WHITE PAPER · NOVEMBER 2026

Migrate a legacy booking platform: a planning guide for travel marketplaces

How to replace a custom booking system or marketplace in phases, without losing bookings

Published by TAK Devs
Published November 4, 2026 · Last checked November 2, 2026

Contents

/01 What does a legacy booking platform cost a travel business?

/02 Should you replace it with a custom platform or an off-the-shelf system?

/03 How do you map integrations before you migrate a booking platform?

/04 How do you plan the cutover without losing bookings?

/05 What does a modern booking platform need at launch?

/06 What should be on a legacy booking platform migration checklist?

/07 How did Holiday Horse move from Magento to a booking marketplace?

/08 What does the Holiday Horse rebuild teach about integration order?

/09 Frequently asked questions

/10 How this paper was checked

/11 References

/00

Executive summary

THE SHORT ANSWER

Migrate a legacy booking platform in phases. List every system it connects to, decide which data and integrations move first, and schedule the cutover outside your busiest booking months. Hotels still spend 63% of their tech budgets maintaining legacy systems, according to Skift Research (2025) , so map integrations before you pick a platform.

Most of a hotel's tech budget goes to keeping old systems alive, not to winning bookings. Booking marketplaces built on an aging monolith pay the same tax: every new currency, payment method or partner feed costs weeks.

This paper is for owners, product leads and executives running a custom or legacy booking platform or marketplace in the EU or UK. It covers custom booking platforms and marketplaces, not off-the-shelf hotel property management systems. You get the numbers, a custom or off-the-shelf decision, an integration map, a cutover plan, an eight-point checklist and the Holiday Horse rebuild as proof.

Three findings

01 Legacy upkeep crowds out growth. Hotels spend 63% of tech budgets keeping legacy systems running (Skift Research, 2025[1]), and only 11% of operators in Otelier's 2026 vendor survey[2] report a fully integrated stack.

02 Integrations set the schedule. In HotelTechReport's 2026 survey of 450 operators[3], 24% named data migration complexity as their top worry about switching systems. Map every connection before you choose a platform.

03 The deadlines are not yours. Adobe ends standard support for Adobe Commerce 2.4.7, formerly Magento, on May 31, 2027 (Adobe lifecycle policy[4]), and EU accessibility and payment rules already apply. Plan the move before a vendor date plans it for you.

/01

What does a legacy booking platform cost a travel business?

A guest picks dates, sees a price in the wrong currency, and leaves. A host asks for a new payout option and waits a quarter. Nobody files that as a technology cost. It is one.

Skift Research's Hotel Technology Priorities 2025[1] found that 63% of hotel tech budgets still go to maintaining legacy systems, many of which cannot handle complex data integration. That money buys stability, not growth. Every euro spent keeping an old system alive is a euro not spent on search, conversion or new markets.

The cost compounds. The longer an old platform runs, the fewer people understand it, the more workarounds pile up around it, and the more the eventual move costs. Delay does not avoid the migration. It makes it bigger.

63%
of hotel tech budgets go to maintaining legacy systems (Skift Research, 2025)

65%
of hoteliers cite difficulty integrating legacy systems (2026 Lodging Technology Study)

11%
of surveyed hotel operators report a fully integrated tech stack (Otelier, 2026)

Integration is where the cost hides. Hospitality Technology's 2026 Lodging Technology Study, as summarized in a Maestro PMS release[5], reports that 65% of hoteliers cite difficulty integrating legacy systems as a major barrier to innovation. Otelier's 2026 Hotel Operations Index[2], vendor research from a hotel software company, found that 91% of surveyed operators still rely on some manual reporting and 27% spend more than 11 hours a week consolidating data by hand.

Those figures come from hotels, but marketplaces carry the same weight. A custom booking platform connects to payments, email, calendars, partner feeds, maps and reporting. Each link was built for the old system's data model. Change the core and every link moves with it.

