



TRAVEL AGENT'S
**GUIDE TO FLEXIBLE
BOOKING OPTIONS**



WHAT WE OFFER TO OUR AGENTS

- Book now, pay later
- Flexible refundable rates
- Local payments
- Pre-payment platform
- Commission flexibility

Perhaps it goes without saying, but it's a message which will be repeated for many years to come: the pandemic has changed everything. After the events of 2020 onwards, the travel industry was turned on its head, and today it's clear that the old ways of doing business are behind us. Gone are rigid cancellation policies; no longer are the wealthy the gatekeepers of flexibility; and long-held rules around lead time are effectively out the window - in today's world, all travelers are seeking a booking experience which can be bent to their requirements, rather than crossing their fingers and hoping that they can find an experience that fits.

Fortunately, the shift towards flexibility has been seismic, with key players across all parts of the industry moving mountains to accommodate the demand of their paying customers. Even airlines - the most rigid of all - have shunned 'no cancellation' policies in their masses, and while such

actions would have been perceived as huge risks pre-2019, these days they're proving to play a major role in the recovery of travel. The rise of trends such as remote work have, too, changed the way that the game is played, but underneath it all, it is important to remember that nervousness around potential travel restrictions and the like does remain. (That, plus the fact that today's travelers have had a taste of the flexible life, they're unlikely to want to give it up.)

Here at Bedsonline, we're aware of the benefits that flexible travel can bring, which is why we offer a range of fantastic options for our agents to share with their clients. From 'book now, pay later' options to flexible refundable rates, we're making it simple for you to satisfy your clients' needs - and in this guide, we're going to show you how.



READY TO OFFER AN AMAZING BOOKING EXPERIENCE TO YOUR CLIENTS? FIND OUT HOW BY READING ON.

STEP ONE – ATTRACTING YOUR CUSTOMERS

Determining how you're going to offer flexibility to your clients is just one half of the battle – drawing them in is another challenge entirely. Luckily, the rise of social media and easy, effective marketing means that this part of the job doesn't have to be a chore. **Here are our suggestions...**

RUN A SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Catching the eye of prospective clients can be as simple as sharing a bold image on Instagram. Consider creating a strong visual in your brand colors, if you have them (if not, red is always a good idea – it's typically used to represent sales!); add some easy-to-read text and hey presto, you've got yourself a fantastic social media post, ready to be promoted. Instagram and Facebook are two social media behemoths which allow you to run paid advertisements on their platforms; find out how to set yours up by [downloading our guide](#).

RELY ON WORD-OF-MOUTH

Have any of your past clients gotten in touch to say 'thank you' for your great service? If so, this could be a brilliant opportunity for you to ask that they share their feedback more broadly. Find out if they'd mind leaving a review for you, either on Google, on your Facebook page, or via email with permission for an excerpt to be published on your website. Better yet, you could ask if they'd mind sharing the good word with their friends and family so that when their time comes to book their dream escape, they can rest assured they're in safe hands – and that they can secure their trip under flexible terms, if they'd prefer.

MAKE A SCENE!

If you work in a bricks-and-mortar store, you could create a dazzling display that can be seen from space. Print out posters and stick them to your windows for passers-by to see; buy balloons and other eye-catching decorations which will help to advertise the fact that something interesting is going on in-store; or make your business truly memorable by running an event. The latter suggestion might take some more preparation (you'll want to invite past clients and may also wish to share flyers in the street), but a well-executed plan could result in massive interest. Paired with your amazing USPs (whatever they may be!), an event will surely help you to stand out from the crowd and to secure plenty of bookings.





STEP TWO BUILDING A BOOKING

Got clients lining up outside the door? It's time to make good on your commitments

– here's how to build a flexible booking experience.

1. FIND YOUR DESTINATION

You can search for options based on the destination, zone or even by hotel name. Enter the information as per the consultation you've had with your client and, depending on their reason for travel, you may also want to select 'product for packaging'. This will reveal cheaper room rates which are bookable alongside ancillaries such as tours, transfers or car hire.

2. SEARCH BY FLEXIBILITY TERMS

On your search results page, you will be presented with a range of filters down the left-hand side of the page. Among these, you will find cancellation terms such as 'free cancellation', 'partial cancellation fees', 'cancellation fees not available' and 'non refundable'. Select from these options if you would like to tailor your search based on flexibility.

Did you know?: The Bedsonline search platform features dozens of filters, some of which you'd expect and others which you might not find anywhere else. Search by hotel type such as 'pet friendly', 'green hotel' and 'hotels with charm'; star rating; TripAdvisor rating; and 'Safe2Stay', which represents the hotels which have provided information on COVID-19 protocols and certifications.

3. CHOOSE YOUR ROOM RATE

Your next step will be to select the preferred room rate for the client, however do please note that, depending on the cancellation filters selected in the previous step, certain room types may have been excluded. Be aware of the information on this page regarding cancellation fees, as these may vary depending on how close to the check-in date the client chooses to cancel their booking (for example, cancellation may be free up until three days before check-in, but there could be a charge for any cancellations within this timeframe).

At this stage, the booking page will offer requests for the accommodation, such as bed configuration, late arrival, non-smoking rooms and so forth. Check the boxes as per the client's requests.

