



Building a Content Strategy

TO SATISFY
TRAVELERS' NEEDS

Building a Content Strategy

TO SATISFY TRAVELERS' NEEDS



To succeed in a constantly changing market, hoteliers need to keep an eye on what's trending and how travelers are finding their way to hotels – that way, they can develop a content strategy to directly capture the needs of travelers.

Google researchers found that travelers spend 13% of their time online conducting travel-related activities.

This includes scrolling through inspirational travel blogs, perusing friend's posts about recent adventures, and planning for their own personal getaway.

Consumer search behaviors are trackable, and it helps the industry learn how to generate more compelling content that fulfills those travelers' needs. Frequently reviewing the content hoteliers present to potential guests – whether it's social advertising, email marketing, or optimizing search engine results – can help them stay ahead of the competition.

Tracking Consumer Behavior:

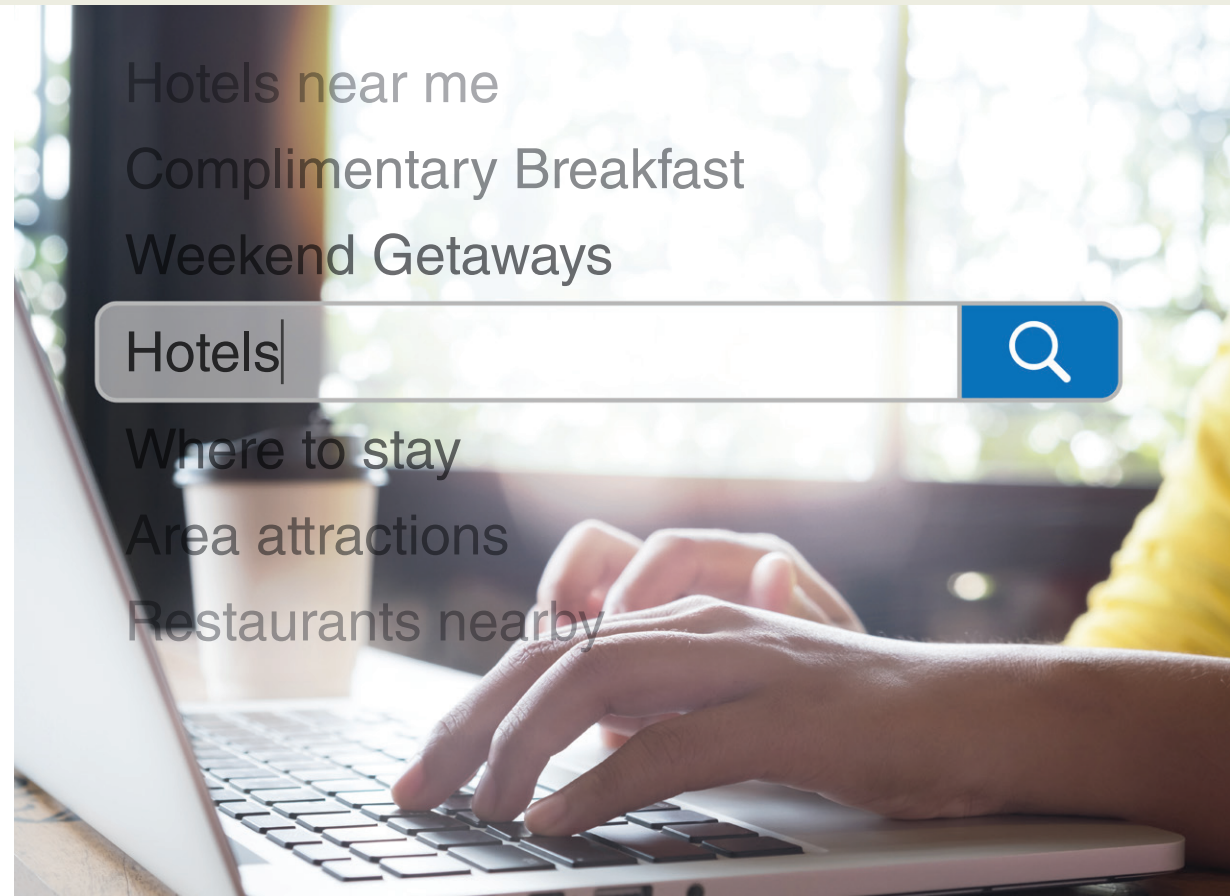
SEARCH INTENT

Whenever a consumer inputs text into the search engine of their choice, they do so with some form of intent in mind. Business owners may assume that all searches are drawn out of a need to find a certain product or service, but that isn't the entire truth. When faced with a set of popular or common keywords, the important question hoteliers must consider is: "why?" Why is the consumer searching for that, and what can their hotel do to meet that need? Google researchers teamed up with Kantar to discuss the six different "needs" that are established by consumers whenever they search a set of keywords:

- ! Surprise me
- ? Help me
- 😊 Reassure me
- ✎ Educate me
- 👏 Impress me
- 🎢 Thrill me

These six primary areas of need all come into play during a search. If hoteliers consider the path to booking a room as a search journey, then they can identify how searches are influenced by each need. Google's researchers found that "emotional motivation driving a particular search

is shaped by not only the category the person is searching for, but also where they are in their journey." Learning how each traveler may arrive at their destination – the decision to book a room – will provide valuable insight into what searches are driven more by which need.



While the six consumer needs developed by Google's collaboration with Kantar are not exactly the same as a guest's property-based, tangible needs that hoteliers are used to discussing (the presence of a business center, a pet-friendly room, etc.), the specific needs of travelers do align with the six categories. When a guest searches for "pet-friendly hotels near me," they are asking to be reassured that a property has the type of room appropriate for their visit, and to be helped in finding that property. However, guests who are already at their travel destination may be running a search for "things to do near me," which aligns with a "thrill-me" search state. If your hotel has a unique experience to offer alongside lodging, gearing marketing toward attracting their attention will result in higher ROI than alternatives when targeting those searching for things to do.



