

# EU SET TO CLAMP DOWN ON MISLEADING SITES



How many times have you come across the feeling that you are being ripped off on an airline website whilst ordering a ticket? Unfortunately, there seems to be a growing tendency amongst airline companies of all sizes to purposely mislead and downright deceive the customer. The most typical methods used are pre-checking boxes for optional items, luring customers onto the site in the first place by offering something which is either unavailable or not available at all. Furthermore, the sites have been known to purposely avoid putting the conditions of purchase into the language of the customer and to avoid mentioning the final price as long as possible. The good news for airline travellers is that such immoral practice is only likely to continue for a short while and shall be eradicated at the latest by May 1, 2009. This is the new directive of the EU after their investigation revealed an internet horror story.

The fact that a number of airline websites has tick boxes already ticked or not ticked to suit the company is not a coincidence. It is a ploy to trick people into paying for things they may not need. Out of the 386 EU and Norwegian sites investigated, 137 were deemed to be misleading in a way that customers are clearly being deluded. 58% of the sites were found to have irregularities in contract terms and nearly all of them were guilty of not advertising the real price. Instead, many were found to advertise a price for a flight which nobody could possibly pay unless they were to travel without having paid any taxes or having any luggage. The airline is similarly fully aware that the flight being advertised for a ridiculous price is very rarely available. The sites are going to have to clear their act up soon before strict EU intervention.

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