

5 Ways Hotels can Improve and Track Return on Investment from Twitter - Oh wait, there is no investment!

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There is a reason why everyone is talking about Twitter. It works - really it does! Many hotels are skeptical about opening a Twitter account. Some hotels think they don't need it, some think it will add more work, and many just don't know how to use it.

Then you have the hotels that send Tweets on a regular basis. They instantly update their followers about events, announce special offers, and promptly answer questions. All this and it's free! Hotels that use Twitter have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Many hotels want to know how they can measure their return on investment. Ironically there is no financial investment involved but you do have to invest some time. You cannot see specific numbers on your ROI with Twitter, but you can look at how things such as traffic to your website, customer satisfaction, brand awareness and reputation management can increase business. Below are five ways you can measure the effectiveness of Twitter for your hotel.

Tweet a special offer and give a code word for a discount

One of the main uses of Twitter for hotels is to promote a special event or offer. The Drake Hotel in Toronto Canada www.thedrakehotel.ca has had a lot of success with this and says, 'Similar to phone and email, twitter is a really great medium for communicating with our guests and the community in general. We use twitter to run contests and offer special deals to our followers and as a means for responding and maintaining guest services.'

A hotel can tweet about an event or an offer the very same day which creates a sense of urgency and a feeling of 'act now or lose your chance'. This same offer in a print campaign or e-blast would have to be planned ahead of time, couldn't be edited, and would cost a lot of money. With Twitter a hotel can spread the word for free and it can be delivered instantly to its followers' mobile phones. You can measure the percentage of people who came to your event through Twitter by having them give a promo code at the door for a discount. You could also promote an event only on Twitter.

The Drake Hotel has proved this works, 'As twitter grows so does the direct relationship between our online followers and physical guests. People will call in or ask in person about specific offers we've only promoted via twitter, which we view as a direct success.' A typical tweet from the Drake hotel is the following:

A rainy Sunday is perfect for seeing a play. Catch one of the last performances of 'The Misanthrope' tonight @8PM
<http://tinyurl.com/c8o5rv>

7:11 AM Apr 26th from web

Track traffic to your website from twitter with analytics

Another way you can measure the effectiveness of Twitter is to track how many people visit your website from the link you place on a tweet. This is automatically updated in an analytics tracking software such as Google Analytics <http://www.google.com/analytics>.

Dimension: Source	Visits ↓
1. hotelnewsresource.com	43
2. facebook.com	32
3. twitter.com	29
4. hotelresource.com	18

Improve customer service and satisfaction

Twitter allows you to send messages to your followers and equally important is that they can send messages to you. You must listen to what your guests have to say and respond to them in a timely manner. They may ask about room rates, events, or restaurant information. They may also have a request or complaint. The Drake hotel knows the importance of addressing these issues, 'Since its earliest days the Drake has made customer service its number one priority and we take all feedback from guests very seriously.

For the most part, Drake's reviews have been positive which is encouraging and motivates us to maintain the highest quality of service. On the odd occasion that someone has a concern about their experience at Drake we contact them directly to ensure their next visit is improved.' Fantastic customer service will ensure repeat customers and new business. Below is an example of how the Drake Hotel quickly responded to a customer complaint:

Customer complaint:

@TheDrakeHotel Showed up at 5pm for \$5 Caesars only to be told that the deal ends 4. We were a little disappointed.

9:05 PM Apr 19th from web in reply to TheDrakeHotel

Hotel Response:

@LauraBerthiaume So sorry to hear that! Next time have a drink on us. There's an envelope at the front desk with your name on it. X[OH!]

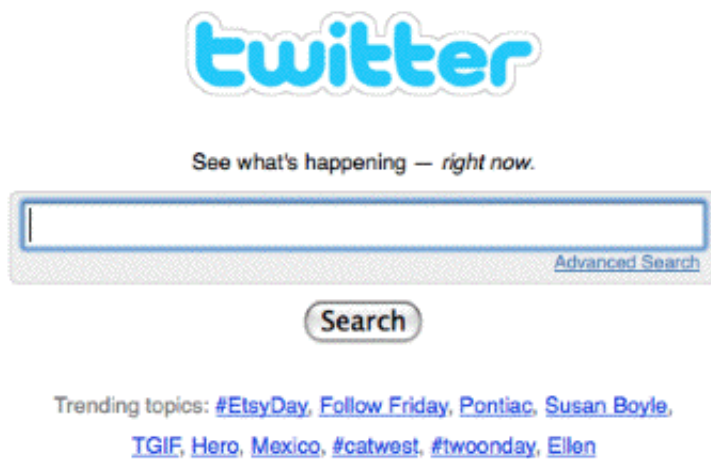
11:24 AM Apr 20th from web in reply to LauraBerthiaume



TheDrakeHotel
The Drake Hotel

Search what people are saying about your hotel and make changes

As with any social media site it is important to monitor what the public is saying about your hotel. A bad comment could seriously hurt your reputation and if this happens you must respond in an effective manner. You can also learn from any comments about your hotel as to what your guests like or dislike. Based on this information you can make changes that will improve your hotel and satisfy your customers. You can do a search for your hotel name in Twitter at <http://search.twitter.com/> and you will see a screen as shown below:



You can also see what people are tweeting about in the hospitality industry on a site called tweetmeme: <http://tweetmeme.com/?category=lifestyle-travelplaces>. You can see more tweets on the travel industry at 'we follow' <http://wefollow.com/tag/travel>.

Build brand awareness and trust

Twitter is an excellent way to build people's trust and confidence in your hotel. Once you have established a community of followers you can communicate directly with them and they will appreciate that there is someone there to answer their questions or keep them informed of special events and offers. Through twitter you can transmit your brand's personality and strengthen credibility. As your list of followers broadens, so will your brand awareness. Strong consumer confidence and brand awareness has the power to generate more leads and bookings.

If you are interested in learning more about Social Media and Internet Marketing Strategies for the hospitality industry please visit www.orourkehospitality.com or call us at 978-465-5955. Thank-you!

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