Duff on Hospitality Law

OTA & Travel Distribution Update: EDreams adds hotels to its subscription services; metasearch grows in importance; Japanese hoteliers once again raise concern about OTAs' rate practices

06.25.20

This week's Update contains a number of stories on the growing significance of metasearch, particularly as properties compete for the attention of even fewer travelers. However, we begin this week's Update with a story on EDreams, which has been successfully growing its subscription-based travel model. Enjoy.

EDreams Subscription Model Adds Hotels

("EDreams Now Has a Half Million Paying Travel Subscribers," Jun 17, 2020 via Skift Travel News)

Since November, EDreams' Odigeo has added 50,000 members to its subscription services, bringing its total membership to close to 500,000. Although the Barcelona-based online travel agency began with flights only, the service has now expanded to include hotels (adding 2.1 million hotels since November). For those of you unfamiliar with the service, EDreams' two brands - Edreams Opodo and GO Voyages - offer members travel discounts in exchange for their annual membership fees. Faced with the pandemic's many challenges, EDreams is currently running a promotion offering new members a free six-month trial subscription. It will be interesting to see whether this service (or others like it) gains enough traction to warrant parties' re-examination of existing rate parity commitments and their limited exceptions.

Metasearch's Importance Even Greater in the Current Pandemic Downturn

("DerbySoft Expands Metasearch Coverage for Hotels Around the World," Jun 18, 2020 via Hotel News Resource")

We've included two stories in this week's Update highlighting the increasing importance of metasearch

© 2026 Foster Garvey PC. All Rights Reserved.

channels in the current pandemic. First, this past week, Derbysoft announced a new solution (DSCP) designed to allow hoteliers to better reach smaller regional or specialty price-comparison sites on a more reasonable (commissionable) cost basis. The second story highlights how this new solution and others like it from Cendyn, Triptease, Google and others are being used by independent hoteliers (that previously may have not used metasearch to drive direct bookings) to leverage the major metasearch sites. Most notably, Google Hotel Ads is now offering cash-conscious independent hoteliers the opportunity to use pay-per-stay or pay-per-booking commission models used by their larger brand counterparts.

A Kinder, Gentler Form of Parity Arises in Japan
("Despite probe, online travel agencies still ask for best deals, Japan inn association says," Jun 18, 2020 via MLEX Insight)
Following investigations last year by the Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC) into the rate parity requirements of the major OTAs (Expedia, Booking.com and Rakuten), hotels enjoyed a short-lived respite from the burdensome provisions. Now, months after the investigations began (and following one distributor's commitment to JFTC to abandon the provisions entirely), Japanese hoteliers are again crying foul. Members of the Japan Ryokan and Hotel Association (whose membership totals 2,600 hotels and inns) have again raised concerns about the OTAs' rate practices (including the alleged use of broad parity requirements), though now the demands are "gentler" and sometimes made in exchange for other contract concessions.

Other news:

Pandemic Prompts Indie Hotels to Buy Ads in Price-Comparison Searches
Jun 16, 2020 via Skift Travel News
The coronavirus pandemic has made many hotel companies more eager for direct bookings. Price-comparison websites are a significant source of such bookings, and new tools are making it easier for smaller hoteliers to ramp up their ad purchases on these metasearch brands. Until now, independent hotels and regional hotel groups haven't spent on metasearch.

Accelya Swoops in to Buy Farelogix
Jun 16, 2020 via Phocus Wire
Farelogix has found itself with a potential new owner in the shape of Accelya, a leading provider of airline revenue management and logistics technology. The agreement to buy the U.S.-based Farelogix and its airline commerce and retailing system is subject to regulatory approvals but is expected to be sealed over the course of this summer.

What an Antitrust Case Against Google Could Mean for Travel
Jun 19, 2020 via Phocus Wire
Evidence suggests the U.S. Department of Justice will soon file an antitrust lawsuit against Google that will most likely target the ad technology used to buy, sell and serve online and mobile display advertising.

Posted in OTA Update

© 2026 Foster Garvey PC. All Rights Reserved.

Foster Garvey

Authored by

Greg Duff

Principal|Seattle

206.816.1470 greg.duff@foster.com

© 2026 Foster Garvey PC. All Rights Reserved.