



German Distribution Tech Provider To Offer Corporate Tool

DECEMBER 22, 2008 -- German travel technology provider Ypsilon.net AG plans to launch in 2009 a corporate version of its multisource distribution engine and a Web-based point-of-sale agent booking tool, according to Ypsilon vice president of sales and marketing Patrick Coulomb. The company currently provides the system for some of the largest leisure travel agencies in Europe and several leisure agencies and consolidators in North America.

Ypsilon's technology already has the ability to process corporate fares and is in use by some agencies, including Dublin, Ireland-based Club Travel.

Ypsilon, which handles all content aggregation and development work in house, is building a corporate policy rules engine and a profile system to handle corporate hierarchies. "Once we do that, we'll be able to read the profile and validate the search from the information that is in that profile, Coulomb said."

Ypsilon's distribution technology provides content from all major GDSs and about 120 European low-cost carriers. About half of those connections are done directly via XML application programming interfaces, Coulomb said. Ypsilon is able to transact some ancillary fees, including seat upgrades and baggage fees, through some of those direct connects. The system also aggregates content for hotel and car rental reservations.

The user interface displays from which source the content is coming and can be programmed to show a preferred content provider based on airlines, routes and agency or corporate agreements, which can maximize rebates, incentives or other financial assistance from GDSs.

Other technology providers, including GDS and travel management companies, are further developing their own multisource distribution systems to provide more content for their clients and, in the TMCs' cases, be less reliant on GDSs.

With many contracts between U.S. airlines and GDSs expiring in the next two years and an ongoing row between Amadeus and Lufthansa over surcharges incurred for bookings made on the GDS ([BTNonline, Dec. 17](#)), multisource distribution technology is poised to play a major role as it enables agencies to shift transactions to avoid incurring such fees.

GDSs remain the dominant content providers, but such smaller third-party providers as Ypsilon could resonate with smaller agencies that don't have the resources to build the technology internally, said [Tom Wilkinson](#), president of TRW Travel Consulting. "It's so hard to penetrate the armor of these gigantic GDS companies," he said.

Meanwhile, even with a multisource distribution engine and some direct-connect content agreements, these technologies still don't "get to the root of the problem of accessing the Web fares," according to [Wilkinson](#). "If you don't have those business agreements in place—and nobody does—it won't matter, because that is what travel managers and agencies want."