Did you know? The Bedsonline search platform features dozens of filters, some of which you'd expect and others which you might not find anywhere else. Search by hotel type such as 'pet friendly', 'green hotel' and 'hotels with charm'; star rating; TripAdvisor rating; and 'Safe2Stay', which represents the hotels which have provided information on COVID-19 protocols and certifications.

4. ADD ON ANCILLARIES

Depending on if you selected 'product for packaging' at the start of your search, you will be required to add an activity, vehicle hire, transfers or more accommodation in order to secure the rate (if you didn't select 'product for packaging', you are still free to add ancillaries if you wish!). Take a look at the right-hand side of the page and click to reveal the available add-ons.

5. CHOOSE HOW TO PAY

At the bottom of the page, you will see the payment options and terms. Note which date/time the booking will have to be paid in full to avoid cancellation; this could be just a few days before the client is due to check in. Finally, you can choose to save the booking as a quote or to pay, either in full or under our 'book now, pay later' terms.

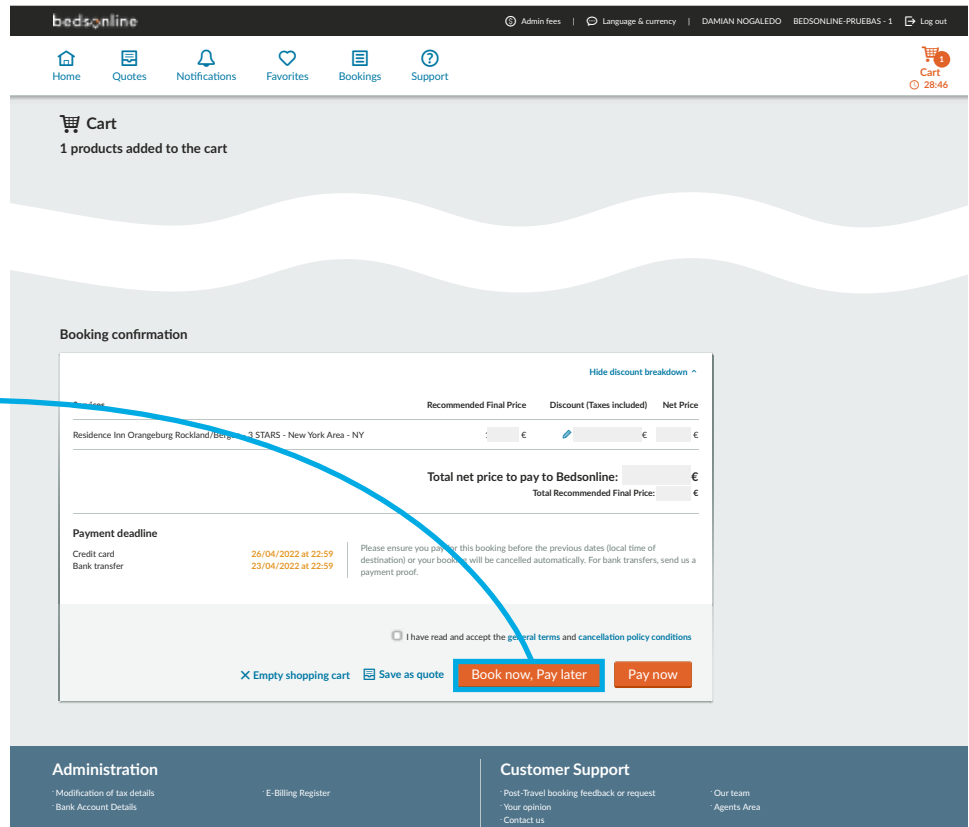


STEP THREE SECURING THE PAYMENT

The booking has been built, the client is happy with what's on offer...so what's next?

As a cherished partner of the Bedsonline family, you'll have access to our flexible booking and payment options. We're pleased to provide our agents with a range of options to suit both you and your clients – take a look at them below!

Book now, pay later:
As a Bedsonline partner, you will have the option to pay for your clients' bookings as late as 3 days before their check-in date. This means that you have full control over your own booking terms – whether you take the full payment from your clients at the time of booking, or if you want to offer more flexible terms too, the choice is yours. (Note: the 'book now, pay later' term is for the benefit of Bedsonline partners, so please ensure that your clients have paid you in full in good time.)



Flexible refund rates:

As circumstances around travel continue to evolve, and while customers embrace the benefits of unfettered flexibility, it's understandable that having flexible rates will be an imperative part of what your agency has to offer. It's for this reason that we've introduced a range of filters which can cater to the new way of doing travel: from 'free cancellation' to 'partial cancellation fees' and 'non-refundable' rates, you'll have options aplenty to share with your clients.

Flexible payment options:

When you partner with Bedsonline, you gain access to a world's worth of payment meth-

ods. We work with local banks and partners across the globe to provide you with suitable payment options across a number of currencies, including USD, GBP and EUR. Working with us means maximizing your earning potential, and our local payment options are here to help you save on costs and commissions.

Similarly, we understand that organizing payments over a period of time can be beneficial to you and to your clients. This is where our flexible pre-payment platform comes into play: here, you can manage pending payments more efficiently, and can even set up alerts to let you know about upcoming payment deadlines

bedsonline

Supercharge your business
**GET ACCESS TO THE MOST POWERFUL BOOKING ENGINE
FOR TRAVEL AGENTS.**

Register your travel agency

Already registered? [Login](#) and start selling!