Social Media Marketing for Accommodation

Overview

June 2013, by Chris Adams, Lara Ortiz
Agenda

I. Why social media? – Research & strategy
II. Facebook essentials – Page setup
III. Content & communications planning
IV. Cross-channel integration
V. Measure & manage
VI. Other social media platforms
VII. Takeaways & to dos
>> Why social media?

RESEARCH & STRATEGY
Why social media?

Word of mouth marketing

Planning trips away

Tools used in the last six months to plan trips away....

- Talked to family, friends
  - 36%
- Online reviews of accommodation
  - 32%
- Online reviews of destinations or activities
  - 16%
- Online travel itineraries or blogs
  - 11%
- Travel guidebook
  - 11%
- Newspaper travel section
  - 7%
- Travel or lifestyle magazine
  - 6%
- Other
  - 29%

Technologies, Resources and Services Used to Plan Leisure Travel
In the past 12 months, which of these have you used to help plan your leisure travel? (Select all that apply)

- 41.6% used user-generated content
- 24.6% used social media resources for travel planning
- 48.7% used print resources

UGC / Social Media
55+%
Social media objectives

Social media offers a powerful opportunity for:
1. Branding
2. Building and managing online reputation
3. Serving customers better
4. Emerging opportunity: cultivating a new sales channel for direct online bookings

The Social Media Funnel

- Connections (with existing and potential clients)
- Relationships (to drive loyalty and create new connections through sharing)
- Conversions
Social media strategy for hotels

1. Establish Goals
2. Customise Your Profile
3. Plan & Create Unique Content
4. Optimise Content
5. Follow Through in Other Media
6. Track Results
Establish goals to guide content

The nature of social media is engagement

Past guests
- Loyalty and repeat stays
- Encourage user-generated content

Soon-to-be guests (already booked)/current guests
- Customer satisfaction
- Help them plan their visit

Potential guests
- Make them aware we exist
- Encourage them to book

Contests to boost conversation and excitement, offers & opportunities for lead generation, incl. email

Use media as customer service channel: Q&A and problem resolution

Travel guides and local info to encourage planning on your site: photos, video, maps
Facebook essentials
Facebook is used primarily by adults in the prime of their active professional careers for social interaction.

- >1 billion active users/month, with strong and continued growth in users over 40
- 80% prefer Facebook for interacting with brands over Twitter

Fastest growing group is 35-65 years of age

THEY CONTROL THE WALLETS!

Sources:
- Who Uses Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, & MySpace? 4thQ & 1stQ Stats and Analysis, Social Media Today, 13 April 2012.
Anatomy of Facebook – Your profile

1. Cover photo
2. Profile picture
3. About
   (use keywords for search)
4. Applications and custom tabs
5. Timeline
   • Milestones
   • Highlights
   • Friend activity
   • Recommendations
   • General posts
Customise your Facebook profile

1. Cover photo

– Your chance to make a stunning first impression!
– What makes you unique?
  • Special views
  • Favourite guest hangout on property
  • Special feature or service
  • Highlight seasonal decor or events on your property
– No calls to action or ad promotions allowed (e.g. “Like us” or “10% off,” “Visit our website!”)
– 851 px wide by 315 px tall
Customise your Facebook profile

2. Profile picture
   - Clearly brand yourself
   - Posted next to every post you make on Facebook
   - 50px x 50px, keep it simple and clean
   - Overlaps your cover photo, 180px x 180px
3. Apps & custom tabs

- Highlight your strong points
  - Photos
  - Accolades
  - Booking engine
  - Promotions
  - Email subscription

- Prioritise the apps you most want your users to interact with
  - Each custom application gets its own image (111x74px) beneath the Like button. Use these as mini ads.
Hotel sweepstakes/contest

- **Fan acquisition**
  - Option of ‘gated’ competition entry form
  - Requires ‘Like’ to enter

- **Email acquisition**
  - Require email subscription to enter or preselect subscription option on entry form

- **Traffic generation**
  - Option to also include other content, incl. shareable video or links to Hot Deals below entry form

