Abstract

Sparks, B.A. & Smith, J.G. (2010). The DeHaan Family and RCI: the Development of the Timeshare Industry. Book chapter in Dick Butler and Ros Russell (Eds) *Giants of Tourism*. CABI, pp 60-75.

Resort Condominiums International (RCI), originally founded by Jon and Christel DeHaan, is currently (2009) a subsidiary of the publicly listed company Wyndham Worldwide Corporation, offering exchange vacations to millions of members. It is part of an important component of the tourism market called *timeshare* or *vacation ownership*. This chapter will explore how the idea of exchange was made into a multi-million dollar business that transformed one of the accommodation sectors of tourism. It starts with a focus on the couple (DeHaans) considered the founders of commercial exchange, reviews the history of the founding company (RCI), discusses the evolution of the product, evaluates the challenges confronting the industry today, and extracts some of the key lessons learned over the past 30-40 years. Throughout the chapter, insights from the founders, as well as those currently employed in timeshare, provide further views on the industry and the DeHaans' contributions to tourism.