

Streamlining the Relocation Process

Today's global relocation market is worth over \$60 billion and it's startling clear as to why; a perfect storm of factors over the past four years has upended traditional plans about how a business should be organised and where they should be based. Businesses are increasingly less confined by international boundaries, cross-border strategy is high on many company agendas, and secondments are more popular than ever.

Contrary to some opinions, corporate relocation is not just about moving possessions across country, or indeed around the world; it's a huge industry and its success lies in identifying bespoke solutions for a corporation with a mobile workforce. It's nothing new but it's constantly evolving; as our global business needs are changing so are the services on offer from relocation firms; there has been a clear trend by some of the more successful firms to streamline their services.

Acquisition International speaks to a panel of relocation industry experts to discuss the current industry trends.



Brookfield Global Relocation Services

Company: Brookfield Global Relocation Services
Name: Scott Sullivan
Email: scott.sullivan@brookfieldgrs.com
Web: www.brookfieldgrs.com
Address: 150 Harvester Drive, Suite 201,
Burr Ridge, IL 60527, USA
Telephone: +1 (630) 427-2062



GROSVENOR HOUSE APARTMENTS BY Jumeirah Living LONDON

Name: Steve Thorne
Company: Grosvenor House Apartments
by Jumeirah Living
Email: StayGHA@jumeirah.com
Web: www.jumeirah.com/GHA
Address: Park Lane, London W1K 7TN, UK
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7518 4444

PASSPORT career MAKE YOUR CAREER MOVE

Name: Susan Musich
Company: Passport Career, LLC
Web: www.PassportCareer.com
Email: smusich@passportcareer.com
Address: 2020 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, #410,
Washington, DC 20006 USA
Telephone: +1 (703) 608-4433



PRS Relocation Made Easy

Company: Pathfinder Relocation Services Sdn. Bhd.
Name: Triona Chelliah
Email: info@pathfinder-relocation.com
Web: www.pathfinder-relocation.com
Address: 501-2-B Wisma Thong Sin,
Jalan Tanjung Bungah, 11200 Penang, Malaysia
Telephone: +6 04 8903758



