

# Online review management: The secret sauce of successful hotel marketing

Issued by [Oak Ventures](#)

3 Apr 2017

Guest reviews management is an integral part of any successful hotel marketing strategy. The reason for this is simple, online reviews influence booking decisions and ultimately, a hotel's revenue.

Why do online reviews have this elevated position? It is all about psychological needs.

Holidays are intangible products whose quality of service or enjoyment potential can only be evaluated after the fact. Travellers have a deep-seated urge to know if a hotel's offer matches their needs. The opinion and recommendations of others fulfills this role perfectly.

By reading online reviews from previous guests, travellers get a sneak preview of what they are to expect at a destination or hotel. They simply do not want to regret a booking decision that spoils their holiday experience.

On the other hand, the importance of reviews to hoteliers and destination managers cannot be overstated as they act as both negative or positive multipliers with tangible effect on revenue inflows.

Surveys conducted on the impact of online reviews in influencing booking decisions confirm this power:

- A study conducted by Bright Local reveals that a hotel is only attractive if it has been praised in at least six reviews.
- According to a survey by Fuel Travel, 83.4% of respondents said that they will not book a hotel without reading reviews first.
- A TripAdvisor survey shows that: 96% of its users consider reading reviews important when planning trips and booking hotels whilst 83% will "usually" or "always" reference reviews before deciding to book a hotel.
- 85% of TripAdvisor users agree that a thoughtful response to a bad review will improve their impression of a hotel.
- Four out five users believe that hotels that respond to reviews care about their guests.

Statistics do not lie and hoteliers should take advantage of this opportunity by adopting online review management strategies like the ones offered by [Guerilla Marketing](#).

Failure to have such a strategy in place is suicidal and leads to revenue leakages.

What other advantages do online reviews bring?

Besides influencing guests' decisions, reviews also enhance a hotel's searchability and ranking on major search engines like Google, Yahoo and Bing. A high rank equals more leads generated that this boosts revenue. Organic traffic from search engines is also a very cost-effective marketing technique that lowers a hotel's expenditure.

Additionally, the Fuel Travel study shows that 48.4% of respondents use search engines when doing travel research and 28.4% say that search engines are their most influential source in booking. Therefore, reviews have immense search engine value that boosts the online visibility of a hotel.

Guests should be encouraged to post reviews and their feedback be distributed to as many different channels and websites as possible. Most importantly, the reviews should be posted on the hotel's homepage to attract more direct bookings as reliance on OTAs results in huge commissions paid to third parties.

In short, reviews are a critical success factor in hotel marketing as they influence travelers' booking decisions. The more online reviews a hotel has, the more credible and attractive it looks to potential guests. This in turn stimulates bookings and encourages more reviews. They also enhance a hotel's online visibility and searchability which results in "free" traffic to their digital assets.

However, successful review management can be time-consuming and complex. This is where digital marketing agencies like Guerilla Marketing come in handy.

For more information about our hotel marketing solutions feel free to contact us on 011 704 2641 or email [gmarketing@adclickafrica.com](mailto:gmarketing@adclickafrica.com).

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