

Duff on Hospitality Law

Online Travel Update: Intermediaries Regain Ground in Latest Hotel Booking Trends Report

By Greg Duff on 2.17.23 | Posted in Online Travel Update

Our weekly Online Travel Update for the week ending February 17, 2023, is below. This week's Update features a number of stories coming out of last week's quarterly earnings releases by several of the largest online travel platforms. We've also attached transcripts from the recent earnings calls for both [TripAdvisor](#) and [Airbnb](#). Enjoy.

- **Intermediaries Regain Ground in Latest Hotel Booking Trends Report.** SiteMinder has released its latest annual [Hotel Booking Trends](#) report detailing 2022 online booking trends. Highlights from the latest report include:
 - OTAs were ranked in the top two positions in 79% of SiteMinder's Top Twelve Lists (versus 37% in 2021)
 - Booking.com was the most popular booking channel across SiteMinder's Lists (Expedia Group websites were second)
 - Direct bookings were down against 2021 numbers in 42% of the markets surveyed (though on par with 2019 numbers)
 - GDS bookings were up in 47% of the markets surveyed as corporate travel began its rebound
 - Airbnb continued to gain strength and made 89% of the Lists (compared to 28% in 2019)

- **Airbnb's Chesky Rejects Need for Traditional Loyalty Program and Seeks to Expand Traditional Hotel Inventory.** During last week's earnings call, Airbnb Brian Chesky rejected the need for Airbnb to offer guests a traditional points-based program like its distribution competitors. According to Chesky, "the best loyalty program is building a product people love so much that they want to come back. We don't have to pay them to come back." Although Chesky may not be interested in emulating his competitors' loyalty program offerings, he is interested in adding more of their traditional product types, specifically hotels. Adding more traditional hotel inventory, Chesky noted, would allow

Online Travel Update: Intermediaries Regain Ground in Latest Hotel Booking Trends Report

Airbnb to better position itself as a traditional booking platform. Chesky's apparent re-embrace of traditional hotels represents a thawing of Airbnb's previous pandemic-induced "freeze" on traditional hotels. Could we soon see corporate wide direct distribution agreements between hoteliers and Airbnb?

- **Marriott Increasing Digital Investment in 2023.** Yes, hoteliers too can sometimes be featured in our weekly Update . . . In its recent earnings call, Marriott shared that product innovation, particularly through Marriott's Bonvoy mobile application and other digital products, remains a priority for Marriott entering 2023. According to Marriott CFO, Leeny Oberg, the newly planned investments will "transform" users' experience on Marriott's mobile application – for both Bonvoy members and the Marriott employees who serve them. Marriott's investment in its digital channels appears to be producing positive results as Marriott mobile app usage grew by 32%, digital room nights grew by 27% and digital revenue grew by 41% (year over year) this past year.

Tripadvisor CEO outlines new three-prong strategy

February 17, 2023 via phocuswire.com

The future direction of Tripadvisor under new CEO Matt Goldberg is coming into view. In a call with financial analysts to discuss the company's fourth quarter and full year 2022 financial results, Goldberg shared what he describes as a three-part strategy "founded in deeper traveler engagement enabled by better products ...

Online travel agencies gain hotel booking ground in 2022

February 17, 2023 via phocuswire.com

Online travel agencies and other intermediaries, such as tour operators and destination management companies, regained ground in 2022, according to a report. SiteMinder has crunched data from more than 100 million reservations last year to reveal [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com) as the most popular booking channel across its Top 12 lists of highest ...

Marriott CEO unfazed by Biden's fight against resort fees

February 15, 2023 via travelweekly.com

The Biden administration's intense scrutiny of resort fees isn't fazing Marriott International CEO Anthony Capuano. During Marriott's Q4 earnings call on Tuesday, Capuano indicated that less than 300 of the company's hotels charge resort fees or similar fees. There are some 8,300 hotels in the Marriott system.

Airbnb Doesn't Foresee Loyalty War With Expedia

February 15, 2023 via [CoStar](https://www.co-star.com)

Best Loyalty Program Is 'Building a Product People Love,' CEO Chesky Says Just days after Expedia Group touted record growth of its loyalty program and said it's a long-term driver of retaining high-value guests, Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky said that type of points-based program isn't in the cards for his ...

Online Travel Update: Intermediaries Regain Ground in Latest Hotel Booking Trends Report

Marriott boosting app and wider digital investment in 2023

February 15, 2023 via phocuswire.com

Marriott International anticipates higher than typical investment in customer-facing technology in 2023. During its fourth quarter earnings call, Anthony Capuano, the company's CEO, says “product innovation and engagement with our members remain key focus areas, especially through investments in our Marriott Bonvoy app and other digital products.”

Sabre says cloud migration will drive savings, improve customer service

February 15, 2023 via phocuswire.com

Sabre is making progress on its migration to the cloud, a journey that the travel tech company embarked on in 2017. The company says it migrated approximately 15,000 servers to Google Cloud Platform in 2022.

Airbnb's Brian Chesky: Earnings point to “exciting year” for travel

February 14, 2023 via phocuswire.com

Lingering effects of COVID-19. Recessionary fears. A war in Ukraine. If 2022 didn't look promising for the travel industry, 2023 doesn't look much better. So why was Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky chattering Tuesday like a schoolboy with a Valentine from every kid the class?