

5 Key Marketing Strategies for a Successful Independent Hotel Opening

The travel industry is growing rapidly. In 2023, global travel bookings hit \$1.5 trillion, with an annual growth rate of 6-10% expected through 2026. An effective online marketing strategy is crucial as the online travel market expands due to changing consumer behavior and technological advancements. By 2026, 65% of travel bookings are projected to be made online.

This intense competition in the hospitality market requires hoteliers to adopt key marketing strategies to position their brands effectively and ensure long-term success. This checklist will help you identify key milestones for launching your hotel's marketing strategy, allowing for a proactive approach.

1.

Conduct Market Analysis

The strategic use of business intelligence tools transforms market analysis into actionable insights. Tools like [Agency360®](#) and [Demand360®](#) provide real, on the books data on market trends, demand fluctuations, and forward-looking booking behaviors. With this information, you will be able to make strategic decisions to:

- Review **demand patterns** regularly to predict peak and off-peak periods and adjust marketing strategies accordingly.
- Make smarter group marketing strategy decisions with insights into market and competitive set occupancy as well as market compression, to compete for groups confidently.

Optimize
pricing strategies
based on market
conditions,
occupancy, and
performance.

A. Analyze Your Competitive Set Marketing Strategies

A robust competitive analysis ensures you understand your market and can differentiate your hotel effectively by:

- Reviewing competitors' websites, offers, and guest reviews.
- Subscribing to competitors' newsletters and following them on social media.
- Setting Google Alerts for competitor activities, including press releases and coverage.

B. Identify Your Booking Travel Agents and Corporations

- **Identify the corporations and travel agencies booking in your market** at this initial stage by using [Agency360](#). This will enable the sales team to engage directly with them to compete for their business.
- Identify opportunities for travel agent/corporate demand and bookings in your market, assess the top 25 agencies based on revenue, room nights and average daily rate (ADR), and review the top corporations booking into your market through PCC (pseudo city code) association.

2.

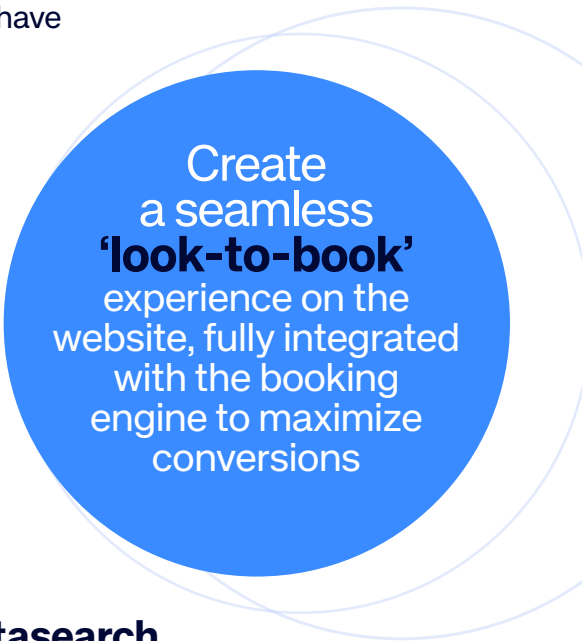
Establish a Strong Online Presence

After understanding where you want to focus with your business mix, ensure you optimize your online presence. Here are a few key steps to establishing a robust online presence:

A. High-performing, SEO-optimized Website

According to the [hotel distribution research that Skift conducted in 2024](#), it is projected that by 2030, more than \$400 billion in hotel gross bookings will originate from direct digital channels. Therefore, it's crucial to have a functional and optimized website:

- Develop a high-performing, **SEO-optimized website** with easy navigation and direct booking capabilities.
- Include virtual tours and **high-quality imagery**.
- Include booking functionality for ancillary services like spas, dining, or activities.
- Test usability to ensure a seamless experience across desktop and mobile.
- Maintain visual consistency aligned with your brand identity.



Discover
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Member Rates
Success

B. Google Business and Metasearch

Establish local business profiles:

- Claim and verify a Google Business Profile
- Create listings on relevant local directories Leverage Multiple [Metasearch Platforms](#):
- Ensure your **hotel is visible on major metasearch engines** like TripAdvisor, Kayak, and Trivago, in addition to Google. This broadens your reach and increases direct booking opportunities.
- Monitor and Adjust Bids: regularly monitor your metasearch campaigns and adjust bids to ensure your hotel remains competitive. This can help you capture more direct bookings to your website.
- Influence traveler decision-making by positioning your hotel during the inspiration phase with **metasearch sponsored listings** such as Property Promotion ads by Google or Sponsored Placements by TripAdvisor. This is crucial for new openings to increase awareness and get travelers to know you.

