



## **A Very Productive TripAdvisor Meeting**

I wanted to share an update with you from AIHP's meeting with TripAdvisor last week. First a few thank you's. Thank you to TripAdvisor and their team for hosting us and being open to hearing from our members on important issues to our innkeeping industry. Thank you to [ThinkReservations](#) (Platinum Allied Partner Supporter), for their partnership with AIHP, by providing resources through that partnership which allows us to host these types of meetings.

A big thank you to our innkeepers and allied partners who were able to join me for the day. We had a great group in attendance and I thank them for being so engaged in the discussion. I felt the meeting was very productive. The group in attendance did a superb job asking the right questions and pushing on the topics that we would like to see addressed.

I also would like to thank those of you that sent me your feedback, even though you could not attend the meeting in person. All of our member feedback and issue priorities related to TripAdvisor are captured in a "working document" that AIHP will use to move our priorities forward.

So, what were the goals for this meeting?

1. Establish a stronger working relationship between AIHP and TripAdvisor (meeting in person is always a benefit)
2. Provide an in-person opportunity for our industry/members to meet face to face with key TripAdvisor team members
3. Host a forum to share our industries concerns and feedback, so that we can enact change
4. Establish a more comprehensive internal process within TripAdvisor to address our industry issues

I felt we left the meeting having made significant progress with all these goals.

### **1. Fostering a stronger relationship**

The team we met with at TripAdvisor was open to our feedback, we appreciated that. This meeting was really the first collaborative step towards having an ongoing dialogue about how best our industry can be incorporated into the TripAdvisor product(s).

It is my hope that at least on an annual basis, AIHP will be able to host an in-person meeting either at TripAdvisor or at some other location. Sitting at the table with partners and fostering these types of positive relationships will always give us the best chances for success.

## **2. Meet with Key Team Members**

It is important to begin to develop relationships with key TripAdvisor staff. This allows us to continue to share our feedback in a more personal way. It also gives us a better understanding of how TripAdvisor makes its decisions internally. What their long-term goals are etc.

Last week's meeting was a good example of how fostering these relationships can be beneficial. We had an opportunity to spend time with the following team members:

- Director of Product Development
- Key Research Staff
- Forty (40) Marketing Managers
- TripAdvisor CEO – Steve Kaufer

## **3. Sharing Our Industries Concerns**

We had the opportunity with each team to explore a number of topics and ask a myriad of questions. In some cases, we really just hit the tip of the iceberg with some of these topics, but you will see in our next steps that the work continues.

- Trip Connect
- Default Dates
- Best Value
- Reviews
- The challenges with finding B&B's on the site. Desktop vs. Mobile
- Algorithm changes
- Sponsored Ads
- Business Advantage
- Competing with the OTA's
- The User Experience

## **4. Addressing Industry Issues within TripAdvisor**

I want to thank Brian Payea – Global Head of Optimization. Brian was very instrumental in getting our meeting set up and getting the right team there. He has been a great resource to me and AIHP on all things TripAdvisor. Brian continues in his role at TripAdvisor but has been working to find some additional staff resources internally to support our needs.

One of the take aways from last week was being able to establish a more direct process, in which I (we) can work directly with a point of contact within TripAdvisor to triage our questions and needs. While we are flushing out specifics on how this internal triage system works, continue doing the following:

1. Anything specific to your property, billing inquiries, questions about your account etc. - continue to go to your contact person at TripAdvisor first, but if you are not getting answers or feedback, please let me know and I can take your questions directly to TripAdvisor.
2. Industry related issues will go through AIHP directly to TripAdvisor to be addressed.

## Next Steps

As I have shared, there were a lot of topics covered and of course some we did not get to. There is a lot of follow up and future work to be done. My goal in this update was to give you a higher-level overview of the meeting. But in the coming weeks, I will be communicating with you on each of the topics/issues in a more compressive and detailed way. Look for regular ongoing dialogue on our TripAdvisor efforts. We look forward to continuing to foster a strong working relationship.

I would ask you to please continue to share with me any feedback. I thank you again for your continued support. The more we work together the more success we are going to have.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rob', written on a light-colored background.

Rob  
AIHP – CEO  
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