Distribution Channel Monitoring for Airlines

Airlines monitor your global network distribution across OTAs and Meta Search Engines

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Why tracking OTAs & Meta Sites is important.

Travel attracts intermediaries looking to profit from your demand. Even amongst the most reputable we see techniques and practices designed to steal away passengers that would otherwise book direct. Thanks to the internet, OTA and Meta sites seemingly spring up daily with freedom to operate on their terms and not yours. Tools that track fare, seat and bag parity are badly needed if airlines are manage their third-party distribution strategies effectively.

What Airlines stand to lose:

- With airlines investing heavily in personalised offers this effort is effectively lost if they fail to attract direct bookings in the first place.

- Ancillary products are becoming more and more important to airline profitability. Cross sell/upsell opportunities are lost and gifted to the competition often at inflated prices.

- Fares offered lower that your own lead to increased volumes that effectively enhance OTA/Meta's bargaining power.

- Airlines stand to lose control of 'Special' fares provided to certain OTAs if not adequately policed.

- Passengers who see lower fares offered via other channel risks loss of reputation and brand damage.

- GDS availability fees mean that airlines effectively pay for the privilege of being 'Gamed'.

Developing Third Party Distribution Strategy

Managing a distribution policy that embraces OTA and Meta Site on a mutually beneficial basis can be difficult and hazardous. On the one hand, the reach that can be obtained via the third-party channel is vital for passenger growth. On the other, blatant and repetitive abuse of airline product risks lost revenue opportunity, increases costs and damages brand image and therefore reputation. What ever course an airline chooses to take, data must be at its heart. The adage 'You can't manage what you can't measure' has never been so poignant. Airlines must track third party channels in a robust and formulaic way in order to gather insights that can be used to act.

What can airlines do with the data?

- Learn about intermediaries, who they are and what pricing strategies they employ to steal your demand.

- Examine their presentation of your services and look for inconsistencies incompatible with advertising and trading and other legal standards.

- Distribute information to airline account managers to help them encourage behaviour change and foster fair play.

- Produce data packs useful to legal teams for action when required.

- Lobby Meta Sites and GDS to take responsibility and ownership of rogue OTAs known to be 'Gaming' your flights.

- Question display fees linked to bad actors.

Choosing a supplier

Whilst there are many organisations available to harvest information from websites only those with solid understanding of airline reservation and data presentation should be considered. Additionally, the supplier should go beyond simple fare capture and be prepared to harvest ancillary items such as seat allocation and baggage charges all evidenced by sample screen captures duly date and time stamped. Operating your own airline's API should also be a necessary requirement giving the supplier capability to compare your own products and services with those offered via OTA/Meta sites. Finally, your chosen supplier should offer analytics via dashboards well as raw data options for blending with your own BI environment and/or revenue management systems.

ChannelEYE

We have been monitoring OTA and Metasite behaviours on behalf of airline clients since 2018. Our turnkey solution, ChannelEYE, is built upon the PowerBI analytics platform designed to flag rate parity discrepancies across air fares, seat allocation and baggage fees. It is Cloud based, intuitive and features sample screen shots to match your data records.

Data Collection

The starting point for effective third-party distribution management is good data. We gather thousands of data points to perform in depth analysis. Target sites are usually selected from intelligence observed via leading Meta sites however target selection, point of sale, types of data to be collected and update frequency is flexible and subject to discussion.

Protecting your Infrastructure & Digital Assets

Bots and scrapers can be a menace. We should know as we have built them on an industrial scale and know every trick in the book to get around mitigations. Our BotStop solution is best in class and has recently won investment from the EU Horizon 2020 program for innovation.

EDNA helps you manage, monitor and track your distribution allowing your Airline to maintain a competitive edge.

CONTACT US FOR A FREE 30 DAY TRIAL

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