

# a note from our CEO

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## Consumerism & NDC

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The dictionary defines consumerism as “the protection or promotion of the interests of consumers.” Consumerism is a term frequently used today in the travel industry to describe making a purchase easy and simplified. True consumerism, however, can only happen in the travel ecosystem when suppliers provide open content and allow the consumer to choose the service which best meets their goals. Otherwise, the consumer isn’t protected and what appears more simplified and easy will come with a hefty price tag.

Global Distribution Systems (GDS), many founded and once owned by airlines, remain the best overall content market place for comparative shopping and buying. For business or leisure travel, the consumer should be able to choose a distribution provider that delivers comparative shopping content. This is where some of the lines within travel consumerism are being blurred.

Think about the real-estate market in comparison. Without the Multiple Listing Service (MLS), your realtors and aggregators wouldn’t be able to display the majority of homes for sale for comparative shopping. We wouldn’t want to contact separate realtors for only their home listings. Similarly contacting or online searching each airline becomes inefficient, inconvenient and costly.

Companies attempting to push us toward a 'tunnel vision' sale, only their product, isn’t consumer friendly. Have you ever wondered why certain products on the shelf in a store are attached to a cable or locked behind plexiglass? It is more difficult to purchase, we need to find a clerk to unlock the merchandise which creates additional steps before the actual transaction. Typically, shelved beside this merchandise is the store brand readily available to take off the shelf for quick purchase. Does it have the same ingredients and potency? Will I have the same results that are expected? Or was it simply more convenient?

One of the best examples of airline consumerism today is demonstrated by Delta Airlines. Here is Delta's response last week to content and maturing technology for NDC. “As Delta continues on its NDC journey, we want to ensure that all of our content remains available and without any surcharges attached. When Delta delivers NDC content, it will be through the GDS, so customers can use that one-stop shop for their needs. NDC is important to Delta’s future in introducing new products and ensuring consistency across channels. When the technology is mature and industry partners are ready, we’ll leverage NDC to introduce new products that the legacy systems cannot support.” (Read Delta's full interview with the American Society of Traveler Advisors [here](#).)

Buyers need consumer-friendly traditional and online systems. They expect that transparency and serviceability is not lost. As we embark on new and easier functionality for the end user, let’s hold all of our travel suppliers to these standards together by looking at the bigger picture.

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For questions on NDC, please email [NDC@WorldTravelInc.com](mailto:NDC@WorldTravelInc.com).

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