

December 4, 2008

VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS AND FACSIMILE

Honorable Edward J. Markey United States House of Representatives Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515-2107 Facsimile: (202) 226-0092

Dear Congressman Markey:

Travelocity.com LP ("Travelocity") is pleased to respond to your letter requesting information about Travelocity's disclosures concerning the safety of international travel. We appreciate the additional time that you have given us, via the Interactive Travel Services Association ("ITSA"), to respond to your letter.

Travelocity was the first major online travel company to commit to pro-active customer advocacy. We launched our commitment to "Customer Championship" in May of 2005. Travelocity has spent millions of dollars to train thousands of employees on how to advocate for our customers, including going the extra mile for them, and meeting or exceeding their expectations.

Since the launch of Customer Championship, we have continuously improved the quality of service we provide for our customers. One of the hallmarks of our commitment to Customer Championship is the Travelocity Guarantee, which was the first "service guarantee" provided by a major online travel company, and which still is the most comprehensive and pro-active guarantee in the industry. Additionally, we have a dedicated Pro-Active Customer Care team that addresses many of the issues you raise in your letter. Responding to your letter provides me with an opportunity to highlight the work that Travelocity has done on behalf of our customers, including initiatives and tools that affect their safety and security.

Travelocity's responses to your questions are as follows:

1. Do you always inform your customers of relevant U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings? If so, how? If not, why not?

Yes, U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings are made available to the customers of Travelocity.com. Travelocity.com has a Web page called "Travel Info Center," in which Travelocity provides customers with tools and links which customers can use to learn more about travel in general, and specific destinations.

The Travel Info Center Web page is accessible via a prominent link on the Travelocity.com home page. You can view the Travel Info Center on the following URL:

http://www.travelocity.com/info/cust_alert1/1,3083,TRAVELOCITY,00.html

For your reference, a screen shot of the Travel Info Center Web page is attached to this letter as <u>Attachment 1</u>.

The "Travel Info Center" Web page contains a link to the U.S. Department of State information page on the left hand navigation bar. The link to the Department of State takes customers to the U.S. Department of State information page located at the following URL:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html.

The Department of State page contains all "Travel Warnings," "Travel Alerts," and "Country Specific Information" made available by the Department of State. A screen shot of the Department of State Web page is attached as Attachment 2 to this letter.

2. Do you always inform your customers of relevant U.S. Department of State Travel Alerts? If so, how? If not, why not?

Yes, see response to Question #1 above, <u>Attachment 1</u>, and <u>Attachment 2</u> to this letter.

3. Do you always inform your customers of the U.S. Department of State Country Specific Information relevant to their travel, especially regarding crime, safety and security, medical facilities and health information, traffic safety and road conditions, and aviation safety oversight? If so, how? If not, why not?

Yes, see response to Question #1 above, <u>Attachment 1</u>, and <u>Attachment 2</u> to this letter.

4. Do you always provide your customers with information regarding the emergency medical services available at the hotels and resorts

advertised on your site? If so, how? If not, why not? If you do, how do you validate the accuracy of this information? How frequently?

Travelocity does not provide customers with information regarding the emergency medical services available at hotels and resorts. This is mainly because this information is typically not provided to travel agencies as a matter of course, but hotels and resorts do make this information available to customers upon their request.

Hotels and resorts may or may not have emergency medical services available on site. However, we understand that many hotels and resorts will have medical services on site, or otherwise have access to such services. For example, many major hotels and resorts in the Caribbean have a nurse's station on property, with a nurse on duty and a physician on call. We understand that if a property or resort does not have a nurse's station (because, among other things, of the relatively small size of the property or resort), their guests would have access to medical assistance through the front desk or concierge. Properties with nurse's stations or other medical services generally inform customers at check-in, or post this information using property signage.

5. Has your company ever terminated its relationship with a foreign vacation destination as a result of a poor health or safety record at its facilities? If yes, please provide the number of terminations that have occurred for this reason in the past two years.

