

# INTERNET AND HOSPITABILITY



Computers and the Internet in particular have changed the hospitality industry considerably. The number of customers who book their holiday via the Internet is continuously rising. It is estimated that this development will even accelerate in the upcoming years. Experts say that some 40% of hotel bookings will be generated from the Internet in 2008. Even in 2007 the number of customers using online booking exceeded the expectations for that year. From these facts it is clear that a hospitality business players need to pay attention to this electronic distribution channel. It is important to have a state-of-the-art website and to take into account a comprehensive, long-term strategic approach for the Internet presentation in one's budget.

Nowadays a hotel's webpage is the first point of contact for a customer. Therefore it is important to attract them and not to scare them off. A webpage needs to be well and professionally designed. The site must be user-friendly and should be easily found through search engines. Traditional distribution channels are becoming obsolete and they can often be even more expensive than the Internet distribution. The Internet presentations have many advantages, they are e.g. accessible 24 hours 7 days a week and the hotel can easily advertise its specials and packages here.

However, the Internet is not only used for advertisement and booking, the media is also important for those who look for jobs and of course for those who look for employees. According to a survey produced by the UK's leading Hospitality job board Hcareers.co.uk, some 57% of employees within a selection of premiere Hotel brands had found their job online. More and more hotels include online recruitment in their recruitment strategy. The connectivity rises every month and it is obvious that the Internet is going to become more and more important distribution and advertising channel in the future.

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