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Responding to Reviews Online Drives Booking Inquiries, TripAdvisor Study Reveals

Study Shows Which Factors Drive Higher Online Engagement From Travelers on Hotel and B&B Pages

NEWTON, Mass., Sept. 3, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [TripAdvisor®](#), the world's largest travel site*, today announced the results of a new study that reveals the key factors that drive engagement¹ from travelers researching places to stay on the site's property pages. The study analyzed data including the number of reviews, management responses, and photos and videos across a sample of hotel and B&B pages to reveal which factors have the greatest influence on travelers to look for more information about a property.

The study finds that hotels providing a management response to reviews are 21 percent more likely to receive a booking inquiry via TripAdvisor than those that don't respond to any reviews. Properties that respond to more than 50 percent of their reviews increase their likelihood of receiving a booking inquiry by 24 percent, compared to properties that do not respond to reviews.

Factors That Drive the Most Traveler Engagement on Hotel or B&B Pages

Ranked by level of impact on traveler engagement¹

1. Number of photos
2. Total number of reviews
3. Management responses in the past year
4. Number of reviews in the past year

Seeing is Believing - The More Photos, the Better

The study shows that photos are essential, driving not only higher levels of engagement from travelers, but also leading to more potential bookings. Hotel and B&B pages that have photos receive 138 percent more engagement from travelers, compared to those that don't have any photos. Engagement levels and booking inquiries demonstrate linear growth the more photos there are.

How Photos Increase Traveler Engagement Levels

Compared to properties that have no photos:

- Properties with at least one photo: +138% engagement
- Properties with more than 100 photos: +151% engagement
- Properties with more than 1,000 photos: +203% engagement

How Photos Increase Likelihood of Booking Inquiries

Compared to properties that have no photos:

- Properties with at least one photo: +225% likelihood of booking inquiry
- Properties with more than 100 photos: +238% likelihood of booking inquiry

Both Sides of the Story - Responding to Reviews Reaps Rewards

The study shows that taking part in the conversation is also beneficial to properties; the more reviews the property's management responds to, the higher the average review rating. The level of engagement from travelers also increases with the presence of management responses - hotels and B&Bs that have responded to at least one review see 17 percent more engagement from travelers, compared to those with no management responses. Properties that respond to reviews at least 13 percent of the time see a 21 percent boost in engagement, compared to those that never do. This increase in engagement trends upward the more management responds.

Similarly, responding to reviews has a significant impact on overall ratings for hotels and B&Bs on TripAdvisor:

Rate of Management Response for Recent Reviews vs. Average Review Rating

- 0% response rate = 3.81 average review rating
- 5% - 40% response rate = 4.04 average review rating
- 40% - 65% = 4.05 average review rating
- 65%+ response rate = 4.15 average review rating

"Looking at the results of this study, a clear theme emerges: the more engaged the business owner, the more interested the traveler," said Marc Charron, president, TripAdvisor for Business. "It's no secret that travelers want to see pictures and read reviews of a property before making their booking decision. What's really key is the upward trend in average review ratings, traveler engagement levels and booking inquiries on the site, the more frequently a hotel owner responds to reviews. Taking part in the conversation and demonstrating that the owner cares about feedback has a very real and measurable effect on converting a traveler from a casual browser into a potential guest."

"As part of our internal culture, guest comments on TripAdvisor are a priority for us. This is why our hotel managers read and react on every single review posted regarding their hotels," said Javier Carazo, Quality SVP for NH Hotel Group. "But we do not stop here, we try to respond to as many reviews as possible, giving our guests feedback on their comments, or just thanking them for their opinion. We are convinced that these actions have a very positive impact on our current and potential guests in terms of engagement and new bookings. They really like to see that we care about what they share with the TripAdvisor community."

Methodology

¹For the purpose of this study, TripAdvisor analyzed data from a sample of accommodation properties from the 25 most reviewed cities* on the site from July 7 to August 7, 2014. The study reveals how review ratings change based on management response rates and the level of traveler engagement (defined as page views per session and booking inquiry clicks) relative to various content factors including the number of reviews, photos, videos and rate of review responses from management.

**Cities included in the study sample are: London, Rome, Paris, New York City, Las Vegas, Barcelona, Orlando, Milan, Florence, Bangkok, San Francisco, Istanbul, Amsterdam, Berlin, Madrid, Prague, Edinburgh, Venice, Chicago, Buenos Aires, Singapore, Dublin, Marrakech, New Orleans.*

About TripAdvisor

TripAdvisor® is the world's largest travel site*, enabling travelers to plan and have the perfect trip. TripAdvisor offers trusted advice from real travelers and a wide variety of travel choices and planning features with seamless links to booking tools. TripAdvisor branded sites make up the largest travel community in the world, reaching nearly 280 million unique monthly visitors**, and more than 170 million reviews and opinions covering more than 4 million accommodations, restaurants and attractions. The sites operate in 44 countries worldwide, including China under daodao.com. TripAdvisor also includes TripAdvisor for Business, a dedicated division that provides the tourism industry access to millions of monthly TripAdvisor visitors.

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*Source: comScore Media Metrix for TripAdvisor Sites, worldwide, Q1 2014

**Source: Google Analytics, average monthly unique users, Q2 2014; does not include traffic to daodao.com

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