

North American Land (Tour) Rush: Explore Worldwide Leading the Charge on Expansion

by [Sarah Milner](#) February 21, 2025



Katy Rockett, Canadian Regional Director, Explore Worldwide. Photo: Explore Worldwide

Over the last year, Explore Worldwide has been making a push into North America.

Toronto-based Katy Rockett joined Explore Worldwide as Regional Director in January 2024, tasked with helping the company capture market share in North America.

With a four-decade history of providing guided small group walking, trekking and cycling trips around the world, Explore is well-positioned to capitalize on the [booming small group travel segment](#). Guests enjoy an average group size of just 11 (maximum 16), and can choose from various travel styles, including cultural, active, wildlife trips, and the newly added “Upgraded” experiences with premium accommodations.

So far, the growth strategy has paid off. Explore saw a 52% increase in U.S. and Canada advisor revenue in 2024 compared to 2023. In total, approximately 20% of business is coming from the trade in North America.

“Return of international travel is truly back as Explore saw growth across all regions, with a particular interest in Asia and Europe, which saw 105% growth and 62% growth in 2024 respectively,” said Rockett.

How Explore Worldwide Is Supporting The North American Trade

Rockett told TMR that Explore Worldwide understands the importance of strengthening relationships with the trade in order to continue expanding into the North American market.

“We recognise the opportunity, so we’re continuing to invest in the travel advisor side of our business,” said Rockett.

One such investment is the hiring of By Iris, a travel trade representation company, to assist in developing support and training for travel advisors.

Rockett also told TMR that the company is actively recruiting a BDM for Canada, and is developing tech initiatives to better support the North American trade. Although it’s too early to share details, Rockett said she’s excited to bring the new initiatives into the market.

“Travel advisors are hugely important to us at Explore, particularly in Canada,” she added. “We really are mindful of the importance of this channel and making sure that we’re really putting that into our strategy and in our investment.”

In the meantime, travel advisors are encouraged to look at the company’s website for information, and reach out directly to Explore Worldwide for any questions.

“We really do want to make that as easy as possible for advisors,” said Rockett. “It’s easy for us to set up new agents in the booking system ... If travel advisors have clients that are interested in this style of travel, give us a call. We have an expert team that loves to talk travel.”

The [TMR 2024 land tour outlook](#) found that 85% of travel advisors prefer FAM trips as a training format. This isn’t all that surprising—it’s easier to sell a product if you’ve experienced it firsthand.

Explore Worldwide understands this, and encourages travel advisors to try our their product.

“We want to get [new agents] out experiencing our trips. We offer a 50% discount for a travel advisor to travel with us once they’ve made one booking.”

The tour operator also periodically runs incentive programs for advisors, offering free trips for reaching reservation milestones.

“I’m very excited to get travel advisors out and experiencing the product because I think it is the best way to understand exactly what we do,” she said.



Photo: Active England

Active England Also Has Eyes On The U.S.

Explore Worldwide isn't the only tour operator keeping an eye on the potential in the U.S. and Canada.

Active England Tours, a luxury British operator specializing in adventure travel, recently announced that it too would be expanding its presence in North America.

"The majority of our clients already come from the U.S., and with increasing demand for experiential and luxury adventure travel, now is the perfect time to expand further into the U.S. travel advisor market," explained Emma Radford, the travel trade manager for Active England.

Like Explore Worldwide, Active England is pursuing initiatives to better support the trade on this side of the pond—including expanding their business hours to reduce time lost between time zones and looking at opportunities to participate in U.S. trade shows.

Radford told TMR that the tour operator has conducted "extensive" market outreach and research to better understand what support U.S. travel agencies need from tour operators. In response, Active England is developing sales tools (marketing materials, detailed itineraries, etc.) and training to help travel advisors sell its product.

The tour operator is even implementing a partnership program with U.S.-based travel agencies to co-develop exclusive tours tailored to American travelers.

"This initiative aims to leverage local market insights, enhance brand visibility, and create unique experiences that resonate with the U.S. clientele—whether that be high-end active experiences, silver screen/literary tours, or multi-generational trips for the whole family," said Radford.

"With demand at an all-time high and an increasing appetite for active travel, we are seizing this opportunity to expand, ensuring that U.S. travel advisors have access to unique, high-quality itineraries that meet their clients' evolving needs."

<https://www.travelmarketreport.com/packaged-travel/articles/uk-land-tour-operator-expanding-us-canada-explore-worldwide-active-england>