

MEANT FOR EACH OTHER

Travel & Hospitality Industry and Online Video

Why it's vital that Travel & Hospitality businesses use online video to promote their hotel or destination, attract prospective clients and boost valuable travel revenue.



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Just 10 years ago, planning a vacation likely included a trip to the local AAA office or ordering travel brochures through the mail.

Today, most people turn on their computers, surf through major travel portals, and book their vacations online. While pictures of specific destinations, finely furnished guest rooms at a hotel, or the deck layout on a cruise ship can help travelers make their decisions, it's online video that truly brings prospective customers into *the experience*.

Travel portals, cruise lines, hotel chains and luxury resorts are keen in listening to customer feedback, but many are just beginning to discover the benefits to using online video. What better way to showcase luxurious suites, spacious cabanas on a sandy beach, or a log cabin in the woods than to let prospective guests feel as if they are already there?

Online Video: A Growing Trend for Businesses

When Google purchased YouTube for \$1.6 billion in October 2006, Internet marketing for businesses was destined to change. Millions of corporate videos can now be viewed on websites like YouTube, flickr and metacafe, posted by users and businesses alike. In July 2007, comScore reported that 75% of U.S. Internet users watched an average of three hours of online video during the month, equating to about 9 billion videos.

For the travel and hospitality industry, sites like trivop.com, tvtrip.com and showhotel.com let American and international hoteliers post videos highlighting their unique amenities. [Revver](#) offers a travel channel that allows visitors to upload videos from exotic and exciting destinations like St. Tropez and Kamchatka, Russia.

But by placing their own professionally produced videos directly on their websites and on travel websites, hoteliers help engage prospective consumers, build an emotional connection with them, and increase the amount of reservation requests.

While online video use continues to explode, the number of Internet users booking their travel plans online is also increasing at a steady rate. Travel sites were visited by 83,342 unique visitors in February 2007, according to a Nielsen / NetRatings NetView report. By not taking advantage of the emergence of online videos with placement on their own websites, hoteliers must rely on sites like YouTube for user-submitted online video.

The question remains: When will the travel and hospitality industry as a whole take notice that it's no longer too expensive or time intensive to produce and distribute online video? Travel businesses that do not create their own high-quality online videos for placement on their websites and on video sharing sites are allowing user-generated video to speak for their business. With professionally produced video to highlight the true guest experience, businesses in the travel industry can capture prospective customers' attention at the moment in time they're looking to book their hotel, cruise or honeymoon destination. Competition for travel revenue is intense. Why not take a piece of the pie?

[Click Here to Watch the "Travel & Hospitality: Who Should Use Online Video" Video](#)

Hotels and Resorts

International travel is commonplace for all types of travelers. Family vacations, romantic getaways and corporate conferences are planned every day by millions of Internet users. Whether it's an intimate bed and breakfast in Savannah or a high-end resort in the heart of Manhattan, hoteliers can use online video to highlight what makes them unique: granite bathrooms, plush bedding or 24-hour room service. With million-dollar renovations spent upgrading suites, and the addition of luxurious spas and championship golf courses, lodging owners can turn an ambivalent Internet browser into a confirmed customer with a professionally produced online video.

Cruise Lines

More cruise lines may soon realize that if they do not create their own Internet videos, their customers will. Disney Cruise Line offers online videos on its website, showcasing how much fun everyone in the whole family can have as a guest aboard its ships. While some sites use virtual tours, giving users a moving camera-type glimpse at the sparkling pool or the wrap-around deck, many continue to rely on pictures. Producing an online video can let prospective customers feel that cool ocean breeze from the comfort of their living rooms.

Cities and States

Online videos can benefit chambers of commerce and travel bureaus in cities around the world. An Internet video is the ideal opportunity to give someone who is considering visiting a particular location a glimpse into what makes it unique. Why not highlight billowy white ski slopes, quaint shopping districts, world-class museums and white-sand beaches? The travel and tourism website for Sheridan, Wyoming, entices snowmobilers with an online video of how "the Old West meets Snow West." The [Wisconsin Department of Tourism](#) website promotes travel throughout the state, with videos highlighting luxurious spas. Professionally produced online videos can make users feel right at home, bringing in millions of tourism dollars each year.

Touring Websites

Touring websites that promote travel to specific destinations can easily highlight area wineries, vacation rentals, shopping districts, events and festivals, recreation and natural attractions with online videos. [Tours of Niagara Falls](#) offers online video to give Internet users a chance to see all there is to do and see, including helicopter and boat tours. Portal sites like [TravelVideo.TV](#) feature an extensive collection of Internet videos showcasing destinations across the globe.

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Travel Portals

Websites specializing in recreation attractions or travel destinations are created to promote the area, a perfect opportunity for online video. From the Blue Man Group to a visual tour of Wolfgang Puck's Spago, AccessVegas.com lets visitors get a taste of The Strip through Internet video. Websites catering to conference, banquet and event planners can use online video to showcase flexible meeting space, elegant table dressings for wedding receptions, and state-of-the-art business services. Online video can put the emphasis on beachside ceremonies and mountaintop vow exchanges.

Online Videos: Methods for Distribution

- Streaming on a company's website: Whether it's a hotel or a travel bureau, online videos can complement an existing Internet marketing plan. Online videos with keyword-rich Titles and Meta data can help a website rank on search engines. Google now offers [Video Sitemaps](#), allowing Internet videos to be indexed and appear in the search results.
- Channel creation: Social networking, travel industry and video sharing sites allow companies to display professional videos with calls-to-action back to their website. Sites such as TripAdvisor.com invite visitors to research their travel plans, but also view videos of destinations, accommodations and regions of the world.

Travel professionals need to stay abreast of the emerging features and trends of Internet marketing, as it is becoming the most vital aspect of many companies' marketing campaigns. Online videos are in demand and don't appear to be fading anytime soon.

As travelers become more sophisticated in what they demand before booking their vacations, weddings and corporate conferences, it will be up to travel industry professionals to integrate online video into their online marketing game. It all comes down to delivering the ultimate user experience. ... A website offering targeted information, with online video enhancement.

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About Fathom SEO

Fathom SEO is a Search Engine Marketing firm offering Hospitality Internet Marketing services to include Search Engine Optimization, Pay-Per-Click, Opt-in Email Marketing, and Internet video production.

Fathom SEO's [Corporate Video Production services](#) allow businesses to show prospective clients what sets them apart from competitors. The online video production team can create custom videos for your hotel, spa, golf resort or conference center. Essentially having your own TV network on your website 24 hours a day across the globe can be just what you need to generate sales and publicity for your business. Learn how your company can reach millions of unique Internet visitors with customer-centric online videos.

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