

Airbnb New Sponsor of New York City Marathon

Apartment sharing service a competitor to race's hotel sponsors.

By Scott Douglas; Image by Lucas Jackson / Reuters

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Airbnb will be among the sponsors of the 2014 New York City Marathon, the *Daily News* reports. Terms of the deal were not released by Airbnb or race organizers New York Road Runners.

The announcement comes as the fast-growing apartment sharing service is under scrutiny by the New York Attorney General's office. Some Airbnb operators, the office contends, violate the state's rental laws, which prohibit short-term apartment rentals unless a permanent resident is present. Concerns have also been raised about tax evasion by renters.

NYRR says the marathon has an economic impact of more than \$340 million. About \$65 million of that benefits the hotel industry, according to the *Daily News*.

Airbnb is a competitor to the city's hotel industry, which criticized the Airbnb sponsorship.

"It's a questionable decision by an important New York institution like the Road Runners to partner with a company struggling with regulators here in New York City," a hotel union workers' representative told the *Daily News*.

On its sponsors page, the marathon lists Hilton, Sheraton and Anthony Travel under "Official Hotel Headquarters." (*Runner's World* is a media sponsor of the marathon.)

"We see the Airbnb partnership not as a replacement to hotels, but rather an alternative for runners and their guests," NYRR vice president Chris Weiller told the *Daily News*.