Intelligent Insights
EU Report

How to increase reviews and
improve customer satisfaction
at your hotel

purple

intelligent spaces

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Executive summary

Understanding why guests are staying at your hotel is key to engaging potential and existing guests with relevant, meaningful content to build loyalty and keep them coming back year on year. However, identifying every guest that comes into your hotel remains a challenge for hoteliers.

From January to July of 2017, there were approximately 4.65 million consumers who booked a hotel room across 187,000 hotels in Europe, according to Statista. With an average occupancy rate of 70% the average number of beds per booking during this time period was just over two. This means there could be up to 4.65 million more guests that travelled unidentified in Europe's hotel industry across six months.

As part of a Purple Intelligent Insights research study, 11,081 hotel profiles across Europe on TripAdvisor were analysed to showcase the potential of data and identify opportunities to better understand guests. With a team dedicated to improving TripAdvisor Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) it is paramount hoteliers leverage the online reviews viewed by 390 million unique consumers each month. The data collected looked at 4.8 million review ratings to identify correlations in travel trends to keywords, amenities and hotel offers.

Guests in Europe are either very impressed with their hotel experience or they were not, as a majority of review ratings were Excellent and Average. Walking was the most popular mode of transport with trains and the metro not far behind in average number of reviews per hotel. Only 700 hotels had 'recommend this hotel' in their TripAdvisor profiles, and these hotels had 1.7x the average number of reviews, reiterating the heavy influence of online reviews as the second most trusted form of advertising and source of valuable, timely feedback.

The findings identify a significant opportunity to deliver personalised offers and information to improve guest experience and achieve higher ratings. As WiFi cements itself as a fundamental amenity like running water and a bed, capitalising on this service to understand why certain guests with particular demographics or interests visit the hotel can make a significant difference to your bottom line and brand.

Introduction

Effectively increasing direct bookings is a challenge faced by hoteliers no matter what size the marketing budget is.

70 to 80% of consumer engagement happens before hoteliers are contacted by consumers to book a room or make an enquiry.

Producing digital content and ensuring messaging is not only reaching, but resonating with guests to influence their decision-making to the point of contact is paramount.

On top of existing hotels and shareable economy forces of Airbnb, 401 new projects will commence in the Europe Hotel Construction Pipeline over the next 12 months, totalling 58,646 rooms.

Hotel Construction Pipeline over the next 12 months totalling 58,646 rooms

After 10 years of less than one percent growth of supply, hoteliers will need to understand how their guests are booking their stays and why as competition increases 70%.

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When hospitality marketing platform SiteMinder asked hotel professionals worldwide about projected budget allocations, 48% of respondents planned higher spend on digital marketing while 44% said they intended to designate high investment in social media strategy.

According to research group Phocuswright, current trends of OTA websites versus hotel website show the use of OTAs in Europe went down two per cent and direct bookings are up three per cent from 2016.

39% of bookings made will be from online bookings

By the end of 2017, 39% of bookings made will be from online bookings, up five per cent from 2016, and an increasing number of these are being made via mobile phones over desktop.

Digital strategies need to incorporate smart user experiences more than ever, but the challenge remains to effectively reach the right segments relevant to your hotel, and not to an industry standard report.

Leverage the tripadvisor® SEO team.

TripAdvisor has a team of experts to keep its profiles at the top of search results, attracting 390 million unique monthly viewers from organic search traffic.

According to an independent study done by Phocuswright, two thirds of users will also visit the website more than twice a month, with an astounding 95% of all TripAdvisor users reading reviews before booking accommodation.

Four out of every five travellers read between six to 12 reviews before they book, with one in every two travellers refusing to confirm their booking until they read at least one review.

> 1 in every 2 consumers refuse to book without reviews

It is clear online guest reviews have a weight with persuading other consumers' travel arrangements.

Leveraging these reviews and TripAdvisor's team creates a valuable opportunity for hoteliers to understand how guests are using their venue to deliver outstanding services and boost their SEO for consumers.

The potential of data

11,081 hotel profiles across
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As part of a Purple Intelligent Insights
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The data collected looked at hotels with
a star rating between 1 and 5, and
4.8 million review ratings to identify
correlations in travel trends to keywords,
amenities and hotel offers.

More than half of hotels were rated
between 4 and 5 stars, had an average of
432 reviews each and a 3.9-star rating.

Guest reviews were split mainly between
Excellent and Average ratings at 45% and
34%, respectively.

