

# Worldly Wisdom from a Globetrotting Speaker

**T**he path to success in professional speaking doesn't end at our U.S. borders. As president of Service Quality Institute, John Tschohl has created licensing agreements with local distributors who teach his materials and sell his content in 40 countries, from Russia to China to the Middle East, Latin America and Africa. Despite his success, Tschohl says he hasn't even scratched the surface. He says there are many opportunities for speakers to expand their businesses internationally.

## Dan Janal: What is the biggest challenge in working internationally?

*John Tschohl:* Travel can be longer than you'd experience in the United States, where you can get to your engagement in a day and back the next day. It takes much longer to fly to Europe, Asia and Africa.

## How long does it take to do a deal internationally?

It could take anywhere from two weeks to six months.

## What is the biggest reward for working internationally?

You get paid more and it is easier to close the sale. My clients value someone from the United States who has a higher profile.

## Do many speakers in NSA work internationally?

I think most speakers don't understand

the international market. They're reluctant because they think it's going to be dangerous. In many cases, that's not true. They are missing a great opportunity to broaden their businesses.

## How do you manage your business when you're abroad?

My staff is good at getting things done when I'm away. I work and send emails first thing in the morning, and then I'm on the Internet for an hour or two late at night. I also Skype with my staff and clients.

## What percentage of the time are you away from home?

Maybe only 50 percent of the time.

## Are there any issues in creating new courses for international markets?

I spend hundreds of thousands of dollars upgrading programs and creating new ones. I release at least one new course every year. The latest one is called "Coaching for Success." I spend a lot of money on writers, video shoots, talent, editing and marketing. The course is put into Spanish simultaneously, and then it is translated into Russian, Chinese Indonesian and Arabic.

## Who is a typical client?

Clients range from companies to entire countries. The governments of China and Ethiopia are my licensees. Government-owned Ethiopian Airlines is my partner. I have governments selling for me. It makes it a lot easier.



## Have you saturated the market?

I don't think I'm doing anywhere near what I could do. I think we should be doing 10 to 20 times more.

## Who hires and trains people?

I hire my general partners to do the training because it's not feasible for me to facilitate training sessions. My fee structure is too high.

## What do you do when you are overseas?

I do major service strategy seminars, and I also enjoy making sales calls.

## What's the best part of working internationally?

It's a lot of fun. When I was doing seminars in Botswana last year, I flew my wife and son in, and we took a safari to several different countries.



*John Tschohl is president of Service Quality Institute. He's written seven books on customer services that have been translated in nine languages. Visit [www.customer-service.com](http://www.customer-service.com).*



*Dan Janal speaks on publicity and marketing. He turns small companies into big names. Go to [www.prleads.com](http://www.prleads.com).*