

**Managing online Guest Reviews :**  
**GLOBAL GUIDELINES**  
**from Central Marketing teams**

# Objectives

- ➔ **Give guidance to hotel GMs in order to better manage guest reviews posted on internet**
- ➔ **Make sure that hotel and brand online reputation is consistently monitored and managed across brands and countries**

# Agenda

- **General background**
  - The global recommendation
  - Do's & Don'ts
  - Main websites
  - Focus on Tripadvisor.com

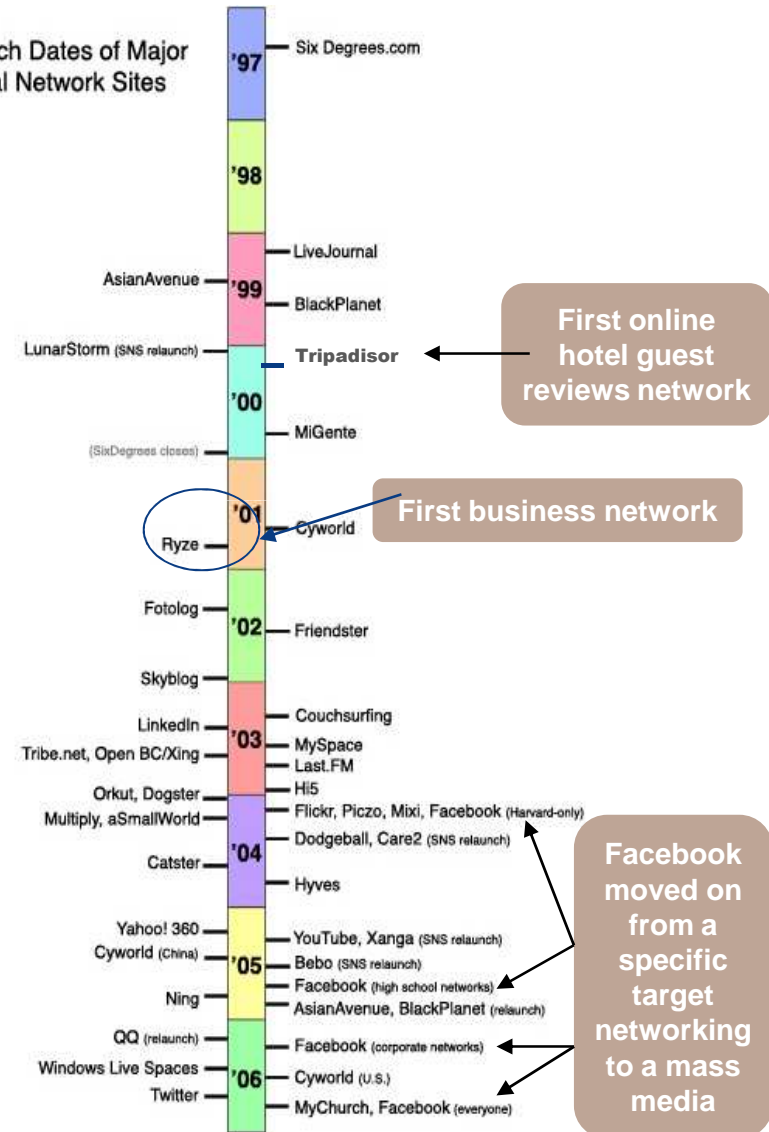
# What is a SOCIAL MEDIA?

**Social media** is a shift in how people discover, read and share news, information and content; it's a fusion of sociology and technology, transforming monologues (one to many) into dialogues (many to many) and is the democratization of information, transforming people from content readers into publishers (source Wikipedia)

