

Duff on Hospitality Law

Online Travel Update: Expedia Integrates ChatGPT, EU Commission's 2022 Policy Initiatives, Lufthansa's Cloopio, and Kayak's Change in Direction

By Greg Duff on 4.10.23 | Posted in Online Travel Update

This week's Update features the obligatory Expedia / ChatGPT story as Expedia garnered most of this past week's industry headlines with its announced integration of ChatGPT into its iOS application. For those of you following the evolving competition landscape in the EU, you might find our lead story regarding the EU Commission's recent release of its 2022 overview of some interest. For those of you interested, links to the EU Commission's report and accompanying staff working document (detailing, among other things, ongoing efforts in the travel industry) are available in the featured story.

- **European Commission Releases Report Summarizing Its 2022 Policy Initiatives.** While the Commission's report provides a good high-level review of the Commission's 2022 initiatives, the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document provides much greater detail about many of the Commission's initiatives broken down by both "competition instruments" and industry specific enforcement efforts. Of particular interest is the Working Document's discussion of the lodging industry (found on page 92 of the Working Document), highlighting the Commission's 2017-2021 study of hotels' distribution practices following several member states' adoption of so-called narrow parity requirements and suggesting that the study and possibly the DMA (hello Booking.com) would continue to play a role in the Commissions' future monitoring and enforcement in the industry. For those of you wanting more information about the 2017-2021 study, we included the study in an earlier [Update](#) and a copy of the study's results is available [here](#).
- **Lufthansa's Innovation Hub Launches Meetings Booking Platform - Cloopio.** In an effort to better leverage the WFH and hybrid work models, Lufthansa's Innovation Hub (LIH) has launched a new booking platform designed to promote "curated team off-site packages." [Cloopio's](#) offerings (initially around Berlin) include transfers, accommodations, meeting rooms, catering and team building activities. Cloopio is the second small group booking platform launched by LIH.

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- **Kayak Abandons Plans to Become Lifestyle Hotel Operator.** Anyone surprised by this announcement? We've featured several [stories](#) over the past year or two about Kayak's robust ambitions to launch a lifestyle hotel business. Kayak CEO and co-founder, Steve Hafner, recently confirmed the news first reported by *Skift*, that Kayak late last year shuttered its lifestyle hotels business (laying off its development team in the process). Hotels currently operating under the "Kayak" brand will drop the name as leases for those hotels expire. Notwithstanding the change in direction, Kayak still plans to build out a hotel technology business, leveraging its ongoing relationship with hotel operator, Life House.
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EU's competition enforcer publishes overview of work in 2022

April 4, 2023 via MLex

The European Commission has published an overview of its competition-law enforcement and policy work during 2022. It hailed efforts to "mitigate the negative effects of Russia's war against Ukraine on the EU economy, its businesses and citizens" and has provided an overview of actions on a sector-by-sector basis.

Expedia adds ChatGPT for travel planning in iOS app

April 4, 2023 via Phocus Wire

While the integration of ChatGPT has happened in a matter of weeks, CEO Peter Kern says it has been done very carefully, with controls in place to ensure the interactions relate only to travel and are unbiased.

Lufthansa unveils platform for booking off-site meetings

April 4, 2023 via Phocus Wire

The service offers "curated team off-site packages" initially around Berlin with early customers including Eurowings Digital and ProductDock.

Kayak Bows Out of Opening Lifestyle Hotels Under Its Own Brand

March 31, 2023 via Skift

Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Kayak won't be opening any new hotels near you, but still hopes to make a go of building a hotel tech business. That, too, could be a big challenge.

Travelport secures \$200 million investment, plans to enhance tech innovation and boost momentum

March 4, 2023, via WIT

Travelport has been on a bit of a hot streak lately. For context, Travelport is a technology company that powers travel bookings for hundreds of thousands of travel suppliers worldwide.

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The company's marketplace, Travelport+, simplifies how brands connect and enables modern digital retailing.