>> Who, what and when?
# Plan your content

Tailor your content to suit your audience and goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past guests</th>
<th>Soon-to-be guests (already booked)/current guests</th>
<th>Potential guests</th>
</tr>
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<td><strong>GOALS:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage loyalty and repeat stays</td>
<td>• Keep the excitement alive.</td>
<td>• Make them aware we exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attract user-generated content</td>
<td>• Help them plan their visit.</td>
<td>• Encourage them to book with our property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTENT:</strong></td>
<td><strong>CONTENT:</strong></td>
<td><strong>CONTENT:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Deals for repeat visits</td>
<td>• Post itineraries of things to do by traveller type, e.g. Auckland family highlights, Auckland’s most romantic activities (use maps, photo albums, etc)</td>
<td>• Highlight milestones that represent history &amp; selling points (use photos!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Photo/story contests to win a return stay</td>
<td>• Upcoming/current events</td>
<td>• Post inspirational photos of views and experiences in your area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Customer relationship management regarding reviews/recommendations, comments</td>
<td>• Neighborhood specials</td>
<td>• Boost excitement with contests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tips and local secrets (the CBD’s best coffee shops, in an album with descriptive text and captions describing each location)</td>
<td>• Highlight promotions on now by pinning to top of timeline for 7 days (make a custom tab or create an album!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Targeted Facebook ads to promote a special or contest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Use apps and tabs to prioritise what we want them to see and do, e.g. booking tab, photos tab, deals tab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Plan your content

### Create a content calendar *(example only)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAY</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1:</strong> Update milestones and add photos</td>
<td>Easter Sale-Pinned to top for 7 days</td>
<td>Travel Tuesday: Share an Auckland travel story from the web</td>
<td>March Events album</td>
<td>Post/share content on family travel, comment on it related to our service/amenities</td>
<td>Favourite Friday – Album of favourite 5 coffee shops in CBD</td>
<td>Highlight reviews of the week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2:</strong> Share a few tourism partner or guest photos</td>
<td>Endless Summer Deals post</td>
<td>Travel Tuesday: Share an Auckland travel story from the web</td>
<td>Contest – to run through 2nd week in June, create app tab</td>
<td>Post/share content on business travel, comment or poll</td>
<td>Photo Friday – Win dinner for 2 by sending in your best Heritage destination photos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3:</strong> Post a destination video</td>
<td>Facebook promo 10% off voucher code</td>
<td>Travel Tuesday: Share an Auckland travel story from the web</td>
<td>Staff profile</td>
<td>Post/share content on general travel, comment on it related to our service/amenities</td>
<td>Favourite Friday – Album of favourite 5 walks in central Auckland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create unique content

5. **Timeline**
   - Photo albums and videos!!
     - Itineraries by traveller type
     - City highlights
     - Fan submissions
     - Promotions
     - Good press
     - Share destination content
   - **Events & milestones**
     (with photos if possible)
   - **Contests**
   - **Deals**
   - **Customer relationship management**
     (Reply to feedback and engage in conversation with customers)

Use photo albums to share good press
Create unique content

Curate others’ captivating video and photos relevant to your destination.

For activities and attractions, develop partnerships and offer to book from your property.
Highlight milestones and events: Historical facts, opening dates and renovation dates allow you to highlight key points of interest, upgrades and selling points. Events such as holiday or anniversary celebrations, celebrity visits or property firsts, especially when accompanied by photo or video, provide opportunities to highlight special touches and traditions on the property.
Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Pinterest
Anatomy of Twitter

1. Background image (contact info and/or brand messaging)
2. Profile picture
3. About (use keywords for search)
4. Tweets feed
Twitter best practice

- **Listening is the key to a successful voice on Twitter**
- Use a third party Twitter application to monitor the conversation
- Set up your application to track relevant keywords/hash tags

Hoot Suite – Helps you monitor and manage conversations and opportunities on Twitter
Emerging player – Instagram

• >90 million monthly active users, mobile-only service (website launched, but cannot upload photos from there)
• Used as a “new scope to see the world” around you, based on the intimacy a photo provides.
• “Real photos that give users the backstage pass, the chef’s hat, or the passenger seat to where your brand is, where it’s going, and what it likes to do.”