Community tools began supporting publicly articulated Friends

Diversification of social networking

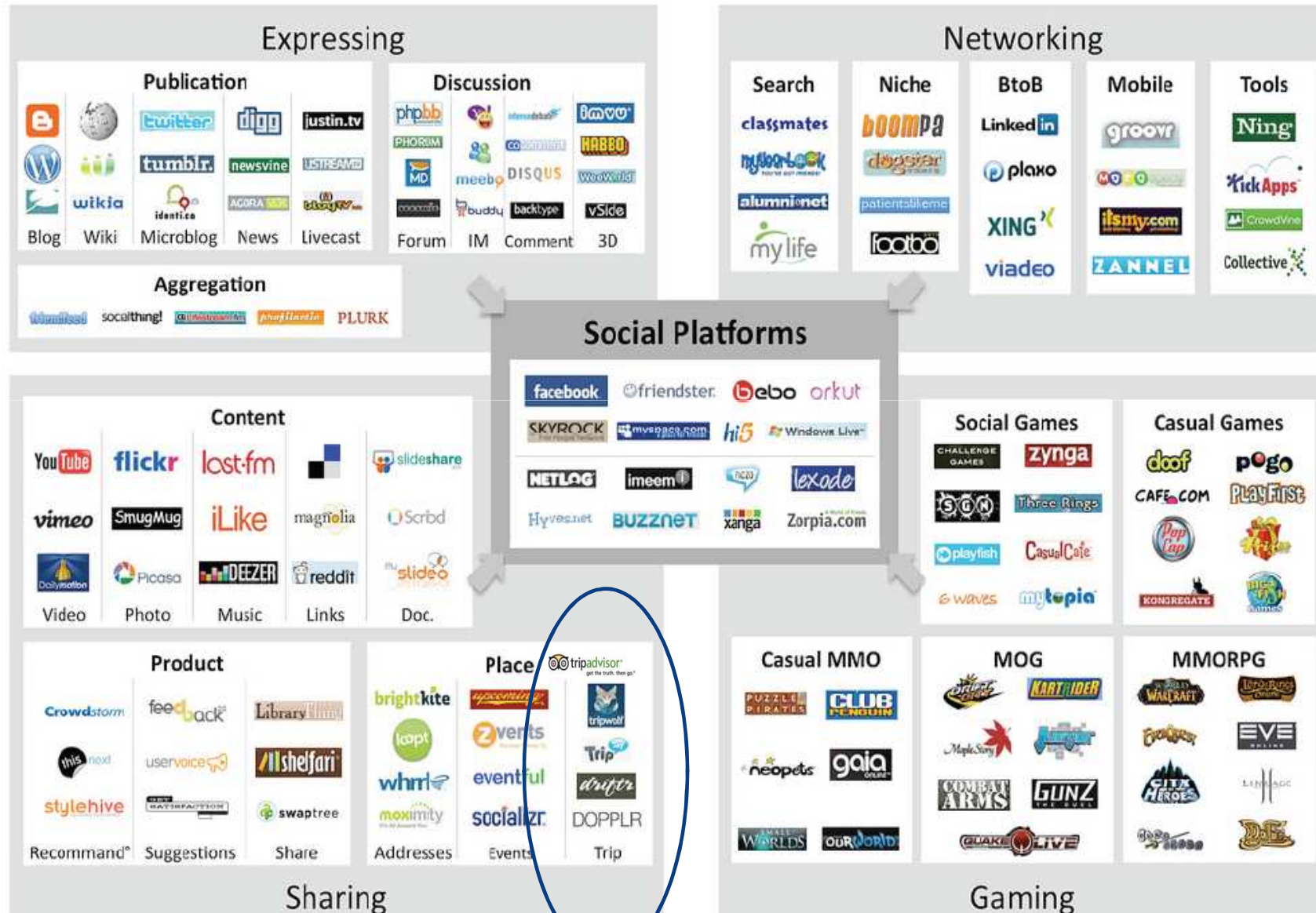
Launch Dates of Major Social Network Sites