The real risk is not the migration. It is three more years on a platform that slows every change. Speed is part of that bill. In a Google web.dev case study[6], Vodafone found that a 31% faster Largest Contentful Paint, the time the main content takes to appear, led to 8% more sales. Old monoliths rarely get faster on their own.

/02

Should you replace it with a custom platform or an off-the-shelf system?

Pick the replacement by what your business sells, not by what the old system was. A single hotel with standard rooms and rates usually fits an off-the-shelf property management system or booking engine, and most migration guides are written for that buyer. A marketplace with several user groups, unusual inventory or its own commission and subscription model will find that packaged software bends the business to fit its data model.

Switching packaged systems is not free either. In HotelTechReport's 2026 study of 450 hotel operators[3], 26% named staff training and 24% named data migration complexity as the biggest barriers to switching, while 48% said they would leave a vendor over reliability and 42% over cybersecurity.

TABLE 1. CUSTOM PLATFORM OR OFF-THE-SHELF SYSTEM. SOURCE: TAK DEVS COMPARISON, NOVEMBER 2026.

Factor	Off-the-shelf system	Custom platform
Best fit	Single properties with standard rooms, rates and channels	Marketplaces with several user groups or unusual inventory
Data model	Fixed by the vendor	Built around your listings, hosts and pricing
Integrations	Whatever the vendor supports	Whatever the business needs, at a build cost
Upgrades	On the vendor's calendar	On your calendar, through your own release pipeline
Main risk	Workarounds when your model does not fit	Scope growth without a phased plan

A quick test helps. List the five things your business does that a guest or host would notice if they broke. If an off-the-shelf product handles all five without custom code, buy it. If two or more need workarounds, you already pay for a custom platform, just in staff hours instead of software.

Staying put has a date on it too. Many custom marketplaces started on Magento. Adobe's Commerce lifecycle policy[4] gives each release three years of standard support, and version 2.4.7 loses it on May 31, 2027. From June 1, 2027, Adobe says it may suspend traffic to Adobe Commerce on Cloud environments running unsupported versions, which takes the storefront offline. The same page flags PHP 8.2 reaching end of life on December 31, 2026 as a risk to payment card compliance.

Whichever way you go, replace in phases. Martin Fowler's Strangler Fig pattern[7] builds the new system around the old one and moves behavior across piece by piece. He writes that like-for-like rewrites usually go badly, because teams struggle to pin down what the old system really does, and much of that behavior is no longer wanted anyway.

/03

How do you map integrations before you migrate a booking platform?

Integrations decide the order of every phase, so map them before you choose a platform. A booking platform rarely fails at its core. It fails at the edges: the nightly export to accounting, the webhook a partner relies on, the email template nobody owns.

Start with a list, not a diagram. Ask finance, support, marketing and operations which tools touch the platform, then confirm it against server logs, scheduled jobs and the payment provider's dashboard. People forget the spreadsheet export until it breaks.

On a typical booking marketplace the list runs longer than anyone expects: card payments and payouts, transactional email, calendar sync, maps, search, reviews, analytics, the CMS, partner feeds, invoicing and the accounting export. Each one has an owner, a data format and a way to fail.

1. **Inventory every connection**
   Record each system, the direction data flows, how often, who owns it and what breaks if it stops. Include payments, email, calendars, maps, analytics, partner feeds and back-office exports.

2. **Rank by revenue at risk**
   Booking, availability and payment links come first. A broken newsletter sync costs less than a broken availability feed.

3. **Mark what must stay live**
   Decide which integrations keep working during the move and which can pause for a planned window.

4 **Decide the data that moves**
Migrate future bookings, live listings and active accounts, then archive or delete the rest. The European Commission's GDPR guidance[8] says personal data should be kept for the shortest time possible and that companies should set time limits to erase or review it.

5 **Write the contract for each link**
Document fields, formats and error handling before code is written, so old and new systems can run side by side.

A migration is the cheapest moment to drop data you should not keep. Moving five years of inactive guest records into a new system copies a problem, not an asset.

/04

How do you plan the cutover without losing bookings?

