
HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR HOTEL WEBSITE



**Travel
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GROUP

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You've recognized that a hotel website is necessary to control your message while providing travelers with an easy way to make direct bookings. Your website is built and live on the internet. Now what?

There are three considerations in making a website successful: gaining traffic and pageviews, providing relevant information to website visitors, and converting visitors to buyers. In this white paper, we'll share ways to optimize your hotel website for success.

One common theme you'll find throughout this white paper: ease of use. Your website should make it as simple as possible for a website visitor to find the information they need and to book a reservation. Let's dive in to how you can do that.



DRIVE TRAFFIC TO YOUR WEBSITE

In website lingo, “traffic” refers to the number of people who see your website. And just like with traffic on the road driving by a billboard for your hotel, you want people to stop and purchase from your business, rather than driving on to a competitor.

There are well over half a billion websites on the internet. How will people find yours? The key is to help search engines know that your website exists and that it is relevant to a person searching for hotels in your area. Then, try to drive traffic from social media and at your property to increase repeat guests and referrals.

Website Optimization

Google and other search engines rely on consistent information to decide what is important and relevant to searchers. That means that your online listing information should be exactly the same anywhere your business appears online. Update your listings on search engines, social media website bios, TripAdvisor, and OTA listings to match perfectly.



Watch out for:

- Abbreviations: Your address should match exactly, so don't list 123 Main Street Southeast in one place but 123 Main St. SE in another.
- Phone numbers: Many businesses have multiple numbers. Choose one number with a local area code to use everywhere online.
- Incomplete information: Fill out profile information 100%. This includes uploading photos for search engines like Google My Business, Yahoo Local Listing, and Bing Places for Business.

Social Media Posting

Your hotel Facebook and Twitter accounts are a great way to increase traffic to your hotel website. Consistent posts help travelers to get a better sense of what your hotel is like and keep your property top-of-mind for the next time they need to book a hotel in your area or when a friend asks for a recommendation.

Here are effective ways to increase web traffic from your social media accounts:

- Promote special deals: If you're coming up on a slow time of year, then create and promote a special offer. You can even put a little ad money behind it to get more people to see it. Keep a Special Offers page on your website regularly updated.
- Share local events: Check out local event calendars and create posts around them to both be a local resource and get bookings from people visiting the area for festivals, concerts, and more.
- Use the call-to-action button: Hotels on Facebook can add a prominent button to their reservation engine. Take advantage of the "Book Now" button to give followers direct route to your booking page.

Offline Marketing

When looking at your website analytics, you'll see a portion of traffic that is "direct." This means that the person on your website wasn't referred from an email blast or social media, and they didn't use a web search to find you. They just typed your website URL in the address bar and came directly to you.

Here are ways to increase direct traffic:

- Make it easy: Purchase a web domain that is short and easy to remember - like www.hotelnamecity.com
- Put it in print: Add your website address to all your printed materials, including guest folios, guest room information books, and business cards.
- Use word-of-mouth: At check-out, remind guests that when they want to return, the best rates are found directly on your website.



PROVIDE HELPFUL INFORMATION

Once on your website, you want to make the road to booking a room as easy as possible. Once someone is on your website, that means they are interested in learning more about your hotel and potentially choosing you for their stay. Web visitors want to be able to find as much information as possible without having to work too hard for it - or, they will leave to find another website that can help.

Use Clear Messaging

A hotel website should be easy to use to find information that is needed to make a booking decision. Use common sense menus to organize content. Write with intuitive language instead of what seems “trendy” - naming a page “Restaurant” will be easier to find and understand than something like “Nourish” or “Fuel.”

Review your website content to be:

