

US Health Advisors

I met with a representative from US Health Advisors. They're pretty anti-Affordable Care Act and base their marketing on that. That, however, is beside the point.

The guy I met with said "they got into business because of Obamacare"; that people were being taken for a ride from insurance companies for years and that "USHealth Advisors (USHA hereon out) saw where things were headed and innovated new products to help protect people."

He ranted about how ACA compliant plans pay for abortions (factually incorrect), can't deny insurance for preexisting conditions, and that people would still be paying \$10,000+ for their medical coverage.

As has already been covered in this thread, USHA offers indemnity benefits rather than true insurance. For the uninitiated, that means they will pay out a set amount per procedure, sickness, or injury. They offer discounts within their network of doctors and providers with less of a discount outside their network, just like a standard **PPO**.

The trick is that once you get their price sheet and see \$10/generic drug and other prices laid out, you start thinking that is what you'll owe toward those services. It's actually what they'll pay out for those services. He had a lot of receipts where people went to the hospital and ended up getting money back after USHA paid their bills and sent them the difference (if the bills come out to less than what the indemnity payout is, you get that difference). These bills, though, were all from 2011. I think we know how much things have changed since then.

He couldn't tell me how often they adjust for inflation or

other cost changes with the state offices, where they file what they'll pay out to customers.

There are a number of things that aren't covered:

Birth control – ever

Preexisting conditions for the first 12 months

Wellness/preventative care visits for the first 6 months

Prescriptions aren't covered, you just get \$10 back if you sign up for that option.

There are a ton of other things they won't cover, but it's not listed in their online brochure.

In order to get that brochure, you have to sign up and become a member of their "association" (seriously).

There is no out of pocket maximum for a consumer. Consumers will still pay the ACA penalty, but the agent I spoke with suggested lying to the IRS about your insurance status at the end of the year. Yes, he suggested fraud. When I pointed out what he just told me, he said "Of course I would never suggest that!". Right.

They say that if you sign up for the lowest cost and lowest benefit plan and something happens, within 90 days after that something happening, you can upgrade to a higher level plan and have slightly more coverage. That would raise the maximum of what they'll pay out for you that year from \$100,000 to \$250,000.

The amounts they pay out for cancer treatments, accident recovery, and AD&D are considerably less in volume and considerably more restrictive than what Aflac, Colonial, or even Unum provide.

To top it off, when I asked him what their AM Best rating was, he said they didn't have one. They do: it's B-. This makes him not just misinformed, but a liar.

Honestly, people would be better off with a bronze level ACA plan, getting a CI rider on their life, and a midrange Aflac cancer and accident policy if they wanted all the bells and whistles of these plans.

World Ventures: in depth

I caught a lot of flak from my last blog post among my networking groups. There are a bunch of World Ventures representatives in almost every group that I meet with. Heck, they're so saturated that, often times, there are upwards of three representatives at a time.

My error in my last blog post was lumping them together with a bunch of other MLMs. It was incorrect of me to do so. They are far larger and more comprehensive company than any of the other ones I mentioned.

I've sat down with no less than four World Ventures reps in many, many situations and have compiled an in depth review of their company, their products, and whom they are a good fit for and in what situations.

Dreamtrips

At the heart of World Ventures' business model is their dream trips. These are trips offered at often significant discounts to World Ventures members and representatives.

The allure of these trips is a curated experience in stunning destinations with purportedly excellent accommodations. I say "purportedly" because I will not sign up to check it out myself, the reason why will be spelled out later.

These trips are things like a \$69 per person five day cruise, a \$570 per person 3 night stay in an all inclusive resort, or other various offerings. They say that there are hundreds offered at any time, ranging in price from \$70 per person to over \$700 per person for all sorts of events. Without signing up, though, one is unable to see the actual offerings. I'll be basing my illustrations on a seven day, six night Caribbean cruise with Holland America.

Airfare is not included in Dreamtrips prices. Dreamtrips are also separate from any other travel booked through a representative, which will be touched on shortly.

Points

When one signs up with World Ventures, one pays \$200 and gets 200 "points" to use towards the purchase of a Dreamtrip. One also pays an additional \$55/month and receives the 660 points on their year anniversary. The catch is that not all Dreamtrips are able to have points applied and, when they are, only a limited amount of points are applicable towards that trip.

If this point system reminds you of airline vouchers, that's because it's extremely similar. Airlines are infamous for giving vouchers as compensation for delayed, canceled, or otherwise messed up flights. These vouchers are good only for the airline awarding them, and cost extra money to be used.

Perks

When one signs up for World Ventures as a rep, one gets a website that allows their friends to book airfare and trips through them. They then receive a small commission, paid in "Rovia bucks", from each sale. These Rovia Bucks can be applied to trips the representative takes, whether for airfare, Dreamtrips, car rentals, non-dream trips, or anything

else.

In order to earn Rovia bucks, the rep has to have their friends use their own personal site rather than any other major indexed flight site out there. They have to be diligent about reminding their friends, clients, and family. They have to be the first point of contact rather than Google or any other search engine, as it's all but guaranteed that they won't show up in search results.

