



LODGING interactive

DIGITAL MARKETING | SINCE 2001 | SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT



# Tips to Increase Hotel Website Traffic

# Is your Hotel Website Losing Traffic?

If you have a hotel website the hope is that with each passing year you continue to see an increase in traffic to your site. Unfortunately, this may not always be the case. You may experience a decline in your website traffic year to year and if this is the case, there are a number of things that should be checked that can help determine why the decrease occurred.

## Website Traffic Drop Checklist

We've put together a list for you of common causes for your hotel website traffic to drop. See if any of these affected your YOY traffic.

### **Google Knowledge Graph**

- Perhaps one of the greatest traffic drivers for a hotel website is the Google Knowledge Graph. The Knowledge Graph provides pertinent information about a hotel, as well as a direct link to its website. If your website is not properly linked to the Google Knowledge Graph you can guarantee your traffic will decline. The Google Knowledge Graph is highly visited, so you'll want to make sure it's taking users to the right place.

### **Historical Events**

- How have events in your market differed from year to year? Historical events, like the Pope's visit to the United States, will increase hotel searches and drive more traffic. However, if your market is not experiencing the same high profile events the following year, then you could potentially see the volume of hotel searches and website visits go down.

# Is your Hotel Website Losing Traffic?

## Referral Traffic

- Are you still linked to the same quality referring websites? Referral traffic may not be the same year to year if you've stopped advertising on certain sites or if 3<sup>rd</sup> party sites have dropped you from their listings. In addition, sometimes 3<sup>rd</sup> party websites go through changes that may affect how traffic to your site is recorded. For example, if they change their page formatting to accordion style, Google will most likely not record the traffic being sent to your site because the search engines have difficulty reading the content on accordion style pages. Be cognizant of the referrers sending traffic to your site. Periodically, check their websites for any changes that could be affecting your traffic.

## Hotel Website Design

- Along the same lines, how is your [hotel website design](#) affecting traffic? If your website has accordion pages or pages with tabs you might be getting traffic to the site, but it may not be recorded, so you will see a change in your traffic numbers year to year. In an instance such as this, it's important to keep up with Google's ever-changing algorithms or you may be sabotaging yourself.

# Is your Hotel Website Losing Traffic?

## New Hotel Competitors

- New competition in the market may also affect traffic numbers. With more hotels in the area there are more options for consumers, so traffic may be diverted to the market newcomers. Always be aware of your new “neighbors” and what’s on the horizon, as well. According to [NYC & Company](#), the official Travel & Tourism company for NY, New York City has the nation’s most active hotel development pipeline, with **107,000 hotel rooms** in 2016, and a total inventory of **133,000+ rooms** expected by the end of 2019.

## PPC Advertising

- Lastly, are you spending money on [PPC advertising](#) and if so, are you spending enough? Now that Google has removed the PPC ads from the right side of the search page there is 66% less page real estate available, making the competition for the top ads even greater. With increased competition comes higher keyword costs. If you’re not spending enough for your market or if you are not increasing your budget year to year, your PPC dollars will not be effective. With rising costs each year, as well as new competitors, you have to have the right budget to stay in the game.

In a perfect world you would see a consistent increase in website traffic year after year. However, you can’t count on that happening, but if you are aware of market conditions, have good strategies in place and take the right course of actions, you could greatly increase your chances of avoiding a traffic decline.

# Hotel ABC's of Pay Per Click Marketing

PPC is an ever evolving form of digital advertising that has proven to provide great results if you plan well, monitor your campaigns and spend the appropriate budget each month. It is an especially popular form of advertising for the travel industry. Hotels, in particular can benefit greatly from paid ads, as it gets you easily noticed when potential guests are searching for accommodations. However, in order to be successful, you must have the right strategy in place. This is where a lot of misconceptions about PPC come into play and your PPC advertising can prove to be ineffective if not handled properly. Hotels need to fully understand how PPC works and the repercussions that can occur if it's mismanaged.

One of the first things you need to decide for your PPC advertising is how much will you allocate to your monthly budget. There are quite a few factors to consider when determining your budget. Some of these include, what market is your hotel in, how many campaigns you will be running, and what the average cost per click is for the keywords you are targeting.