# Key figures about SOCIAL MEDIA

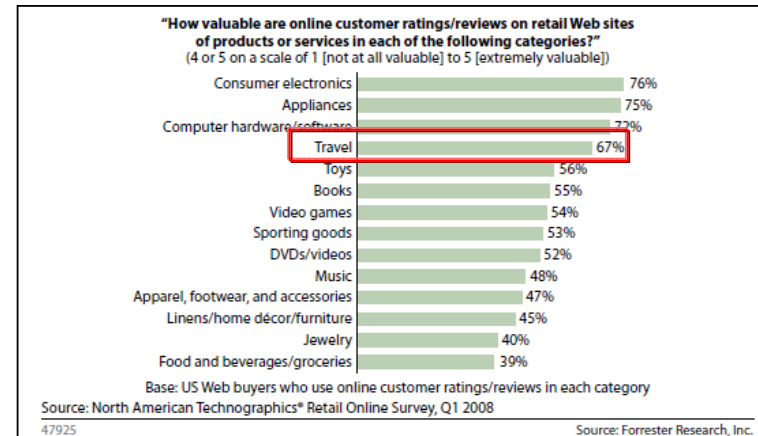
- **Social networking is getting more and more important.** In 2009, it has already a **larger audience than E-mail** (in terms of Media by reach)
- **Over 44% of all Internet users are active in Social Media** (in the world).. **Even 70% of online European leisure travelers** (source Forrester 2009)
- **3.5 billion pieces** of content shared **each week on Facebook**
- **You Tube, 1 billion video views per day**, nearly **20 hours of video** is loaded on to the YouTube **per minute**

# 4 spheres of influence... and some targeting travels



# Online Guest reviews become a basic for travelers...

- E-travelers are now very familiar with reading their peers comments and couldn't book a hotel online before having checked them



- 40% of European travelers are trusting online consumer reviews.. far above ads : 7% for online banners (source Forrester – Technographics data 2009)
- “almost six persons out of ten say that negative comments would lead them to abandon a purchase” (source Social Media for Brands Report by Tamar)
- 77% of surveyed ecommerce sites said consumer generated content leads to increased site traffic...

# Why should Hotels manage online guest reviews ?

- **Consumers place far more trust in their fellow consumers than they do in advertisers**
- **Consumer reviews build brand awareness, credibility and therefore sustain customer loyalty... providing that the reviews are positive...**
- **If not managed or not well monitored, it could lead to bad reputation and therefore missing business !**
- **It helps understanding what's going well and bad in your hotel in terms of quality, to make you continuously improve... vs competition**
- **It influences the way your are ranked on the booking sites**



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# Global Recommendations

**1- Every hotel should monitor what their guest say about them on the web**

→ *Recommended approach : use 'Web Reputation Tracking' with our global partner*



**2- Every hotel must “respond” to all negative guest reviews** (if technically possible)

→ *Objective : turning a negative into a positive and manage your web reputation*

**3 – We do recommend to “respond” to positive online guest reviews from time to time (almost every 10 positive comments)**

→ *Objective : reinforce your good web reputation without being too “intrusive”*

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## **Do's**

- 1. Be timely**
- 2. Make sure senior management is involved in the process**
- 3. Thank the reviewer for their feedback to show that you are listening**
- 4. Be relevant, transparent and honest**
- 5. Apologize that the stay did not go as planned**
- 6. Point out that this is a rarity when compared with your regular service**
- 7. Fix the problem if there is one**
- 8. Always run a spell check over your response**
- 9. Welcome guests back to your hotel / brand**
- 10. Offer a direct line of communication (email, phone line, etc...)**

# Don'ts

1. **Ignore negative reviews and think they will go away**
2. **Blame others**
3. **Write angry responses**
4. **Question the reviewer's legitimacy**
5. **Respond insincerely or automatically**
6. **write fake reviews –you'll be found out !**

# Do's (examples)



- **Be timely**  
→ *Try to respond no longer than a week after the reviews date*



- **Make sure senior management is involved in the process**  
→ *It is important for the reviewer to know that their problem is being handled from the top*



- **Thank the reviewer for their feedback**  
→ *It shows that the hotel is listening*

Respuesta de la dirección de Michelle Taylor, General Manager

(Representante de la dirección)  
30 jul 2009

Dear Mr Hank,  
Thank you for your Trip Advisor report. Yes, we are in the most perfect location and our plasma screen's are a bonus. Thank you for your positive feedback.  
The room you were in was regouted 3 months ago. The walls are grouted in a white grout and the floor covering in sand colour cement. I have personally checked the room with my Maintenance Manager and could not find any mould in the bathroom.  
I have met my Housekeeping Manager in regards to the service of your room; she joins me in apologising for the lack of cleanliness.  
Mr Hank, I would be more than happy to further discuss with you if you wish.