Another perk is that the representative or member can earn Rovia bucks from online shopping. This kickback ranges from 0.5% to 15% depending on what's purchased and from which site, but usually stays around 2-7%. These are on major stores, such as Best Buy.

Refunds

World Ventures guarantees you the lowest price with their Dreamtrips. They promise that if you find a lower price deal for the same dates with the same accommodations and the exact same features within, depending on who you talk to, 1-7 days, they'll give you the trip and refund 150% of the price you paid.

They also promise that if you book a flight through them and the price drops, they'll refund you the difference. They don't offer the stipulations for that unless you ask, but I'll give them to you in the next section.

Seems great so far, though, right? Wait for it.

The rub

By now, you are probably thinking "Woah, Eddie, this is too good of a thing to pass up...you must be insane."

Well, let's piece a few things together, things often

overlooked.

First off, the Dreamtrips are World Ventures people only. This means you have a lot of company people travelling with you. They're going to be on your plane, in your hotel, on your beach, in your pool, in your bar, in your restaurants, etc. If you are going to relax with the family, you will most likely have to travel elsewhere for quiet and solitude.

Also, if I know MLMs, and I do know MLMs, your upline will pressure you to network and talk with other representatives there. You're supposed to take pictures with their now-iconic "You should be here" signs, which really is just to make your friends on Facebook jealous and sign up with you. That makes your trip a business write off.

I like to travel to get away with my wife. If we want to party with people, there are no shortage of options with people who we actually like, rather than cohorts from a company we represent.

Second off, trips that aren't Dreamtrips aren't covered by points. This means that if you want to take an Eastern Caribbean cruise with a certain line on a certain date, if it's not offered as a Dreamtrip, you either have to change what you want or pay for it separately.

Even if that cruise is offered, the best offer I saw was for \$679/person for a 7 day trip on Holland America with up to 200 points being applicable towards the cruise. That is 200 points total applicable, not per person. You can easily get that same cruise a week later for \$499/person (\$80 less than what it would be per person *with* points reducing the price).

Thirdly, the airfare rate guarantee only refunds you whatever is left over after rebooking fees. Those very fees which often are higher than \$150. This means your airfare, if you do any sort of due diligence with price hunting, will hardly ever be refunded.

If you decide to represent and sell them, all the costs of training are on you. There are, indeed, costs. World Ventures is well known for requiring many conferences (which you pay to attend and travel to), videos, and other expenses.

There are advantages to selling World Ventures, however. Once you recruit four people, you pay no more fees for your monthly membership (they'll be pulling in over \$220/month from the people you recruited and have collected at least \$800 in initial fees from them, also, remember how you are extremely likely to have leftover points at the end of the year – they profit heavily off of you and the people you would recruit).

They also claim that you can earn money off the people recruited by the people you recruit. This only happens, though, once you have about 30 people working under you.

Good luck figuring out how they count those recruits and how you will actually earn their compensation. Their hierarchy is infamously confounding. Their payout structure is superbly obfuscated. When they describe it in a presentation it sounds simple, but to look at the actual breakdown is a wholly different experience.

This product is likely to only be a good deal for someone who is at the top of a decently sized distribution chain. Any savings realized on a Dreamtrip will likely be lost in unredeemed points and airfare.

There are plenty of World Ventures reps who will tell me that I'm dead wrong, and they'll undoubtedly cite a \$69 5 day cruise.

That cruise still costs airfare, and doesn't let you apply any points towards it. It's still a week off work (which costs money), and the chances of successfully booking this cruise after it's announced are slim to none. Yes, they announce the cruises to the entire team, and they sell out within an hour or two. Plus, it's a \$69 cruise...if you want the savings,

you're tied into the date, port, cruise line, and itinerary.

If that cruise is the only trip you take, you're paying a total of \$69+\$200+\$660. That comes out to \$929/person (not including airfare) for a cruise which you could otherwise have for \$499 in most cases. For many people, that *will* be the only trip you take that year.

I would love to address how much the average World Ventures representative makes, but they don't have any easily accessible documents detailing that. What I can tell you is that less than 30% make a profit, and likely less than 5% make more than \$,1000/year. Part of this is on par with any MLM structure, but a lot of it is due to the actual company.

Alternatives

So, what is a more financially logical way to do travel?

Obviously, there are sites like cheapoair.com. There are economy airlines that aren't accessible by third party searches, like Southwest Airlines.

There are great deals to be had just by calling the hotel or cruise that you want. LivingSocial and Groupon have plenty of travel deals, and those often give you a six month window to make your trip, rather than a set date. In addition, you get to travel in peace and quiet or with as many friends as can join you on that trip.

What about those other perks, like points for shopping? Well, why pay \$660/year for the ability to earn points to travel when you could get a credit card with a \$150 annual fee for even more points, points which can be used for things both travel and non-travel related? Heck, some debit cards offer this and for people with decent to good credit, they may qualify for these cards without an annual fee.

Finally, for almost anyone in their 20's, they could start a

decent retirement fund for \$55/month. For someone in their 30's, they could work their way out of debt and, using the tools I listed above, still travel affordably. For someone in their 40's and up, the same story applies.

I know that many people with World Ventures will lambast me as someone who "doesn't get it", but the problem is that I do get it. That's fine. I hope you learned something, though, and I hope you enjoyed this post.