Hotels want to be more than just a room with a bed.

The overall spread of results suggest guests are either really impressed with their stay, or it was simply a place to sleep at the end of a long day.

The distribution of reviews is skewed to represent a positive experience with 45 percent of reviews rating hotels Excellent. However, the number of Average reviews carry a significant weight in the overall rating at 33.7%.

> Nothing stands out during guests' stay, and therefore they leave average reviews.

This may be acceptable for budget hotels, but guests won't return if there is a cheaper option next time and no guests are persuaded by average.

What it shows is a big opportunity for hoteliers to identify what is making the experience average, how guests are using their hotel, and action change to keep reviews positive and attract future guests.

The power of storytelling

The power of storytelling is in the data. Purple analysed keywords written by guests and found the top 10 keywords focussed on location and hotel room; great location, minute walk, metro station, recommend this hotel, nice hotel, within walking distance, breakfast room, top floor, walking distance.

Online recommendations are more than a passing comment.

Consumers cannot read from a hotel's physical guest book while they are booking travel arrangements.

They rely on accessible, online platforms such as TripAdvisor to know what other guests felt about their stay and are the second most trusted form of advertising.

1.7x the average number of reviews

Only 700 out of 11,081 hotels analysed had 'recommend this hotel' in keywords. These hotels had 1.7x the average number of reviews, including one third less Terrible reviews, 18% more Excellent reviews, and an 8.4% higher star rating.
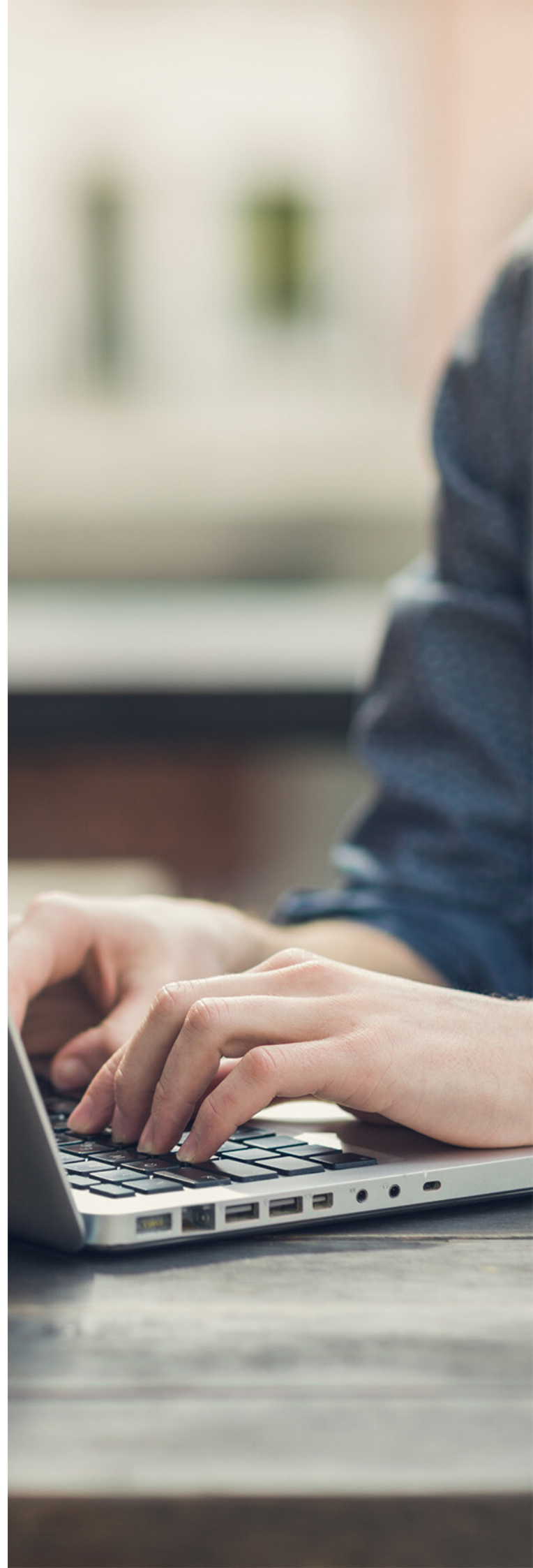
When researching shortlisted hotels on review websites consumers can choose to only view hotels with 'recommend this hotel' in their keywords.