Thank you for taking the time to review the InterContinental Boston. I would like to apologize for the negative experience that you had with us. I can assure you that that this is not the service quality that we strive to provide our guests. **Without more information, I cannot speak to the exact circumstances surrounding your relocation upon arrival at the hotel.** I am hoping that you will respond to the message sent to you through Trip Advisor so that I can be sure that you are contacted as you were promised. Again, **thank you for sharing your experience**

This review is the subjective opinion of a TripAdvisor member and not of TripAdvisor LLC.

# Do's (examples)



- Be relevant, be transparent and honest  
→ if someone complains about the quality or service of the breakfast don't talk about new bedspreads



- Apologize that the stay did not go as planned

- Point out that this is a rarity when compared with your regular service



- Fix the problem if there is one  
→ It is not just a communication exercise it is above all a good way to improve your hotel

## Management Response

GSTSVCMNGR, Guest Service Manager

(Management representative)

Apr 7, 2008

Aloha! Thank you for the positive review of our hotel. We are very pleased that you enjoyed your stay.

We are disappointed that you didn't enjoy the hot items at Breakfast on the Beach. Please know that we constantly evaluate the menu in our effort to provide a variety of quality food items.

We apologize for any negative experiences you had with our elevators. We will soon begin an Elevator Modernization Project which will ensure that the elevators enhance the overall experience at the hotel.

The following response is respectfully submitted. First and foremost it should be noted that this isolated incident has been taken very seriously by the staff and management of The Wort Hotel. Our guests, past and future, should not be alarmed as there is no bed bug problem at The Wort Hotel.

Although an isolated occurrence, anytime a guest is not satisfied or not comfortable for any reason it becomes a top concern for all of us at the Wort Hotel, as guest satisfaction and comfort remain our number one priority.

Regarding the incident in question the room was immediately taken off-line; a staff evaluation was conducted, followed by a thorough professional examination. It was not until management was 100% certain that the room was suitable for occupancy that it was returned to inventory. The guest was also personally contacted by the General Manager. As an experienced and conscientious hospitality professional this incident is both frustrating and alarming, as we host thousands of guests each year, consistently providing exemplary service and comfort. We unequivocally apologize for the inconvenience and discomfort this guest experienced and once again, we would like to assure you that the Wort Hotel does not have a bed bug problem. We take every step including staff training and implementing professional preventative programs to insure our guests' comfort.

Employees of the Wort Hotel are firmly committed to guest satisfaction and the guest experience. We would like to personally invite you to experience this for yourself.

# Do's (examples)



- Always run a spell check over your response

## Management Response

novbenoa, Management

(Management representative)

Nov 25, 2008

Novotel Benoa Bali is delighted to read that you liked our Tropical Terrace room, appreciated the friendliness of our staff, and particularly value our resort.

We will share your comments with our team. It was certainly a pleasure for us to be at your service and we look forward to welcoming you again soon to the Novotel Benoa Bali.



- Welcome guests back to your hotel / brand

## “ Overpriced and Underpar ”



ahamm123  1 contribution  
ahamm123

Save Review

Aug 10, 2009 | Trip type: Business

2/3 found this review helpful

I must say, when I looked at the Clift's website I was excited about staying at this hotel...My husband and I are from the east coast and took a month vacation/business trip to the west coast. We are used to staying in the top rated hotels; San Francisco was our last stop after visiting Sedona AZ, Las Vegas, and Napa... more

Management response from  
Clift, Jenny Chmielecki, Front Desk Manager

Dear ahamm123, Thank you very much for taking the time to post this review. What you've described is deeply concerning and altogether shocking. Please contact me as soon as possible either by email at

jenny.chmielecki@morganshotelgroup.com or by phone at 415.775.4700. Many thanks,



- Offer a direct line of communication (email, phone line, etc...) for mid/upscale brands



# Don'ts (examples)



- Question the reviewer's legitimacy

## Management Response to "was told t f--- off"

By Janice 08/20/08

The mere fact that one would want to buy a place where one had experienced such "horrible services, a lack of restaurant, fraudulent credit charges and a stolen credit card" is suspect. However, Management wants to respond to the accusations by this Yahoo Contributor.

