

Module 1

Digital Marketing



The most common digital marketing channels for hotels are:



Search

The biggest product in the market is Google Search, and this could either be Organic or Paid. The difference between the two are the costs, as organic is free, and the level of exposure. When you search a Hotel in your area, the first 3/5 results you may see at this point are Paid, and especially now that most of the people are starting their searches on mobile the organic section gets a very limited exposure.

Metasearch

These are the price comparison websites, such as TripAdvisor or Trivago, and they aggregate the inventory available in the market and the different prices offered for the same product. The difference with an OTA is that the Guest, once selected the price, would be redirected to the website of the Distributor whereas on an OTA site they would complete the booking in there. A new hybrid concept emerged in the last 18 months, where metasearch websites are offering both, but these products called instant bookings are not taking off. Another product that Metasearch sites have introduced recently are sponsored listings, that essentially would allow you to take a better place in the ranking of your destination by paying a commission. If your issue is the lack of Traffic to your site, but the demand of your destination is high, then this is the perfect solution for you.

Affiliates

Usually you pay your affiliate partners a commission, rather than a fee for a click or an impression, and in exchange they promote you in relevant placements. For example, your hotel is

near a local attraction that is very popular like a zoo, and you promote your hotel on their website using an Affiliate programme. Here the zoo would receive a commission on consumed revenue, and depending on the performance, they would give you more exposure.

Emails

Newsletters or transactional emails are usually part of your CRM strategy, and they are still a relatively cost effective way to interact with your Customers.

Social Media

This is the organic part, and your posts would be only visible to your followers. It's very important to have a social media strategy, but without the Paid it's very hard to get a tangible impact.

Paid Social

These are the sponsored posts that you can push to existing customers and new prospects, and you can then monitor the visibility and performance. Less than 10% of your followers may see your organic posts, but with a Paid activity you can reach your entire userbase.

Display advertising

Also called Programmatic, this is the activity that involves a Display Banner and usually it appears on sites with relevant content or audience.

Video advertising

The most popular example is YouTube, a video Ad could appear on a pre-roll before the se-

lected video is loading. This is now a very effective way to raise the Awareness of your Hotel, and also very targeted, but it would be hard to optimise for a single or few Hotels.

Website

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Mobile App

Most Hotels won't have an independent App, but the two major opportunities are the Push Notification, that are appearing on the phone of the user, and in-app messaging that works like the inbox of your email address and stores all the relevant information the user will access when they open the App on their phone.

OTA

The most famous are Booking.com and Expedia, OTA sites are aggregating the inventory in the market and sell the best room to the Guest based upon their requirements. They are definitely a solid Partner, and they can bring incremental Revenue to your property, but this shouldn't stop you trying to reduce the reliance on them and grow the direct bookings over time.