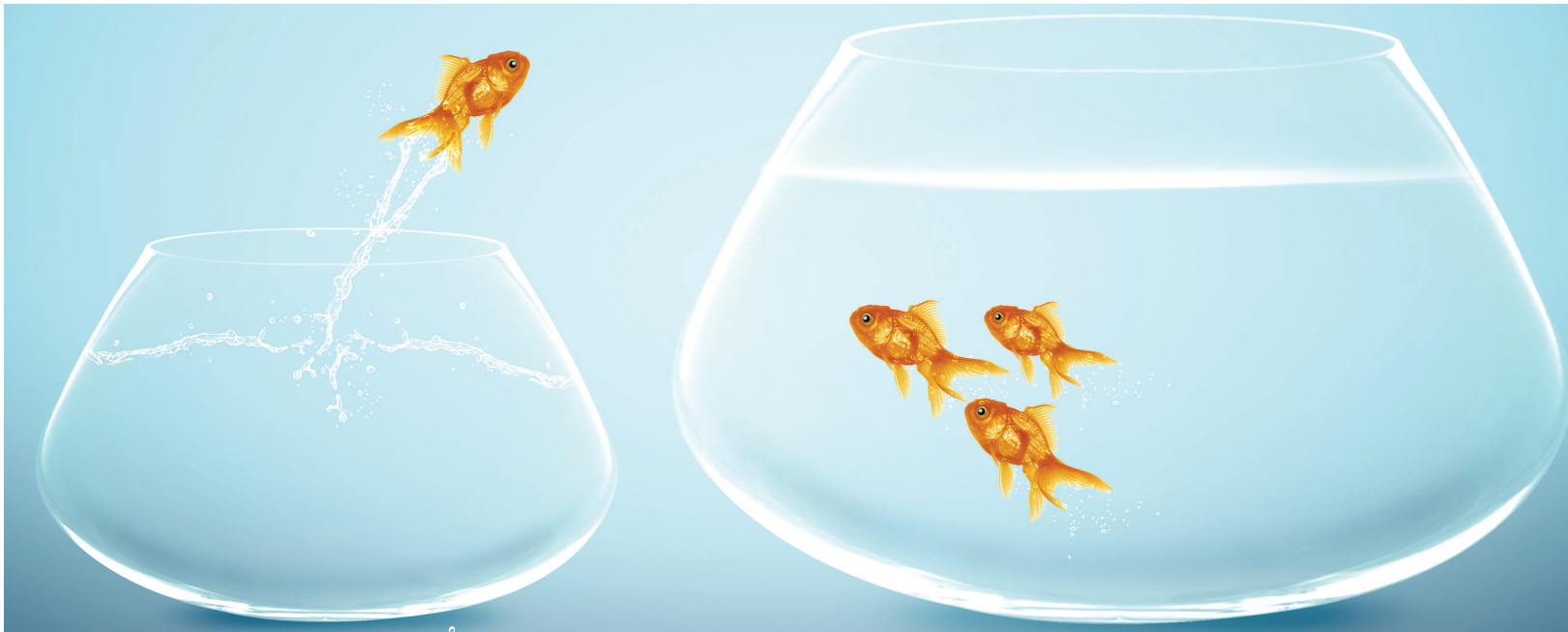
RSB RELOCATION SERVICES UND -BERATUNG

Company: RSB Deutschland GmbH
Name: Helmut Berg
Email: helmut.berg@rsb-relocation.de
Web: www.rsb-relocation.de
Address: Dreieichstr. 59, 60594 Frankfurt,
M., Deutschland, Germany
Telephone: +49-(0)69-61 09 47 - 0



wendy wilson consulting Coaching through change, culture & global transition

Company: Wendy Wilson Consulting
Name: Wendy Wilson
Email: wendy@wendywilsonconsulting.com
Web: www.wendywilsonconsulting.com
Telephone: +44 (0) 7917 456 608



Scott Sullivan is the Executive Vice President of Global Sales, Marketing, and Consulting at Brookfield Global Relocation Services.

For 50 years, Brookfield Global Relocation Services (Brookfield GRS) has been a trusted leader in designing and delivering domestic and international relocation and assignment management services throughout the world. Their portfolio of services includes program administration, selection and preparation, global expense payment and administration, home sale, property management, destination services, global household goods management, immigration, transition assistance, and global compensation services. "We facilitate everything from Government Relocation Program Management and Domestic Relocation Program Management to International Assignment Services and Strategic Consultancy," said Mr Sullivan. "Our worldwide reach is supported by our global service centres and our Global Alliance Management (GAM) team relationships around the world. Our partnerships and strategically placed service centres give us the range to handle the specific scope of both domestic and international services. "Relocation is our fundamental business, and we are proud to be the partner of choice for the world's most recognisable corporate brands. Our balanced portfolio, with over 500 clients, including 35% of the Fortune 100, continues to grow and represents a wide spectrum of businesses and industries."

Brookfield GRS is a division of Brookfield Asset Management (Brookfield). Headquartered in New York and Toronto, Brookfield (NYSE: BAM, TSX: BAM.A) is a specialised asset management company focused on property, power, infrastructure assets, and real estate.

Brookfield GRS' employees operate from regional offices in Asia, Europe, North America, and South America to support the success of the firm's clients and the relocating employees around the world. Brookfield GRS continuously evaluates its service offerings and develops new innovative products to complement their existing portfolio. The firm has a Steering Committee dedicated to product development and enhancement. Ideas are solicited from across the organisation, as well as from its clients, customers, and suppliers. "Not only do we solicit feedback, but we take action," said Mr. Sullivan. "Proposed services or modifications are

advanced through different stages from concept, scope, investigation, and development, to testing, launching, and validation phases."

Recently, due to challenges the firm's clients have faced as a result of the U.S. domestic housing crisis, Brookfield GRS designed and implemented a pre-decision counselling program that included policy and risk assessment counselling, referrals to client providers for real estate services, dual career counselling, and mortgage services. The program also includes a tiered application of Brookfield GRS' eValuatorSM market-analytic tools, broker market analyses (BMAs), or relocation appraisals, depending on employee profile and lead time. "From a service perspective, several clients had expressed concern with the number of contacts that transferring employees had to speak to during the course of their relocation," explained Mr. Sullivan. "Each transferring employee is contacted by at least one supplier for each service in scope, in addition to their interaction with the Brookfield GRS Consultant."