The Montauk Manor prides itself on there service. The Manor has a wonderful restaurant that is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner 7 days a week in the summertime and on weekends during the winter. Credit cards have never been held at the front desk, making it impossible for any employee to steal a guest's credit card. All charges at checkout are those incurred by the guest. The accusation that one of our employees stole the credit card is close to slanderous.

The units for sale are privately owned and, therefore, handled and shown by the condo owner's realtor of choice. Arrangements are made between the potential buyer and the realtor. The front desk has absolutely nothing to do with these arrangements. The local realtors are all professional and would never leave a customer sitting waiting for them over an hour.

The Montauk Manor prides itself on hiring and training professional hotel personnel. Under no circumstances would any employee of the Manor use language as described. In addition, every employee at the front desk is required to wear a name tag making it unlikely that two employees would have failed to wear their tags at the same time.

- Write fake reviews – you'll be found out

- Respond insincerely or automatically

Hotel lobby was beautiful, rest of the inside of the hotel was kind of a dump. Rooms were dirty and used-looking, especially bathrooms. We expected more from a Westin. We were also double-billed for our stay. Three weeks later and we're just starting to get it sorted out. The wedding we attended here was wonderful and the food was fantastic, ... more

## Management response from hotel management, manager

Thank you for your compliments on our lobby, the wonderful wedding, and the fantastic food. We appreciate both positive and negative comments and know that your observations are reviewed by our management team as we constantly strive to improve. We hope you will give us another try in the future so we have the opportunity to welcome you back.

# Don'ts (examples)



• Ignore negative reviews and think they will go away

→ They are seen by hundreds, even thousands of people

• Blame others

→ Take responsibility and say how you are working to fix it



• Write angry responses

**Rating**  
**1** **MOLD and BUG infested** BOOK HOTEL

**Submission date:** 2007-01-10 **Date of Stay:** December 2006 **From:** United States  
**Submitted by:** K **Age Group:** 26 - 30  
**Traveller Type:** Mature Couple

*If I can, I would put Negative Stars. Stay here if you wish to live with bugs, roaches and breath in mold. My family and I got so sick. Our entire vacation consisted of vomiting and sleepless nights. Even the manager went to room and confirm the terrible stench coming from the mold. After many complaints we changed 3 rooms in our 4 nights stay. But all the rooms, including the deluxe rooms are in such horrible condition. There are much better hotels in much better locations. I have stayed in some terrible places before even places in the middle of nowhere of Kazakhstan and Urumchi. But this is the worse. BE WARNED! DO NOT STAY HERE FOR YOUR HEALTH'S SAKE!*

Was this review helpful? [Yes](#) - [No](#) 17 out of 17 readers found this review helpful

**"smelly horrible dirty trailer park rude inn keepers"**

 **lilboos** Save Review  
Vacaville, Ca

Jul 28, 2008

This was the hugest disappointment! This dump looks nothing like the website. It's criminal how they misrepresented themselves... As soon as we arrived the rusty basketball hoop in the driveway should have been our first get out of here clue. The pool was disgustingly dirty and unheated. We were smart enough to ask to see the room before registering, It... more

**Management response from berylwinkle, manager**

"Lilboos" from Vacaville, California breezed in 2 hours before check in time, when our staff was intent on getting the rooms ready for the new guests on a very busy day at the inn. The innkeeper kindly interrupted the task at hand to greet "lilboos" and was persuaded to allow her to enter the room just to leave perishable food...

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# Main Travel websites (not exhaustive)



**BOOKING.COM**  
online hotel reservations



**HOLIDAYCHECK**  
★★★★★



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## Who's TripAdvisor?

The world's largest travel community where web users can get real information, advice and opinions from travellers.



Up to 30 million unique travellers visit TripAdvisor per month. More than a third of them are from continental Europe.

