

Duff on Hospitality Law

OTA & Travel Distribution Update - Seattle home to yet another travel industry startup; Chase strikes OTA travel partnership

By Greg Duff on 8.24.18 | Posted in OTA Update

August has been a slow month in the distribution world as this week's Update reflects.

Seattle Is Home to Yet Another Travel Industry Startup

("KuaiBangXing Links Chinese Travelers With Activities: Travel Startup Funding This Week," August 17, 2018)

There must be something in our Seattle water...Seattle-based activities booking platform, KuaiBankXing, announced last week that it had completed its \$1 million angel round of funding. The 3-year old startup assembles itineraries (using either existing programs or directly assembling its own combination of tours and activities) and marries those itineraries with Mandarin speaking escorts. KuaiBankXing not only then promotes and sells these itineraries to inbound Chinese travelers (via OTAs like Ctrip and Fliggy), but also works with independent tour and activity providers to better promote and facilitate transactions with inbound Chinese travelers.

Chase Strikes OTA Travel Partnership

("Chase teams with Expedia to beef up travel card perks," Consumer Affairs News and Alerts, August 14, 2018)

Holders of Chase Ultimate Rewards travel cards will soon be able to use those cards (and accumulated loyalty benefits) to book the wide range of travel products available through Expedia. Hoteliers seeking to shift travelers' booking practices away from OTAs (or other third-party channels) will now have one more "channel" to consider.