

OpenTravel Alliance Announces New Programs

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Increases Membership Value

The OpenTravel Alliance, the travel industry's leading distribution specification development organization, will outline two new membership programs at its annual Advisory Forum next week.

The first is a certification program, a long-time goal of OpenTravel. In the world of electronic distribution, finding a trading partner who is experienced in implementing transaction messages is not always an easy process, so OpenTravel has created a program where travel companies - suppliers, distributors, technology and solutions providers - can publicly demonstrate their business and implementation experience, and knowledge of OpenTravel specifications.

'Speaking as a travel industry supplier, I need distribution partners who know OpenTravel messages and know how to use them,' said John Turato, vice president of technology for Avis Budget Group and chair of the OpenTravel board of directors. 'Speaking as an OpenTravel board member, it's time we offered this valuable service to the travel industry. Our members have been asking for and we have responded.'

An OpenTravel certified company will name the functional messages they've implemented (availability query, cancellation, etc.) and at least one of their trading partners, and have the right to use the certification designation in their own marketing and customer-facing materials. OpenTravel will provide a public registry of all certified members, available on its website, www.opentravel.org.

Another new program is an implementation support program. Companies new to travel distribution or new to OpenTravel sometimes need additional help to realize their development goals using OpenTravel messages, so OpenTravel has met that need with this cost-effective program of direct implementation support via email or phone.

Details of both programs will be unveiled during the 2007 Advisory Forum, to be held at the Hilton Montreal Bonaventure on April 16- 18, 2007.

About the OpenTravel Alliance

The OpenTravel Alliance is passionate about solving the problems inherent with connecting multiple systems within the complex travel distribution arena.

OpenTravel's mission is to engineer specifications that make data transmission flow smoothly throughout travel, tourism and hospitality. OpenTravel creates, expands and drives 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.

With a diversified membership representing influential names in all sectors of the travel industry, OpenTravel is comprised of representatives from airlines, car rental firms, hotels, cruise lines, leisure suppliers, service providers, tour operators, travel agencies, and trade associations. Thousands of OpenTravel message structures are in use, carrying tens of millions of messages between trading partners every day.

For more information, visit www.opentravel.org.

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