

Sabre Names Former CWT Head Ekert President

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Global distribution system operator Sabre Corp. has named as president Kurt Ekert, the former president and CEO of travel management company CWT, effective Jan. 3, the company announced Wednesday. Sean Menke will continue as Sabre's CEO, a role that will be separate from the role of president.

"We are thrilled to have Kurt join Sabre as president during this pivotal phase in our transformation journey," Menke said in a statement. "He brings extensive global operating leadership and a deep understanding of the travel technology ecosystem."

Ekert will oversee all aspects of the company's business and technology operations. He will report to Menke, whose focus will be on accelerating the execution of the company's strategic plans, according to Sabre.

Menke added that Sabre was focused on creating a new marketplace for personalized travel, and that Ekert's experience, "especially in corporate travel management and global distribution is a critical step toward achieving that goal."

Ekert will receive an annual salary of \$750,000, with a target bonus set at 125 percent of his base salary, and will receive an initial equity grant valued at \$1 million consisting of restricted stock units, according to a company filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Most recently Ekert served as president and CEO of CWT from 2016 until May 1, 2021, then remained as a senior advisor to the company. "Sabre has an agreement with CWT pursuant to which Sabre provides CWT with access to its GDS and pays incentive fees to CWT, and CWT purchases certain products from Sabre," according to the SEC document. Prior to joining CWT, Ekert served as EVP and chief commercial officer of rival GDS operator Travelport from 2010 to 2015.

In addition, Sabre announced that Dave Shirk will step down as EVP and president of Sabre Travel Solutions as of Jan. 1, 2022, and will serve as a senior advisor to Menke and Ekert through 2022.

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