
BookAhead 'Quick Start Guide' v1.4

26 April 2009

BookAhead Online Booking System

www.bookaheadnow.com
(About)

www.bookahead.com.au
(Consumers)

www.bookahead.com.au/book_admin
(Administrators/Operators)



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QUICK START GUIDE



Please note : this document contains references to more comprehensive documentation in the **BookAhead System Manual** – you should download a copy from the help link available at http://www.bookahead.com.au/book_admin after logging in with the username and password supplied to you.

It is recommended you thoroughly familiarise yourself with your new booking system, but we recognise Tourism Operators may have better things to do – like looking after guests and passengers !

The following pages summarise key things you should check before using your new BookAhead system. The Quick Start Guide assumes you are a tourism Operator managing a single online tourism entity, in our terms an “Operator Administrator”. Those administering larger networks should read the Super Administrator and Brand Administrator sections of the manual.

LOGIN

Sign in with your username and password at http://www.bookahead.com.au/book_admin

EDIT PROFILE

http://www.bookahead.com.au/book_admin/main.php?pagename=edit_operator_profile

Ensure all your details are accurate and up to date, paying particular attention to :

Child and Infant Ages

Default to Child : 3-14 and Infant 0-2 but these can be edited to suit your rules

Availability Viewing Window Start

Very important to prevent short notice bookings (for example if you wish to prevent pax booking online on mobile internet outside your property/tour office, then turning up for immediate check-in!)

Setting this to the default (2) means the next 2 days are not able to be booked online, even if availability exists. See **Error! Reference source not found.** for a more detailed explanation.

Availability Viewing Window End

You may choose to maintain availability for 1 or 2 (or more) years in advance. Using the default setting of 365 means Consumers will only be able to check availability for the next 365 days, regardless how much availability exists after that date. To ensure no one can see your availability after the next 3 months, you would change this setting to 90 days, for example. See **Error! Reference source not found.** for a more detailed explanation.

Payment Options

Ensure the Payment Options you wish to offer Consumers are correct, including any applicable payment surcharge

Payment Surcharge

You are able to add an optional surcharge to cover credit card merchant fees etc.

Email Signature

Personalises the emails sent to Consumers by the system on your behalf.



Terms and Conditions / Cancellation Policy

Ensure these are up to date and match your legal terms. Pax need to agree to these terms (which they can read and print) before they are permitted to proceed with a booking.

Booking Fee End User

This amount is charged to the Consumer (usually to reimburse the booking fee charged by BookAhead) – please ensure it reflects the amount you wish to pass on to the Consumer.

ADD SERVICE

http://www.bookahead.com.au/book_admin/main.php?pagename=view_products

Add one or more Services describing what you sell

ADD OFFER

http://www.bookahead.com.au/book_admin/main.php?pagename=view_products

For each new service, follow the “Add Offer” link to stipulates what your offer costs (ie. How much to book this Service?) with the terms and conditions attached.

Offers are categorised as either “**Hot Offer**” (20%+ discount), “**Last Minute**” (shows only short term availability to Consumers), and “**Online Offers**” (all other offers).

A further offer type off “**Add On**” exists which is attached as an optional extra to other offers. Eg. You may have a “Stay 7 nights Pay 5 nights” offer “Hot Offer”, and then attach the option of “Add-Ons” such as Airport Transfers, Cot Hire etc

ADD AVAILABILITY

For booking links to appear on your site you must follow the link to Add Availability from the Offer details.

Set a date or range of dates for the Offer as either Available (instant booking from ‘open freesale’), On Request (requires confirmation by your reservations personnel) or Unavailable (Sold Out).

TEST BOOKINGS

We strongly recommend you create at least 3 reservations using the data you have set up above, addressing each of the following functions. (note further assistance to set up testing is available at **Error! Reference source not found.**

You can access the bookable offers from either :

BookAhead Portal

<http://www.bookahead.com.au>

Your Private Label Site

eg. <http://www.bookahead.com.au/Operator/{your Operator ID}>

Follow the booking process to see what the Consumer sees.

Customer Profile / Account

After making one reservation, you will have an active 'account' (or profile) on the system. You can choose to make multiple bookings under this profile, or logout of the site and create a new customer/booking.

System Emails

Using a valid email address, you will receive the system-generated emails sent to Consumers. (You might choose to use a free email service like www.gmail.com to separate the Consumer correspondence from the others system advices.

Your **Reservation Email** address (from your Profile) will receive the system-generated email advices sent to you as the Tourism Operator.

Available and On Request

If you intend to provide Available and On Request offers, you should try booking each type of availability, to see how the system treats each differently.

Payment Methods

We suggest you attempt payment by each of the Payment Methods you offer. This will demonstrate how the Consumer is redirected to the various secure payment options.

Payment Testing

We have a number of options for testing secure payments if you choose to.

OPPORTUNITIES



The more you put into BookAhead, the more you can expect to receive. The system is designed to reward the effort of maintaining accurate information and providing attractive offers to Consumers.

Text Content

Take some quiet uninterrupted time (somehow!) to ensure your Operator Profile, Services and Offers are all attractively set up, with good 'Call-To-Action' Language. Focus on what the Consumer is being offered and how special the deal use. Encourage them to Book Now

Imagery

Make sure an image is uploaded for all Services and Offers to show people what they get. Complete your Image Gallery by uploading the images in your Operator Profile.

Focus on "Savings"

Ensure the Offer "Normal Price" is completed if your Offer Price represents a substantial saving.

Available Offers

Where able, have as many "Available" offers as possible, which allows the Consumer to book and pay immediately with no additional workload for you. "On Request" offers are ideal where you have limited space or are unable to offer open freesale. As availability gets tight, you might change Available offers to On Request.

Upsell

BookAhead allows you to add Services which represent other products you might choose to sell. Why not add a day tour or hire car service, then place an offer with availability on your site ? This will allow Consumers to create a more complex itinerary with lots of extras (and commission for you)

Add On

The system allows you to create “Add On” offers which are shown to Consumers at the time of checkout. Anything you might add to bookings should be included as an Add-On to remind Consumers they can ‘enhance’ their booking. Add-Ons are assumed to be always fully available, so normally include items like Breakfast Baskets, Airport Transfers, Cot Hire, and anything else you wish to add. An Add-On is then “attached” to one or more offers to be promoted when a Consumer chooses the parent offer.

Last Minute

If you currently receive bookings from the Last Minute sites (Wotif, LastMinute, ReadyRooms etc) it is a great idea to set up your **own** on-site Last Minute offers. It is likely savvy consumers will see your business name in the Last Minute site and ‘google you’. If they arrive on your home page and see a prominent link to “Standby Rates” or “Last Minute Deals”, it’s equally likely they will book direct, saving you the commission that would otherwise be deducted by the Last Minute site. Importantly, BookAhead allows you to set the Last Minute offers within the threshold expected by wholesalers and other suppliers (eg. no more than 14-28 days in advance, so while you set the Availability only once, you ‘set and forget’ knowing the Consumer will only ever see a limited window of availability.

PROMOTE !



Once all is set up to your satisfaction, link to your Mini-Site and Special Offers wherever possible. Place a prominent link on your website, place a link in email signatures, and use persuasive language like :

See how much you can save by Booking TODAY at :

<http://www.bookahead.com.au/Operator/{your Operator ID}>

Last Minute Deals Available ! :

{Copy and Paste the Last Minute URL from your mini-site}

25% during February – Limited Offer !

{Copy and Paste the Hot Offer URL from your mini-site}