10 Million registered members

**EU Total audience = 11.2M of monthly unique users**

**Worldwide Total audience = 30.6M of unique users / month**

Source: Comscore August 2008

## Managing guest reviews

- ➔ **Tripadvisor offers the possibility for each hotel to post a « response » against any guest reviews**

# How to access your Owner's Center on TripAdvisor (1)

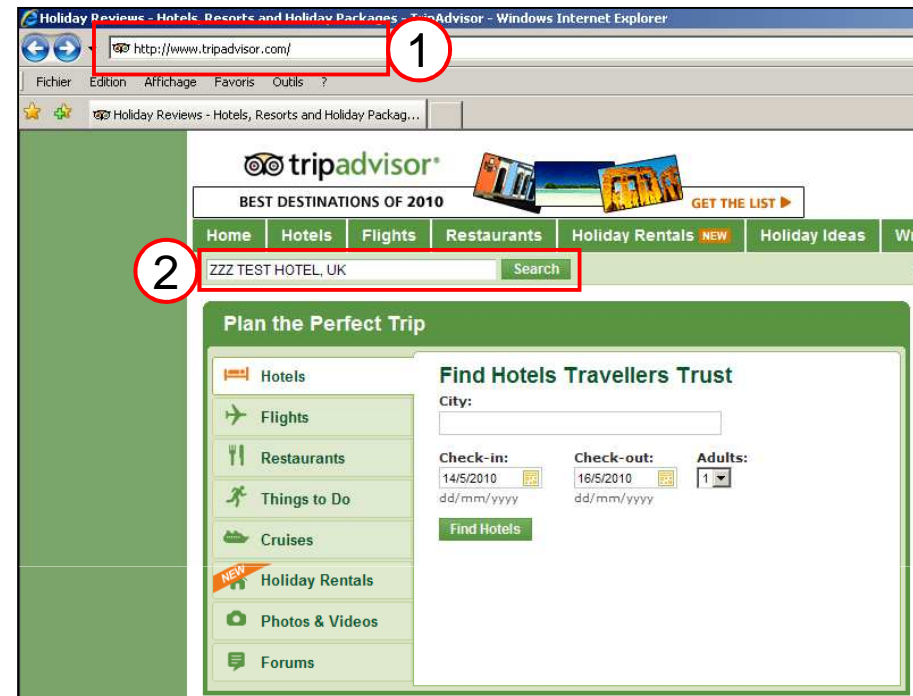
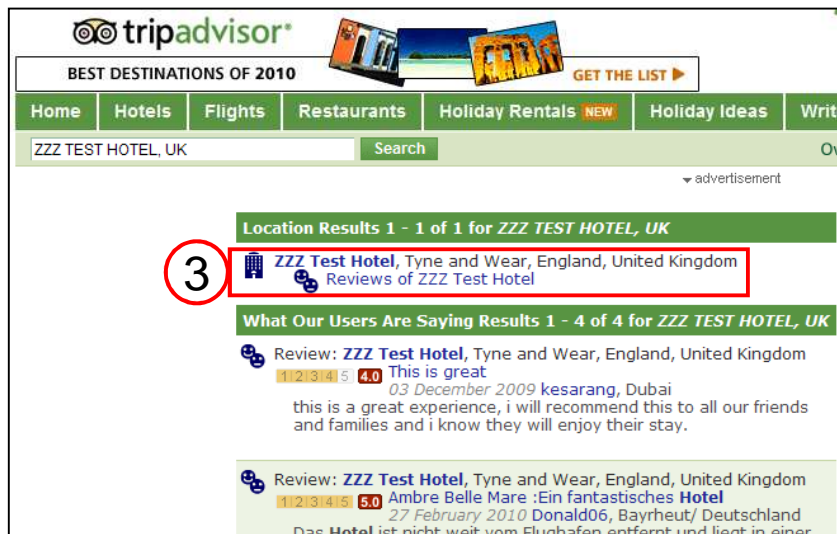
1. Point your browser to [www.tripadvisor.com/owners](http://www.tripadvisor.com/owners)
2. Select your business type
3. Enter your hotel name and city and click Search
4. If more than one location is listed, Select your hotel (more the one location could be listed) and click Go
  - If unable to locate your listing on TripAdvisor, please complete a new hotel listing form

