

Direct bookings

Reaching 40%+ direct without an agency or a developer — with Web Studio.

- 01 What a direct booking is actually worth, once you do the arithmetic
- 02 How large a promo code can be before it costs more than the commission
- 03 Why the site has to be fast, current, and yours

WHAT THE CHANNEL COSTS

Three costs. Only one of them shows up on the invoice.

The commission

Rp 150 juta

a year, on a miliar of room revenue booked through a 15% channel. Move ten points of that to direct and Rp 15 juta stays with you.

The relationship

Not yours

The email belongs to the platform. So does the review, and so does the second stay.

The brand

Theirs

Every stay teaches the guest to trust the platform. The name they remember next season is not yours.

“

On an OTA you are not a host. You are an inventory supplier — **and every booking you take builds their brand instead of yours.**

DO NOT FIRE THE CHANNEL

The OTA is a marketing machine you never had to build. The mistake is stopping there.

WHAT IT IS GOOD AT

Finding the guest

It puts your villa in front of somebody who has never heard of you, in a market you do not advertise in, in a language you do not speak. That is worth paying for — once.

WHAT IT IS NOT

A relationship

The same commission is charged again on the second stay, and the third, for a guest who by then knows your name, your pool and your housekeeper.

WHAT YOU DO WITH IT

The handover

The stay itself is yours. Ask for consent in the Guest Guide, keep the guest in your own CRM, and invite them back to a direct booking next season.

Pay the channel for the introduction. Do not pay it rent on the friendship.

And do it the lawful way, which is also the way that works: **consent the guest gives you, recorded with a date** — never contact details lifted from a platform. The guest who ticks the box is also the one who opens the email.

NOT A THEORY — A PORTFOLIO IN THIS ROOM

Villa Operator in Bali, eight months, 55.6% direct.

REVENUE

Rp 7.3 miliar

OCCUPANCY

78.2%

ADR

Rp 1.49 juta

REVPAR

Rp 1.17 juta

WHERE THE 490 BOOKINGS CAME FROM

Direct

Airbnb

Booking.com

55.6%

273 bookings

Agoda, Trip, Ctrip and Google Ads together: 2.2%, 10 bookings.

28.2%

138 bookings

14.0%

69 bookings

Average stay

10.1 nights

Commission avoided

≈ Rp 920 juta a year

Elevate Villas Bali, 1 January to 26 August 2026, from their Elev8 account, converted at CHF 1 = Rp 22,000. Commission avoided assumes direct revenue in proportion to direct bookings, at 15%, annualised — direct stays run longer than OTA stays, so the real figure is likely higher.

AGAINST THE MARKET

Everyone has a website. **Almost nobody books on it.**

	THIS PORTFOLIO	THE MARKET
Direct share of bookings	55.6%	About 34% across the market in 2025 — and 62% of operators are still under 25%, with 18% at zero.
A direct booking website	Yes	70% of operators already have one. Having the site was never the hard part.
Average length of stay	10.1 nights	Direct bookings run 45% longer than OTA bookings, across 1.6 million of them.
What the channel charges	273 stays	Airbnb 15.5% host-only. Booking.com 15%, rising past 23% with Genius and Preferred Plus.

Seventy per cent have the website. Almost none of them get a quarter of their bookings from it. The gap is not the page — it is everything behind it.

THE NUMBER NOBODY WORKS OUT

How big can a promo code be before it costs you money?

$$\text{discount at break-even} = 1 - (1 - \text{commission}) \div (1 - \text{payment fee})$$

OTA commission

you can discount up to

12%

9.3%

15%

12.4%

18%

15.5%

20%

17.5%

Read the middle row

On a 15% channel, a direct booking at 12% off earns you the same as the OTA booking at full price — and the guest paid 12% less than they would have.

Anything below that line, you are ahead. A 10% code is not a giveaway; it is the cheapest guest you will book all year.

Assumes a 3% payment fee on the direct booking. Put your own two numbers in — the formula does not care which market you are in.

ONE BOOKING, BOTH WAYS

The guest pays a million less. **You keep more.**

VIA THE OTA

Rp 10,000,000

guest pays

Rp 8,500,000

you keep

15% commission

DIRECT, 10% CODE

Rp 9,000,000

guest pays

Rp 8,730,000

you keep

3% payment fee

The guest

Rp 1,000,000 cheaper

You

Rp 230,000 better off

The channel

Rp 1,500,000 it did not get

The only party worse off is the one that was taking a cut for showing your villa to somebody who was already searching for it.

A CODE DOES NOT HAVE TO BE MONEY OFF

Give away the upsell, **not the rate.**

WHAT THE CODE UNLOCKS		FEELS LIKE	COSTS YOU
Late check-out to 3pm	<i>when nobody arrives that day</i>	Rp 500,000	nothing
Early check-in	<i>when the villa is already turned</i>	Rp 500,000	nothing
Airport transfer on arrival	<i>the driver you already use</i>	Rp 450,000	Rp 250,000
Breakfast for two on day one	<i>ingredients</i>	Rp 300,000	Rp 120,000
Sixty minutes of massage, in the villa	<i>the therapist's fee</i>	Rp 500,000	Rp 250,000
The whole bundle		Rp 2,250,000	Rp 620,000

Ten per cent off that booking would have cost you Rp 1,000,000 in cash. **This is worth more to the guest and costs you 380,000 less** — and nearly three quarters of what they feel costs you nothing at all.

