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Duff on Hospitality Law

OTA & Travel Distribution Update: Booking.com relaxes keyword restrictions on its trademarks; insurer partners with Roomer Travel to insure against losses and spur growth

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This past week was relatively quiet in the distribution world as evidenced by the few stories below. Enjoy.

Booking.com Relaxes Keyword Restrictions on Its Trademarks

("Booking.com relaxes keyword bidding clause with hotels," Phocus Wire on Jul 22, 2019)

In a purported effort to comply with a recent unidentified ruling in the EU, Booking.com sent notices to many of its hotel suppliers this past week advising them that existing contract restrictions prohibiting the suppliers from bidding on Booking.com's keywords (e.g., Booking.com) were being removed. While the change may make for interesting headlines, it is doubtful that many suppliers will race to their nearest search engine to begin bidding on Booking.com's keywords. Unfortunately, suppliers should expect to hear a lot more about this change and Booking.com's need for reciprocity while negotiating critical keyword protections on their valued marks in the future.

Insurer Partners with Roomer to Insure Against Losses and Spur Growth

("Munich Re creates insurance solution for hotel booking cancellation startup," Insurance Business – New Zealand News on Jul 24, 2019)

Roomer Travel, the U.S. / Israeli startup that created the non-refundable hotel room re-selling platform, is back in the news. We first featured Roomer in a story last June. Roomer announced last week a partnership with insurer, Munich Re, through which the insurer now offers Roomer financial protection against unexpected cancellation payouts. According to the press release issued by Roomer founder and CEO, Gon Ben-David, the partnership (and ability to better manage its financial risks) will allow Roomer to

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further expand its room resell services.

Other news:

Trivago Could Kill Controversial Ad Feature That Caused Its Fortunes to Plummet
Skift Travel News on Jul 24, 2019
Trivago said it is working with its largest advertisers, including Booking Holdings and Expedia Group, on changes that could eventually cause it to eliminate a controversial "relevancy assessment," introduced in 2016, that wreaked havoc with Trivago's financial performance.

Posted in OTA Update

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