Ms. Bohan for her diversity initiatives at the annual Multicultural Business Ceremony and Forum in 2003, and more recently in 2005, recognizing Omega World Travel as the number one Top Diversity Owned Businesses in the U.S. She has received this award repeatedly, in 2002, 2004, 2005 and 2006. In 2007, Gloria Bohan received the BRAVO! Women Business Achievement Award from Washington SmartCEO and TiE-DC in recognition of her success and achievements as a business woman, an executive and entrepreneur in the Washington, DC area.

GIVING BACK

Omega World Travel (Omega) sent a team of agents to New Orleans on to volunteer for Habitat for Humanity International and New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity. More than 30 agents and managers from company offices throughout the U.S. will be working with the Musicians' Village, a project conceived by Harry Connick, Jr. and Branford Marsalis, to provide Habitat-constructed homes for displaced New Orleans musicians.

Omega, a woman-owned business, hopes its efforts will put New Orleans one step closer to reviving its tourism industry. Before Hurricane Katrina struck, the southern Gulf city was considered one of the top destinations not only for those seeking the ultimate experience in southern hospitality, food and music but also for business travelers attending conferences and conventions.

Omega President & CEO Gloria Bohan said Omega has a long history of booking leisure and business meetings in the region. "Before Katrina, New Orleans was at the top of the list of sites for meetings and incentives business. We're



trying to help restore that aspect of tourism in any way we can. Working with Habitat for Humanity is a good start." Ms. Bohan has visited New Orleans many times both for business and leisure. "It's always been a unique destination. It's a truly exciting place where diversity thrives — in the people, the food, the music, in everything.

Ms. Bohan currently is serving on the board of the Fairfax County Education Foundation as well as the Enterprising Women Magazine Advisory Board. She has been a member of the Grant Thornton Business Owner's Council and has served on the Board of Directors for The American Business Conference, The Greater Washington Board of Trade, The Virginia Chamber of Commerce, and The Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges. She was a founder of The Society of Government Travel Professionals ("SGTP") and served as president from 1986-87.

Ms. Bohan is a co-founder of Space Adventures, the company instrumental in sending the first tourists into space, and a board member of Zero Gravity, a space entertainment and tourism company specializing in weightless flights. She is a member of The National Association of Women Business Owners, Women Presidents' Organization and The American Society of Travel Agents. Omega is certified as a woman-owned business by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council ("WBENC").

EDUCATION

A graduate of Marymount Manhattan College in New York where she serves as a Trustee, Ms. Bohan started her career as a teacher in the New York City Public School System and later worked at Forbes Magazine. She received Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, from Marymount Manhattan College in 2003 for her vision of service to the public, her skills in organizing a successful enterprise, her commitment to the advancement of women, and fidelity to the values and ideals of liberal education.

Ms. Bohan is active in various organizations and groups including the International Brain Research Foundation, the Race for the Cure, Suited for Change, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and the Salvation Army, to name a few.

Interestingly enough, Gloria became enamored with the travel business as a result of her honeymoon cruise aboard the Queen Elizabeth 2. □