At different stages of their booking journey, guest search behavior arises from varying needs. Understanding this will help hoteliers avoid the "one-size-fits-all" style of content. Everybody's search behavior is unique, and tracking search results using machine learning can help hotel marketers decide what type of content will work best for each stage, as it relates to their hotel.

Hostelworld, a company geared toward providing lodging to backpackers worldwide, launched efforts in tracking and monitoring consumer search behavior, which became even more effective through the use of dynamic search. Dynamic searches utilize machine learning to alter the title of a landing page based on consumer search terms, to help garner more clicks from organic searches that typical keyword optimization cannot plan for. Broadening the potential for reaching the right audience helped increase their conversion rate by over 600%.

! The "Surprise-me" State

These searches are geared toward pure entertainment; they're extensive searches with dozens of unique iterations and interactions. These consumers may enjoy "roadside attractions" or "unique lodging."

✎ The "Educate-me" State

Fairly straightforward, this search is an information exchange. Consumers search for reviews, ratings, amenities, and comparisons to see how your hotel ranks among the rest.

? The "Help-me" State

This search type prioritizes practicality, more often including family or location in the equation, like a search for "affordable hotels near Tulsa," or "family-friendly hotels near me."

👏 The "Impress-me" State

These searches are about influencing, often flaunting status and importance. Searchers may hunt for "luxury 5-star hotels" and seek a grand experience as a reward to themselves.

😊 The "Reassure-me" State

Searchers in this state revolve entirely around simplicity, comfort, and trust. These searchers want to know that you have what they need: a search for a "pet-friendly hotel," "non-smoking room," etc. aligns with this state.

🎢 The "Thrill-me" State

In this category, searches are associated with finding new and exciting things, such as "things to do near me," "top 10 things to do in Venice," "fun places to stay in Orlando."

Tailoring Hotel Content

TO ADDRESS TRAVELERS' NEEDS

Once hotel marketers are able to track what consumer behavior looks like, they can start generating content that capitalizes on gaining their attention. This content can and should change depending on the season and group of consumers you're aiming to reach. Additionally, hoteliers should develop and share this content on social media platforms. Consumers spend over 2 hours every day on social media, making it the most viable channel for your hotel marketing strategy to take hold. Social media also prioritizes satisfying the varying search states without having to leave the platform, so your potential for reach increases.

