

Duff on Hospitality Law

Online Travel Update: Airbnb takes steps to accommodate hotel listings; Hopper is ranked the most downloaded travel app in the first half of 2021

By Greg Duff on 10.8.21 | Posted in Online Travel Update

Fall has definitely arrived in the Pacific Northwest. It was a relatively quiet week in the online travel world. This week's Update features a story on one of the most widely used Global Distribution Systems – Amadeus – as the company announces its second (unnamed) major customer for its new reservation platform. Enjoy.

Airbnb Takes Steps to Accommodate Hotel Listings

(“Airbnb revives hotel strategy, moves closer to rival OTA model,” September 29, 2021 via Phocus Wire)

While the pandemic may have led Airbnb to pause its hotel distribution aspirations, it appears that the pause may have only been temporary. Airbnb is reportedly testing a new API that allows suppliers to provide and display multiple rate plans (similar to many of Airbnb's OTA competitors). According to two of Airbnb's beta partners – RoomCloud (an Italian channel manager and booking engine) and [Cloudbeds](#) (an US cloud-based PMS provider), the changes are designed to appeal to hoteliers. Airbnb is also apparently re-starting efforts with its mobile booking platform, HotelTonight, as it seeks to fill multiple open positions within the company, including market managers. Airbnb has refused to provide comment on either effort.

The Most Downloaded Travel App in the First Half of 2021? Hopper

(“Top Travel Booking Apps: Look Who's Winning the U.S. Now,” September 28, 2021 via Skift Travel News) (subscription may be required)

Those of you who have read my Update for the past year or two know all about Hopper. While Hopper may have started out as just another mobile booking application, it is now successfully leveraging its many fintech tools to appeal to post-pandemic travelers seeking maximum flexibility in their travel plans (as evidenced by the 1.3 million U.S. consumer downloads of the app that occurred in July alone). As noted in last week's Update, Hopper CEO, Frederic Lalonde, isn't satisfied just being the most downloaded app, he hopes to create the “West's first travel superapp.” For those of you wondering, with the exception of Tripadvisor, Expedia and/or Booking Holdings owned applications dominated the remainder of the list of the top ten most downloaded apps.

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Other news:

Amadeus Signs Another Hotel Giant to Its Enterprise Software Platform

September 28, 2021 via Skift (subscription may be required)

On Tuesday, Amadeus revealed it had signed on an as-yet-unnamed hotel company to use its hospitality software platform.

Pandemic Twist Emerges on Bookings for Hotels in Tussle With Online Resellers

September 27, 2021 via Skift (subscription may be required)

Several hotel groups have tried to lower costs for roughly a decade by driving more consumers to book directly. During the pandemic recovery, hoteliers have by and large continued to avoid overusing aggregators such as Expedia and Booking.com for much of their online sales.