

Duff on Hospitality Law

OTA & Travel Distribution Update - June 30th, 2017

By Greg Duff on 7.7.17 | Posted in OTA Update

Our weekly OTA & Travel Distribution Update for the week ending June 30, 2017 is below. A mix of stories in this week's update...

[Airbnb Continues Its March Toward Mainstream Lodging \(SHORT-TERM RENTALS\)](#)

("Airbnb signs partnership with Flight Centre's corporate travel brands," Tnooz News Feed, June 29, 2017)

Airbnb announced last week its agreement with Flight Centre Travel Group to feature portions of Airbnb's inventory with Flight Centre's corporate travel brands FCM Travel Solutions and Corporate Traveler. Although this newly announced partnership applies only in Australia and New Zealand, it is yet another example of Airbnb's ongoing efforts to grow its presence in the mainstream (and lucrative) business travel market. According to Airbnb's announcement of the new partnership, at least 10% of Airbnb's bookings now come from business travelers.

[Google's Anti-Trust Fine Could Affect Google's Travel Ambitions \(METASEARCH\)](#)

("Why the EU's massive antitrust fine could become a huge headache for Google," Vox, June 27, 2017)

No, this isn't another story detailing the European Commission's recent landmark fine (\$2.7 billion) against Google and its comparison shopping service. Instead, it is an invitation to consider how this ruling (and the continuing EC investigation into Google's practices) might affect its travel ambitions. If Google's practice of featuring its own comparison shopping service above those of its competitors was the primary basis for the recent fine, why wouldn't the rationale applied by EU regulators to Google's retail comparison shopping service cause the regulators to reach a similar result with regard to somewhat similar practices by Google in air and hotel search? More updates on this story are sure to follow...

[Priceline Group Finally Consolidating Its Many Travel-Related Properties \(OTA\)](#)*("Booking.com Is Expanding Beyond Hotels and Into Flights, Cars and Restaurants," Skift Travel News, June 27, 2017)*

Although it took longer than many anticipated, Priceline Group appears to be finally bringing together its many travel-related properties – metasearch, car rental and restaurant. In an effort to capture the entire “traveler journey” (should sound familiar to those of you following Accor and its many acquisitions over the past 18-24 months), Priceline Group has added tabs on its hotel-centric Booking.com website featuring Kayak, RentalCars.com and Open Table. Most

notably, the addition of the Kayak tab now allows Priceline Group to re-direct the millions of visitors to its Booking.com site to a valuable flight search resource.

Other news:

Hyatt Adds Miraval to Make Its Loyalty Program More Attractive

Skift Travel News, June 29, 2017

It's a relatively small addition for now, but as Hyatt grows the Miraval brand, no doubt its members will appreciate the access to Miraval's wellness offerings. Now, we just have to wait and see what happens with Hyatt and Expedia.

GreenTree Inns Launch Progressive Hotel Loyalty Program

PRWeb, June 27, 2017

GreenTree Hospitality Group, Inc., the 14th largest hotel brand globally, with over 2600 hotels worldwide, is proud to announce the launch of its hotel loyalty program in the United States, GreenTree GiveBack Rewards. GreenTree Inn is offering a different approach to its rewards program. Guests can join and immediately receive exclusive benefits associated with the GreenTree GiveBack Rewards program.