

Duff on Hospitality Law

AI's Growing Influence in Travel: Key Updates and Emerging Trends

on 2.18.25

Good (holiday) Monday morning to everyone . . . It is President's Day, which means those of us in the U.S. get to enjoy an additional day off (sort of, but not really) work. Our Online Travel Update for the week ending Friday, February 14, 2025, is below. As I promised in our last [Update](#), this week's Update contains a number of stories providing concrete examples of how AI is being used (and predicted to be used in the near future) in the travel industry. I've also included a story updating the status of the UK's Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024, which the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has confirmed it will begin to enforce in April of this year. For those of you who have asked recently what new regulations are on the horizon – after the FTC's Junk Fees rule and most recently, the DSA's KYP requirements – you might want to take a closer look at the new consumer-focused legislation. I plan to have more information about the Act and its requirements in our next Update. Enjoy.

- **Here Come the AI Agents.** For the past few weeks, we've been featuring stories about OpenAI's new AI-powered agent, Operator. *Hospitality.net* published an article last week that provides a helpful overview of these new tools, including a description as to how [these tools could actually aid hoteliers](#) and their direct booking efforts. As the author notes, timing is everything with these newest technologies and hoteliers now need to move with a sense of urgency (particularly, with OTA's current and growing head start).
- **Southeast Asia Leads the Charge in AI Transformation.** With its online travel penetration levels estimated to increase to 74% by 2027 (with the majority of that soon to be coming through mobile), Southeast Asia is expected by many to be at the forefront of AI disruption to the travel industry. Young travelers in the region are already transitioning to AI-based itinerary planners and concierge apps.

Have a great week everyone.

[Personal AI Agents and the Hospitality Industry: Are Hoteliers Ready?](#)

February 14, 2025 via *Hospitality Net*

In the wake of Google CEO Sundar Pichai's recent assertion that their upcoming Gemini AI

aims to become a “universal AI agent” useful in everyday life, hoteliers are asking a pivotal question: How can they prepare for personal AI agents that promise to transform the travel and hospitality landscape? Industry ...

New UK Consumer Protection Regime to Go Live in April 2025

February 13, 2025 via Justia

The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 is set to transform the UK's consumer protection regime by empowering the Competition and Markets Authority to impose penalties of up to 10% of global group turnover for unethical or misleading business practices. In light of growing public and political scrutiny ...

How AI is impacting travel startups

February 11, 2025 via Phocus Wire

Appetite for AI-driven travel startups from savvy investors alongside the potential for costs come down could help level the playing field for new businesses.

Young travelers transitioning to AI trip planning in Southeast Asia

February 11, 2025 via Phocus Wire

Southeast Asia's booking pathway is online, increasingly mobile and with a high potential to be influenced and/or disrupted by artificial intelligence agents and applications.

Preferred Hotels & Resorts Introduces Travel Advisor Portal

February 11, 2025 via Hospitality Net

Preferred Hotels & Resorts, the world's largest independent hotel brand, is excited to announce the launch of its new Travel Advisor Portal, a cutting-edge platform designed to empower travel professionals with a comprehensive suite of tools and resources. With its user-friendly interface and advanced features,