

Duff on Hospitality Law

## Online Travel Update: A Growing Influence of Fintech Products and Their Suppliers

By Greg Duff on 6.20.23 | Posted in Online Travel Update

This week's Update features a wide variety of stories, including two on the growing influence of fintech products and their suppliers:

- **Google and TikTok Out as Travel Planning Tools?** A recent survey of U.S. travelers by travel publisher Matador Network (and owner of AI powered travel assistant, GeekGuide) revealed that more than a third of travelers intended to use AI to research or plan travel.
- **Buy Now, Pay Later Becomes Save Now, Buy Later.** Online travel agent, CheapOAir, has launched new fintech tools that allow travelers to save for future travel purchases on the online platform (a/k/a layaway). Users of the new tool can receive cash incentives of up to 6%. Fintech company, Accrue Savings, powers the program, and amounts deposited will be insured through Blue Ridge Bank.
- **Additional Details Emerge Re Regulators Concerns Over Booking Holdings' Planned Purchase of ETraveli.** Since late 2021, we've been covering Booking Holdings' planned purchase of European online platform ETraveli. EU regulators expressed concern late last week about the effect of the planned purchase, specifically with regard to hotels as Booking's growing market position among competing online platforms would lead to higher costs for hotels and ultimately consumers.

Have a great week everyone. We will be offline next week as I head out to Toronto for HSMAl's week of events. I hope to see many of you there.

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**Bye TikTok, Hello AI. Easier payments. Qatar's try-before-fly.**

*June 15, 2023 via WIT*

A survey of US travelers has found more than one third — 36% — said they are likely to use AI to research or plan travel within the next 12 months. The survey was conducted by travel

publisher Matador Network, which recently launched the personal AI travel assistant GuideGeek.

### **CheapOair Offers Savings Accounts for Trips as an Alternative to Going Into Debt**

*June 13, 2023 via Skift Travel News*

Save Now, Buy Later may contribute more to traveler well-being than having to worry about the bills later from a trip that you really couldn't afford. Anyway, it's a novel way in travel to market vacations.

### **What Causes Sleepless Nights for Hotel Execs? The Rise of Fintech**

*June 12, 2023 via Skift Travel News*

The chief financial officers at Marriott and Accor are closely watching the entry of banks, financial technology (fintech) firms, and tech giants into the selling and servicing of travel. As they should.

### **Booking Holdings' Acquisition of Etraveli Now Subject to Full-Scale EU Antitrust Probe**

*June 9, 2023 via Skift Travel News*

It's hard to see how Booking's pending acquisition of flight-oriented Etraveli Group would materially hurt the European hotel industry. After all, [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com) is already Etraveli's partner for hotels. The European Union's antitrust regulators on Friday warned that Booking Holdings' planned acquisition of Sweden-based rival ETraveli may strengthen...

### **The Case for Expedia Narrowing the Profit Gap With Booking Holdings**

*June 9, 2023 via Skift Travel News*

In some ways, Expedia Group's potential narrowing of the take rate gap with Booking Holdings has a lot to do with Booking's strategic decisions — pushing more into the U.S. and expanding its lower-margin flights business.