94% of European hotels
are immediately discarded
from the search

This would mean 94% of European hotels in this sample would be eliminated, and is a clear indication of how influential online recommendations are for hoteliers.

The most popular mode of transport.

Unsurprisingly, walking is the most popular form of transport for guests in Europe.

For the 2,430 hotels which had a positive reference to 'walking' or 'within walking distance' they had more than double the amount of average reviews than other hotels; 735 compared to 348.

They also achieved 17% less Terrible and 37% less Poor reviews. While hotels with keywords referencing 'train', 'metro' and 'transport' did not reach number one mode of transport they weren't far behind. These hotels had almost double the average number of reviews than other hotels; 691 compared to 352.

With the right data about guest interests such as food, literature or adventure hoteliers can communicate to potential and existing guests what is within walking distance of the hotel.

Guests are looking for a means to experience life as the locals, try new foods and navigate streets they have never been down before.

The desire to explore local culture could start to outweigh convenience

It also suggests there is a movement of budget travellers who aren't willing to pay top dollar for city centre accommodation if the desire to explore local culture outweighs convenience.

When guests go to write their reviews about their experience, the study suggests they will be more likely to rate the hotel higher because they were given local suggestions to experience during their stay.

Getting fundamentals right should be fundamental.

While Purple's UK Intelligent Insights study revealed a significant increase in reviews for hotels that supplied Free WiFi, the close to average result for hotels in Europe suggests WiFi is considered a staple.

Hotels with Free WiFi represented 81% of the sample and had an average 465 reviews, only 33 above average.

Good WiFi is a staple for hotels across Europe despite new roaming and GDPR policy

In comparison to hotels that list 'Paid WiFi' and 'Internet', their average review rates were 346 and 273 per hotel, respectively. Hotels with no connectivity represent less than one per cent of the sample and have an average of 40 re-views.

It is clear connection with friends, family, and colleagues when abroad is a key part of guests' stay, like having towels and a bed to sleep in. Families are also relying on connectivity and content filtering with new GDPR policies shaping data privacy.

However, that does not mean hoteliers should feel they have to provide Free WiFi and not get a return on their investment.

Creating a local, personalised experience starts with the lingo.

A multilingual approach targeted at guests' native languages ensures a personalised experience. More than 98% of hotels in the research sample had a review written in a language other than English. 24 different languages were used to write reviews; 60% of reviews were written in Italian, 43% in French, 24% in German, and 19% in Spanish.

Hoteliers know they will be using a smart portable device to connect, communicate and research their local area on where to go. Despite so many multilingual reviews, only 1,753 hotels list Multilingual Staff as a hotel offer.

Interestingly, for 1,364 hotels that offered Free WiFi and Multilingual Staff on TripAdvisor had an average 430 reviews above average for all hotels; 862 compared to 432.

When guests log on to hotel WiFi they are connecting with the hotel brand, and hoteliers need to capitalise on this service most already provide.

Sending guests offers and information the moment they connect in a language they understand improves the experience, engages through personalisation, and helps build customer loyalty.

How to identify the why

Hoteliers can start to identify why guests are staying in their hotel by creating a profile of who their guests and visitors are.

When guests connect to WiFi they can fill out a short form or login via a social media platform they already trust, such as; Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn.

Identify every hotel guest through WiFi to make a return on your WiFi

This information can be profiled against the device's ID and begin creating a profile with the information they are willing to share with you, such as; age, gender, location, hometown, social interests, and the number and length of times they visit particular facilities.

With this information hoteliers will be able to understand why certain guests with particular demographics or interests visit the hotel and shape the information delivered via the most popular digital channels.

