

YouTube, Hilton, Starwood, Orbitz and Travelocity Discuss How to Monetize Social Media

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Recent findings from EyeforTravel's 'Online Marketing Report' reveal that 79% of travel industry executives view social media as a long-term part of the online marketing mix. The evidence is clear: For the travel industry as a whole, UGC and social networking is not a passing fad - it's a must.

Over the last year hotels, travel agents, online intermediaries, even airlines have got their feet wet, dipping tentative toes into the world of social media. On March 5-6 in San Francisco, EyeforTravel's Social Media Strategies for Travel event demonstrates this industry-wide adoption, with speakers from Orbitz, YouTube, Groopie, AOL, VibeAgent, FlyerTalk.com, JupiterResearch, Google, SideStep, Starwood, Yahoo, American Airlines, Travelocity and more. [For more information click here](#).

Experts from these leading companies will give practical advice to travel marketers who want to build a coherent social media strategy. Topics on the agenda include monitoring reviews, driving traffic, building loyalty, protecting your brand, generating content and forming partnerships.

[To receive a PDF brochure with a full agenda and a list of speakers click here](#)

Starwood Hotels and Resorts was one of the first to get in on the action with 'TheLobby'. And in late 2006 Sheraton fully embraced social media, by making UGC the basis of their website. Jeff Mirman, Director Interactive Marketing for Sheraton will be giving the opening keynote at the Social Media Strategies for Travel conference. His presentation will focus on choosing the best mix of Web 2.0 features and act as a beginners-guide for cautious marketers. As well as Starwood, speakers from Hilton and Extended Stay Hotels will also be on hand to give advice.

Airlines have it a little tougher. It's more difficult for them to prioritize social media amid other financial pressures. And, with a highly-commoditized product, their customers are less likely to feel part of a community. However a handful of major airlines have definitely been making inroads. KLM launched a social networking mini-site for business travelers, and American Airlines and Cathay Pacific have also got in on the act. Steven Moo Young from American Airlines and Ravi Sreekakula from Cathay Pacific will both be sharing their opinion in San Francisco.

No conference on social media would be complete without hearing directly from the major UGC and social networking sites. Internet giants, YouTube and TripAdvisor will be joined by speakers from VirtualTourist, RealTravel, FlyerTalk and TripIt. Delegates will have a unique opportunity to quiz these industry pioneers and identify profitable partnerships.

The timing of this conference couldn't be better. In San Francisco next March innovators in online travel will come together to share their experience in the social media arena. Delegates will benefit from hearing real-world, practical advice from people who are already working on social media initiatives. [To request a PDF brochure with a full agenda and a list of speakers link here](#).

[For more information on Social Media Strategies for Travel on March 5-6, 2008 in San Francisco, click here](#).

For more information on EyeforTravel's Online Marketing Report contact amy@eyefortravel.com

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