

# AIRBNB SPENDS A FORTUNE TO SMOOTH OUT UNPLEASANT STAYS



Born between 2007 and 2008 from the idea of two students who decided to use the web to rent a small space of their home, Airbnb has been able to collect impressive success and carving out a place in the perception of the public on par with other platforms dedicated to tourism such as Booking, Expedia etc.

Financially speaking, it is perhaps an even better story. The company is valued above \$ 100 billion on the stock market, which is more than the combined value of the world's four largest hotel companies, according to calculations by the Financial Times. **Moreover, the IPO has allowed Airbnb to raise more than three billion dollars.**

## Unpleasant Stays in Airbnb Apartments

However, it seems that all is not so rosy for the American company. Over the years, Airbnb has built a special 'security team' to handle difficult situations. A real crisis management department made up of competent figures in the field and who in the past have held similar roles in the political and military fields.

Testimonials have been collected about an 'extremely stressful' work activity that rests on the delicate balance of providing support to victims and protecting the public image of the company.

And apparently, no expenses are spared. The company allegedly spends about 50 million dollars per year to solve problems that can range from simple claims for damage to property or theft, to the 7-million-dollar plea deal reached with a woman who was the victim of violence in a rented apartment in New York, where she was attacked by a stranger in possession of a duplicate key to the apartment.

## 'Really Bad Things'

According to Airbnb, 0.1 % of stays are reported as 'unpleasant stays', but it must be taken into account that the company deals with about 200 million bookings per year.

Airbnb points out that most cases are minor and that six-figure deals are exceptionally rare. On the other hand, it must be noted that those who register on the platform are required to accept the terms of the service, where legal claims for damage or stress deriving from a stay are excluded and private arbitration is the solution in case of a dispute.

Furthermore, unpleasant situations also arose as a result of measures introduced by governments to stem the pandemic. The security team was overwhelmed by calls over infection issues.

Added to this were the housing **owners who used the opportunity to transform the properties into "night clubs"**, with easy imaginable consequences for law enforcement, public health and, of course, the security team of the company.

This was also acknowledged by Tara Bunch, head of Airbnb's global operations. "We are dealing

with real people in the houses of real people. People are unpredictable by nature and no matter how hard we try, sometimes really bad things happen,” she said.

“We all know that you can’t prevent everything, but it all depends on how you respond and when it happens you have to do it the right way and that’s what we try to do every time,” Bunch concluded.

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