Yes, it is our practice to remove hotels from Travelocity.com for serious health or safety issues. However, Travelocity does not track the number of hotels terminated for health or safety issues, so we do not have historical data available. We have recently removed two properties from Travelocity.com for safety, health, or cleanliness issues. In both cases, Travelocity responded to information sent to us by customers or third parties (such as consumer watchdogs). Travelocity investigated the complaints and removed the hotels from Travelocity.com. Both of the recent cases involved hotels in the United States. We would follow the same procedures for foreign hotels.

6. Does your company collect, in a systematic manner, complaints from customers about poor medical care, unsafe or unsanitary facilities or other health-related problems they experienced at vacation destinations booked through your site? If yes, how does your company use such information? Is it made available to individuals who are considering purchasing a vacation trip to a destination about which your company has received health or safety complaints? If not, why not?

Yes, customers have an opportunity to provide feedback about hotels and resorts on Travelocity.com. Customers can provide feedback by writing and submitting a customer review of their hotel or resort. Customers can rate hotels on a five-point scale in several categories, including "Security & Safety," "Cleanliness," and "Room Quality." In addition, customers have the opportunity to enter free text comments in their review. A screen shot of a sample Customer Review page is attached to this letter as Attachment 3. Customer reviews are made available to all customers of Travelocity.com during the shopping process.

Travelocity also owns and operates IgoUgo.com ("IgoUgo"). IgoUgo is an online travel community with over 500,000 members. Travelers use IgoUgo to share their trip stories and pictures, including traveler reviews, opinions, tips, and experiences. IgoUgo currently has traveler reviews and other content on over 8,000 destinations worldwide. Travelocity provides its customers with access to IgoUgo on the "Travel Info Center" Web page referred to above.

Additionally, when our call center agents receive feedback from customers about hotel properties, Travelocity categorizes the feedback (for example, "service issues" or "safety issues"), and then sends that feedback to our employees who have a relationship with the relevant hotels. Travelocity employees then provide that feedback to hotels where necessary, and work with the hotels to improve the service that hotels provide to our mutual customers.

Finally, all customers of Travelocity.com receive a "Welcome Back" e-mail after they have returned from a trip. As part of the Welcome Back e-mail, we invite all our customers to provide us with feedback on all aspects of their travel experience, including participating in a customer satisfaction survey and submitting a customer review of their hotel or resort. We use the comments received from the customer satisfaction surveys and customer reviews to improve our customers' travel experiences, and when there is a safety and security issue involved, Travelocity will work with the hotel or resort to investigate the issues and to determine what actions, if any, Travelocity will take. As noted in the response to Question #5 above, if there is a serious and unresolved health or safety issue, Travelocity's response could include termination of our relationship with the hotel or resort.

7. Do you have a discussion board or other interactive communication tool on your site where customers can share their travel experiences? If yes, do you consider travelers' postings that include information about the existence or quality of medical services or responsiveness to be appropriate content for discussion on your Web site? If not, why not?

Yes, Travelocity provides customers with opportunities to share their travel experiences via the Customer Review pages on Travelocity.com, and via the IgoUgo site referred to in Question #6 above. Travelers may use these tools to

post on any subject, including information about health care and health related information.

8. What other information do you provide on your site to inform visitors of the potential risks associated with international travel to the various destinations marketed by your company?

Travelocity has a travel weblog (blog) called "The Window Seat." Travelocity's team of writers provides travel-related articles on The Window Seat blog. Categories for articles include "Trip Tips", "Guides & Planning," "Security & Safety," and "Travel Insurance." Recent blog posts include the following safety-related articles: "Blood in the Streets of Bangkok: How to Travel Safely in an Unsafe World," "Hurricane Safety Travel Tips," and "Is Kenya Travel Safe?" A screen shot of the Bangkok article is included as Attachment 4 to this letter.

Travelocity also licenses destination-specific content from Frommer's, and makes this content available to the customers of Travelocity.com. Frommer's is a popular publisher of travel guides and travel-related literature. Frommer's content is written by destination experts, and typically includes general useful information about a destination and the services available to travelers. Travelocity provides Frommer's content as a service to our customers, who may review and print this information to take along with them on their vacation.