This in-depth information for each guest in the hotel, rather than just an email address of the person checking in, ensures an above average experience through personalisation and effective engagement.
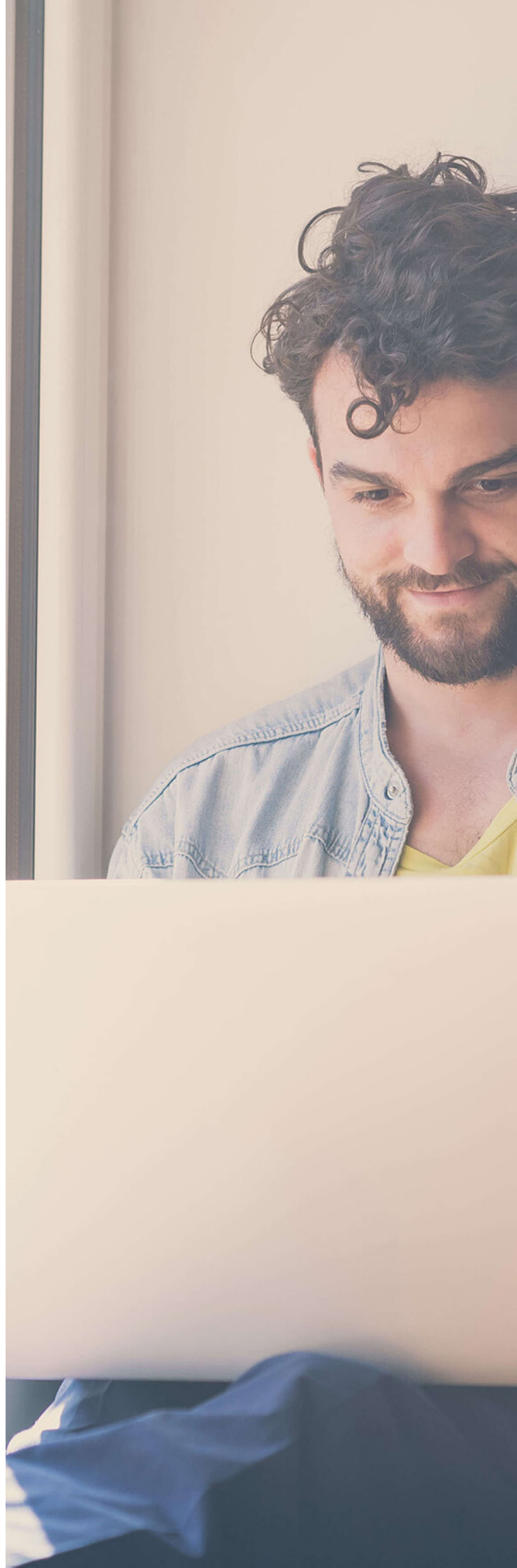
Justifying your ROI

Reduce wasted advertising budgets by refining target groups and increasing conversion.

If data about your guests revealed the rooftop lounge was the most popular area of your hotel, can you justify building an Instagram account with daily posts or videos about the view to attract new guests?

Are foodies coming to stay at your hotel?

Can a hotel blog, Facebook page or email campaign highlight a new dish of the month made with local produce as part of the breakfast menu if breakfast is popular?

Are guests staying for local events?

If we can identify particular guests return to our hotel during sporting games, can we send them tailored messaging offering a discount at the bar for game day?

Keeping it local for a point of difference

Or finally, what local businesses can you partner with for referring your guests to their premises, and will they be willing to sponsor advertising spaces on guest WiFi splash pages to get their business featured at your hotel?
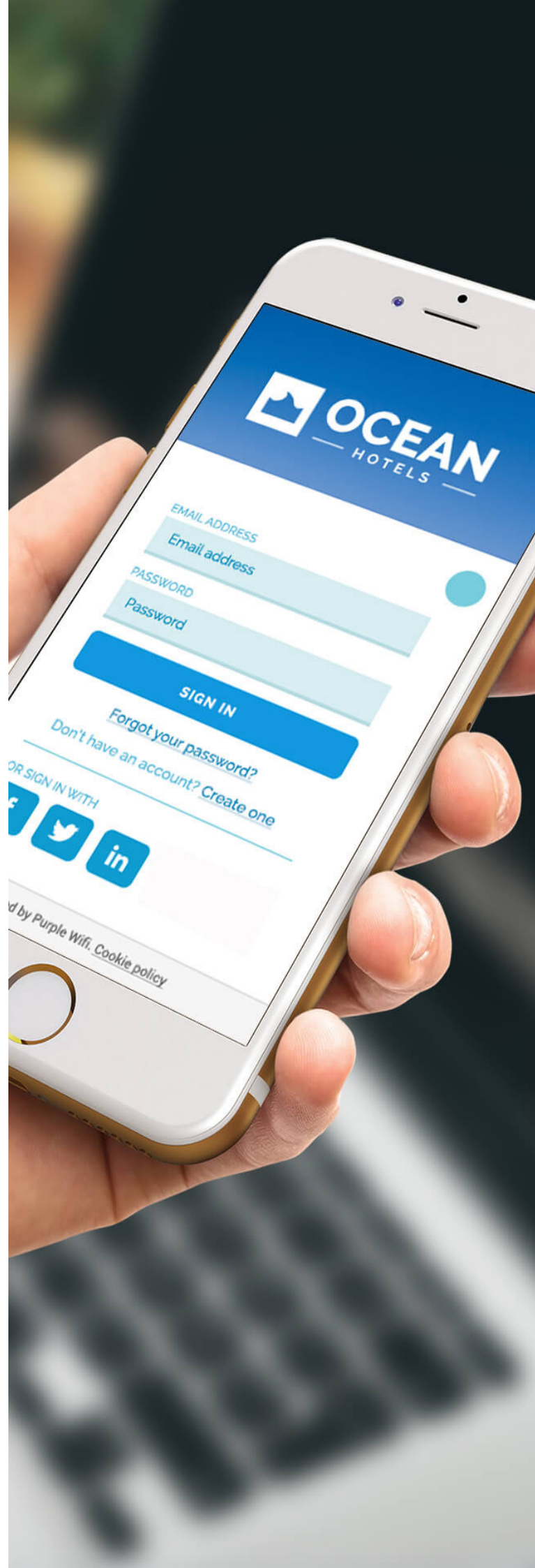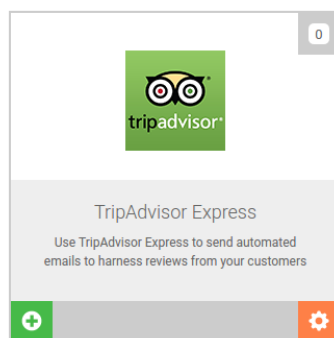
TripAdvisor Connector

