

Duff on Hospitality Law

Online Travel Update: Rumors Around a Possible Sabre Sale Persist

By Greg Duff on 10.7.22 | Posted in Online Travel Update

This week's Update covers a variety of topics, including persistent rumors regarding a possible Sabre sale and proposed new federal regulations governing airline fee disclosures that may one day serve as a foundation for similar regulations for hotels. Enjoy.

Rumors Around a Possible Sabre Sale Persist

("Sabre Quietly Looks to Shed Hotel Software Unit," September 28, 2022 via Skift)
(subscription may be required)

Last week we featured a story detailing discussions from earlier this year regarding a possible sale by Sabre of its hotel software business. According to Skift, the source of last week's story, prospects of such a sale has largely diminished. This past week, Skift, doubled down on the previously reported Sabre rumors, noting that six industry professionals had anonymously shared rumors of the possible Sabre sale with Skift since June.

Google and Agoda Re-Considering and Launching Fintech Products

("Airbnb, Google and Agoda Hint at Upcoming Search and Fintech Features," September 28, 2022 via Skift) *(subscription may be required)*

At Skift's annual Skift Global Forum recently held in New York, Google announced that it was contemplating the return of its previous airline price guarantee. The guarantee, which debuted in 2019, was abandoned by Google early in the pandemic. Agoda made similar news this past week with its announcement that it planned to launch both price freeze and cancellation insurance products. Whether Agoda will leverage its sister company's (Booking.com) new financial platform to provide these new products or rely on an established outsider (Hopper) isn't yet clear.

President Biden Endorses Draft DOT Regulations Regarding Airline Fees

("President Biden Calls for Airlines to Reveal All Fees Upfront," September 26, 2022 via Skift)
(subscription may be required)

President Joe Biden endorsed the Department of Transportation's (DOT's) recently released draft rules regarding mandatory disclosure of all airline fees (e.g., cancellation fees, baggage fees, change fees and adjacent seat fees). The proposed rules govern flights to, within and from the United States and apply not only to airlines, but also to all third-party agents (including, OTAs) that process and sell their tickets. Expect to hear more about these rules once the current 60-day public notice period ends.

Other News:

Expedia Group Launches New Startup Accelerator

September 28, 2022 via Phocus Wire

Called Open World Accelerator, the initiative provides startups and small- and medium-size businesses access to Expedia Group's technology and resources.

Priceline Starts Selling Activities

September 28, 2022 via Travel Weekly

Priceline has launched Priceline Experiences, giving customers the ability to book more than 80,000 activities and experiences.