



Basic “rules-of-the-road” for hotel website success

Whether you call it the Internet or an electronic channel, it’s still an inexpensive and effective means of promoting your hotel. There are some simple tactics which promote success in web marketing. Don’t be fooled by those huge numbers of “hits” on your site. The true measure of your site’s success is the number of reservations it generates.

The most important first step is to make sure your web site is designed for success. What is success? Success means attracting people to your site, then converting lookers to bookers.

Sometimes, web site owners, themselves, are the biggest obstacle to efficient site design; it’s called human ego. Web sites are public instruments and the design or “look” of a hotel web site is often greatly influenced by everyone involved with the hotel. I call it “design by committee”. Design-by-committee generally results in a confusing, difficult to navigate web site. Everyone has an opinion; often an uninformed one, based upon how good it looks versus how well it works.

The design of an effective hotel site involves much more than how it looks; and herein lays the problem. There are basic “rules-of-the-road” so to speak, which greatly affect how well a site performs. The first is its search ability. Techies love movement and flashy design; unfortunately, search engines do not. Savvy designers know how to fool search engines, but they spend more time trying to get around search engine parameters than they spend on the site’s content; and content is king. Search spiders read copy, yet designers devote less time and effort to the “words” and concentrate on making a site pretty with photography.

Here’s a news flash for owners, managers, and other interested parties; the site is not being designed for you. It is hopefully being designed to attract new guests. If you really need to be involved in your site’s design, learn search engine parameters and the way they work, before you impose your will on the designer.

The next very important requirement is to create a simple navigation scheme. “Buried links”, links accessible only from other links, are very slick looking, but confuse search spiders and, more importantly, they also confuse the site’s users. Your site is not an online brochure; it’s an online sales instrument. If an online brochure is what you want, be satisfied with mediocre sales results.

HTB’s hotel e-Marketing success formula: TRACK. ANALYZE. OPTIMIZE.



It's still amazing to me how many site designers neglect the hotel's location information on their site. The assets of your location are the most important considerations for choosing a hotel. Your hotel's address is only a small part of your location. Distance to/from attractions, activities, and businesses play a major role in hotel selection. Accessibility is the next consideration. Accesses to/from major cities and/or airports are important considerations.

We have all heard the old axiom "a picture says a thousand words"; in life this is very true; except when it comes to web sites. Good photography is important but search engines do not read photography. Carefully written copy on your site can boost your site's popularity by making it easier to find. For many sites, the copy appears to be written simply to fill empty space instead of actually providing important information.

Reciprocal links are those which, by mutual agreement, reside on your site and, in turn, contain a link to your web site from the linked site. Reciprocal links can boost the overall popularity of your web site by borrowing the popularity of the linked site. Good examples are links to blogs, news articles, and attractions. But, caution, your home page should never contain an external link. Would you really want to entice someone to exit your site from your home page?

The popularity of the Internet has also spawned a new breed of site designers eager to cash-in on this new income source. Web site designers are not necessarily good hotel marketers. It seems that everyone involved with the Internet have now become hotel web marketers; without ever spending two days in the hotel business. If necessary, hire a hotel sales person to oversee the building of your site. Make sure good basic principles of hotel sales are being utilized.

When shopping for someone to oversee the design and perform the marketing for your site, ask questions. Hotel sales and marketing experience should be a basic prerequisite. Choose someone who understands the principles and methodology involved with hotel sales and marketing. Choose someone who will utilize those principles to meld your Internet marketing effort into your hotel's direct sales program. Not doing so is sort of like hiring a plumber to fix your electric wiring. Selling rooms is not like selling widgets or designing technical web tools.

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About Hotel Traffic Builders (HTB):

We are a full-service digital marketing agency dedicated to the boutique hotel &

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residential resort industry.

Our mission is very simple: ***"To maximize sales success by providing our clients with exceptional internet marketing results"***.

Our clients consistently enjoy industry leading success because of our dedicated focus and experience. Our use of state-of-the art tools, best in class technology and wealth of industry experience enable us to provide full solution applications. We recognize that our clients are experts at running their hotels, and our role is to develop and maintain online marketing leadership for our client hotels.

We differentiate ourselves through:

Industry Expertise

We have a singular specialized focus on boutique hotel, resort and vacation home e-Marketing. Our sole goal is to be the best at what we do by ensuring maximum success for all of your e-marketing activities. Our 52 person design and development technology team delivers unparalleled quality and results. Our sole focus is resort marketing.

Individual Customized Creative Approach & Solutions

Every client has unique needs, opportunities and priorities, our e-Marketing plans are always custom built and based on in-depth research of your specific hotel.

Cutting Edge Technology

We use proprietary state of the art tools and applications that enable project efficiency, measurability and success of your e-marketing. We not only promise success, we document it in a 24/7 real-time secured private reporting platform that we create for every hotel client. Our clients never wonder about how hard their marketing dollars are working because they always know!

Return On Investment

The true measurement of our success is our proven ability to deliver reservation bookings. We grow booking results year over year, and we grow advance bookings, which result in higher occupancy levels and ADRs.

Contact us at: www.HotelTrafficBuilders.com or call us 954-421-6399

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