

Duff on Hospitality Law

## **Online Travel Update: Assessing Instant Booking Apps for Event Management, Fintech Promises, and Texas Resort Fees Settlements**

By Greg Duff on 5.22.23 | Posted in Online Travel Update

As evidenced by our list of stories, it was a relatively quiet week in online travel. The Texas Attorney General's Office and its pursuit of hotel companies over their resort fee practices garnered most of the industry's headlines (exactly as the Texas AG wanted). Some highlights from this week:

- **Following Its Settlement with Marriott, Texas AG Targets Hyatt.** With a settlement in hand with Marriott, the Texas Attorney General is now targeting other national hotel brands and operators with claims that their rate and resort fee practices violate Texas consumer protection laws. In announcing the settlement, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton stated, "Marriott is now taking proactive steps to promote price transparency. In contrast, other major hotel chains have defended their deceptive practices, and they will be facing the full force of the law for their actions." Apparently, Hyatt is next on the Texas AG's list as the AG's office filed suit on Monday against Hyatt.
- **Fact or Fiction: Instant Booking for Meetings and Events.** For some time now, we've been working with clients to move their sales and contracting practices for small meetings and events to online platforms (both proprietary and third party) with the promise that small meetings and events can be booked instantly. But do these tools really work? Is that what meeting planners and groups really want? Or do the many nuances of a successful meeting or event (as compared to a rooms only leisure booking) make them too difficult to book entirely online? This past week, *Skift*, offered its perspective on these instant booking platforms.

For those of you attending the upcoming week of events in Toronto (HSMAI's [Commercial Strategy Week](#)), I would enjoy connecting. I'll be presenting on Monday at the Executive Roundtables and facilitating that afternoon the discussion at the Chief Distribution Officer roundtable. I hope to see you there!

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### **Instant Booking Apps — Help or Hinderance?**

*May 18, 2023 via Skift*

While big-brand hotels and specialized apps tout the advantages of instant booking, the cons may outweigh the pros when it comes to professional event management. Big brand hotels are invested when it comes to instant booking.

### **The Fintech Platform That Promises Happy Campers**

*May 18, 2023 via Skift*

The rain insurance provider could discover plenty of partners on the other side of the Atlantic as more brands and consumers warm to clever insurance add-ons. California-based climate risk technology company Sensible Weather is expanding out of the U.S. into Europe following a new partnership.

### **Texas settles with Marriott, sues Hyatt over "resort fees"**

*May 16, 2023 via Reuters*

The State of Texas and Marriott International on Tuesday entered a voluntary agreement to prominently display all "resort fees" and to increase price transparency in its advertisements and booking process.