

Hotelbeds Group fuels innovation at the THack @ Dublin travel hackathon

Submitted by admin-hbg on Mon, 18/05/2015 - 12:47

- 100 developers from all over Europe competed to find solutions to several challenges faced by today's traveller. Hotelbeds Group bets on constant innovation as part of its quest to reshape travel.

Palma de Mallorca, 11th May 2015 – Hotelbeds Group, the leading global provider of travel services, has supported and participated in THack @ Dublin 2015, part of a collaborative hackathon roadshow aimed to improve travel via technology.

Celebrated over the weekend at Dublin's National Digital Research Centre, THack @ Dublin brought together 100 developers from all over the continent with leading travel tech companies for a competition. These programmers coded for 48 hours non-stop looking for solutions to four challenges faced by the modern traveller: 1. Finding inspiration to choose where to go and how to share experiences; 2. Seeking accommodation; 3. Planning routes; and 4. Exploring the destination.

The event's sponsoring companies, including Hotelbeds Group, opened their proprietary APIs a week in advance of the event and provided onsite access to the individual developers and teams of up to five members. This enabled participants to use the APIs, as well as other publicly available resources, in programming solutions to one or more of the challenges put forward.

A team of Hotelbeds Group employees also attended the event after being selected in an internal hackathon developed within the company. The projects carried out on this occasion included a collaboration system for group decision-making and booking and an integrated platform of natural language recognition for travel reservations.

Hotelbeds Group's participation in this initiative shows the company's clear commitment towards innovation and playing a key role in reshaping the future of travel through supporting the creation of new developments. Technology and innovation form part of its DNA, which has always been a key driver of the business' success and its ability to maintain a leading position in the global travel industry.

In the words of Álvaro de Nicolás, CTO, Hotelbeds Group: "At Hotelbeds Group we innovate constantly in our IT processes to develop high-end tech solutions for our clients, enabling us to remain at the forefront of the industry. These events are a great opportunity to explore new ways of using, enriching and improving the company's products and services. This hackathon has enabled us to receive valuable feedback about our API's functionalities, which will surely result in further improvements. On top of that, they are a real teambuilding opportunities, where our team get to meet and work together with other developers at an international level which is also a great way of finding new talent."

After two days, which included working through the night at NDRC, the different projects achieved recognition in several categories from the public and sponsoring companies. In the case of Hotelbeds Group, the company awarded first prize to the project DreamUp, thanks to its integration concept with the company's new API, as well as innovation and positive user experience in the search process. Walking Distance was awarded runner-up for its use of the API's search capabilities and usability concept. Finally, Snap rounded off Hotelbeds Group's top three with the integrated use of mobile technology and simplicity of the solution.

About Hotelbeds Group:

Hotelbeds Group is part of TUI Group, the world's number one leisure travel company. With more than 30 million customers, TUI Group operates in over 180 countries.

The Hotelbeds Group is a global provider of travel services from over 180 countries worldwide with local operations in 40 countries. Its businesses provide hotel accommodation, transfers, excursions and tours, meetings and events, visa outsourcing and cruise handling services. Its main clients are tour operators, travel agencies and corporate clients. Its brands include Hotelbeds, Destination Services and Intercruises.

Hotelbeds Group provides these services to the tourism industry, corporate clients and directly to the consumers worldwide.

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