As a result, Brookfield GRS has launched a new process ensuring its clients and their transferees receive best-in-class service provision through "Strategic Links". The revised processes, with supporting SLAs, for its downstream suppliers, have been designed to:

- Reduce the number of supplier contacts who speak with the assignee/transferring employee
- Ensure key information is collected only once from the assignee/transferring employee and then appropriately disseminated by the Consultant to the suppliers, with the exception of service-specific information collected by suppliers as necessary, i.e. to support the immigration process
- Eliminate supplier-requested information via Brookfield GRS' system generated referral form

"We follow a formal procurement cycle within our co-sourced service streams providing our clients access to the most innovative service offerings and competitive pricing in the marketplace," elaborated Mr. Sullivan. "Clients benefit from our aggregated volume spend, over 3 billion annually, resulting in a pricing advantage over other relocation management companies or managing suppliers independently. As relocation trends continue to evolve, we will be adjusting our portfolio to meet our current and future clients' needs."

Looking ahead to 2014, Mr. Sullivan believes focusing on the competencies of the international mobility function, identifying and mobilising talented workers with unique and vital skills, will position organisations to win lasting and competitive advantages in the talent marketplace. Over the next year, Brookfield GRS anticipates the following trends and conditions:

Policy Flexibility

Mr. Sullivan noted that business-driven cost and policy flexibility within an overall global mobility program has shifted to focusing on solution development for problems faced during flexible-program implementation. "This will ensure flexibility is well communicated, implemented, and managed within the organisation," he observed. "As a growing trend, additional policy types, such as short term assignments, localisation, and developmental assignments, continue to enhance flexible packages and benefits within existing policies. More companies are considering the introduction of flexible or segmented programs."

Diversity and Emerging Markets

According to Mr. Sullivan, highly educated talent is increasingly available in developing countries, and skilled migration from emerging markets is enhancing the talent-pool's diversity. "We must re-evaluate mobility programs to ensure that they meet the needs of transferring employees from an array of cultures and home countries," he continued. "Brookfield GRS' mobility practices are continually integrated with talent management initiatives, which are developing and managing talent from emerging countries."

Cost Management

Mr. Sullivan stated that companies continue to implement and use cost estimates, assignment authorisation processes, and management of exceptions to optimize costs, new structures, and patterns of mobility containing those costs.

Technology to Support Compliance

Mr. Sullivan believes showing a renewed interest in technology to support compliance requirements is vital. "Mitigating tax and immigration compliance through technology tracks highlights their impact. In some jurisdictions, the existence of programs, backed by technology, may minimise penalties imposed by authorities, if their records show a company has made an effort to be in compliance," Sullivan concluded.

SECTOR SPOTLIGHT:

Streamlining the Relocation Process



Steve Thorne is the Director of Sales & Marketing for Grosvenor House Apartments by Jumeirah Living.

Securing suitable permanent housing is one of the most stressful areas of the relocation process. Making this easier for companies and relocating employees is Grosvenor House Apartments by Jumeirah Living. These exclusive hotel residences offer the perfect “home” for a newly relocated employee, whether as a temporary solution whilst longer-term housing is secured, or as a luxury semi-permanent residence.

Grosvenor House Apartments is centrally located on Park Lane in Mayfair, one of London’s most exclusive areas. The 130 serviced residences range from studios through to four and five bedroom premium suites and penthouses and are ideal for extended stays in London.

A new concept in luxury accommodation

Combining the services of a five-star hotel with the discretion, comfort and security of a private Mayfair residence, Grosvenor House Apartments is the first exclusive ‘hotel residence’ to be opened in London, offering discerning clientele a highly personalised service with luxurious amenities, full business services and flexible accommodation. Services include 24-hour Concierge, daily maid service, fitness room, and 24-hour in-residence dining. Additional services including spa and beauty treatments and private dining are also available in-residence through the At Home with Jumeirah Living services, which offers the best of London services in the comfort of the residents’ London ‘home’.

