

INTERNET

## Communities form around potential Luxury Link closure

May 22, 2015



*Elbow Beach, Bermuda is a Luxury Link destination*

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By NANCY BUCKLEY

Travel Web site Luxury Link is rumored to have ceased operations this week without any warning for consumers.



The site has been in operation since 1997 and has served consumers with unique trips for lower prices than normal. The rumors began on travel forums across the Internet from concerned consumers looking for answers.

A **Luxury Link** spokesperson told Luxury Daily in a statement, "Luxury Link has entered into a General Assignment for the Benefit of Creditors, ABC, and Corporate Management, Inc. is the assignee."

Mixed messages

In January, Gilt added a new line of shoppable luxury items through its partnership with Luxury Link.

Consumers from Gilt were able to continue their exclusive access provided by the Web site in their travel purchases (**see story**).

"Luxury Link was an independent company that was not owned or operated by Gilt and

had been in business for over 15 years," said a **Gilt** spokesperson. "However, we do understand that many Gilt members booked trips on Luxury Link, in part due to the marketing relationship it had with Gilt.

"Yesterday morning we notified the Gilt members that we believe may have made an upcoming travel booking through Luxury Link. As the bookings occur directly with Luxury Link, and not through Gilt, we don't have specific details, but we are doing our best to try and help our customers work through this unfortunate and inconvenient experience."

The news of the potential closure was first reported by **Forbes** and exposed that Luxury Link has been facing recent financial problems.

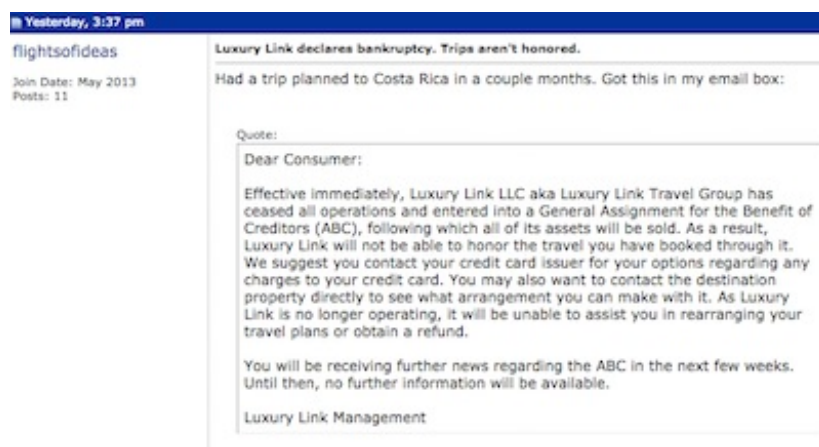


### *Luxury Link forum on Trip Advisor*

Travel forum sites such as Boarding Area, TripAdvisor and Flyertalk have conversation threads from consumers surrounding the rumors.

On TripAdvisor, a thread that began July 1, 2014 about the legitimacy of Luxury Link and it has been stagnant since, but on May 15 the thread picked up again with a consumer advising against using the site.

This consumer speaks about an incident where their trip's hotel reservation was cancelled without any warning. A few other posts from the day have mixed messaging about the company going out-of-business and then some consumers booking without any troubles.



### *Flyertalk forum*

Another TripAdvisor thread began on May 20 and asks for help about what to do with pre-booked trips through Luxury Link.

