<text>



HOW TO CREATE ACTIONABLE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT TO ATTRACT GUESTS

Social media is an excellent tool for marketing hotels because it enables hoteliers to reach more travelers, make meaningful connections with guests, and tell their hotel's story online. The value social media adds to a hotel's relationships and public perception is vast, yet difficult to measure. That's why the actions social media users take when they interact with businesses online are so important. When travelers engage with the content you share online, it's an indicator of success for your property. In this white paper, we'll explore how hoteliers can create social media content that inspires action.

UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

WHAT IS CONTENT?

When it comes to social media, content can be anything you post or share with your followers. There are many types of content, and different social networks support various content types. The simplest posts are just text that is shared, but your posts can also include photos, videos, photo albums, hyperlinks, polls, recommendations and more.

Some networks like Facebook and Instagram offer two places to share content: in posts on your Profile (which are shared in your followers' Feed) and as updates in your Story. Generally speaking, Profile posts are long-lasting, while Story posts are temporary and only display for 24 hours. Depending on your audience and the time you have to invest in social media, different post types may make sense for your hotel. This means that content will vary from hotel to hotel, based on their individual strategy.

In this white paper, when we refer to **content**, we are talking about the accumulation of all your social media posts.

WHAT IS A CALL TO ACTION?

The Google Dictionary defines call to action as "a piece of content intended to induce a viewer, reader, or listener to perform a specific act, typically taking the form of an instruction or directive." To create any content that is effective at inspiring users to take the desired action, it's essential to include a clear and direct call to action. Here are some examples of common calls to action in social media posts:

- Tag a friend who...
- Share this post if...
- Like this post to...
- Click below for...
- Comment with...

When deciding what content to create - and what type of call to action to include - the question you have to answer first is: What action do you want travelers to take? Based on the needs of your business, your goals could be to gain new followers, increase booking conversions, or earn more positive reviews. For an on-going social media strategy, we recommend a mix of posts designed to: drive engagement, extend your reach, and drive bookings. Next, we'll share examples of how to create actionable content along the booking journey.

IMPORTANT KPIs TO KNOW

Followers: users who subscribe to your updates Reach: unique number of people who saw your content Impressions: number of times your content was viewed Reactions: how many users Liked/Loved/etc. your content Clicks: number of times a link was clicked Comments: how many comments were made Shares: number of times your content was share





CREATE CONTENT THAT COMPELS TRAVELERS ALONG THE BOOKING JOURNEY

As consumers travel along the pathway to booking, there are numerous opportunities for social media to create touchpoints. At any given time dozens of travelers may be considering your property. The booking journey is cyclical, and every step from Inspiration to Advocacy is a chance for your hotel to be discovered by a potential guest. By sharing content on social media that's designed to inspire action at each point along the booking journey, you can attract more guests to your hotel.



INSPIRATION

During the *inspiration* phase of the booking journey, consumers are open-minded about their ultimate destination. For travel marketers, this is a perfect time to share images of breathtaking nearby vistas, famous landmarks, and attractions in your area. You could even opt for a famous travel quote by someone like John Muir that will leave your followers tempted to take a new trip. The goal of this phase of the journey is to instill a sense of adventure, curiosity, or wanderlust.

To create actionable content in the inspiration phase, we recommend sharing a high-resolution image of a nearby experience that guests of your hotel enjoy. To make your post even more effective, share a real traveler's photo to the area (you can learn more about how to share usergenerated content on our blog). Remember, this is the type of post you want your potential guests to daydream about from their daily cubicle.

Here's an example of how we use a travel quote and graphic to inspire travelers to Roseville, MN on Facebook.

Redisson Hotel Minneapolis/St. Paul North (2540 North Cieveland Avenue, Roseville, MN) July 3 at 7:05 PM · Tort overlook Roseville, be our guest for a little while and you'll fall in love with the area.

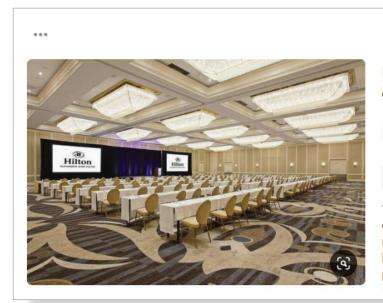
PLANNING

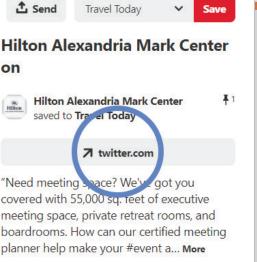
During the **planning** phase of the booking journey, consumers have decided to take a trip to a particular destination, but they haven't finalized the details yet. At this time, they may be actively seeking information about where to stay, things to do in the area, where to eat, and what transportation options are available. Hoteliers should regularly share information about area attractions, upcoming events, and property information. The goal of this phase of the journey is to offer valuable information to assist travelers in formalizing their travel plans.

