

The rise of social media in the hospitality industry critical thinking samples

[Business](#), [Customers](#)



Over the course of the past few years, use of internet has become a major trend in the hospitality industry. Hospitality industry has had a lot of exploration and up gradation of new methods, enabling a better reach of the target audience. In recent times, e-commerce is one of the most important internet facets to have emerged. Therefore, hoteliers have been piggy banking on innovative ways to make profits, through the internet.

In the past decade, hotel industry focused on manual back-office processing and customer service with a human touch. However, with the advent of the proliferation of online travel portals, social media adoption and international hotel brands, different hotels started leveraging technology, to make it more customer-centric and more efficient (Solis, 2009, p. 312). Additionally, hoteliers used to depend on customer contact for bookings and reservations, but over the past years there has been great emphasis on online booking.

Also, travel consumers in the past relied on traditional media and travel journalism to guide them to the right places. Now, the internet has taken over the role and has become the information provider. The Travel Association data in the United States, in 2008, provides that the internet was used by approximately 90 million American adults to make travel plans, and 76% of these people were making leisure trips (Verma, 2013, p. 184)

Similarly, emergence of social media has enabled customers to have more control of information generation, organization and sharing (Tapscott, 2009, p. 30) Consumers are able to use new media to participate in social networks; enabling them to share and create content, communicate with each other and build relationships with other consumers. Nowadays, consumers spends more time creating user generated content and posting it

on the internet (Verma, 2013, p. 185).

There is a rapid increase of online -booking in the hospitality industry; this includes; travel packages, hotel and airlines. Most hotels have developed their own websites, where bargain hunters book hotel rooms, other than using auspices in the travel agency. Different hotels also have a strong presence in the social media sites, including Facebook, instragram and twitter, with great fan base following their pages. Instagram enables posting of photos in regards to the beautiful and serene places offered by different companies, while Facebook and twitter allow instant communication. (Scott, 2011, pg. 9) The use of this social media sites enables them to fill in details of their visit and guest relations team, getting in touch with the customer care (Tapscott, 2009, p. 68). These activities have helped in establishing strong brand presence in the social media space and leveraging strong fan base hence reaching out to the target audience.

In the same note, social media has affected the relationships between companies and their customers. This is because social media has provided a platform where consumers can complain or compliment their service providers with a lot of ease (Solis, 2009, p. 65). Therefore, companies have the opportunity to engage with their customers. Similarly, the different companies are no longer being reviewed by travel guide writer, but rather customers in the social media and web sites who can rate them directly. These reviews are of great help, but sometimes can hurt the hospitality industry (Sigala, 2012, p. 62).

Given the potential impact of social media on online travel information and tourism, more research is vital in regards to hospitality to ensure

improvement in social media as the marketing cities. e- Commerce is on the rise with the growing literacy in computer technology; hence social media is the marketing place for future. Hospitality 2015 is an article published by Deloitte, which states that new technology and social media trends will play a key role over the next few years in the expansion and growth of the hospitality industry. Different companies are also focusing on IT solutions to enable them provide different services, hence the hospitality industry, will have wide presence in social media platforms. Hotels need to keep track on new developments in the social media to enable them continuously market themselves, because of different changing trends. Accordingly, social media is changing ways of going on with marketing in businesses today, hence the need to rethink and change traditional methods (Edgar, 2013, p. 44).

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