When circumstances dictate, "Travel Alerts" are posted prominently at the top of the Home Page of Travelocity.com. Travel Alerts are used for major events or conditions that Travelocity wants its customers to be made aware of. The most common use of Travel Alerts is to provide customers with up-to-date information on weather issues that will have an impact on travel, such as hurricanes or blizzards. Travel Alerts are also used to warn travelers of political unrest that could affect their safety, such as the recent terrorist attack in Mumbai, India. A screen shot of the Travel Alerts for the Mumbai terrorist attacks is provided in <a href="https://dx.doi.org/10.1001/jac.

Travelocity believes that we provide our customers with a myriad of resources which they can consult to help them plan their vacations, and to know what to expect. In addition to information produced by Travelocity, we also provide links to information published by the Department of State, information produced by independent sources (such as Frommer's), and first-hand accounts and stories from customers (such as on the Travel Review pages and on the IgoUgo online community). We believe that Travelocity customers who want health, safety, and security information about their destinations have access on Travelocity.com to the resources they need to obtain information and plan for their trips. This

information would be in addition to the many other sources of information customers have access to, whether from the Internet or other sources.

In addition to the information that Travelocity makes available to customers, Travelocity also works hard "behind the scenes" to provide assistance to our customers. A few examples:

- As part of its commitment to Customer Championship, Travelocity has a dedicated team of customer care specialists, called the "Pro-Active Customer Care Team." The Pro-Active Customer Care Team monitors and analyzes issues that may affect our customers. The Pro-Active Customer Care Team has alerted customers about numerous issues in the past, including natural disasters (such as hurricanes and blizzards) and political unrest (such as coups and terrorist attacks). The Pro-Active Customer Care Team may use e-mail communications or even telephone calls (when urgent) to inform our customers of situations that may affect their travel. During the first half of 2008, the Pro-Active Customer Care Team was engaged in about 900 incidents, and contacted over 350,000 customers. During the third quarter of 2008, the Pro-Active Customer Care team was engaged in 392 incidents, and contacted over 107,000 customers.
- Every year during hurricane season, Travelocity works to keep apprised of progress of hurricanes, and any destinations that may be affected. In the event that a destination is threatened by an impending hurricane, Travelocity generates a list of our customers who we know are in an affected destination, or who are traveling soon to an affected destination. Travelocity formulates an appropriate communication strategy for all affected customers. Our communications with affected customers could include providing them with airline and hotel policies, and working with customers to re-accommodate or re-schedule their trip. During the third quarter of 2008, Travelocity pro-actively contacted over 99,000 customers due to weather issues (primarily hurricanes).
- When there is political unrest that could affect the safety and travel plans of our customers, Travelocity also engages key personnel to monitor the situation, and to act accordingly to protect the safety of our customers and to advise them of their options. For example, during the political unrest in Bangkok, Thailand and the terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India late last month, Travelocity's senior leaders immediately began communicating regularly on crisis calls to monitor the situation and to coordinate Travelocity's response. There were numerous crisis calls in the final days of November, including two calls on Thanksgiving Day, to assess the situation and determine what we should do for our customers and our employees who might be impacted. We established a customer response team and trained that team to deal with the unique issues associated with

the crisis. We identified our customers who were traveling to or through Bangkok and Mumbai, we notified them of the situation, and then we asked them to contact Travelocity's response team for assistance. For the situation in Mumbai, Travelocity mobilized employees to work with hotels to determine the impact to the hotels and their guests, and the hotels' response to the crisis (such as hotel policies and processes). We are currently working with several customers who had planned to travel to either Bangkok or Mumbai to help them change or cancel their travel plans.

Travelocity also cultivates strong relationships with our hotel suppliers. As part of our relationships, we rely on hotels and resorts to assist our customers when assistance is needed (including for medical and other emergencies), and keeping Travelocity informed of the situation. The following are a few examples:

- One hotel in the Caribbean contacted Travelocity to inform us that they had been hit with a strain of the Norwalk Virus and that they were going to quarantine the property. The hotel called the local Ministry of Health for guidance and assistance. Guests who were already checked in were put into guarantine, at the hotel's expense, until they could be cleared to go home. The hotel put together a comprehensive plan to move all future reservations for a period of several weeks to its other two properties in same country. In addition to that, guests who accepted the move were also provided with a complimentary return stay to the property that they had originally booked. Guests on property were also provided a complimentary return stay. Additionally, the hotel took care of the cost to re-accommodate the guests on new flights. Upon receiving the notice of the virus from the hotel, Travelocity immediately made the property unavailable for booking on Travelcotiv.com. Travelocity also generated a list of our customers who had upcoming reservations at the hotel. Travelocity's Pro-Active Customer Care team contacted the affected customers and worked with them to re-accommodate them. Travelocity did not make the property available for reservations until after the property was cleared by the Ministry of Health. The property provided Travelocity with a copy of the Ministry of Health's documentation, clearing the property of the virus.
- Another resort in the Caribbean recently contacted Travelocity about an outbreak of food poisoning on their property. Travelocity was informed by the hotel, and the hotel provided alternative accommodations for travelers arriving over the next two week period. Upon receiving this information, Travelocity disabled future reservations to that resort. In addition, the Pro-Active Customer Care team contacted customers with reservations to that hotel to offer re-accommodations. Once Travelocity received confirmation that the outbreak had ended via documentation from the country's Health Department, Travelocity made the property available for reservations again.

I hope that this information is helpful to you. Please let me know if you need any additional information. Also, please note that Travelocity is a member of ITSA, the industry group that represents all of the major online travel companies on matters of public policy. While Travelocity is always willing to be helpful and responsive to your office, whenever you need general or aggregate information from the online travel industry, your office might find it more convenient and efficient to work with the industry via ITSA.