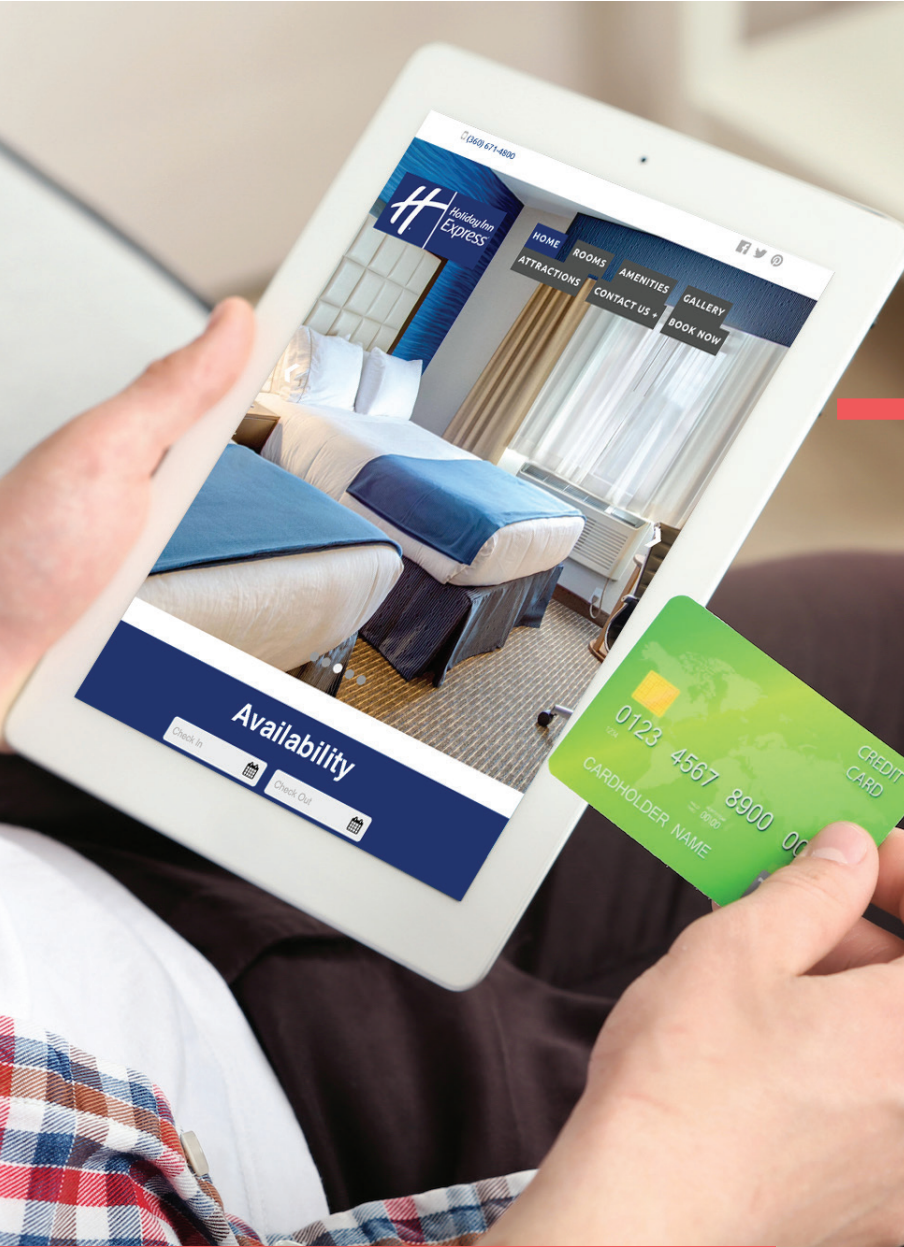
- Simplified: Short sentences with a lower reading level result in people reading further and remaining on a website for more time.
- Skimmable: Break up paragraphs about features with bullet points to make it easy for people to skim the page for the details that matter to them.
- SEO-friendly: Use subheadings in your content, include photos, and write original text - never copy and paste words from another website.

Be a Resource

Use the pages on your website to help visitors learn what they need to make a booking decision. Answer potential questions about what your hotel is like by creating pages about your room types, amenities, and location. Including distances to nearby attractions is a great way to help people know if the hotel is a good fit for their needs.

However, you won't be able to answer every potential question a guest has. Keep your contact information visible in your website's header, footer, and on a contact page to help people contact the front desk.





CONVERT VISITORS TO BUYERS

Of course, the top priority for a hotel website is to increase direct booking and cut down on OTA commissions. Once you have the traffic on your website, it's time to close the sale.

Web visitors want to be able to:

- Book on any device: Hotel websites must be mobile-friendly, including a responsive design and adaptive booking features.
- Reserve at any time: Every page has the potential to be where a booking decision is made, so the booking calendar should be accessible on every page.
- Contact in one tap: Eliminate copying and pasting phone numbers. Use the `a href="tel:"` HTML code to allow mobile users to tap your phone number and call directly.

Encourage Repeat and Referral Reservations

Travelers have a lot of options when they're searching for hotels. Your website can help support reputation management and social media efforts to both help others choose to book with you and to gain more repeat reservations.



IMPACT FUTURE BOOKINGS

Each person who stays at your hotel has the potential to impact future reservations at your property. They may share your hotel through personal word of mouth, on social media, and on review websites. It's important to keep in contact with a guest following their check-out so that next time they're in town your hotel is top of mind.

Optimize your website to stay connected with guests:

- Connect social media: Add all of your social media icons to your website header and footer to make it easy to Like and Follow your pages.
- Ask for feedback: Include a guest feedback form on your website to allow guests to make comments directly to you after their stay.
- Respond to reviews: Don't let great guest service stop after check-out. Respond to all of your online reviews, and invite happy guests to come back. The extra step of personalizing responses can have a big impact on repeat business.

Monitor Site Performance

Some of the biggest components of running a successful website are entirely behind the scenes. It's important to maintain your website so that there's never a lapse in it being available to view. Monitor your site performance to minimize downtime and regularly keep any add-ons and plugins up-to-date to protect against security risks.

Learn how to get the most out of your hotel website from the consultants at Travel Media Group.

Contact us at 888.656.2561
or visit trvl.media/website.

