

U.S. COURT RULES AGAINST BOOKING HOLDINGS



A U.S. court ruled significantly against Booking Holdings, stating that the company violated the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act. The Delaware jury's decision, which found that Booking Holdings accessed parts of Ryanair's website 'with the intent to defraud,' is a major development.

This ruling is expected to curb unauthorized scraping by booking sites, a move welcomed by Ryanair. However, Booking Holdings is disappointed with the decision and plans to appeal.

In recent years, **Ryanair has been constantly fighting third-party booking platforms that resell its tickets without authorization.** The airline claims that these companies, which use screen-scraping software to find and resell tickets, charge additional fees, making it difficult for the airline to contact passengers. This struggle is a testament to the challenges faced by airlines in the digital age.

In a recent ruling from a jury in Delaware District Court, Booking Holdings was found to have clearly violated the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act by causing a third party to access parts of Ryanair's website without authorization "with the intent to defraud."

Booking Holdings holds a different view. The company believes that enabling customers to compare rates across the travel industry promotes consumer choice. As a result, the company plans to appeal the ruling.

Ryanair CEO Michael O'Leary stated, "**We expect this ruling will end internet piracy and the excessive prices imposed on airlines, other travel companies, and consumers by the unlawful activities of OTA (online travel agency) pirates.**"

He hopes the ruling will prompt consumer protection authorities across the UK and Europe to take action to prohibit screen scraping and overcharging for flights and ancillary services. This potential impact on consumer protection is a significant aspect of the ruling.

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