The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window with the URL <http://www.tripadvisor.com/Owners> in the address bar, circled with a red box and the number 1. The page title is "Manage Your Listing on TripAdvisor". The TripAdvisor logo and tagline "World's most trusted travel advice™" are visible. Below the logo, there is a "Continue browsing TripAdvisor" link. The main heading is "Manage Your Listing on TripAdvisor". The "Get Started..." section contains the text "Be where travelers are. More than 32 million travelers visit TripAdvisor each month." Below this, there is a form with four numbered callouts: 2. A red box around the "What type of business are you?" section, which includes radio buttons for "Hotel", "Attraction", "Restaurant", and "Tourism Organization". 3. A red box around the "Enter hotel name and city" input field containing "Novotel London St Pancras, London" and the "Search ..." button. 4. A red box around the "Select your hotel" dropdown menu showing "Novotel London St Pancras, London, England, United Kingdom" and the "Go" button. To the right of the form, there is a box titled "Looking for a Travelers Choice Destination Award badge?" with instructions: "1. Select 'Tourism Organization' 2. Enter the location and click 'Search...'" At the bottom of the form, there is a yellow box with the text: "Can't find what you're looking for? Try including the name of the city. Still no luck? We may not yet list this business. Tell us more about it. We will look into it and e-mail you once the listing has been created."



## How to access your Owner's Center on TripAdvisor (2)

1. Point your browser to [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com)
2. On the homepage, enter your hotel name and city or country in the first field and click "Search"
3. In the "Location results" page, click on your hotel name
4. Once on your hotel page, scroll all the way down to the "Do you own [this] hotel?" section and click on "Start here – Visit your Owner's Centre"



# Create your Owner's Center account

On the "Get started" page, TripAdvisor proposes a paying subscription to their "Business listing" product. It's not related to your "Owner's center" account so this subscription is **not mandatory**.

1. Click on the "Track performance" tab, a form will be displayed automatically.
2. Fill in the form specifying your type of affiliation with the property (are you the manager? The owner? A marketing agency? Etc.) and click on "Sign up" once it's done.

The screenshot displays the TripAdvisor website interface for the 'ZZZ Test Hotel - Owners' Centre'. The navigation menu includes Home, Hotels, Flights, Restaurants, Holiday Rentals, Holiday Ideas, and Write a Review. The 'Track performance' tab is highlighted with a red box and a red circle containing the number '1'. Below the navigation, there is a section for 'Purchase TripAdvisor Business Listings' with a '30% Off' offer. A modal window titled 'Please register as an owner. It's quick, easy, and free.' is overlaid on the page, containing a registration form. The form includes fields for first and last name (Guillemot, Francois), affiliation (Other), e-mail address (francois.guillemot@accor.com), business phone number (+33145381690), and screen name (FGuillemot). A red box highlights the registration form, and a red circle with the number '2' is around the 'Sign up' button. The form also includes a checkbox for 'Get notified by e-mail when ZZZ Test Hotel has new reviews' and a 'Privacy policy' link.

## Tools at your disposal - Overview

1. Section dedicated to a suite of widgets that feature your property's reviews and accolades. **USE OF THESE PRODUCTS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED BY CENTRAL**
2. "Track performance": follow your customers' satisfaction index (CSI), compare it with one of your direct competitors (for more than 1 competitor you'll have to subscribe to a paying Premium account) and the average of your area.
3. "Get more reviews": copy widget code that encourages your guests to write reviews on TripAdvisor. **NOT RECOMMENDED BY CENTRAL BECAUSE CONTENTS WOULD GO DIRECTLY TO TRIPADVISOR AND WOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS JOINTLY COLLECTED REVIEWS**
4. "Manage your listing": update your hotel information, reply to customer reviews, etc.

The screenshot displays the TripAdvisor Owners' Center interface for a property named 'ZZZ Test Hotel'. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the TripAdvisor logo and user account information. Below this is a search bar and a navigation menu with tabs for Home, Hotels, Flights, Restaurants, Holiday Rentals, Holiday Ideas, and Write a Review. The main content area is titled 'ZZZ Test Hotel - Owners' Centre' and features four highlighted buttons: 'Get started', 'Promote your business', 'Track performance', 'Get more reviews', and 'Manage your listing'. A sidebar on the left lists various categories like 'Tyne and Wear Tourism', 'Tyne and Wear Hotels', 'Holiday Rentals', 'Flights to Tyne and Wear', 'Tyne and Wear Special Offers', 'More On Tyne and Wear', 'Restaurants', 'Things to Do', 'Travel Forums', 'Travel Guide', 'Photos', 'Tyne and Wear Deals', and 'Discount Hotels'. A promotional banner for 'Purchase TripAdvisor Business Listings' is also visible, featuring a 30% off offer.