The cutover window is a business decision. Pick it from your booking calendar, not the developers' calendar. For a travel marketplace that usually means the quietest weeks between seasons, never the run-up to summer or the holiday weekends your hosts depend on.

Plan for the switch to go wrong, then rehearse it. A rollback plan only counts if the team has run it on a copy of production data before launch day.

1. Freeze changes on the old platform ahead of cutover, so you migrate a stable target.
2. Run a full rehearsal migration and time it. The real one will take about as long.
3. Move one market or a small share of traffic to the new platform first, then widen it.
4. Keep the old system read-only and recoverable until the new one has handled real bookings, payments and refunds.
5. Name one person who can call the rollback, and the trigger that makes them call it.
6. Tell hosts, partners and support teams the date, what changes for them and who to call.

Compare the first two weeks on the new platform with the last two on the old one: booking conversion, payment failures, refund volume and support tickets. If a number moves the wrong way, the rollback decision has a named trigger instead of a debate.

TEST IT WITH ONE REFUND

Before go-live, take one real booking through payment, change and refund on the new platform. A refund touches payments, availability, email and accounting at once, so it exposes broken links fast.

Payments need their own plan. Article 97 of PSD2, the EU's revised Payment Services Directive, requires strong customer authentication when a payer initiates an electronic payment. The European Banking Authority[9] has said that a refund a merchant initiates from its own account also needs it, unless an exemption applies. Agree with your payment provider how saved cards, subscriptions and refunds carry over before you set the date.

/05

What does a modern booking platform need at launch?

Do not rebuild the old platform in new code. Rebuild what the business needs now and drop what it does not. For an EU or UK booking marketplace, five things are hard to add later.

- A content, language and currency model fixed before design starts, because prices, listings and emails all depend on it.
- Real-time availability, booking confirmation and guest to host messaging, agreed as launch features or as later phases.
- Payments and recurring billing for hosts or partners, with strong customer authentication and refunds tested end to end.
- A content management system (CMS), so marketing and operations publish without waiting on developers.
- Monitoring plus continuous integration and delivery (CI/CD) pipelines in place before cutover, so problems surface before guests report them.

Accessibility is a legal requirement now, not an extra. Since June 28, 2025, the European Accessibility Act has applied to e-commerce services offered to EU consumers. Bird & Bird[10] notes that it reaches providers based outside the EU and covers every step that leads to a transaction, payment included. A rebuild is the cheapest time to meet it.

Speed belongs on the launch list too. Set page speed targets for search and checkout, and measure them on real users from the first release.

Keep the scope honest. Every feature the old platform had but nobody used is a feature you do not have to rebuild, test or maintain. Ask for usage data before you write the backlog, and let it cut the list.

/06

What should be on a legacy booking platform migration checklist?

Run this checklist before you sign a contract or set a date. It works for custom builds and off-the-shelf systems alike. Mark each item done, partly done or missing. Each item names a decision, not a task, because decisions are what slip.

LEGACY BOOKING MIGRATION CHECKLIST

- [ ] **List every system connected to the booking platform.** Payments, email, calendars, maps, partner feeds, analytics and back-office exports. Confirm the list against logs and scheduled jobs, not memory.
- [ ] **Mark which integrations must stay live during the move.** Availability, booking and payment links usually cannot pause. Decide which others can stop for a planned window.
- [ ] **Decide the content, language and currency model before design starts.** Prices, listings, emails and invoices all depend on it. Changing it after the build is a rewrite, not a tweak.
- [ ] **Agree which real-time features are needed at launch.** Live availability, chat and notifications each add integration work. Launch the ones bookings depend on and phase the rest.
- [ ] **Plan payments and recurring billing.** Settle with your payment provider how saved cards, subscriptions and refunds move across, and where strong customer authentication applies.
- [ ] **Give marketing and operations a CMS.** If every content change needs a developer, the new platform inherits the old bottleneck.
- [ ] **Set up monitoring and CI/CD before cutover.** Automated builds, tests and alerts exist on day one, not after the first incident.
- [ ] **Name the cutover window and the rollback plan.** Pick the date from the booking calendar, rehearse the migration and name the person who can call a rollback.

