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Online Travel Update: CWT teams with Booking.com for Business, Uber takes flight bookings to the UK, and Expedia unveils new B2B initiatives

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Welcome to our weekly Online Travel Update. Expedia's many announcements at its Explore 23: Connect conference this past week garnered most of the industry headlines, while Uber moved closer to becoming a full online travel booking platform. Recent news highlights include:

- **CWT Partners with Booking.com's Booking for Business**. Want to participate in Booking.com's corporate booking platform, Booking.com for Business? You may have no choice now. CWT and Booking.com announced last week a new partnership under which CWT will provide the corporate booking platform discounted (and perhaps, loyalty program) rates and inventory for its suppliers' hotels, flights and rental cars.

- **Uber to Offer Flights to UK Users**. Users of Uber's transportation booking application in the UK will soon be able to search and book flights. Powered by Hopper, the new functionality will include Hopper's signature fintech products, including Prize Freeze and Cancel for Any Reason. Uber plans to roll out the new offering across the UK this summer with no announced plans to introduce the offering outside the UK.

- **Expedia Announces Several New B2B Initiatives**. At Expedia's Expedia 23:Connect conference held this past week in Seattle, Expedia announced several new B2B initiatives, including a new partnership with Mastercard that allows issuers of the cards to allow users to redeem credit card loyalty program points for travel products and services offered through Expedia. Other announcements at the event include the launch of Expedia's travel operating system (Travel OS), whose first commercial "micro-service" will help users protect against fraud, the launch of Expedia's guest experience score, the launch of new rate management capabilities for those suppliers using Expedia's optimized distribution (OD) platform and the launch of new capabilities for travel agencies using Expedia's Travel Agent Affiliate Program (TAAP). For those of you wanting a more intimate view of last week's Connect event, we've included a story about the event from Seattle's own technology newsletter, *Geekwire*.

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Expedia Group launches OneKeyCash for partners

May 12, 2023 via Phocus Wire

The new rewards currency is intended to target the 83% of consumers who travel to infrequently to earn status or meaningful rewards.

CWT to provide content for Booking.com for Business

May 11, 2023 via Travel Weekly US – Top Stories

CWT has partnered with Booking.com for Business to expand its offerings for small business customers. Under the partnership, the accommodations on Booking.com for Business' platform – which is powered by technology company Serko — will be complemented by CWT hotels, flights and car rentals.

Uber launches flight bookings in U.K. powered by Hopper

May 10, 2023 via Phocus Wire

The functionality, which is powered by Hopper, will be rolled out to users across the country in the coming weeks and be available to all United Kingdom users this summer.

Expedia Group adds Mastercard to growing B2B lineup

May 10, 2023 via Phocus Wire

Financial institutions that issue Mastercard-brand credit cards can enable their cardholders to redeem credit card loyalty points for travel bookings made through Expedia.

Expedia Group Shows B2B Growth: Announces new Partnerships and Tech Features

May 10, 2023 via Hospitality Net

Following a strong quarter for Expedia Group's B2B segment where it delivered 55% in revenue growth compared to 2022, the Company announced new partnerships and tech features aimed at expanding its already vast partner network.

As storm clouds clear for travel, Expedia Group looks to become a bigger tech provider to industry

May 10, 2023 via GeekWire

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman opened Barry Diller's eyes to the potential of artificial intelligence by asking ChatGPT to dish on the media mogul's personal life.

MakeMyTrip adds Microsoft's GPT tech for voice-assisted travel booking

May 9, 2023 via Phocus Wire

The India-based online travel agency says it will use the technology to introduce voice-assisted booking in Indian languages.

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