# Manage your listing – Dispute a review

You may dispute a review if it meets one of the following cases: if you truly suspect a competitor's spam; if the reviewer didn't actually stay in your hotel; if the review is untrue; if it contains personal insults; if a staff member is clearly named in the review; if the review is obviously not about your property.

## DISPUTE PROCESS

1. Click "Dispute a review" on the "Manage your listing" page
2. Fill in the Dispute form completely. Be sure you select the right "Reason for dispute" and the right "review" in the dedicated fields.
3. Write your own comment towards Tripadvisor's team and click "Submit". You should have an answer within the next 48 working hours.

## Manage reviews

- Get notified of guest reviews
- Respond to a review
- Ask a guest to write a review
- **Dispute a review**
- Get help with management responses

tripadvisor®

Welcome, franz1980 | Your TripAdvisor | Manage Your Listing **NEW!** | Sign out

BEST DESTINATIONS OF 2010 GET THE LIST ▶

Home Hotels Flights Restaurants Holiday Rentals **NEW** Holiday Ideas Write a Review Contact Us

City, hotel name, etc. Search Over 30 million trusted traveler reviews & opinions

Help Center Home Home → Help Center

Getting Started

Membership

Community

Content Policies

### Contact Us

#### Owner Support

Please fill out the form below so that we can help you more readily. Fields with \* are required.

\*Property Owner Name:

\*Property Name:

\*Please tell us what the issue is:

\*Reason for dispute:

\*Select Review:

Our policy states that we will not accept reviews that contain personal insults; however, we will allow unflattering language about a staff member of a property if this information pertains to the job function of the employee.

Comments: (optional)

Submit

# Manage your listing – Update your property's infos

- **Update property details:** used to update property name, main description, average rate & amenities

- **Add photos to your listing:** owners can upload multiple photos and select one to use as the property's main photo

- **Post a video:** owners can upload multiple videos and add up to 10 keywords per video

- **Correct property location:** if the adress mentioned is not correct, you can update it via a simple form

- **Report ownership change:** requests to remove old reviews as a result of an ownership change, rebranding, or major renovation. You will have to fill in and send a complete form to TripAdvisor.

**Note:** *management changes and minor renovations are not grounds for the removal of reviews; management response feature should be used to inform the community about such changes.*

- **Get help with ratings:** ask questions about popularity index, star rating & review rating

- **Update rates and booking info:** ask questions about becoming bookable, booking links and average rates

The screenshot shows the TripAdvisor Owners' Centre for the ZZZ Test Hotel. The page is titled "ZZZ Test Hotel - Owners' Centre" and includes a navigation menu with options like "Home", "Hotels", "Flights", "Restaurants", "Holiday Rentals", "Holiday Ideas", and "Write a Review". The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Most popular owners' tools:** Includes "Ask a guest to write a review", "Respond to a review", "Get notified of guest reviews", and "Owners' Forum".
- Update your listing:** This section is highlighted with a red box and includes "Update property details", "Add photos to your listing", "Post a video", "Submit an article", "Correct property location", "Get help with photos or maps", "Report ownership change", "Report duplicate listing", "Report property closure", "Get help with ratings", and "Update rates and booking info".
- Manage reviews:** Includes "Get notified of guest reviews", "Respond to a review", "Ask a guest to write a review", "Dispute a review", and "Get help with management responses".
- More owners' tools:** Includes "Owners' Forum", "Follow TripAdvisor on Twitter", "Manage your subscriptions", and "Follow TripAdvisor on Facebook".
- Owners' FAQs:** Lists common questions such as "Someone posted a review that does not meet your review guidelines. How can I report this?" and "Instructions for writing a management response to a review".
- View your listing:** A section for seeing how the listing appears to users.

At the bottom left, there is a "Free Newsletter" sign-up section for users interested in ZZZ Test Hotel and Tyne and Wear.