

HitchHiker XtremePricer – Next Generation Flight Shopping Tool

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Frankfurt am Main, August 2008 - The trend of flight bookings via the Internet is permanently on the rise. The latest figures show an approximate 30% increase, which in turn presents many portals with a new technological challenge, with which the fewest can cope.

In particular, it is proving to be quite difficult for European portals to differentiate their products other than by price. Thus, these portals concentrate on undercutting one another by a few cents for the service fees on usual routings such as on short-and medium-haul flights yet have neglected the high margin destinations either completely or deliver only insufficient results. The reason being is that the reservation technology behind almost all portals functions according to the same principles, meaning it is optimized for plain and simple routings. Revenue generating routings, such as long hauls, are often handled inadequately.

Thus, it is not surprising that a potential customer gives up in frustration since 300 results for one request are anything but user-friendly, even less if 200 of those results are identical.

Internal on-line studies have shown that flight shopping engines deliver improper results as soon as more than two transfer points are allowed per routing. These same engines deliver good results as soon as a major airport is included within the routing. This major airport guaranties the existence of “simple” tariffs – in general.

However, not all people are able to depart from one of London’s International airports for example. A request for a routing from Glasgow to Queenstown would result in an excess of overpriced results. This routing is offered by Qantas yet no flight shopping tool offers Qantas – even if flights with Qantas are available and bookable via cryptic GDS systems.

Most shopping engines give up and shut down entirely if additional add-on flights are contained in the routing, especially when different airlines are applicable. Most standard shopping engines rely on the LowFareSearchEngines of the GDS. However, these LowFareSearchEngines generate expensive transaction fees. Furthermore, the inefficient caching methods and the high volume of failed bookings due to inefficient algorithms are becoming an ever increasing standard for GDS LowFareSearchEngines.

With a study from 2007 on the difference of tariffs loaded into the GDS and those which are returned with a query, HitchHiker’s technicians had already proven that only fundamentally new shopping engine technologies will endure in the long run.

The logical answer to this issue is HitchHiker’s XtremePricer.

Only during direct customer consultation at a travel agency is it possible for agents to build the most complex routings manually, thanks to their knowledge and expertise. However, this manner of travel reservation is a time and money waster and always requires specialists who are able to deal with the cryptic entry masks of the CRS.

Therefore, the new HitchHiker XtremePricer takes a totally different approach. XtremePricer uses a newly developed technology called “HitchHiker Pathfinder”, which is capable of taking all possible routing variations into account without

wasting expensive GDS transactions. The results will uncompromisingly contain the best and shortest routings; the actual complexity of a routing has no influence on the results.

A valuable side effect is the fact that the results are constant no matter which GDS is being used.

HitchHiker's Pathfinder technology evaluates all relevant and possible flight combinations, rules and restrictions and builds a routing comprising several airlines and transfer points. This totally new technology includes not only the latest algorithms, search and optimization mechanisms but also 16 years of tourism, booking engine and InternetBackEnd experience and expertise.

HitchHiker's XtremePricer is characterized by its comprehensive, flexible and pioneering features as well as its adaptability and scalability - of course, just like everything from HitchHiker, it is GDS-neutral!

The traditional InternetBackEnd technology will remain in use up to the final stage of expansion of HitchHiker's XtremePricer. All existing booking engines and TeMyra.net applications are automatically upgraded with version 1.0 of HitchHiker's XtremePricer as part of their service and support contracts. New customers get the HitchHiker XtremePricer version 1.0 as a standard. Thus, HitchHiker customers using visualFares Entry and the IBE will be able to display the shortest, easiest, fastest and cheapest routings available between 2 points – no matter how many airlines or transfer points are necessary.

Andreas Bieber, Key Account Manager: "With this innovation, we are establishing new standards and new minimum requirements for online flight queries within the European online market. Hitchhiker's XtremePricer marks the start of a number of new developments based on HitchHiker's Pathfinder Technology."

"By using the latest search algorithms and heuristics," according to David Friderici, Director of Product Strategy ", we find first-class results and even save transactions on all net fare queries. Currently, we are brooding over the next generation that will incorporate published fare tariffs as well.

Further developments planned for 2009 are a tax-engine, low-cost carrier hopping and HitchHiker's Round-The-World Engine.

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Working as an independent software house since 1992, Hitchhiker has been developing tariff management software solutions for airlines and consolidators under the name of visualFares. In addition, HitchHiker also offers hosting services („TeMyra.net“), front and back-end solutions including Internet-booking machines for all types of bookable flights such as scheduled flights, charter flights and low cost carriers as well as net fares and nego fares. With its headquarters in Frankfurt on the Main, HitchHiker has a total of 55 employees; the Managing Directors are Nicole Hoeckle and Thomas Boffo.

More information about HitchHiker is available at: www.hitchhiker.com

[You can find this press release here](#)