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Duff on Hospitality Law

Booking Holdings Builds on Its Travel Distribution Ambitions

11.22.26

Good Sunday afternoon from Seattle . . . Our Online Travel Update for the week ending Friday, November 20, 2026, is below. Booking Holdings' newly consolidated B2B offering, Booking Partner Division, takes center stage in this week's Update. This week's Update also includes updates on a number of recent stories, including Expedia's cyberattack, the pending lawsuit by EU hoteliers against Booking.com and Booking Holdings' failed etraveli acquisition. Enjoy.

Introducing Booking Holdings' Booking Partner Division (BPD). This past week saw the introduction of Booking Holdings' new B2B division, Booking Partner Division, which combines Booking.com Strategic Partnerships with Agoda's Rocket Travel. According to Omri Morgenshtern, the new division's head and Agoda CEO, the new division intends to not only provide its partners with access to rates and inventory, but AI technology as well. Potential customers include banks, financial institutions, airlines, online travel companies, travel technology platforms, advertisers and publishers. Priceline's B2B offering (Priceline Partner Network) is not part of the new division, at least for now. According to Morgenshtern, the decision to exclude Priceline's offering was driven by the prospect of likely FTC action against Priceline. The new division expects to be operational in January 2027.

Airbnb Stakes Its Position in the Hotel Distribution Landscape. For those of you still questioning Airbnb's intentions for "traditional" hotel distribution . . . In an interview this past week, Airbnb's global head of hotel enterprise and connectivity partnerships, Lou Zameryk, spoke directly of Airbnb's primary competitor (and Lou's former employer) Booking.com and made his pitch to the hoteliers that he hopes to soon feature on the Airbnb platform. According to Lou, "Booking is not 'not-hotel friendly,' but it's not hotel-centric." "I think we're a more hotel- and stay-centric as a brand." What this actually means for hoteliers remains unclear.

AHLA Introduces Direct Booking Campaign - "Look Before You Book." As consumer confusion over deceptive travel sites continues to grow and increasingly becomes the object of federal, state and local legal and regulatory efforts, the American Hotel and Lodging Association has launched a national campaign to bring awareness of these sites and their practices to travelers ahead of the busy holiday travel season. As part of its efforts, AHLA hopes to also work with national and state legislators and regulators to end these practices and increase enforcement.

Booking Holdings' Vayo Now Makes Bookings. Just weeks ago, we featured a story detailing Vayo's itinerary management service. Users of Vayo's invite-only beta release (this author included) can now use Vayo's AI agents to complete bookings for flights, hotels, rental cars and experiences, even bookings on

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cross town rival Expedia.

I hope everyone who is celebrating has a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends. Look for our next Update after the holiday.

Booking's B2B Arm Positions Itself as AI Brain for LLMs
November 20, 2026 via PhocusWire
Booking Holdings unveiled further details of its combined B2B division earlier this week, bringing together Booking.com's partnerships with Rocket Travel by Agoda.

Booking Holdings Unveils Booking Partner Division to Accelerate B2B Travel Innovation
November 18, 2026 via Booking Holdings
Booking Holdings today announced the launch of Booking Partner Division, a new global B2B organization designed to help partners grow their businesses through travel, create more value for their customers, and unlock new opportunities by harnessing Booking Holdings' global reach, leading technology, expertise and continuous innovation.

Booking Holdings Leaves Priceline Out of B2B Unit Amid FTC Scrutiny
November 18, 2026 via Skift
Leaving Priceline out of the B2B consolidation is a blow to the goals of Booking Partner Division.

Airbnb Pitches Hotels: We Care More About Stays Than Booking.com Does
November 18, 2026 via Skift
Airbnb could deliver lots of new customers to hotels. But will that hurt its short-term rental business?

Booking Holdings to Appeal EU Ruling Upholding Etraveli Acquisition Veto
November 18, 2026 via Reuters
Booking Holdings on Wednesday said it would appeal a decision by Europe's second-highest court that upheld the EU antitrust veto of its €1.63 billion ($1.79 billion) acquisition of rival ETraveli three years ago.

Booking Holdings' Travel Startup Vayo Starts Booking Trips with AI Agents, Even on Rival Expedia
November 17, 2026 via GeekWire
Vayo, the Seattle-based AI travel startup launched by Booking Holdings last month, is expanding beyond its initial focus on tracking travel plans - starting to use AI agents to book flights, hotels, rental cars and activities on behalf of users in its invite-only beta.

More Swiss Hotels Join Lawsuit Against Booking.com
November 16, 2026 via Swiss Info Business
A large number of Swiss hotels have joined a class action claim against online booking platform

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Booking.com in Europe.

OpenAI Is Hiring Engineers to Build Travel Into ChatGPT
November 16, 2026 via Skift
OpenAI is getting serious about travel: Francis Davidson, formerly of Sonder and acquisition target Odessia, is now the AI company's very first head of travel. And he's already hunting for builders to design how trip requests work in ChatGPT.

AHLA Launches Campaign to Protect Travelers From Booking Scams
November 16, 2026 via Lodging Magazine
According to a new survey commissioned by the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), approximately 50 percent of consumers mistook deceptive travel booking sites for official hotel websites.

Look Before You Book: Don't Let a Booking Scam Ruin Your Day
November 16, 2026 via AHLA
Whether you're booking a family vacation, weekend getaway, or business trip, you deserve to know exactly who you're booking with, what you are paying, and that your reservation will be there when you arrive.

Extortion Group Claims Theft of Nearly One Billion Expedia Traveler Records
November 14, 2026 via National Cyber Security
Russian extortion group n0n claims to have stolen nearly one billion Expedia traveler records through a compromised third-party provider.

Posted in Online Travel Update

Authored by

Greg Duff
Principal|Seattle
206.816.1470 greg.duff@foster.com

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