

Duff on Hospitality Law

Weekly Travel Update: Marriott's New SMB Platform, Expedia's Co-Branded Cards, and Amazon's Prime Day Travel Deals

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Good Sunday morning from Seattle . . . Our weekly Online Travel Update for the week ending Friday, July 12, 2024, is below. Marriott and its launch of a new small and medium sized business travel platform garnered most of the attention this past week. While announcements by Expedia and Sumitomo Mitsui Card underscore an increasingly competitive travel card (now platform) landscape. Enjoy.

- **Expedia Launches New Co-Branded Credit Cards.** Anyone surprised by this latest announcement? In an attempt to further strengthen its growing loyalty program, One Key, Expedia this past week in partnership with Wells Fargo and Mastercard launched two co-branded credit cards. Holders of the new cards will receive a variety of benefits, including the ability to earn One Key Cash, which can be used to book travel services and products across the Expedia Group family of platforms. Holders of the cards will also receive elevated status within the One Key program, unlocking additional hotel room discounts and other benefits. Those interested in the new cards can begin applying this summer. Hoteliers should consider how these new cards and their “loyalty cash” rewards might affect parity across competing channels and whether these latest offerings violate pricing / discounting commitments contained in hoteliers’ existing distribution agreements. These issues will become even more important with the soon-expected launch of a similar co-branded by card by Booking.com.
- **Amazon Expands Travel Offerings for Upcoming Prime Day.** Shoppers looking for the latest bargains during this week’s annual Amazon Prime Day (July 16-17) will now be able to shop a variety of travel products and services on a new dedicated page – “Prime Day Travel Deals.” Participants in this year’s shopping extravaganza include Carnival Cruise Line, Southwest Airlines, Viator and Avis. Members shopping the dedicated page will find discounts ranging from 20-30% off base fares / prices. Regular readers of our Online Travel Update will recall that Priceline partnered with Amazon during last year’s Amazon

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Prime Day, though this year marks the first time Amazon has created a dedicated travel page.

- Marriott Introduces Business Access by Marriott Bonvoy.** Marriott's launch of its new small and medium sized business travel platform, Business Access by Marriott Bonvoy, captured much of the online travel industry's attention this past week. The new program, which is powered by Spotnana, offers business users a variety of traditional and non-traditional travel tools and services – discounted hotel stays at participating Marriott properties, loyalty program benefits, access to flights, rail tickets and rental cars and other traditional TMC services – expense management, employee tracking, etc. To participate, travelers must be members of Marriott's loyalty program, Marriott Bonvoy.

Have a great week everyone.

Expedia Group, Wells Fargo, and Mastercard announce new suite of One Key credit cards

July 12, 2024 via Business Wire

Expedia Group, Inc., one of the world's largest online travel platforms, has finalized a multiyear agreement with Wells Fargo (NYSE: WFC) and Mastercard (NYSE: MA) to launch two new co-branded credit cards. Designed to complement One Key™, Expedia Group's groundbreaking loyalty program, the One Key™ Card, and One Key+™ Card, will offer more flexibility, savings and perks for U.S. travelers.

Major Japanese credit card issuer enters travel space

July 11, 2024 via Phocus Wire

SMBC Group's Sumitomo Mitsui Card, a credit card issuer in Japan, has partnered with Hopper's B2B division Hopper Technology Solutions (HTS) to create a travel loyalty portal to benefit cardholders.

Carnival, Southwest, Viator to sell travel deals on Amazon Prime Day

July 11, 2024 via Phocus Wire

The opportunity to sell with Amazon is appealing, according to the travel brands included in Amazon's Prime Day travel deals that seek to meet travelers where they are shopping.

Fresh Details on Marriott's Travel Booking Tool for Small Businesses

July 10, 2024 via Skift Travel News

We spoke with Marriott's chief revenue and tech officer to learn more about the hotel giant's new online booking portal aimed at small- and medium-sized enterprises. Does it truly offer a seamless, one-stop solution for road warriors? Sean O'Neill Share Marriott International has debuted a new booking platform

Marriott Gets Aggressive with SME Business Travel Program

July 9, 2024 via Business Travel News

Marriott International launched on Tuesday a long-awaited new SME program. But if you thought it took a year to roll out discount and loyalty program, that wasn't exactly the strategy. Instead, the hotel giant has introduced a travel management program option for small and midsize enterprises.

Expedia, Airbnb and Booking Comply With California Junk Fee Law — But in Different Ways

July 3, 2024 via Skift Travel News

Now you know why online travel companies do so much A/B testing. The whole world seems to depend on whether a price disclosure is in a bold or light font. Fee transparency is being put to its own test in California. Dennis Schaal Share The Big Three travel ...