

Comparing Hotels' Official Websites with Their Pages on Booking Sites: An Exploratory Study

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Abstract : Hotel websites frequently aim at encouraging visitors to become potential guests by completing their booking procedures, and accordingly, they have been proved to be attractive and appealing. That might be due to the consideration of them as one of the direct efficacious tools to promote and sell hotels' facilities, besides building strong communication with guests to create unforgettable brand images. This study tried to find out a step for five-star and four-star hotels to develop their websites to meet their visitors' or guests' requirements for an effective site. In addition, it aimed at exploring to what extent hotels' official websites compared with their pages on hotel booking sites still influence visitors' or guests' desires to book. Besides, it also aimed at investigating to what extent visitors or guests widely trust and use those sites to accomplish their booking. Furthermore, it tried to explore to what extent visitors' or guests' preferences of those sites can influence on hotels' financial performance. To achieve these objectives, the researcher conducted an exploratory study by surfing both hotels' official websites and their pages on booking sites of such hotels in Alexandria city in Egypt to make a comparison between them. Moreover, another separate comparison was made on Arab and foreign guests' views conducted by using a questionnaire during the past seven months to investigate the effectiveness of hotels' official websites against their pages on booking sites to trust and motive them to book. The results indicated that hotels' pages on booking sites represented widely trusted and used sites compared with their official websites for achieving visitors' or guests' booking process, while a few other visitors or guests still trusted official hotel websites for completing their booking.

Keywords : five-star and four-star hotels, hotel booking sites, hotels' financial performance, hotels' official websites

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