

Lawsuit says travel agencies conspired with hotels

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SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A California lawsuit claims online travel agencies like Travelocity conspired with hotels to fix room prices nationwide.

The suit filed Monday in San Francisco federal court claims the Hilton Hotels, Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, Marriott International and others fixed prices with Expedia, Travelocity and other online sites.

Although travel websites say they buy blocks of unsold rooms to give consumers low hotel rates, the lawsuit claims hotels set a minimum room rate for online travel websites to offer to consumers.

The Los Angeles Times (lat.ms/O0gKSQ) says hotels agree to the fixed prices for fear of losing online travel business.

The suit filed on behalf of travelers Nakita Turik of Chicago and Eric Balk of Cedar Falls, Iowa, seeks an injunction to prevent further price fixing as well as unspecified damages.