Access, analyze, and action meaningful insights to gain reviews

Purple's TripAdvisor Connector uses demographic, social, and location data collected from guests who login to hotel WiFi to send timely reminder messages and encourage reviews.

Using Purple cloud software over the top of your existing network enables hoteliers to collect this key data, such as email addresses, for every person who connects to your WiFi.

TripAdvisor Connector has the power to connect hoteliers with guest expectations and experience in real-time, generating measurable return on the WiFi offering.

o Effortlessly prompt guests for reviews

o Increase online visibility and SEO

o Build customer loyalty with your brand

o Leverage reviews to drive new business

o Active within 24hours

o Available in 20+ languages

Case Study The Eldan Hotel

The Eldan Hotel Jerusalem wanted to offer their guests a WiFi solution without changes; however, they also wanted to see a return from their investment.

After installing Purple and the TripAdvisor Connector The Eldan Hotel Jerusalem saw a 218% increase in TripAdvisor reviews, distributing e-shots to encourage repeat bookings.

Read their success story on our website.

Case Study SunSol Hotels

SunSol Hotels wanted a quality WiFi connection for guests, along with the ability to capture detailed customer data, and increase the number of guest reviews collected on TripAdvisor.

Within two weeks of installation, SunSol Hotels saw a 500% increase in TripAdvisor reviews, collecting more reviews in April than they had in the previous year.

Read their success story on our website.

About Purple

Purple is the intelligence spaces company helping global brands turn their physical spaces into intelligent spaces.

We are experts in WiFi analytics and work with a number of leading hotel brands, including the W Hotels, Mercure, Hyatt, Choice Hotels Europe, and Radisson to provide them with detailed insights about their guests. Purple were the first to offer social WiFi login and capture information that can be used to understand how guests behave in your hotel and measure conversion rates for different areas of your venue.

Whenever a guest logs onto the WiFi our portal captures an array of valuable demographic, location and presence analytics, which can then be utilised by marketing teams to understand how guests behave and what they truly want during their stay.

- o Fully GDPR compliant
- o Wider reach through social WiFi
- o Available in 20+ languages
- o Automate marketing campaigns with LogicFlow
- o Content filtering and real-time reporting and heat mapping
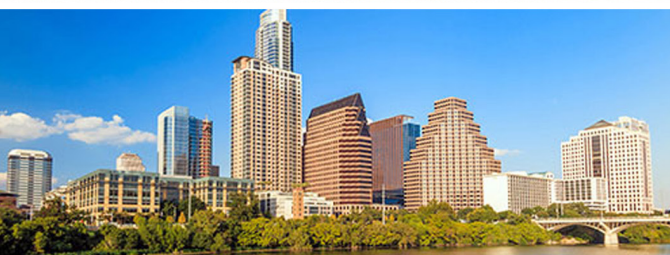
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