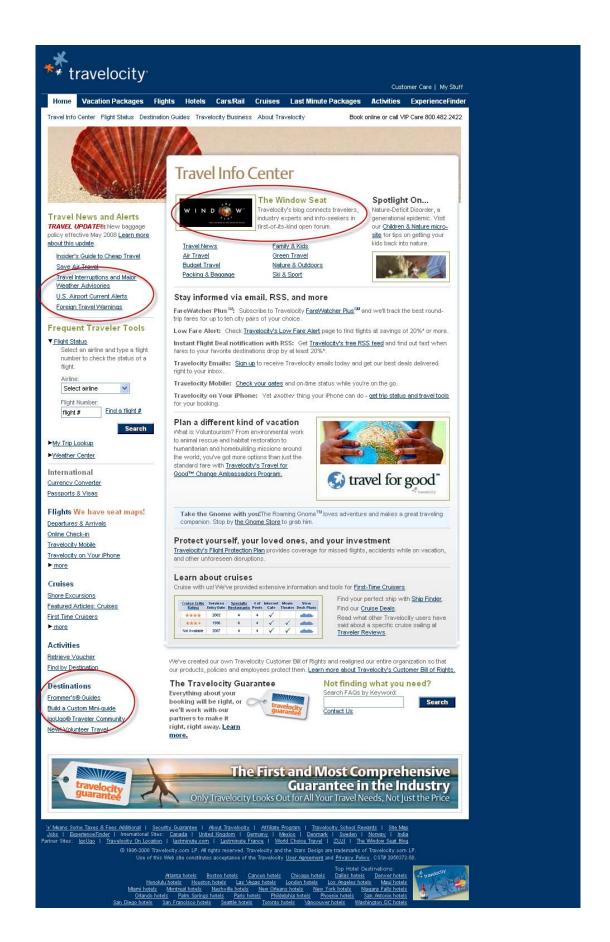
Sincerely,

Michelle A. Peluso

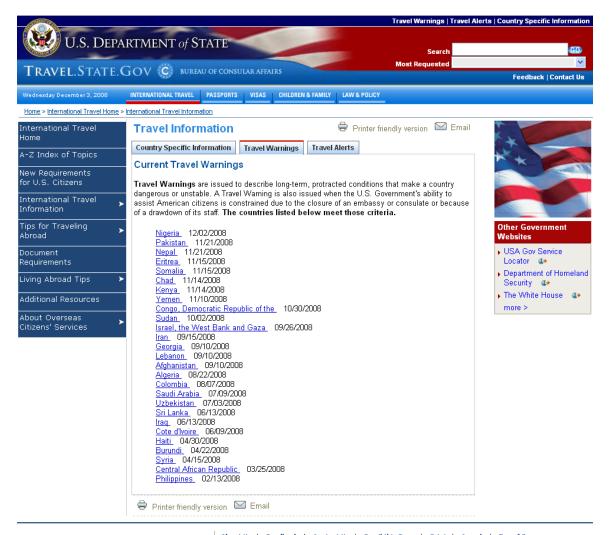
Michelle A. Pelusa

President and Chief Executive Officer

Travel Info Center Web Page



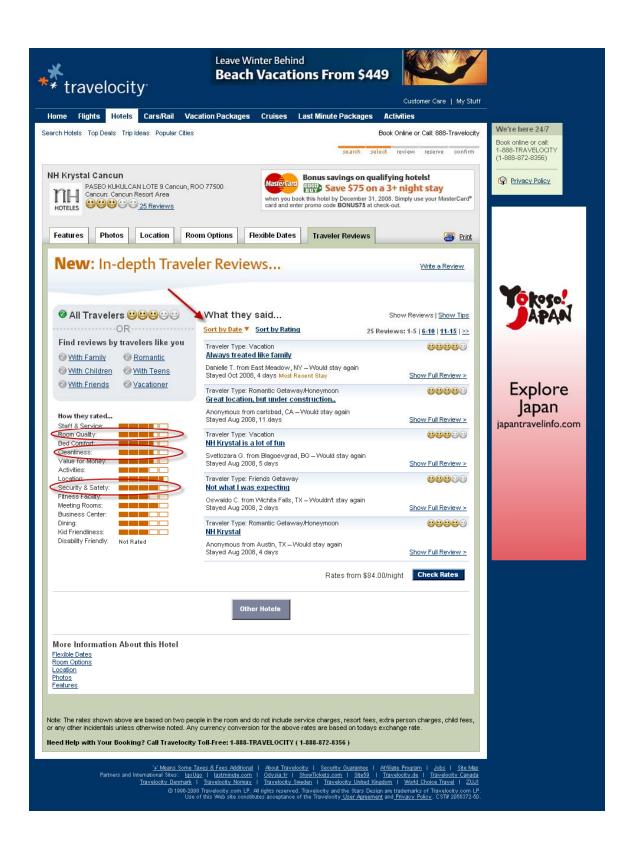
Department of State "Travel Warnings," "Travel Alerts," and "Country Specific Information" Page





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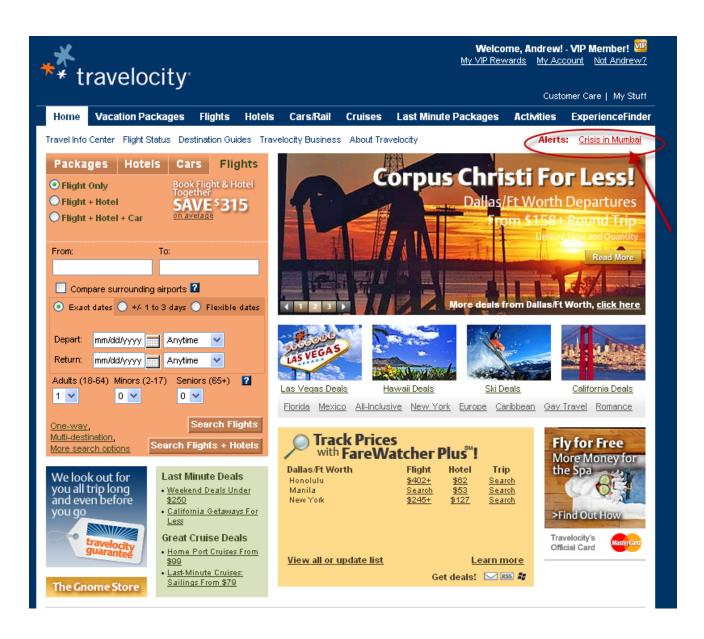
Sample Customer Review Page



Sample "Window Seat" Safety Weblog Post



Mumbai Travel Alerts



Customer Support

Your Results

Back to Customer Support

