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FairSearch.org Coalition Grows, New U.S. and International Travel Members Urge Justice Department to Challenge Google-ITA Deal

Foundem, Level...com, Microsoft, ZUJI, Join Coalition, Signal International Concern Over Impact

WASHINGTON, D.C. – December 13, 2010 – The FairSearch.org coalition has added several new online travel and technology members from the U.S., U.K., France, and Asia Pacific. FairSearch.org launched in October to support competition, transparency and innovation in online search. The coalition is urging the U.S. Justice Department to challenge Google's proposed acquisition of ITA Software, the flight search technology that powers many of the web's most popular travel sites.

New FairSearch.org members are Foundem, a UK-based vertical search engine that offers price comparison for travel and other products and services; Level...com, a French online travel agency association based in Paris (http://www.levelfrance.com/); Redmond, Wash.-based Microsoft, which operates decision engine Bing and uses ITA Software to power its flight search tool; and ZUJI, a Singapore-based online travel agency that operates in Asia Pacific countries, including in Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, Korea, New Zealand, and India.

The members announced today join existing FairSearch.org members Expedia Inc., and its brands Expedia.com, Hotwire and TripAdvisor; Farelogix Inc.; KAYAK, and its brand SideStep; and Sabre Holdings, and its brand Travelocity. Travelocity owns ZUJI.

Today's announcement and the coalition's new international members signal the growing concern around the world about the broader threat the Google-ITA deal poses to travel consumers.

"Competition in online travel search over the last decade has not only created more choices and innovation for travelers, but has also driven prices lower around the world for consumers," said Roshan Mendis, President of ZUJI. "We are concerned that less competition in flight search in the U.S. will result in less innovation in travel search globally, and more importantly, less pressure on travel service providers to offer the lowest price for consumers regardless of where they are located."

Acquiring ITA Software would give Google control over the software that powers most of its closest rivals in travel search and could enable Google to manipulate and dominate the online air travel marketplace. The end result could be higher travel prices, fewer travel choices for consumers and businesses, and less innovation in online travel search.

"Level...com is committed to protecting customer choice in online travel and to upholding the ethics of a fair marketplace," said Frederic Vanhoutte, President. "Our members welcome competition and changes in the market. But allowing one dominant company to concentrate all the power in online flight search in its hand will reduce transparency and stall innovation, and that will lead to higher airfares for consumers."

ITA provides the technology behind 65 percent of all online flight searches at airline Websites in the U.S., and its flight search software powers six of the top ten air carriers in the U.S. Some of ITA's most well-known U.S. customers include American Airlines, Continental Airlines, Hotwire, KAYAK, Orbitz, Southwest Airlines, TripAdvisor, United Airlines, US Airways, and Virgin Atlantic.

Today, Google is the source of more than 30 percent of all search engine traffic to online travel sites, delivering more visitors than any other search engine, the primary way Internet users navigate to U.S. industries online, according to Experian Hitwise. Google is also the dominant provider of online search, controlling more than 70 percent of U.S. searches, according to Experian Hitwise.

For more information about the FairSearch.org coalition, news updates about Google's proposed acquisition of ITA Software, and more information on the deal, please visit www.fairsearch.org.

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About FairSearch.org

FairSearch.org is a group of businesses united in support of a healthy Internet future, where greater consumer choice and economic growth are driven by competition, integrity and innovation in online search.

Members of FairSearch.org include Expedia Inc., and its brands Expedia.com, Hotwire and TripAdvisor; Farelogix Inc.; Foundem; KAYAK, and its brand SideStep; Level...com; Microsoft; and Sabre Holdings, and its brands Travelocity and ZUJI.