The London Suites & Penthouses

For those requiring more space or simply a statement address in London, the London Suites – comprised of the Serpentine, City, Westminster, and Hyde Park – are named after local landmarks and views. Ranging from 158 to 225 square meters, each of the four suites offer breath-taking views of Hyde Park or the rooftops of surrounding Mayfair, and are ideally equipped for either short or extended stays and offer a host of inclusive services and benefits.

On the top floor are a further four spacious and luxurious penthouses ranging from 368-448sqm and offer the ultimate in luxury London living, complete with a personal Butler to attend to your every need. Key features include secure private lift access, bespoke Poggenpohl kitchens, opulent dining and sitting rooms – ideally sized for entertaining – as well as a study area, media room and stylish bedrooms. Private balconies offer residents impressive views over Hyde Park or the rooftops of Mayfair.

Supporting relocating employees

Through the experienced team at Grosvenor House Apartments, residents receive the best insider knowledge on how to settle in to life in London. The dedicated Concierge team providing a full five-star hotel consultation service at the convenience of the resident, while the expansive “At Home” events programme introduces residents to elements of a luxury London lifestyle during their stay, ensuring they can culturally adapt to life in the capital and start to live like a true Mayfair resident. For companies without relocation support, the Grosvenor House Apartments team are connected to some of the relocation industry’s most experienced professionals and able to offer advice and support on everything from household goods shipments and school searches, to transporting art collections or buying property in London.

The combination of refined hotel services, relocation support and luxurious accommodation available at Grosvenor House Apartments aims to make the transition to life in London as stress free as possible.

Susan Musich is the Executive Director of Passport Career, LLC.

Dual Career Impact Global Mobility

Global mobility is increasing in international companies and the changing needs, demands and demographics of the cosmopolitan international assignee is turning mobility departments on their heads. Global mobility support has moved from the traditional destination briefings to an expanded focus of proactively addressing family concerns—particularly that of spouse/partner career support.

How dual careers impact a company’s bottom line

Dual career couples are on the rise, and now more than 80 percent of couples have a dual career focus and dual income. Therefore, dual career issues are one of the key issues for motivating mid-career and top talent to accept an international assignment. Further, they are of increasing importance to the companies’ success with international mobility. When the careers of both partners cannot be accommodated, it has negative implications for recruitment, talent management, deployment of human resources, retention of key talent and successful economic outcomes for individual employees as well as for companies in home and host countries.

Research shows that the cost to a multinational company for a failed assignment due to dual career matters can

exceed \$1 million. An international assignment failure includes both assignment refusals and early returns for personal rather than business reasons. A number of companies report that assignees have returned home early from an international assignment due to concerns regarding their partner’s career or perceived lack of employment opportunities.

Companies recognize that when spouse/partner career issues impact global mobility of assignees, the costs can be significant for both the organization and for the family. The benefits of expatriation to companies, assignees and country economies extend far beyond monetary value. Expatriation gives the employees professional exposure as well as a cross-cultural experience that impacts the way they approach their work and company markets. Employees become more culturally sensitive, adaptable and flexible—key skills valued by global companies.

Why dual careers are on the rise

Over half of companies employ more than one nationality and women make up some 12 percent of the expatriate workforce. The proportion of assignees between the ages of 25 and 35 and those over 50 is also increasing, and these age categories now make up almost 48 percent of global assignees. Family patterns are much more diverse, and now include more accompanying male spouses, unmarried partners and same sex couples. All of these factors impact the dual career issue.

Younger, upwardly mobile expats who are offered opportunities overseas and their accompanying spouses are also looking for their partners to have relevant career opportunities in the host country—particularly since the international experience can help move both careers forward in this era of globalization. In many cases, the assignment packages are reduced from previous years, so many assignees also depend on second incomes in the host country.

Companies predict that as they start to move larger numbers of employees, and include those in junior positions to new locations, it will become even more of an issue as both partners usually work in the home country and have the expectation for both to continue working in their host country.