Four codes worth having. **Not one blanket discount.**

01

The returning guest

Given at check-out, on paper, in the villa. They already know the property — this is the cheapest booking in your entire mix.

02

The gap filler

Aimed at the orphan nights the calendar cannot sell: a code that only works on a two-night stay starting Sunday.

03

Direct-only

Never published where a channel can see it. It lives on your site, in your email, and on the card the guest takes home.

04

The shoulder season

A season-wide code is a price change with better manners — and it comes off the moment the season does.

A code that everybody can use is not a promotion. It is your new rate — and the channel will match it.

A finished website in four minutes. **Not four weeks.**

0:00

Pick the properties

Tick the villas you want on it.

0:30

Choose the look

A layout and your colours.
No brief, no mockup round.

1:30

Add your domain

Your own address, your
logo, your favicon.

3:30

Publish

Live, with rates and
availability already on it.

► **Starting it now, live. We carry on with the deck and come back to the finished site in five minutes.**

One site per villa

Every property gets its own, with its own address. The guest who searched for that villa lands on that villa — not on a directory page they have to work through.

And one for the collection

The whole portfolio on a single site, so a guest who cannot get the dates they wanted sees the other four villas instead of going back to the channel.

It takes minutes because the content already exists. The photos, the descriptions, the amenities, the rates, the reviews — you maintain them every day. You are not building a website. You are publishing one you already own.

SPEED IS NOT A DETAIL

Half your visitors leave **before the page finishes loading.**

53%

of mobile visits are abandoned when a page takes longer than three seconds to load.

Google, 2016

Your competition loads in under a second

The channel page the guest just came from is one of the fastest-loading pages on the internet. That is the bar, not the villa website down the road.

A generated site has nothing to slow it down

No page builder, no plugin stack, no theme carrying features you never use. The pages come out of your listing data, already assembled.

On a Bali connection this is the whole ballgame

A guest deciding on 4G between two villas does not wait to find out whether yours was worth it.

You can win the guest on price, on photos and on reviews, and still lose them to a spinner.

BUILT FROM YOUR OWN DATA

The site cannot go stale, **because nobody types it.**

Rates and availability

Come from the same calendar the channels read. A price changed in the Cockpit is the price on your site — there is no second place to update.

Property content

Descriptions, amenities and photos are the listing content you already maintain. One property, one truth, every channel.

Reviews

Pulled in from the OTAs and shown on your own pages — the social proof you earned on their platform, working on yours.

Your brand

Logo, colours and favicon carry through from the same brand settings that style the Guest Guide.

A villa website goes out of date the day the person who built it stops maintaining it. A generated one has no such day.

AND THEN THE MARKETING WORKS

A direct guest can be invited back. **A channel guest cannot.**

The email address

Not a forwarding alias that expires with the booking.

The second stay

One repeat guest a month is a booking you never paid to acquire.

The audience

Past guests are the only advertising list that already liked the product.

The story

What you say on your own pages is not squeezed into somebody else's template.

Every one of these is worth more in year two than in year one. That is the difference between buying guests and having them.

WITHOUT AN AGENCY OR A DEVELOPER

What you are **not** signing up for.

No build project

The site is generated from the properties already in your account. There is no brief, no wireframe and no six-week timeline.

No monthly retainer

Nobody has to be paid to change a price, swap a photo or add a property.

No plugin maintenance

Nothing to update, nothing to break on a Sunday, nothing to get hacked while you are asleep.

No second source of truth

The website is a view of your data, not a copy of it that somebody has to keep in sync.

The reason most villas have no direct channel is not the cost of building one. It is the cost of keeping it alive.

BACK TO THE SCREEN

Five minutes ago this did not exist.

Every villa, on its own address. Rates and availability straight off the calendar. The reviews you earned on the channels. Your logo, your colours, your domain — and a booking on it costs you a payment fee instead of a commission.

▶ [Switch to the browser](#)

No agency was briefed. No content was written. Nobody was paid a retainer.

START THIS WEEK

Four steps. **None of them take a month.**

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 01 | Open Web Studio and publish | Four minutes, from the properties already in your account. Look at the result before you decide anything else. |
| 02 | Work out your own two numbers | Your blended commission and your payment fee. They give you your break-even discount, and it is probably higher than you think. |
| 03 | Print one card | A returning-guest code, handed over at check-out. The cheapest marketing in hospitality, and the easiest to measure. |
| 04 | Put the link everywhere the channel is not | Your signature, your Instagram bio, the Guest Guide, the WhatsApp reply. A direct channel nobody can find is not a channel. |

Forty per cent direct is not a campaign. It is the compound effect of every guest you did not have to buy twice.