

Duff on Hospitality Law

Online Travel Update: Airlines' Tactics Under Scrutiny, Booking.com's Challenges, and Citi-Navan's New Partnership

By Greg Duff on 10.31.23 | Posted in Online Travel Update

This week's Update features updates on several recently featured stories, including Booking.com's ongoing payment and fraud challenges and new legislative efforts to limit junk fees.

- **OTAs Raise Issues with Airlines' Aggressive Tactics.** Online travel agents, On the Beach and UK Holidaymakers, have raised objections with the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) over the aggressive tactics of Ryanair (and other discount airlines) to push travelers to book direct. According to the paper presented to the CMA and UK government, discount airlines are harming consumer choice by blocking sales of certain products (seat-only offerings), charging excessive OTA fees and delaying refunds. The OTAs are asking the UK competition authority to mandate that airlines provide with fair access to products and services and create a code of conduct for airlines and their OTA partners. Really?
- **Citi and Navan Announce Partnership.** Further to my comment in last week's Update about the explosion of interest in small and medium businesses (SMB), Citi and Navan announced this past week a new partnership under which the parties will offer a travel and expense solution for Citi's Commercial Bank cardholders. For those companies that provide Citi cards to their employees, the new solution will provide services that rival competitors SAP Concur and Egencia. With the deal, Citi will be well positioned to grow its commercial card member base by offering travel and expense services.

For those of that attended the recent Georgetown hospitality law event, it was great seeing so many of you in person. Have a great week everyone.

Booking.com Executive on Addressing Payment Failures and Return of the Chinese Traveler

October 25, 2023 via Skift Travel News

The online travel scene in Asia characterized by fierce competition and high stakes. Booking.com knows that it needs to sort the payment issue and make sure any lingering concerns are put to rest if it wants to stay ahead in the game in the region. Peden Doma Bhutia ...

Ryanair, others must be probed over 'aggressive' tactics, online travel operator says

October 25, 2023 via foster.com

Ryanair and other low-cost airlines should be reviewed by the UK Competition and Markets Authority over "increasingly aggressive tactics" to push consumer sales direct from carriers, an online travel operator has said in a paper addressed to regulators and the UK government.

Google Vacation Rentals Adds Price Comparisons 4 Years After Debut

October 24, 2023 via Skift Travel News

Google likely will introduce advertising to these listings eventually, but it can afford to take its time. Dennis Schaal Share Four years after Google debuted a vacation rental feature in Google Travel, it is starting to show booking links and nightly rates from multiple companies for each listing ...

Marriott-Rappi partnership goes live, signals new opportunities for customer acquisition

October 24, 2023 via Phocus Wire

The partnership is launching in Mexico with plans to expand to Colombia in November and early next year to the other Latin America countries where Rappi operates.

Booking.com customers targeted by scam 'confirmation' emails

October 23, 2023 via The Guardian UK

Travellers are getting seemingly convincing messages asking them to provide bank card details and threatening their reservation will be cancelled Travellers using the popular hotel website Booking.com are being warned not to fall for scam emails asking them to confirm their hotel payment, after a hack of Booking.com's email system. ...

Citi and Navan Enter Into Travel and Expense Partnership

October 19, 2023 via Skift Travel News

This is a big win for Navan, giving it an inside track to a lot of Citi's corporate accounts. Dennis Schaal Share Citi and Navan will soon be marketing a co-branded travel and expense solution for Citi Commercial Bank cardholders. The tools, powered by Navan, initially will be ...

Pennsylvania "junk fees" bill aims for ticket price transparency

October 18, 2023 via ABC 27 Pennsylvania

(WHTM)-- Concerts and sporting events are entertaining but buying tickets to them is not always as great. Especially when huge fees are added at the very end of an online transaction.

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"People have been playing junk fees like this for years," State Rep. Nick Pisciotano (D-Allegheny) said.