

Hunchkin

A recommendation engine for hotels

What it is

Leisure travelers spend countless hours researching hotel features and reviews going back and forth between sites like Expedia, Kayak and Tripadvisor. When you travel alone for business, the decision variables are simple - location, wifi, dining etc. but family vacations can easily get complicated to research - activities for you and your partner, stuff for kids to do. Sometimes you can just go with a chain that you know but in many parts of the world, you really don't have that many chain hotels. The decision about which vacation hotel you pick is an important one because it can make or break a vacation. But it is not easy researching out all the information that you need to make this decision. It is further complicated by the huge volumes of reviews for popular hotels and also the increasing questionable quality of these hotels

We have created a product that does the following:

- Asks you about a hotel that you liked in the past (could be from any location) during your hotel search along with dates of travel and destination
- Gives you 5 recommendations which are similar to the hotel in features, amenities, dining, location etc.
- Provides you with the ability to make detailed comparisons between these 5 hotels
- You can ask your friends on Facebook or Google+ about opinions and recommendations from these 5 hotels

How it works

Think of it as a Pandora for hotels. We have created a genome that represents various aspects of a hotel - its features, the location, the services it provides, the dining and several others and we collect this information from various sources. We have a unique way of finding a "genome distance" between hotels and we try to find hotels with the smallest distance (most similar to) from the hotel you say you liked.

Revenue

Hunchkin will initially rely primarily on affiliations with Online Travel Agencies (Expedia, Orbitz, Travelocity etc.) for referred sales commissions. Eventually as we establish ourselves as a key Hotel search platform, we will add advertising revenues too.

Competition

Our competition will mainly be existing meta-search engines such as Kayak, Hipmunk etc. However, none of them have the recommendation capabilities that we are building.