OPPORTUNITIES/USES:

• Use hashtags and @mentions to link with marketing initiatives, incl. contests and UGC, and converse with others by connecting to their lifestyle and emotions.
  – “Southwest gave away a series of gift cards over the holidays to people who posted photos of their holiday “photo of the day” and used a special hashtag (also had to include Southwest’s account handle) to enter. The entries flooded in, and during a time when people have traveling on their minds, Southwest caught their attention in all the right ways.”
• Sharing is integrated with other social media services (Facebook, Twitter & more)

B2B – LinkedIn

• >150 million members
• Professional business social network

OPPORTUNITIES/USES:

• B2B networking using groups
  – Boutique hotels lead generation
  – Suppliers networking
  – Professional discussion groups

• Recruitment
Emerging player – Pinterest

- 97% of Facebook “likers” are female
- 10.4 million registered users, >9 million monthly users connected on Facebook
- **Drives more referral traffic than Google+, YouTube and LinkedIn combined**
- Heavily product-focused
Focus on results and refine activity
Track results – Facebook Insights

- **Reach**: People whose news feed it was in
- **Engaged users**: People who clicked on any part of your post
- **Talking about this**: The number of people who have interacted with your page or post in any given week, incl. comments, likes, shares and polls
- **Virality**: Percentage of people reached who had an interaction
**STEP 1: Tracking Codes**
When linking outside sites, including your property site or booking engine, put a tracking code in your links.

**Google Analytics** offers the URL builder to generate campaign tracking codes.

To use it, search Google for “URL Builder”

Cut and paste the URL with tracking code from Step 3 and paste this in your URL shortener. Then use that link in your social media.
Track results – Google Analytics

STEP 2: URL Shortener
Paste your URL with Campaign Tracking Code to Get a Short URL for your post

URL Shortener:  http://goo.gl/
Others: Bit.ly, TinyURL, BUDurl

STEP 3: Post to social media
Paste the shortened tracking code URL into your social media post, and when clicked, it will track as a campaign in Google Analytics.
Track results – Google Analytics

Your site profile > Traffic > Sources > Campaigns

Analytics measures the quantity and quality of your campaigns against established goals and desired events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign</th>
<th>Visits</th>
<th>Pages / Visit</th>
<th>Avg. Visit Duration</th>
<th>% New Visits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Valentines Day Feb13</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>00:01:40</td>
<td>54.40%</td>
<td>32.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Valentines Day Feb13_HBC</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>00:01:59</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. December Newsletter 2012</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>00:11:44</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Christmas campaign 05Dec12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.38</td>
<td>00:05:37</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>15.38%</td>
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**QUANTITY**

**QUALITY**
OTHER SLIDES
>> Who, what and when?
Optimise your content

• Use target keywords in your posts to support search.
• Use visuals, videos and photos wherever possible. Visuals invite engagement and can help support your goals.
  – Deals and promos
  – Top spots/tour itineraries in your destination
  – Milestones
  – Post high resolution photos and videos (“highlighted” timeline posts are 845px wide)
Optimise your content

• Do more of what works, and less of what doesn’t.
  – Use FB INSIGHTS to look for shares, comments and likes.
  – Check out what is working for others in your industry and adapt it for your own property.

• Encourage user-generated content
  – Prizes for best guest photo/story
  – Highlight guest reviews and content

• How often should you post?
  – When you have something meaningful to say.
  – Try to post at least once daily, and always respond as soon as possible when people are speaking to you or about you.
Coordinating with other marketing media
Typically, audiences differ slightly from channel to channel

- Know your audiences, and tailor your messages to fit each channel
Cross-channel integration

CROSS-PLATFORM CONTENT:
- Contests (host on FB page, require page “like” to view and email subscription to enter)
- Offers/deals/packages
- Campaign graphics/visuals

Social
- Include and periodically promote email subscription tab
- Include content, graphics, contests, posts, etc., that support ad campaign msgs

Email
- Include and periodically promote social page links
- Include content themed to match advertising campaigns (e.g. header, banner ads, article, packages or offers)

Advertising campaigns
- On landing pages, offer opportunities and give reasons to subscribe, like or follow
Follow through in other media

**ONLINE & OFFLINE**

- **In your emails:** Include links to your social media pages in all email, and in email newsletters, use social sharing links too. Give subscribers a reason to follow your pages.
- **On your website:** Include calls to action and give your users a reason to follow social media links.
- **In your paperwork:** Include your social media contact names in booking confirmations, invoices, etc. Tell them what they can do there.
- **On your property:**
  - Use physical signs around the property and mentions on paperwork like rooms and key card folders.
  - Train your staff, especially the front desk, to advocate for social media. It’s as simple as: “We welcome feedback and questions. You can come back here, or send us a message on Twitter.”
  - OR “Glad to hear you had a great stay. We’d love it if you shared your photos with us on Facebook!”
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Twitter

Twitter is used primarily by young professionals to discuss current, real-time issues including world events and business-related topics.

