

New UK Requirements for Google Put AI Content Use in Focus

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Good Sunday evening from somewhere 30,000 over the mid-west . . . Our weekly Online Travel Update for the week ending Friday, June 5, 2026, is below. It was another relatively quiet week in the online travel industry other than the many stories coming out of Skift's annual AI Conference (where suddenly everyone started talking about the actual cost of implementing AI) and of course news of Barry Diller's proposed purchase of a little Las Vegas gaming company. Surprisingly, none of the major online travel newsletters covered last week's CMA ruling (details below) and what it might mean for travel suppliers seeking better control over the use of their content on AI platforms. Enjoy.

Another Platform Joins the Social Media Ranks. Over the past several months, we've featured several stories detailing intermediaries' growing efforts to capture travelers at the inspiration stage through social media - specifically, partnerships with social media platforms and/or the influencers who use them. This past week, India's MakeMyTrip, joined the ranks of these intermediaries with the launch of the "Creator Circle" program, which includes a partnership with Meta's Instagram. Like Agoda's Ambassador Program, which commissions influencers for travel booked through their online posts, MakeMyTrip's Creator Circle seeks to similarly reward influencers.

Publishers Given More Control Over Contents Use on Google. This past week, the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) announced new content guidelines for Google that requires Google to give publishers more control over when and how their content is used in Google's AI products. The same guidelines also require Google to provide proper attribution and links whenever a publisher's content is used in AI generated results. According to the CMA's chief executive, the new guidelines are intended to give publishers appropriate bargaining power in determining how their content is used. In its response, Google noted that website publishers will now be given the choice of including their website content in the training of Google's AI products or the AI products' responses. Before suppliers seeking to negotiate better terms for use of their content on the search engine's AI platform call their Google counterparts, keep in mind that these guidelines are based on the UK's digital markets laws and likely have little (or no) effect on publishers outside the UK (more detail is needed). For me, the biggest questions are do these first-of-their-kind guidelines (or similar versions) (1) soon apply to other prominent AI platforms, (2) make their way to the EU or other consumer protection oriented jurisdictions (highly unlikely in the US) or (3) affect Google's (or even other prominent AI platforms') handling of third party content generally irrespective of jurisdiction. For now, we will all have to wait and see.

Have a great week everyone.

Priceline Updates Penny AI Assistant with Claude

June 3, 2026 via PhocusWire

Priceline has enhanced artificial intelligence (AI)-powered assistant Penny with the addition of Anthropic's Claude.

MakeMyTrip's New Influencer Play: Relevance Over Reach

June 3, 2026 via Skift

India's largest online travel platform wants to show up before a traveler even thinks about booking. The idea is not to chase viral Reels, but about whether a scroll can turn into a booking.

Who Really Holds Your Travel Money Before You Travel and What Are They Doing With It

June 3, 2026 via Skift

Travel companies have built a banking-like float system around consumer prepayments, without banking-like protections, and the scale is now too large to ignore.

UK Requiring Google To Let Publishers Opt Out Of AI

June 3, 2026 via Law360

Google is giving publishers tools to prevent their content from being used to power the artificial intelligence features shown in search results, after Britain's competition enforcer imposed new requirements Wednesday.

The High Cost of Infinite Search: How AI Agents Break Travel Economics

June 1, 2026 via Skift

Travel search was built around a useful limit: people eventually stop looking. AI agents don't. That turns comparison shopping into a cost problem for airlines, intermediaries, metasearch, and hotels trying to keep control of demand.

Expedia Names Ex-Pinterest Exec to Lead Ads. The Pitch: Real Bookings, Not Intent

June 1, 2026 via Skift

Expedia's advertising program has one thing that Google and Meta can't offer - confirmed bookers. As such, advertisers can target travelers with set plans and try to entice them to book additional products.

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