

Managing Your Hotel's Online Reputation Takes Time and a Real Commitment - By Richard Walsh,  
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2007-07-10

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Lodging Interactive, a leading interactive marketing agency for the hospitality industry, announced today the launch of Chatter Guard™ an online reputation management technology and service.

Social media websites and blogs have rapidly become an important part of any effective Internet marketing strategy. Why? Simply because these websites are where people are talking about your hotel and your services and there is no better advertising media than 'word of mouth'. As the hotelier or director of marketing, your challenge is to know what the buzz is and adding your own buzz. Clearly, the prospective hotel guests who visit these sites, and this number is growing daily, will definitely respond to consumer online chatter more than to a paid advertisement.

Not only do the majority of online shoppers visit more than one search engine before they book a hotel room, now they visit social media websites and blogs to see what is being said about the hotels where they are going. Recent market research tells us that more than 40% of all online travel shoppers will visit a social website or blog to read comments and reviews about the hotels at their destination before they make a reservation. It's not only about brand perception anymore; it's what a real guest experienced at a specific hotel and what they share online. In some cases their sharing includes pictures or even videos of the experience.

Online buzz is not always bad and social media should not be perceived as a negative, many people do go online to tell others about a great deal or a good experience during their business trip or vacation. The real challenge is how do you know what is being said about your hotel, without spending hours every day surfing the world of User Generated Media. Then you need to prioritize the online chatter and respond quickly to the most relevant comments.

Even if you invest in a tool to surf the online user generated media, you will likely find hundreds of comments and reviews that don't relate to your hotel specifically and now you need to sort through your search results for the truly relevant chatter. Now you have to rank and respond to the important buzz quickly. Then to justify the cost for services, you should track and analyze your progress? Is it worth it? You decide, when there is chatter about your hotel, this chatter will may cost you or generate new sales in the weeks and months ahead because the online chatter doesn't go away. The online buzz stays online and it grows. Will it affect a shopper's decision, you bet it will.

It's not just about responding to bad comments online chatter is critical whether it is good or bad chatter. Your online response to online chatter is no different than addressing a guest's request or comment while they are staying at the hotel. The difference now is that hundreds or thousands of prospects are listening to your response to a guest's concerns or complimentary remarks. Reply quickly and with a clear message!

Your online reputation is important so it is important that you manage it effectively. A quick response tells prospective guests that you are aware of any negative issues and that it is being or has been handled. A response also opens a direct communication with prospective consumers and this can be a major benefit. For those positive online comments, your response will go a long way in showing prospective guests that their online buzz is appreciated and they will bring you some repeat business. Plus a response to positive buzz will most likely generate even more.

Richard Walsh, vice president of business development for Lodging Interactive, a leading supplier of Internet marketing service for the hotel industry commented 'In our months of research prior to launching Chatter Guard, our online service to help hotels capture, analyze, report and respond to user generated media, we found that online buzz is available on thousands of websites and whether the comment is good or bad or even whether it is accurate or not it will affect a hotel's business. So it is infinitely important that you manage your online reputation and that is done by being responsive to any type of online chatter. The social media websites and blogs are replacing the office water cooler. They are where people are finding out about travel services and deciding which service they will purchase and which ones they will not.

#### **About Lodging Interactive**

Lodging Interactive is a leading provider of Internet Marketing Services to the travel and lodging industries. The company provides a portfolio of effective Internet Marketing Services to hundreds of hotels, resorts, timeshares and bed and breakfasts worldwide.

The Company also offers effective online tools and services: [hotelBLAST.com](http://hotelBLAST.com), a self-service email marketing system, [ChatterGuard.com](http://ChatterGuard.com), an online social media monitoring and reputation management system, [CommentCards.com](http://CommentCards.com), a full-service business-2-consumer comment card service, interactive [Google mapping services](#), [eProposal Rapid RFP Response System](#), an online RFP response tool for Sales Managers, and [RFPLink.com](http://RFPLink.com), a group RFP lead generation and reporting system.

Lodging Interactive clients include branded properties such as Marriott, Sheraton, Hilton, Radisson, Crowne Plaza Hotels, Doubletree Hotels, Candlewood Suites, Best Western, Wyndham Hotels plus numerous independent properties.

The Company is headquartered in Parsippany, NJ and can be reached at 973-402-4970 or by visiting its website at [www.LodgingInteractive.com](http://www.LodgingInteractive.com). Lodging Interactive's [HotelCast2.0](http://www.LodgingInteractive.com) can be heard by visiting [www.LodgingInteractive.com/podcast.htm](http://www.LodgingInteractive.com/podcast.htm).

Lodging Interactive is a proud member of the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA), The California Hotel Association, and a supporter of the Hotel Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMIAI). For more information you can also contact Richard Walsh, Vice President of Business Development at [rjwalsh@lodginginteractive.com](mailto:rjwalsh@lodginginteractive.com) or at 973-402-4970.

This article comes from Hotel News Resource

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The URL for this story is:

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