

# Case Study Groupon

Cleaner Data,  
Better Decision Making



2018

In partnership with  
FCM since 2018



Trade

Regions of trade:  
AMER, EMEA, APAC



3000

Approximate  
number of travelers

## About Groupon

Groupon is a global e-commerce marketplace connecting consumers to merchants through mobile and web platforms. Groupon has connected 34 million active customers with more than 1 million merchants around the world, pumping more than \$20 billion into local businesses and saving consumers more than \$35 billion in North America alone. Their mission is to be the destination for experiences – where customers discover fun things to do, and local businesses thrive.

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Case Study Groupon

## The hard truth about reporting: Garbage in, garbage out

Groupon's finance and accounting teams rely on FCM data to understand travel expenditure in each business area. To do this, we set up a custom reporting field to capture the name of the Senior Vice President (SVP) for each area, which can be used to sort the data. Travelers and bookers enter the correct SVP for their area during booking.

After beginning trading with FCM, Groupon noticed that the SVP field was displaying many unexpected results. A deeper dive showed that this was due to inaccuracies provided by travelers and bookers at time of booking – some people misspelled the SVP's name, resulting in several different options for one SVP, and others chose the wrong SVP. This meant that the data Groupon was pulling was not showing an accurate picture of all the spend booked under one SVP.

## Taking out the trash

There were two major challenges to resolving this issue. First of all, there was the time required to reload all the data, and the resources this would have required from Groupon and FCM. Secondly, there is no way to completely eliminate human error on the traveler side; we would need to create a solution that would continue to work, and not let the data keep degrading over time.

The simplest solution for the future was to implement a drop-down menu for SVP name, rather than letting users type in the name themselves. We also adjusted our quality control process to “fail” any incorrect SVP names (wrong spelling or wrong SVP) back to the booking team, so they could correct the data before it was included in reporting. This solved most of the issues going forward, but didn't clean up the historical data, and didn't catch 100% of errors.

So FCM proposed to set up a data translation table, which would take the incorrect and misspelled data in the SVP reporting field and translate it into the correct SVP name. This enabled us to provide a quick and efficient resolution, and also gave us a failsafe going forward.

## Results

The FCM development team deployed this translation table in September 2019 and used it to review all historical data. The results were startling:

- The translation table cleaned up the list of SVPs from 43 different variations to 14 correct names.
- This fixed more than 15,000 bookings and over \$9M in total spend that was now correctly allocated for the Groupon teams to review.
- A second audit in August 2020 showed that the solution was working on an ongoing basis.

This translation process has greatly improved the accuracy of Groupon's data without complicating the data entry required from travelers and travel bookers.

Without accurate data, Groupon could not be sure they were meeting their travel budget in each business area, or make good decisions about where budget needed to be adjusted to achieve their business goals without overspending.

Our solution allowed Groupon's accounting and finance teams to more easily identify the travel spend under each business area, so they could make data-driven decisions about their travel budget and effectively target real opportunities to save.

**“Having reliable travel data is a non-negotiable for Groupon. We rely on this information for budgetary and reconciliation purposes. This solution not only fixed the issue with past reporting, but the translation table will ensure that fewer human errors are made in the future.”**

NICOLE VESPA, GLOBAL BUSINESS TRAVEL  
& PCARD PROGRAM MANAGER, Groupon

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