Consumer search tracking efforts show hoteliers who their most loyal guests are, allowing marketers to create advertising campaigns and social media content showcasing special deals aimed at this group. However, keep in mind that tying a marketing campaign to one particular KPI can prevent it from reaching its full potential. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to getting more bookings in a market that fluctuates year-round. Tracking consumer behavior is a continuous process, and as a result, whatever strategy is developed must be open and flexible to bend with the market.



Consumers spend over 2 hours every day on social media, making it the most viable channel for your hotel marketing strategy.

Having the ability to track the behavior of consumers connected to your loyalty program opens up additional opportunities to monitor those that are left. Tracking these searches through machine learning can help hoteliers learn the behaviors, making predictions about when and how to best secure the conversion to a booked guest.

The specific content that's developed by a hotel's marketing team should vary widely, but focus on visual appeal – especially video marketing. Consumers watch an average of 16 hours of video online each week, and further Google statistics measure that video streaming sites like YouTube reach more adults ages 18-49 in one week than **every cable network combined**. Video marketing is a powerful tool, and using it to show off guests having a fun, safe stay at a hotel can be the extra push they need to book. In fact, hotels could develop a set of videos that are shown to potential guests depending on their search history. For example, a consumer who searches frequently for “things to do near me” – someone in the “thrill-me” state – might be captivated by a video showing guests having fun, enjoying the local area, or seeing the sights. However, a consumer whose searches align with the “reassure-me” or “help-me” states might feel more comforted by a video showcasing the amenities or exquisite comfort of a hotel.

A hotel's content marketing strategy is not limited to opportunities regarding an existing pool of prospects or loyalty members. It's also beneficial to consider ways to develop content to reach new audiences, and this too is achieved through understanding keyword research and popular search trends. Content that's developed for this goal may be focused primarily on brand awareness to help consumers inclined to travel search habits to think about your hotel first when it comes time for them to make a booking decision. The goal of brand awareness, however, is not to earn conversions in the form of bookings, but instead gain followers and increase the reach of the hotel's brand and engagement of individual social posts. These posts differ from ones guiding guests to book because they might ask questions to encourage comments and discussion, such as an attractive photo with a caption such as: “What are your favorite things to do on vacation? Ours is relaxing by the pool!”

Overall, consumers like to feel heard and that their needs are appropriately represented by a property. Properties that can successfully tailor their marketing to guests with different needs will see an increase in conversion rate, leaving hoteliers the task of impressing the guest and ensuring they're comfortable when they arrive on-site.



Travel Media Group's Solutions

GENERATE LONG-LASTING RESULTS

Our product teams at Travel Media Group are experts in their field, available to provide professional assistance that helps bolster hoteliers' marketing efforts across the board. With **Social Media** services that generate engaging content for hoteliers to share with their audiences, brand awareness or booking conversions can be prioritized, depending on the goals of the hotel. Our **Reputation Management** program provides hoteliers a comprehensive view of their hotel's reputation, so they can easily see and spot areas to improve the property and better target traveler's needs, when possible. The **Respond & Resolve™** program leaves writing professional review responses to our expert team, giving the hotelier more time to focus on those converted guests who are currently enjoying their time at the property.

Sources:

[How Hostelworld found backpackers better places to stay with Dynamic Search](#), ThinkWithGoogle

[How consumer needs shape search behavior and drive intent](#), ThinkWithGoogle

[Data & travel digital marketing automation](#), ThinkWithGoogle

[Daily social media usage worldwide](#), Statista

[Same search terms, different intent](#), ThinkWithGoogle

[5 Ways that Machine learning is transforming the Travel Industry](#), MarkTechPost

[The never-ending travel customer journey](#), ThinkWithGoogle

[Video Marketing Statistics: What You Must Know for 2020](#), OptInMonster

Place your trust in the hotel marketing group whose services were designed and developed exclusively for hoteliers, so we can help execute a content marketing strategy that is effective in targeting traveler's needs.

