

To Study the role of Social Media as a promotional Tool for Hotel Industry

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Abstract- Hotel Industry is one of the fastest growing industry in today's world. The new technology and the use of social media is very important tool for hotel industry due to increasing competition among different brands. Due to increasing competition the hoteliers have to change the marketing strategies as per the guest requirements. Social Media is also used to recognize the niche market and to better understand the guest's needs. Also increasing customer satisfaction is a major part for success of any hotel and social media will be driving tool for the same. This research lays emphasis on social media its types and its use for Hospitality Industry.

Key Words- Social Media, Hotel Industry, Importance, Need.

Introduction: Today's era is of Social media, basically it is a computer-based technology which enables one to share ideas, thoughts through virtual network. There are different types of social media like Facebook, Instagram, You Tube & Snapchat. Hence it has become a extremely important tool for hotel industry.

This industry provides amenities like guest accommodation and related services, for leisure or business. There are different types of hotels like Resorts, Service Apartments, Business Hotels, Ecotels, Boutique Hotels.

The hotels adopted Social Media marketing to enhance the brand image & to develop better relations among the hotels and guests. Also CRM- Customer Relation Management became an important tool for the long term results.

Marketing is a important step in driving hotel sales. The biggest advantage of social media is it is available to everyone and at any place. It also helps the industry to increase the brand awareness among the guest. It also allows the hotel to listen to what guests are saying, whenever a guest posts anything related to your hotel or there stay, it is an opportunity for the hotel attract more guests. Different social websites are developed like Trip Advisor, Make My Trip.Com, Yatra.com etc, which helps the guest & hotel to make the reservation process smooth & at the same time it acts as marketing strategy.

Another aspect of social media is for online review and giving rating to the hotels. Hotels can easily take guest feedback about their stay or food, and also guest can share their experiences about the hotel.

The guests who are active on social media always like to hear about new promotions and offers. Rewards and sending Newsletters could be sent on regular basis which enhances the brand recognition and increases brand loyalty among guest.

Social Media allows the hotel to catch, fix or improve the guest experience which creates a differentiating factor. Because of social Media people ask each other where to stay and about the other features of the hotels. And if the guests get a positive feedback the hotel comes as a first preference for the guest which increase the brand loyalty.

A strong presence of a brand on social media enables hotels to continuously update their content, offers, promotions and services to a wide number of people without spending a huge amount. Social media allows the hotel to reach the target market easily at very less or no advertisement cost.

For a hotel a website it is a most direct and a best tool to shape their presence and if managed well it becomes a strong driving force for having major bookings.

Among the types of Social Media the first is Facebook, there are many advantages of using Facebook as a marketing tool. It helps in advertising of a brand on a large scale. According to Sojern data Facebook ads were most utilized social media channels by hospitality brands last year. Facebook is a mixture of mass media like television and digital channels.

Facebook is very popular with different content options like text, photos, videos, brand pages. These options enables the traveller groups to search different options. It proves effective for branding and direct goals of company or hotel brand. Hence a brand can do marketing on a single platform rather than using multiple platforms.

Another type of social media is Instagram, it is a photo-based network. The snaps which people take during vacations turns out to be a good advertising tool for hotel brands. There are different ways in Instagram to post the content like stories which can be used for doing any announcements, running a poll for customer feedback etc.

Need of Social Media:

- As it is a very user friendly, users feel that they are involved in any brand activity.
- It also helps to resolve any guest issue and also he can raise a concern and hotel can rectify it then and there.
- Social media also enhances better communication among the hotel and guests.

- It helps the hotel for promoting or giving any information to the guest in a very less time.
- Social media also enables the ease of advertising of a hotel brand and its services to large number of audience in a short period of time.
- A hotel can have its brand established all over the globe.
- Social Media is platform where in investment is low and returns are on a large scale. Through advertising, promotions hotels can get maximum revenue.
- It can also give quick results in some cases.

There is one more social media type Twitter. For a hotel which is more focused on business travellers should be more active on Twitter. If the hotel is a resort for couples especially the brand should be more active on Instagram.

If the main clientele is family then one should be more active on Facebook, as the families look for people's recommendation and decide on one hotel.

Objectives:

- To understand the importance of Social Media for marketing of hotel Industry brand.
- To study the various elements of Social Media.

Literature Review:

Blackshaw (2006) describes social media as the internet-based applications that carry consumer generated content that

is relevant to the past experiences or any source or online information issues. The consumers create this themselves, based on their experience with products and services, and share it among themselves aiming at educating about the products and services (Xiang & Gretzel, 2009). These can be seen as extension of word of mouth (WOM), a very powerful tool that influences consumer behaviours.

The twenty-first century is witnessing an explosion of Internet-based messages transmitted through social media. These

media have become a major factor in influencing various aspects of consumer behaviour from awareness to post-purchase behaviour (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

The marketing trends have now changed and instead of firms communicating to their consumers now consumers can also communicate with other consumers using social media.

Many consumers now see social media as the most trustworthy source of information about the products and services

than communications derived from the corporations. Unfortunately, there is very little guidance offered to the marketing

managers for incorporating this media with integrated marketing communication strategies

There are different types of social networking sites such as Facebook.com, MySpace.com, Twitter.com; consumer review

sites such as tripadvisor.com, lonelyplanet.com, and business sites such as LinkedIn.com for instance. Trip Advisor is one of the popular sites where consumers share their experience through comments and has become a very powerful WOM communication (Ramsey, 2006). Marketers need to control and enhance positive WOM by working on relationship

management, in order to be effective in marketing communication through these channels (Payne and Frow, 2005).

Social Media also serves as cost cutter as it is a low cost medium to communicate and indicate the insight on users'

preferences, attitudes, feelings and behavior, in a way more direct and efficient than the use of a research company to

figure out this information (Li and Bernoff, 2008). Social media also have significant impact on hotels that are using them

to attract new clients, maintain the existing ones and also boost their online presence.

They cannot ignore the rising popularity of social networking sites and UGC content nor the role they are playing in the

trip planning behavior (Cox, Burgess, Sellitto and Buultjens, 2009). Hotels are increasingly using Facebook and Twitter to publicize new activities and offers and keep up to date with customers. Hotel bookings are increasingly being affected by the many forms of Social media and the peer and guest reviews that have proliferated throughout those sites (Astbury, 2011)

Given the intangible nature of tourism and hospitality services, consumers who have never been to the destination rely a lot on embracing the information supplied by other people through word of mouth and social networking sites on the internet (Saranow, 2004; Ricci and Wietsma, 2006). Compete Incorporated (2007) estimates the consumer's generated content has influenced more than \$10 billion annually in online travel due to the increased reliability it is considered to have compared to more traditional forms of travel marketing

Research Methodology:

This study is based on secondary Data and the data is extracted from books, internet, magazines and research papers related to the topic.

Conclusion:

Social Media is a extremely important tool for marketing in hotel industry. It helps to understand customers perspective in a better way. On the other hand it is also cost saving and effective for a larger audience in minimum time. Marketing is very essential for long run of a brand. Through different social media platforms a brand can update hotel promotions and services.

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