Two or more items marked missing among the first five mean the platform choice is premature. Fix the map first, then choose. Items six to eight decide whether the new platform stays fast to change after launch, which is the reason you are moving in the first place.

/07

How did Holiday Horse move from Magento to a booking marketplace?

Holiday Horse is a German platform for farmhouse stays, countryside events and equestrian holidays, connecting hosts, guests and event organizers. Its original system was a Magento monolith that, according to the Holiday Horse case study[11], was hard to scale and limited multi-language and multi-currency content and real-time interaction.

12 months
research, design and full-cycle development

3 user groups
hosts, guests and event organizers

Multi-currency
and multi-language, localized for German and EU users

TAK Devs rebuilt the platform as a single-page app on a microservices architecture in 12 months. The work included multi-tenant host dashboards with role-based access controls, real-time booking, chat and email notifications, currency-based payments, and Stripe payments with recurring billing and subscription management. Accommodation, event, inventory, stable and profile modules came with it, along with certification, review and badge systems for verified listings.

Operations got their own layer: scalable infrastructure with automated CI/CD pipelines, continuous monitoring, and a CMS that lets marketing and operations teams manage content without developers.

The technology followed the needs: Angular for the single-page app, GraphQL with Apollo for data access, Strapi as the CMS, Stripe for payments and subscriptions, and Leaflet for maps, delivered through CI/CD pipelines. The case study's outcome summary describes a multi-lingual, multi-currency marketplace with multi-tenant host dashboards, real-time booking and chat, and localized usability for hosts and guests.

For a marketplace team weighing the same move, the useful lesson is the order. The data model, payments and content tools were treated as foundations, not features to bolt on later.

Mapped to the checklist, the project covered items three to seven: a multi-language and multi-currency model, real-time booking and chat, Stripe subscriptions, a CMS, and CI/CD with monitoring. The case study describes a marketplace rebuild. It makes no claim about hotel property management systems or channel managers, and neither does this paper. Read the full Holiday Horse case study for the stack and screens.

/08

What does the Holiday Horse rebuild teach about integration order?

The hardest parts of a booking platform are the ones that touch money, time and language at once. The Holiday Horse rebuild shows why. The case study[1] lists currency-based payments next to Stripe recurring billing and subscription management, so prices, host plans and payments all depended on one currency model. Real-time booking, chat and email notifications had to agree on a single view of availability. Multi-language content ran through listings, events, emails and the CMS.

That is why order matters more than the stack. Settle the currency and language model first, then payments, then real-time features, then the content tools. Each later piece reads data the earlier one defines, so reversing the order means reworking the early pieces when the later ones arrive.

The case study does not say which integration took longest. This section is TAK Devs' reading of the published scope, not a project log.

/09

Frequently asked questions

How long does it take to migrate a legacy booking platform?

It depends on the number of integrations, the data you move and whether you rebuild or switch systems. A full custom rebuild can take a year: TAK Devs rebuilt Holiday Horse from Magento in 12 months. Phased delivery puts the first working module live long before the last one moves.

Can you migrate a booking platform without downtime?

Plan for short, scheduled disruption rather than promising none. Run old and new systems side by side, move traffic in stages, keep the old platform recoverable and rehearse the rollback. Choose the cutover window from your booking calendar so any pause lands in your quietest weeks.

Should a booking marketplace use a custom platform or a PMS?

A single hotel with standard rooms and rates usually fits an off-the-shelf property management system. A marketplace with several user groups, unusual inventory or its own commission or subscription model usually needs a custom platform, because packaged software forces its own data model on the business.

When does Magento 2.4.7 lose support?

Adobe lists May 31, 2027 as the end of standard support for Adobe Commerce 2.4.7, with extended support to May 31, 2028. Adobe describes that extra year as being for Adobe Commerce customers, so check which edition you run. Read Adobe's lifecycle policy[4] before committing budget, because Adobe revises it.