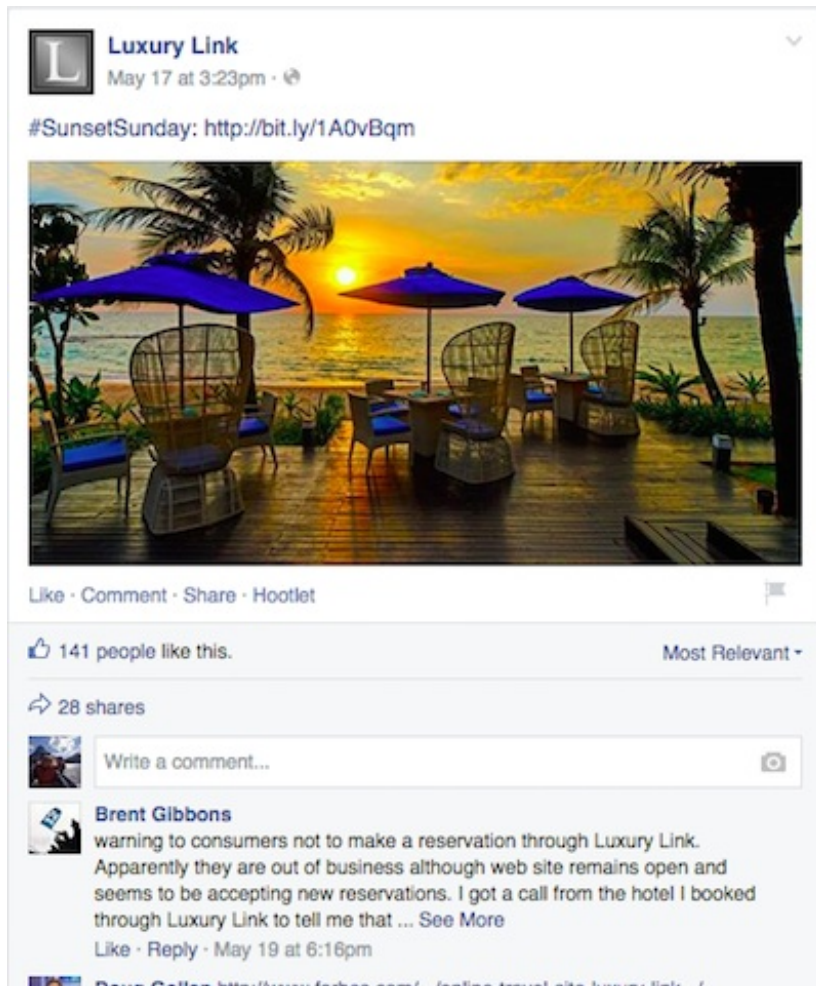
On both threads one commenter, "scott-moron" repeatedly comments. In fact, his

TripAdvisor account has only ever commented on Luxury Link threads. Many individuals on the thread have questioned if this man is Scott Morrow, the CEO of Luxury Link.

Other forum sites, such as Flyertalk have threads focusing on the notice that many individuals have reported receiving from Luxury Link.

The email states, “Effective immediately, Luxury Link LLC aka Luxury Link Travel Group has ceased all operations and entered into a General Assignment for the Benefit of Creditors (ABC), following which all of its assets will be sold.”

Many commenters are expressing concern about their pre-planned trips and potential refunds.



### *Facebook conversation*

When using a site such as Luxury Link, the consumer pays and the site receives the money and then it pays the hotel. Many individuals have reported that the hotels in which they were planning to stay have not received payment from Luxury Link.

On Luxury Link's Web site everything seems to be the same except for when the consumer attempts to complete a transaction. At this point, they are brought to a screen that says, "We apologize but we are unable to process your request at this time."

Another community sharing conversation was started on May 19 on Luxury Link's Facebook. Consumers warned one another about Luxury Link's closure.

As of press time, Luxury Link's social media pages remain active.

## Community gatherings

Although the community was formed around the likely closure of Luxury Link, the idea of a community growing around a single brand is often the goal of marketers. In fact, previously some brands have attempted community conversation around campaigns.

For instance, department store chain Nordstrom was among the first luxury brands to create its own Reddit username and community.

The social media platform creates a space for individuals to hold discussions and vote upon topics. Nordstrom created a Reddit likely to create consumer interaction beyond Facebook likes, tweets and Instagram photos, and the nature of Reddit will allow the brand to hold conversations with its consumers about directed topics ([see story](#)).

Other conversations have been generated on Twitter.

For example, Italian fashion house Fendi hosted a Twitter conversation between accessories creative director Silvia Venturini Fendi and fashion blogger Susanna Lau of Style Bubble.

Fendi asked fans to submit questions prior to the talk by tweeting with the branded hashtag #Fenditalks, which were then posed to Ms. Fendi by Ms. Lau. By hosting this Fendi talk, the brand was able to boost consumer engagement with its relatively new Twitter account, and possibly gain some followers from Ms. Lau's fans ([see story](#)).

## Final Take

*Nancy Buckley, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/2bmNxIm3KQg>

1 thought on “Communities form around potential Luxury Link closure”

1. Rob says:

[May 28, 2015 at 6:20 pm](#)

It's pretty unethical to take peoples' money and hold it for several months with out any intention of paying your hotels.

Hotels are usually paid in 2 days to 2 weeks because of the volatility of hotel rates.

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