

Duff on Hospitality Law

OTA & Travel Distribution Update: South Korean competition authority's antitrust enforcement action against major OTAs; U.K.'s Competition and Markets Authority reinforces focus on consumer practices of intermediary platforms

By Greg Duff on 12.20.19 | Posted in OTA Update

South Korean Competition Authority Takes a Hard Look at Parity

("Comment: Use by online-travel agencies of MFN clauses under study by South Korean antitrust watchdog," MLex Insight on Dec 5, 2019)

South Korea's Fair Trade Commission (KFTC) is rumored to be considering possible antitrust enforcement action against the distributors [Booking.com](#) and Agoda over their use of contract rate parity provisions. An investigation of the distributors' practices is currently under way, and the results of the investigation are expected to be released later this month. Also, under consideration are the market implications of broad versus narrow parity requirements. Stay tuned for further updates.

U.K.'s Competition and Markets Authority Back in the News

("Intermediary platforms' sales practices need CMA consumer-law focus, official says," MLex Insight on Dec 13, 2019)

Last week, the U.K.'s Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA) Director of Consumer Law and International Policy, Jason Freeman, made news again with comments highlighting the CMA's continued focus and prioritization on intermediary platforms' consumer practices, including hotel booking platforms. Areas of particular concern noted by the Director include price transparency and pressure selling techniques, both of which may soon become the subject of greater CMA enforcement efforts, including fines, interim measures and director disqualification.

Other news:

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The Way Forward for Expedia May Include Selling Off Businesses

Skift Travel News on Dec 12, 2019

The strategy and vision for the next stage in Expedia Group's life should include sharp departures from the status quo, but rest assured that the company line for the time being will be stability to keep the peace.