

OTA Publishes Specification Version 2005B

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Travel Industry Standards Organization Adds to its Substantial Body of Travel Messages, Including Cruise Messages for the First Time

The OpenTravel(TM)Alliance (OTA), the travel industry's leading specifications publication organization, has published its 2005B specifications. Included in these specifications are XML-based messages for hotels, car rental companies, cruise lines and travel integrators that are critical to both efficient operations and enhanced travelers' experiences.

'Once again, great process and great member participation have resulted in message solutions the travel industry will use to create operational efficiencies and provide greater customer satisfaction,' said John Turato, chairman of the OTA and vice president, technology for Cendant Car Rental Group. 'We are particularly excited to include cruise-related messages for the first time in an OTA publication release. These specifications are testament to the commitment of our members to collaborate and provide value to the travel industry in an open environment.'

Highlights of the 2005B Specification

Hotel - with the participation of the Convention Industry Council's Accepted Practices Exchange (APEX) initiative, the hotel work group has enhanced and extended OTA's existing group request and response messages. In addition, the hotel work group created a generic message set for an asynchronous update report. Initially, the messages would be used for the report of the hotel availability database update and the hotel rate amount database update, but could be extended to accommodate additional hotel database reports as well as other travel sector database reports.

Car Rental - The car work group has created a new message to be used for the physical exchange of a vehicle without having to close the current rental agreement, allowing the traveler to keep the same rental agreement number. This message would be useful, for example, in the case of a vehicle breakdown when the customer receives a replacement vehicle.

Cruise Line - The cruise work group created several new message sets covering many components of the cruise booking cycle, including cabin availability, hold and unhold messages, category availability, fare availability and sail availability messages, and create booking and price booking messages.

Architecture - The architecture sub-committee created a generic response and request message set that enables one system to send coded binary files like image or video files to another system that will store or process the files. The request message includes a success or failure element.

The specifications can be downloaded at www.opentravel.org/2005b_publication.cfm.

Upcoming OpenTravel(TM)Alliance Activities

OTA's popular Advisory Forum will be held April 24-25, 2006 at the Hyatt Orange County in Garden Grove, CA. Details will be forthcoming.

The OpenTravel(TM)Alliance Mission

OTA's mission is the creation, expansion, and adoption of open universal data specifications, including but not limited to the use of XML, for the electronic exchange of business information among all sectors of the travel industry.

About The OpenTravel(TM)Alliance

OTA develops communications specifications to allow for the efficient and effective exchange of travel industry information via the Internet. With a diversified membership representing influential names in all sectors of the travel industry, OTA is comprised of representatives from the airlines, car rental firms, hotels, cruise lines, leisure suppliers, service providers, tour operators, travel agencies, and trade associations. OTA working groups develop open internet-compatible messages, which are currently in use by companies across the travel spectrum.

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