FAQ: Christopherson Business Travel vs Google Flights or Kayak

Q: I am trying to book flights for a VCU business trip and found flights on Google Flights and Kayak much cheaper than Christopherson Business Travel (CBT)! What gives?

A: There could be a few different reasons why CBT is showing higher fares than what you are seeing on Google Flights:

• Many times, travel search engines such as Google Flights or Kayak will show fares that are in basic economy class. The University does not allow CBT to book this class of service as basic economy class due to it’s heavily restricted nature.

• Travel Search Engines rely heavily on hacker fares and third party vendors which put the employee at risk of not having support in the event of flight cancellations, weather emergencies, or missing flights, or additional costs.

• Travel Search Engines will display fares which are showing as published by the airlines, however, this doesn’t mean the fare is necessarily available. Many times, once you click on the selected fare, you will be prompted to choose one of multiple booking options to book that fare. Once you do, the fare is actually higher than what was initially quoted.
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Illustration

Scenario: Employee is trying to book a one-way ticket from Munich to Washington DC (Dulles) on Monday, May 13th and initial search results showed a much lower fare on Google Flights and Kayak than what was available via the online booking tool through CBT:

CBT - $746.93 for the same flights
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**Illustration**

Scenario: It seems the employee would save $130 by booking outside of CBT, let’s take a look at what happens!

Google Flights: Lower fare booked through my choice of third party booking sites, at both sites, the lowest fare available though, is $673.93; this is for Basic Economy Class; upgrading to Standard Economy changes the fare to $746.93.

CBT - $746.93 for the same flights
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**Illustration**

Scenario: It seems the employee would save $130 by booking outside of CBT, let’s take a look at what happens!

Kayak: The lower fare offered did not allow any changes, Flexible Ticket was offered for a slightly higher fare; this ticket was offered by a third party supplier who uses *a la carte* pricing, additional charges were added to check baggage, pre-select seats, and have a basic level of support that did not provide a quick response time in the case of an emergency. Total cost would have been $825.88

**CBT - $746.93 for the same flights**
Christopherson Business Travel

• Fulfills the University’s Duty of Care program

• Christopherson offers an Online Booking Tool (OBT) or employees may call a knowledgeable full service travel agent

• CBT offers exceptional suite of reporting & management tools, can assist with effectively managing travel spend and tracking policy compliance

• Offers an online support team for employees using the online booking tool
  – If you are having difficulty finding flights/fares found elsewhere, contact them at:
    • Email: onlinesupport@cbtravel.com
    • Phone: 888-535-0179

• VCU agent Team:
  – Email: vcu@cbtravel.com
  – Phone: 855-864-1718 (including after hours service)