**Twitter vs. Facebook**

- 1/2 as many accounts as Facebook (~480 million), likely <20% as many active users
- Skews younger than Facebook
- Far less important for users as a way to connect with brands, however nearly 70% of daily users are followers of at least one brand

**Why users tweet to hotels**

- 31% Find out tips about the neighborhood, events, etc.
- 30% See/share photos of hotel, restaurant, pool, etc.
- 26% Learn about weather/traffic/local transportation
- 12% Rant or rave about a hotel experience
- 2% Have an urgent problem in the hotel fixed ASAP

**What about deals?**

- Find out tips about the neighborhood, events, etc.
- Rant or rave about a hotel experience
- See/share photos of hotel, restaurant, pool, etc.
- Have an urgent problem in the hotel fixed ASAP
- Learn about weather/traffic/local transportation

Sources: 
- Why Users Use Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, & MySpace? 4thQ & 1stQ Stats and Analysis. Social Media Today, 13 April 2012. 

NB: USA TODAY survey at right only included 5 answer choices. Deals/promotions was not one of them.
Twitter

Twitter is not about posting, it's about participating. :-)

JD Andrews
@earthXplorer
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<th>GOAL: Generate leads</th>
<th>GOAL: Promote deals</th>
<th>GOAL: Attract audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTENT:</strong> Anytime you see your name mentioned – @mentions and in brand name searches or hashtags, respond to the person tweeting</td>
<td><strong>CONTENT:</strong> Track search topics and keywords in Hoot Suite. Listen for opportunities to engage in conversations and start relationships (20 min daily). Listening on Twitter requires a soft sell, unless the person has specifically asked for a hotel. Start with answers to questions or relevant information. Only sell your property after you are acquainted. Links to the property should always use tracking codes and shortened URLs.</td>
<td><strong>CONTENT:</strong> Post deals with link to landing page. Attach tracking codes in shortened URLs and measure results using Google Analytics.</td>
<td><strong>CONTENT:</strong> Share photo and viral type content from your Facebook page. Track clicks on your shortened URL if possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Twitter measurement

• No built-in analytics—yet...
• Use trackable URLs to track clickthroughs to your website in Google Analytics
• Monitor clicks on shortened URLs (for links to Facebook or outside sites)
• Use free tools to count retweets
• Monitor your Klout score
Recommendations/action list and resources
Key recommendations/ action items checklist:

1. Define audience, message & objectives
   - Geographic: Proportion of NZ vs Australia vs other intl?
   - Guest status: Past guests vs current/soon-to-be vs potential guests
   - Demographics: Age, persona, type of travel

2. Complete a social media content plan
   - Define content relationships between individual hotels & brand page
   - Photo & video strategy
   - Plan for influencing the influencers (Twitter pilot?)

3. Use integrated reporting incl. campaign tracking codes

4. Review email program in conjunction with social media
   - Run a lead acquisition sweepstakes or contest

5. Trial or pilot Facebook Offers & integrate with email offers

6. Regularly review reporting and make adjustments
   - biweekly or monthly

7. Budget & resource
More information:

Whitepapers and articles –

• 8 Tips on How to Set Up Your Hotel’s Facebook Timeline: [http://www.sabrehospitality.com/blog/2012-03-16/8-tips-on-how-to-set-up-your-hotels-facebook-timeline](http://www.sabrehospitality.com/blog/2012-03-16/8-tips-on-how-to-set-up-your-hotels-facebook-timeline)

Sample Facebook profiles –

• One & Only Palmilla: [www.facebook.com/OOPalmilla](www.facebook.com/OOPalmilla)
• Hawks Cay Resort: [www.facebook.com/hawkscayresort](www.facebook.com/hawkscayresort)
• Four Seasons Resorts Group: [https://www.facebook.com/FourSeasons](https://www.facebook.com/FourSeasons)
• Four Seasons Vancouver: [https://www.facebook.com/FourSeasonsHotelVancouver](https://www.facebook.com/FourSeasonsHotelVancouver)
• Marriott Napa Valley Hotel & Spa: [https://www.facebook.com/NapaHotel](https://www.facebook.com/NapaHotel)