

Hotel eMarketing and Internet 'e'volution - Creating an Online Culture at Hotels - Jitendra Jain

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Are you a hotel eMarketer looking for ways to better communicate, educate and develop the role at your property/ies? This article explores some of the issues surrounding these efforts, complemented by a dose of perspective and a generous helping of best practices, all garnished, hopefully, by your own ideas and experiences.

Finding Meaning: Wikipedia attributes the word 'evolution' to the Latin term 'evolutio' meaning "unfolding". While the tech and Internet revolution have anything but 'unfolded' upon us ('exploded' would be more appropriate, given the short span of time over which most Internet-related developments have occurred), there is something to be learnt from the nature of these changes.

Impact and Perspective: According to the popular statistics site, internetworldstats.com, at the end of 2007, we had 1 in 5 people on the planet already connected to the Internet...and this number is growing fast. While 80% of the world waits to jump onto the bandwagon, the 20% who're already on it are struggling to hold on for dear life. The Internet is to business today what electricity is to industry and good living...without it there would be chaos! That puts a little perspective on just how reliant we've become on this relatively new platform...but also how much we stand to gain from it in terms of breaking down communication, transaction and education barriers. And the pace of development and the evolving uses of the Internet have been dizzying to say the least. Marketers...and your average Internet Joe have been forced to constantly re-learn and evolve.

It may be a challenge to stay on top, but the bigger challenge today is to ensure those who are following you can catch up! In the hospitality industry, the rift between tech-savvy users and those who're just sitting up and taking notice of the Internet revolution is even more pronounced. E-commerce and e-marketing are just starting to make a mark in the industry, much like revenue management did a while ago (revenue management is quite indispensable in hotels these days, despite the slow initial uptake). The level of emphasis and extent of experimentation varies greatly by hotel group and location, but the growing importance, both for generating revenues, lower costs and online visibility, is indisputable.

So the future of e-commerce in the hospitality industry is guaranteed to be a bright one. And the savvy hotel emarketer has a lot to gain, including room to grow, experiment and 'wow' (from SEO to SEM, blogging to social networking, there's plenty to keep the eager hotel eMarketer busy experimenting). But what about those in the industry just climbing on-board, especially employees in hotel operations and those struggling to make sense of the opportunities and challenges presented by the Internet? What can hotel eMarketers do to ensure interest and support at hotels? How do you create a culture of understanding and mutual growth?

The answer is simple...create interest, excitement and buy-in at your hotels. The path to achieving these lofty goals, however, isn't quite so simple. Let's explore some of the issues and opportunities:

Read the entire article at:

<http://www.thetalentjungle.com/hotel-emarketing-how-to-create-an-online-culture-at-hotels/>

About the author

Jitendra Jain (JJ) is the founder of The Talent Jungle (www.thetalentjungle.com), a hotel, hospitality and tourism base created in 2003 for industry professionals, students, educators and alumni, with a focus on sharing best-practices, hospitality education guidance and networking. He is a Business Graduate (specialized in Tourism & Hospitality) from HTW Switzerland and also holds Swiss Higher, Indian and American Diplomas in Hotel Management, with specializations in Rooms Division Management, Food & Beverage Management and Human Resources Management. He is currently engaged with a Global Hotel company as an E-Commerce Manager.

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