Agreement Amsterdam and Airbnb

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Why did we select this case?

This case study describes the agreement between Amsterdam and Airbnb. The deal is often used as an example case for other cities who want to regulate the operations of Airbnb.

About the case

In 2014 the city of Amsterdam signed an agreement with Airbnb. In the agreement, as updated per November 2016, the municipality made clear that housing in the city should primarily cater to its citizens and not be rented out like hotels (City of Amsterdam , 2016). Airbnb blocks bookings on its platform after an Amsterdam host has rented out his accommodation for sixty days in a year. Airbnb, as of May 2017, claims it's automated limit system has already reduced disobeyance of the 60-day rule with 66%. Another part of the agreement includes that Airbnb collects tourist taxes, which amount to 5% of the total booking fee, from Amsterdam hosts and remits these to the municipality. From 2018 onwards, a 6% tourist tax will apply in the most popular areas of the city and a 4% tourist tax in less popular areas, while a general 6% tax will apply to peer-to-peer short term lets. In addition some requirements have been in place for sharing short stays since 2013, that is: the property is the hosts' primary residence; they are the owner of the property or obtain permission from their landlord; the property meets fire safety requirements; hosts pay taxes on their income; and that short-term rentals do not cause their neighbours disruption.

To prevent that hosts rent out their accommodation for more than sixty days, the municipality encourages citizens to use its 'Meldpunt Zoeklicht' hotline to report illegal activity and disruption. Another method the municipality uses is called 'web scraping', through which it compiles its own data from the Airbnb website. If the municipality finds any information suggesting illegal practices, it contacts Airbnb, which shares information with them pertaining to that specific apartment, so that the municipality can check whether illegal practices may indeed be taking place. Furthermore, the municipality has introduced a registration obligation , which will be in force from the 1st of October, 2017 and requires hosts to inform the municipality each time they rent out their property. Along with this, the municipality has stepped up its enforcement efforts by increasing the height of maximum fines, tripling its enforcement budget, and through undercover inspection of short-term rentals.

Want to know more?

- https://www.amsterdam.nl/nieuwsarchief/persberichten/2016/persberichten-1/amsterdam-and-airbnb/
- https://www.amsterdam.nl/wonen-leefomgeving/wonen/bijzondere-situaties/vakantieverhuur/ [in Dutch]

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