Addressing the spouse/partner career issue

To increase the staff mobility as well as cost effectiveness, efficiency, and the success rate of international assignments, the majority of companies—both large and small—increasingly provide some form of dual career assistance to support expatriate spouses/partners. Spouse/partner career support often includes information on the job search and employment opportunities, work permit regulations, country resources, resume/CV guidance specific to the country, coaching, and alternative career options ranging from volunteer experiences to continuing education opportunities.

Triona Chelliah is the Owner and General Manager of Pathfinder Relocation Services Sdn. Bhd.

Pathfinder Relocation Services Sdn. Bhd. is an independently owned and operated Destination Service Provider (DSP) for Global Mobility Companies (GMCs) and the HR departments of international businesses relocating staff to and from Malaysia. Founded in 1996, PRS has been successfully relocating assignees to and from Malaysia through its extensive, yet personal services.

PRS provides the following core services: Home Search, School Search, Visa & Immigration, Orientation, Cultural Training, and Departure programmes.

"PRS has been certified to the EuRA Global Quality Seal since 2008 and this provides our clients with the reassurance that we have proven procedures and frameworks in place to support the assignee (and family), GMC and Corporate HR with the transition into/out of Malaysia," said Triona. "I am also conscious to ensure that PRS continues to deliver a personalised and caring service to our assignees and clients, but now we have the strength of the framework to provide consistency."

"PRS also supports employee learning with regard to the relocation industry. Three staff members and myself hold the Global Mobility Specialist designation from the Worldwide ERC."

"These help us deliver on our company motto of 'Relocation Made Easy'."

By implementing a process-driven methodology through the adoption of the EuRA Global Quality Seal, PRS has used Internal Audit and Management Review to continually re-evaluate the service delivery and how the firm supports the client and assignee.

"It's not always possible to streamline as GMCs and Corporate HR have differing requirements, but we do benefit from being able to improve our core processes and manage the exceptions," elaborated Triona.

The relocation process has a number of participants and PRS strives to ensure their impacts on the process are positive ones. Triona stated that GMCs and Corporate HR require service providers who provide value above and beyond the price they quote.

"It is important to build relationships with the organisations and to tackle any problems directly and professionally," she continued. "Once this can be done the size of the DSP is somewhat irrelevant as the quality of service speaks for itself. I am delighted that PRS is a multi-platinum Cartus Global Network Commitment to Excellence recipient and even shortlisted for the Cartus Masters Cup Award."

"Managing the expectations of the assignee and their family, if included, is vital within the relocation process. PRS starts with the end in mind by incorporating a robust Needs Analysis process that gathers relevant information and provides an area for the assignee to write in longhand what their concerns and requirements are. Sometimes tick boxes are not enough. I encourage my staff to create a dialogue with the assignee as conversation is also important."

Triona stated that there are many challenges to be faced, as by definition, the relocation industry is a people industry. In particular, managing the gaps between expectation, perception and reality can be challenging.

"It can be managed through acting as a partner in the relocation process and providing professional communication to the assignee, GMC, and/or Corporate HR. Sometimes the Destination Service Provider is not in a position to meet the assignee's expectation due to their company's relocation policy, but we keep a smile on our face and explain the options for the assignee to decide upon," she concluded.

Helmut Berg is the Managing Shareholder and General Manager of RSB Deutschland GmbH, among the leading destination service providers in Germany.

RSB was founded in October 1990. From the beginning, the firm offered services in the national and international (inbound and outbound) dimension.

The firm is a proud holder of the EuRA Global Quality Seal since 2008. The EGQS is the only quality accreditation for the Relocation Industry, and Mr Berg sees it as proof of the top quality the firm always strives to deliver.

Mr Berg, in his time as President of the European Relocation Association EuRA from mid-2008 to mid-2011, was instrumental in implementing this tool to improve the overall quality of the industry.

According to Mr Berg, one of the most important factors that impact the relocation process is the "Management of Expectation". He advised that the expatriates should get as much information as possible about their new host country, and not only the expatriate.

"This should also comprise the accompanying family or partner," he commented. Facts about the housing market should be communicated as well as information on the "red tape" that is to be expected. And not to forget an intercultural preparation about different norms and values in the new host country."