Let's face it, if your hotel is in a market like Miami or New York City you're going to need a larger budget than say a hotel in Des Moines or Bismark. Frankly, there just isn't a comparable volume of searches in these markets and this is one of the first items of consideration.

How many campaigns you'll run is also an important factor. Hotels will often want to advertise their event space and so that may mean you'll consider a meeting and/or wedding campaign. This would probably be in addition to a general hotel/location campaign. Depending on your market, there may also be popular local attractions that you'll want to focus on, which would require yet another campaign. So, keep in mind that your monthly budget needs to be distributed among all running campaigns and you don't want to stretch that budget too thin because that may lead to having campaigns that don't have budgets healthy enough to be effective.

# Hotel ABC's of Pay Per Click Marketing

In addition to spreading the budget over the number of campaigns you have, you also have to distribute the monthly budget over the 30 days within the month. So, for example, if your monthly budget is \$750 and you divide that by 30 days, you have a daily budget of only \$25 to spend. Although it may seem that \$750 is a large chunk of your advertising budget going toward PPC, in actuality it really isn't when you break it down to the daily budget. This is where your keyword cost per clicks are going to be very important to understand. Let's take a market like New York City. As you see in the screen shot below, these are 3 keywords that have very high cost per click rates of \$19.90, \$18.24, and \$22.55. This means that a bid on any of these keywords will decrease your daily budget by the respective price. If the daily budget is \$25 then you can only afford to get one click per day with high priced, competitive keywords such as these. It's important to remember that once you exhaust your daily budget, your ads are no longer shown until the next day when your daily budget replenishes itself. Also, if your budget is only allowing for 1-2 clicks per day, the traffic to your website will be pretty dismal at only 30-60 visits in an entire month!

Keyword	Cost per Click
"boutique hotels new york"	\$19.90
+boutique+hotels+in+new+york	\$18.24
+nyc+boutique+hotels	\$22.55

In a situation like this it would be more appropriate to have a monthly budget in the range of at least \$3500-\$5000. This will increase the daily budget and allow for more clicks, which leads to more website visits, which leads to more opportunities for bookings.

# Hotel ABC's of Paid Per Click Marketing

You will also want to consider seasonality when planning your PPC campaign budget. You will most likely not need the same monthly budget throughout the year. Historically, many markets will see a decrease in traffic during September due to summer coming to an end and families getting into “back to school” mode. This would be a prime example of a month where you may decide to decrease your budget. Whereas, you may want to consider increasing your budget when the winter holiday season begins to approach, as consumer searches tend to be on the rise during this time.

Although a proven effective way to market yourself, there needs to be a full understanding of PPC and the correct campaign management in order to achieve positive results. Taking all of the above factors into consideration, understanding the market and carefully planning your budget, will put you on the right track for success in PPC advertising.

# About Lodging Interactive

Headquartered in Parsippany, NJ, Lodging Interactive is a full-service digital marketing and social media engagement agency exclusively servicing the hospitality industry. Through its web design and search optimization division as well as its **CoMMingle Social Media Division**, Lodging Interactive provides effective Internet marketing services to hundreds of branded and independent properties as well as management companies, restaurants and spas. The company also offers fully managed Live Chat agents for hotel websites through its **LiveChatForHotels.com** division.

Lodging Interactive is an HSMIA Adrian Award winner, and has won awards from the International Academy of Visual Arts, Interactive Media Awards, Horizon Interactive Awards, Web Marketing Association, Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts, and Travel Weekly's Magellan Awards have recognized Lodging Interactive as an industry leader.

Lodging Interactive is a proud supporter of the Hotel Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMIA) and the company's president, DJ Vallauri, currently serves on the Board of Directors of HSMIA's New York Chapter. For more information, please contact [sales@lodginginteractive.com](mailto:sales@lodginginteractive.com), 877-291-4411 or visit the [LodgingInteractive.com](http://LodgingInteractive.com).

## Two Operational Divisions For All Your Needs



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- Website hosting
- SEO - organic content optimization
- PPC - Pay-Per Click marketing
- Brand e-Commerce scorecards
- Display advertising
- Email marketing
- Strategic online marketing planning



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- Guest review management responses
- Social media engagement
- Social media marketing
- Blogging services
- Image sharing & marketing
- Social Voices (24/7/365)
- CoMMingle Live Chat Fully Managed

Thank you!