

[Duff on Hospitality Law](#)

The State of Direct Booking

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Good Sunday morning from Seattle . . . Our weekly Online Travel Update for the week ending Friday, May 29, 2026, is below. The short week (at least for those of us in the U.S.) made for a relatively quiet week in the online travel world. Enjoy.

Has the Direct Booking Decade Turned Out as Planned? A story from *Skift* this past week purports to provide answers. Having had a front seat to the supplier-OTA give and take over the past decade, I can say that much of what *Skift's* reports rang true for me. Yes, the percentage of direct bookings versus OTA facilitated bookings has remained relatively flat for the largest operators. But . . . the particulars of those OTA facilitated bookings has continued to change - commission levels, marketing commitments, parity obligations (not just rates and availability), resell price maintenance, payment tools, keyword protections (or not), EU competition laws, fintech and B2B distribution. The smartest hoteliers are rightly focused on more than OTA commission levels. The rapid change we've seen the past 10 years isn't slowing anytime soon as the industry grapples with AI, evolving EU regulation and OTAs' growing focus on B2B. And that just summarizes changes in leisure distribution. Don't overlook corporate/managed travel - changes are coming.

Airbnb's Hotel Efforts Continue to Show Momentum. This past week, Airbnb announced the hiring of Andrea D'Amico as the new Vice President of Hotels. Andrea's hiring is a reunion of sorts as the former Booking.com executive will again work alongside fellow Booking.com alum, Lou Zameryka. Airbnb's hotel efforts have also expanded beyond the handful of test markets in late 2025 to now over 30 markets globally.

Have a great week everyone.

[**Direct Booking Tug-of-War: Hotels' Long Bid to Take Back Power**](#)

May 27, 2026 via *Skift*

Ten years after Hilton, Marriott, and other chains began coaxing travelers to book directly, online travel agencies still control roughly the same slice of the pie. Yet the chains have won the economics: lower commissions, better contract terms, and stronger loyalty programs.

[**Marriott Signs ResortPass Deal. Why Hotels Are Pushing to Sell More Than Rooms**](#)

May 27, 2026 via *Skift*

Hotels have long treated the room as the only thing worth selling. Marriott's deal with ResortPass signals a growing sideline to boost margins: selling empty pool chairs and spa slots to locals who show up for the day.

[Airbnb Recruits VP of Hotels Amid Category Expansion](#)

May 26, 2026 via PhocusWire

Airbnb has announced the recruitment of Andrea D'Amico as vice president of hotels. D'Amico, who has been CEO of adventure travel specialist WeRoad since 2022, will take up the position in early June.

Posted in [Online Travel Update](#)

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