

# THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY'S HIGHEST-PAID CEO REVEALED



In 2023, Glenn Fogel, the CEO of Booking Holdings and its central platform, Booking.com, was the highest-paid CEO in the travel industry among S&P 500 companies. He received a total package of \$46.7 million.

This information comes from a recent analysis by the Wall Street Journal, which ranked CEOs based on their 2023 cash compensation and the value of stock grants. **The analysis considered various factors such as base salary, bonuses, stock options, and other forms of compensation.**

Despite his impressive position as the highest-paid CEO in the travel industry, Fogel was only ranked 10th among S&P 500 companies, highlighting the fierce competition in executive compensation. The top three highest-paid CEOs were Hock Tan of Broadcom (\$161.8 million), Nikesh Arora of Palo Alto Networks (\$151.4 million), and Stephen Schwarzman of Blackstone (\$119.8 million), further underscoring the high stakes in this arena.

The WSJ also rated each company's overall return compared to the industry on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 being the top 20 percent. This rating measures the company's financial results and its ability to generate returns for its shareholders. Four travel companies received the highest rating: Booking Holdings, Delta Air Lines, Host Hotels, and Royal Caribbean. This suggests that these companies are paying their CEOs well and delivering strong financial results.

With a pay package of \$31.4 million at American Airlines, Robert Isom and Chris Nassetta at Hilton had compensation packages in the top 20 percent of the airline and hotel industries, respectively. However, their companies' total returns to shareholders were only in the top 60 percent of their industries. This raises questions about the correlation between CEO compensation and company performance and whether high CEO pay is always justified by strong financial results.

Airbnb is a member of the S&P 500, but CEO Brian Chesky's total compensation of \$300,000 last year put him at 413 on the S&P 500. Nonetheless, according to a recent report by Skift, Chesky's 10-year \$120 million pay package announced for 2021 **could exceed a billion dollars if Airbnb achieves specific stock price targets.** While this incentivizes Chesky to drive up Airbnb's stock price, it also raises concerns about the potential for excessive CEO pay and the impact on shareholder value.

Neither Expedia nor Tripadvisor is included in the S&P 500, which includes the major U.S. online travel companies. The former CEO of Expedia Group, Peter Kern, received a total compensation of \$1.1 million last year, while Tripadvisor CEO Matt Goldberg's total package was \$1.9 million.

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