To create actionable content in the planning phase, we recommend sharing specific details about a local event or attraction that will be useful for travelers. To make your post actionable, it's essential to explain how your hotel relates to the information you're sharing. Your post should educate travelers on things to do nearby, add context that positions your hotel as convenient, and invite them to stay with you.

Here's an example of how we use event space details to help travelers plan their event in Alexandria on Pinterest.







BOOKING

During the **booking** phase of the booking journey, travelers are finalizing their plans by purchasing lodging and airfare. At this decision point, consumers are weighing their options by comparing property amenities, photos, reviews, and - yes - social media presence. It's crucial to use social platforms to make it an easy choice for travelers to book online with a hotel. Optimizing your profiles with booking links, sharing posts about packages and special offers, and advertising your loyalty program can all help

Here's an example of how we use complimentary breakfast information to entice travelers to book with Comfort Suites Woodstock on Instagram.



 \bigcirc

2 likes

comfortsuiteswoodstock Jump start your day with our complimentary hot breakfast buffet at Comfort Suites Woodstock. Rise and shine with us! https:// bit.ly/2la7w98 travelers take action. The goal of this phase of the journey is to assure travelers that staying with you is the best choice based on value.

To create actionable content in the booking phase, we recommend sharing specific information about special rates and accommodations. All of your posts targeting travelers in this stage of the journey should include a booking link and a clear call to action such as "Book today and save!" or "Stay with us for an unforgettable experience."



STAY

During the **stay** phase of the booking journey, the traveler has become your guest and is likely to connect with you on social media. To encourage guests to follow you, share your social network information at the front desk, on keycard sleeves, or on breakfast signage. Some hotels that prioritize social media even add links to their profiles on their Wi-Fi landing pages. Sharing time-sensitive information on social media can help your current guests who are in need of details. The goal of this phase of the journey is to provide upto-date information and exceptional customer service.

To create actionable content in the stay phase, we recommend sharing updates about breakfast hours, ongoing renovations, shuttle services and more. You should also post content that reinforces the dedication of your front desk, concierge, housekeeping, and maintenance staff. By posting content that gives guests the information they need, at the moment they need it, you can increase confidence in your level of service.

Here's an example of how we share concierge hours to inform hotel guests in NYC on Facebook.







ADVOCACY

During the *advocacy* phase of the booking journey, guests are sharing their experience with friends, family members, and social media followers. Your relationship with your guests doesn't end a check-out. Asking guests to share photos and reviews with you is an important step to growing a network of customer advocates for your business. By sharing positive feedback and guest photos (with permission) in social media posts, you will turn your guests into promoters of your property. The goal of this phase of the journey is to increase positive word-of-mouth about your hotel and build trust in future travelers.

To create actionable content in the advocacy phase, we recommend sharing positive reviews from TripAdvisor and Google on your social media profiles. Another important strategy is to leverage user-generated content about your hotel. When you get permission to share guest photos with your followers, you can offer a unique perspective on what it's really like to stay with you.

Here's an example of how we use contests to share guest experiences on Facebook.



Hotel Pennsylvania NYC Published by Social Media by TMG (?) - July 12 at 5:50 PM - 🚱

Congratulations to our contest winners, Frank P. and Renee G.! Our modernized Penn Plaza rooms include the ability to stream video and music content onto the TV so they will be able to stay up to date on all of their favorite shows.

Take a look at all the wonderful entries we received https://bit.ly/2I7DIk4 and don't forget to like our page so you can be notified next time there's a new contest. (hint, hint)





BEST PRACTICES

Be intentional Use a positive & informal tone Post striking images Share video Ask questions Get your team involved Use hashtags appropriately Connect and interact

Sand Hospitality has gone from utilizing TMG for Social Media only services at just a few of our hotels in larger markets to adding our entire portfolio of hotels and expanding services. Over the course of one year, our hotels' Community Growth and Reach have exploded. There's no other media that can touch that many impressions with so little invested. I could not say enough about what TMG has done for our organization. The personal attention and commitment to our success are beyond expectation.

> **Jason Mortland** Revenue Management/Operations Sand Hospitality, LLC

PARTNER WITH TMG FOR SOCIAL CONTENT THAT CAPTIVATES

6 🖸 🖸 🗿

ocal Story

Property Feature

Property Feature

Attract guests on facebook Instagram Ewitter Pinterest with a custom social media program.

All of the sample social media content shared in this whitepaper was crafted by our expert social media team. Let our experts assist you in creating an actionable social media strategy that works.



Learn more at http://trvl.media/social today!