

How can a Hotel, Golf or Leisure Club use twitter for business?

Social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Myspace have been getting a lot of press in the last few months and there is no doubt that they are making a significant difference to the way we communicate in our social lives but are they really any good for business?

I have spent some time considering the possible merits of Twitter as a communication tool for my clients, and in doing so become an avid follower of a huge number of individual hotels, groups and other leisure based businesses and receive either daily tweets or, in more cases than not, no tweets at all! The hotels which do Tweet seem to have very little to say other than basic marketing messages with the odd hotel, usually in a city where footfall is higher, doing Twitter specific offers and discounts on room rates.

My perception is that hotels, and probably businesses in general, are struggling to use Twitter in a manner which will engage followers and produce sales.

Now for my bright idea!

A lot of hotels have additional leisure facilities such as golf courses & gyms or spa's and beauty treatment facilities. On a lot of occasions there are appointment or tee times, classes etc which are not being used and producing no revenue but incurring a cost, particularly in wages. The problem is that the facility has the space and availability but cannot communicate this effectively within a time frame to the customer. The customer may have a need, or at very least a desire, but thinks that at short notice they are unlikely to obtain an appointment or tee time and hence does not bother to enquire.

I believe that Twitter could be used to bridge this gap.

If the business create a Twitter account and then actively encourages and helps its membership or local customers to create their own accounts and enables them to follow the business and receive updates on by phone then Twitter can be used to communicate available time slots, special offers and anything else to the customer.

If successful this could, of course, be expanded to include restaurant tables, public events etc.

I'll be encouraging my clients to give this a go and whilst it could well take a few months of hard work to set this up I think the results could be very worthwhile.

I would love to hear about any ideas or current strategies being used on Twitter to create sales or improve customer communication so please send me your comments.

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