Christopherson

From shadow bookings to sanctioned solutions

Gaining visibility and control over alternative ground transportation and accommodation bookings

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The hidden booking problem

What your travel program can't see—can hurt you.

Happening

Travelers are booking Uber, Lyft, Airbnb, and Vrbo right now for business travel.

Not approved

These bookings may fall completely outside company guidelines and travel policy.

Invisible

No tracking. No receipts. No duty of care. No visibility into where your people are.

The solution isn't to ban these platforms. It's to bring them into the program with proper authorization, tracking, and compliance tools.

When travelers go rogue: By the numbers

The scale of off-channel booking activity in corporate travel programs

51%
of employees sometimes book outside approved channels*

Zero
visibility into off-channel bookings made outside policy

Increased
liability exposure when platforms aren't in policy

Why this matters
When employees use personal accounts on Uber, Lyft, Airbnb, or Vrbo for business travel, those transactions are completely invisible to the travel program. There is no spend capture, no receipt, no duty of care coverage, and no way to know where your travelers are. The goal: bring that spend into the light.

* Deloitte 2025 Corporate Travel Study

Duty of care: What’s at risk when travelers go off-channel

Off-channel bookings don’t just create a compliance gap—they create a safety gap.

No location tracking

When a traveler books on a personal Uber or Airbnb account, your program has no idea where they are. In an emergency, that blind spot can have serious consequences.

No insurance coverage

Standard corporate travel insurance policies are written around hotel and rental car stays. Non-hotel accommodations and personal rideshare accounts may fall entirely outside that coverage.

No incident response

Hotels have front desks. Rental car companies have 24/7 support lines. A personal Airbnb listing or Lyft ride has neither—leaving your traveler without a safety net if something goes wrong.

What visibility gives you

Real-time traveler location data

Emergency alert and response capability

Incident documentation trail

Insurance-compatible booking records

Policy-compliant receipts and approvals

Client confidence in duty of care

Hertz and Hilton meet Uber and Airbnb

Understanding both worlds is the first step to managing them

Traditional vendors

Hotels
Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, Hampton Inn

Rental cars
Hertz, Avis, National, Enterprise

Billing
Centralized, corporate card, VAT-ready

Safety
Standardized, ADA compliant, 24/7 support

Compliance
Policy-aligned, receipt-ready, trackable

VS

Sharing economy

Homeshare
Airbnb, Vrbo—self-service stays

Rideshare
Uber, Lyft—on-demand, app-based

Cost profile
Variable pricing, personal card required

Safety
No standard protocols, variable coverage

Compliance
Visibility gap—receipts, tracking, duty of care

Preferred vendors vs. sharing economy: Managing both worlds

Understanding the vendor landscape is the foundation of a sound visibility strategy

Preferred program vendors

Airlines
Negotiated corporate fares, preferred seating and status benefits

Hotel chains
Program rates, loyalty points, and centralized billing

Rental cars
Corporate CDW coverage, fleet agreements and direct billing

TMC / Advisors
Full-service booking support, policy enforcement at point of sale

Sharing economy—manage with visibility

Uber / Lyft
On-demand rideshare—already in use by travelers, with or without policy

Airbnb for Work
Alt accommodations—corporate tools available if client authorizes

Personal Airbnb / Vrbo
Highest risk—no tracking, no receipts, no duty of care

Other platforms
Any unauthorized booking platform creates a complete visibility gap

Booking channels: Online tools vs. off-channel spend

Online adoption is a positive signal—but online doesn't automatically mean in-policy

Managed channels

Online booking tool (OBT)
Travelers self-book air, hotel and car through policy-compliant tools. Spend is captured, receipts auto-generated, policy enforced at booking.

Full-service advisor
Complex itineraries, VIP travel, and international trips handled by advisors—full policy control and documentation.

Corporate card integration
All managed bookings feed into consolidated reporting, providing complete spend visibility across the program.

Off-channel / unmanaged

Personal rideshare accounts
Uber or Lyft booked on a personal account—no corporate tracking, no receipt capture, traveler invisible to the program.

Personal Airbnb / Vrbo
Accommodation booked outside approved tools—no duty of care, no insurance alignment, no expense system integration.

Any unauthorized platform
Whether a traveler books on a personal account or an unapproved site, the result is the same: a complete visibility gap.

Managing rideshare: Uber and Lyft in your program

Corporate account tools give travel managers the control they need

Works well when...

- Urban city centers and airports
- Solo traveler, short trip
- Client-authorized and pre-approved
- Corporate account used—not personal

Use caution when...

- Rural or international markets
- High-risk travel regions
- Executive or sensitive trips
- No corporate account in place

Corporate account controls

1. Centralized billing dashboard
2. Ride-type restrictions enforced
3. Surge pricing caps configurable
4. Auto expense platform sync
5. Traveler GPS and duty of care
6. Corporate profile required—not personal

Alternative accommodations: Airbnb, Vrbo, and beyond

The goal is visibility and control—not promotion over preferred vendors

Safety and security

No standardized security, fire checks, or ADA compliance. No 24/7 support.

Insurance and liability

Standard corporate insurance may not cover non-hotel incidents. Review policy.

Invoicing and compliance

Receipts often don't fit expense systems. VAT/GST reclaim requires extra steps.

- Centralized billing
- Employee travel profiles
- Duty of care dashboard
- Work-friendly property filters

Some travelers are already booking alternative accommodations whether or not it is in policy. Christopherson's role is to ensure that when client-authorized bookings occur, travel managers have full visibility, compliance, and duty of care coverage.

A framework for visibility and control: Defined by your policy

Each client defines what is authorized. Christopherson provides the tools to enforce it.

Client approved
Authorized spend

When a client authorizes alternative ground or accommodation bookings, those transactions flow through approved platforms—spend captured, receipts collected, travelers within duty of care coverage.

Requires approval
Client-defined exceptions

Some clients may allow certain alternative bookings on a case-by-case basis. The client determines the criteria; Christopherson ensures the process is documented and visible.

Outside policy
Unauthorized bookings

Any booking outside the client's defined policy and approved platforms creates a visibility gap—no tracking, no receipts, no duty of care. The framework's goal is to eliminate that gap.

Technology integration: Connecting the ecosystem

The right integrations turn fragmented off-channel spend into managed, visible program data

Booking platforms

Uber for Business
Corporate rideshare with centralized billing and controls

Lyft Business
Alternative rideshare with corporate account dashboard

Airbnb for Work
Alt accommodations with duty of care and policy tools

Concur / OBT
Primary online booking tool for air, hotel and car

Integration layer

What your program gains

Consolidated spend reporting
All bookings—traditional and alternative—visible in one dashboard. No more blind spots.

Improved traveler tracking
Duty of care coverage extends to rideshare and alt accommodation bookings when made through corporate tools.

Automated receipt capture
Expense platform integration eliminates manual receipt submission for all connected platforms.

Policy enforcement at booking
Spend caps, ride-type restrictions, and accommodation filters enforced at the point of booking—not after.

Your next steps

- Audit current off-channel bookings
- Evaluate non-traditional ground and accommodation options
- Review insurance for alt accommodation language
- Define your client-specific authorization framework
- Connect platforms to expense and risk tools
- Communicate updates—make compliance easy

Questions?

Connect with your Christopherson travel consultant for a program assessment today.

cbtravel.com

Thank you