Mr Berg stated that every expatriate faces different challenges. RSB recently conducted an analysis about expatriates' experiences in Germany. Top of the list of challenges are: disability to speak the language; irritation about small apartments/houses; and disability to distinguish "normal" behaviour of the locals from what the expatriates rate as unfriendly treatment.

"Again: the best way to overcome all this is unbiased information, support with home finding and dealing with the authorities and giving the feeling that the counterpart is very welcome," he continued.

From RSB's experience of the industry, Mr Berg stated that the business volume has grown compared to last year, though there are no exact figures available.

"However, the monthly EuRA Index on the basis of a research among the EuRA members indicates that business is better than last year," he observed. "For RSB the year 2013 is a little lower than 2012, when we had the best year of the company history."

Mr Berg noted the positive trend seen in the industry, but he stated that the still unsolved financial uncertainties in Europe and elsewhere can have a slightly negative impact on the relocation business in Germany and Europe. However, in other parts of the world, e.g. the BRICS, he expects to see more volume.

"The relocation industry – yet rather small and not in the focus of public interest – is successfully contributing to the economic success of international corporations. There is a trend that relocation is either a mere transaction activity (orientation, home search, settling-in) or is developing to be partnering with the HR departments when it comes to the development of assignment policies and – following this – take care of the entire process of assignment management," he concluded.

Wendy Wilson is founder and director of Wendy Wilson Consulting.

Wendy Wilson Consulting supports businesses managing global workforces, implementing bespoke coaching programmes to prepare employees for global assignments. The increased demand for one-to-one cross-cultural and transition coaching support is a direct result of the radical changes in modern talent mobility.

Firstly a marked shift in mobility patterns is resulting in more flexible opportunities but in new and different forms. As more efficient, short-term and cost-effective alternatives to traditional global mobility are being implemented in response to the global business need to move talent quickly, a new pattern of mobility is emerging – the 'purpose based' mobile worker is gradually superseding the traditional 'duration based' assignee role.

Secondly there is also a new generation of global talent now entering the workforce - the Millennials (Gen Y'ers born between 1982 and 2002). By 2020 Millennials will comprise around 75% of the world workforce and their expectations are reflective of the changing economic, technological and increasingly globalised environment that they are immersed in. Self-sufficiency through technology has bred a generation of confident, independent, self-assured and adaptable individuals who are extremely receptive to new ideas and lifestyles. They expect to have several different employers during their career and many expect an overseas assignment during the early part of their career as part of their learning and development.

Millennials are the blue-print of the 'purpose based' mobile worker and forward thinking relocation specialists are now having to re-think their current working models and how they might accommodate this new demographic as well as a new market for self-driven lower cost relocation.

Some relocation companies have begun to embrace a new relocation approach by introducing web-based online relocation services to their clients – a sort of one-stop shop for the transferee to go shopping online for all their relocation needs prior to, during and following their move to their new destination and this innovative use of technology in global mobility is beginning to transform the relocation industry.

By using technology to facilitate round the clock access to online expertise, online relocation is reducing cost and administration for businesses when relocating their staff around the world and it's empowering assignees and their families as they have more control and knowledge of what's happening with their moves. This is particularly beneficial if they're managing a lump sum relocation package because it gives them the flexibility to personalize their relocation plan according to their individual needs and at the pace they prefer.

It's also opening up a relocation support path to a much wider globally mobile audience such as graduates and interns, local hires, contractors and project managers, who have not traditionally been supported in the past.

Online relocation can also provide support for the relocating client and their family not just at the time of the move but beyond. With an online relocation platform in place, relocation companies will now be able to offer a much wider range of what are often referred to as the 'soft' support packages for pre departure and post arrival care including cross-cultural coaching and training, partner support and career advice. The client can go online and research products, compare prices and ultimately make a purchase for exactly the sort of post-landing support they require to suit their needs and budget. And that's good news for independent suppliers such as Wendy Wilson Consulting who offer an integrated cross-cultural coaching service to support the needs of the individual assignee, their partners or family, not just before the move but throughout the duration of their assignment, including on-going repatriation support if required.