Does the European Accessibility Act apply to booking websites?

If they sell to EU consumers, yes. Since June 28, 2025, the European Accessibility Act has covered e-commerce services, including providers based outside the EU and every step toward a transaction, payment included, according to Bird & Bird[10]. A platform rebuild is the cheapest time to meet it.

Test your platform against the checklist

Most of a hotel's tech budget goes to keeping old systems alive, not to winning bookings. Request the legacy booking migration checklist and test your platform against it before you choose a replacement.

Request the migration checklist

Read the full Holiday Horse case study

TAK Devs is a custom software and AI development company with headquarters in Islamabad and a presence in the US, serving clients in the US and Europe. We own the full software lifecycle: strategy, UI/UX, development, QA, cloud and maintenance. ISO 9001 and ISO 27001 certified. Developing Futures.

/10

How this paper was checked

We opened every source below on November 2, 2026 and checked each figure against the page it comes from. Hotel figures come from surveys of hotel operators; we label vendor research as such and apply it to booking marketplaces by analogy. Hospitality Technology's own study page blocked automated access, so its 65% figure is cited

through a published summary. Legal points are attributed to the named regulator or law firm. TAK Devs is not a law firm: ask counsel before relying on any reading here.

> General information, not legal advice.

/11

References

[1] **Skift**. Hotel Technology Priorities 2025: Innovation, Integration, and Impact, as reported on skift.com. Sep 11, 2025. https://skift.com/2025/09/11/hotels-risk-a-tech-trap-fixing-the-basics-unlocks-revenue/

[2] **Otelier**. The 2026 Hotel Operations Index: Progress, Pressure, and the Path Forward. 2026. https://resources.otelier.io/whitepapers/the-2026-hotel-operations-index-progress-pressure-and-the-path-forward

[3] **HotelTechReport**. 2026 Hotel Property Management Systems Impact Study: Market Research and Statistics. Oct 9, 2025. https://hoteltechreport.com/news/2026-hotel-pms-report

[4] **Adobe Experience League**. Adobe Commerce lifecycle policy. Updated Sep 18, 2026. https://experienceleague.adobe.com/en/docs/commerce-operations/release/planning/lifecycle-policy

[5] **eHotelier, Maestro PMS release**. Study shows Maestro PMS is delivering what hoteliers need and guests expect. Apr 16, 2026. https://insights.ehotelier.com/insights/2026/04/16/study-shows-maestro-pms-is-delivering-what-hoteliers-need-and-guests-expect/

[6] **Google, web.dev**. Vodafone: A 31% improvement in LCP increased sales by 8%. Mar 17, 2021. https://web.dev/case-studies/vodafone

[7] **martinfowler.com**. Strangler Fig. Aug 22, 2024. https://martinfowler.com/bliki/StranglerFigApplication.html

[8] **European Commission**. For how long can data be kept and is it necessary to update it?. n.d.. https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-topic/data-protection/rules-business-and-organisations/principles-gdpr/how-long-can-data-be-kept-and-it-necessary-update-it_en

[9] **European Banking Authority**. Q&A 2019_4855: Application of the strong customer authentication (SCA) in case of refund. Apr 23, 2021. https://www.eba.europa.eu/single-rule-book-qa/qna/view/publicId/2019_4855

[10] **Bird & Bird LLP**. A guide to navigating the European Accessibility Act for online retailers, service providers and platforms. Jan 8, 2025. https://www.twobirds.com/en/insights/2025/a-guide-to-navigating-the-european-accessibility-act-for-online-retailers-service-providers-and-plat

[11] **TAK Devs**. Holiday Horse Moves From Magento to a Marketplace for German Farmhouse Stays and Events. Updated Oct 16, 2026. https://takdevs.com/case-studies/tak-devs-revitalizes-a-german-farmhouse-accommodation-and-event-platform-into-a-scalable-digital-marketplace/