C. Social Media

Social media platforms are vital for visibility and guest engagement. Tailor your approach based on the platform:

- **LinkedIn:** Share updates on professional achievements, new partnerships, and significant milestones. Ideal for finding new hires.
- **Meta (Facebook and Instagram) and TikTok:** Create appealing content showcasing your hotel venue, lifestyle content, festive season special offers, etc. Some social media strategies during hotel openings include:
 - **Collaborating with influencers** and local content creators.
 - Monitoring and engaging with followers in real-time.
 - Sharing sneak peeks of the property and behind-the-scenes content.
 - Running live sessions, posting countdown clocks, and hosting Q & A sessions about the property.



D. Online Travel Agencies (OTAs)

Online travel agencies such as Booking.com, TripAdvisor, Expedia, and Agoda are essential for driving visibility and bookings, especially during the initial stages of your launch. Optimize your OTA presence by:

- Creating detailed, **compelling listings with high-quality images** and engaging descriptions.
- Offering **competitive rates** and adding temporary discounts or packages to encourage early bookings.
- Highlighting your unique value propositions (e.g., sustainability, local partnerships, or exclusive amenities).
- **Monitoring reviews** and responding promptly to feedback to build and maintain your online reputation.



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E. Global Distribution Systems (GDSs)

Global distribution systems (e.g., Amadeus, Sabre, Travelport) connect your property to travel agents worldwide, providing a platform that can significantly boost your property’s visibility and drive room bookings.

- Develop **engaging property descriptions** (HOD) highlighting unique amenities and local attractions.
- Upload **high-quality visuals** to capture attention.
- Ensure **competitive pricing** and introduce special opening promotions.
- When running a **GDS campaign**, leverage Agency360 for corporate and travel agency insights and improve marketing efforts by better understanding the target audience.

Media ads travel agents on GDSs with [Checklist](#)



3.

Launch Targeted Awareness Campaigns

A. Paid Advertising

By leveraging data, reach potential guests based on their browsing behavior and interests:

- Use **Google Ads and social media campaigns** to target specific audiences.
- PPC campaigns for generic terms that describe well the unique selling points of your business are a must for new openings, so travelers get to know you.
- Use **Display and social prospecting campaigns** to connect and engage with travelers during the inspiration and planning stages of their journeys.
- **Run programmatic campaigns:** Leverage automated advertising tools to buy digital ads in real-time, ensuring your property is visible on the most relevant sites to your target audience.
- Leverage paid strategies like **retargeting campaigns**; set up retargeting ads to re-engage visitors who have previously visited your website but did not complete a booking.

B. Email Marketing

- Build an **email mailing list** and send engaging newsletters with launch updates and special promotions
- Plan a **loyalty program** to recognize guests.
- Prepare personalized transactional emails that **highlight the property location, events, amenities, and upgrade options.**
- Begin sending transactional emails as soon as booking is available.

Plan a loyalty program to recognize guests



4.

Host a Memorable Launch Event

A. In-House Hotel Opening Marketing Strategies

Organizing a grand opening event for your hotel is essential to create a lasting impression and generate interest. Below is a list of engaging activities to consider:

- **Exclusive tours:** Offer guided tours of the hotel facilities.
- **Live entertainment:** Hire local musicians or bands for live performances; arrange cultural performances or dance shows.
- **Themed decorations:** Decorate the hotel with a specific theme; set up photo booths with hotel logo for guests.
- **Culinary delights:** Host a grand buffet with signature dishes.
- **Guest engagement activities:** Offer personalized souvenirs with hotel logo.

**Invite
Influencers
& Media
Representatives**



B. Social Media and Press Awareness

Launching a new hotel in a new market necessitates spreading electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). To achieve this, consider the following initiatives on the hotel's opening day:

- **Invite influencers:** Engaging local and international content creators from your primary markets will enhance awareness of your brand.
- **Engage media representatives:** Invite local press and ensure they receive VIP treatment. Provide them with a memorable experience that will inspire favorable articles about your property.

5.

Leverage Partnerships

- Collaborate with local vendors, artists, or organizations for cross-promotions
Example: Partner with a local winery to host a wine-tasting evening.
- Leverage partnership with your local destination management organization (DMO) or convention & visitors' bureau (CVB) to:
 - **Access valuable market data and insights:** Use the demographic and travel behavior data from the DMO/ CVB to identify and target the most promising customer segments for your new hotel.
 - **Enhance your online presence:** Ensure your hotel is prominently listed on the DMO/CVB's website and social media channels. Provide high-quality content to be featured in their promotional efforts.
 - **Support group and meeting bookings:** highlight your hotel's meeting and event spaces in DMO/CVB's marketing materials to attract business travelers and event planners.



Launching a hotel requires a combination of digital innovation, community involvement, and guest-focused initiatives. **By following the steps in this guide, hotels can attract travel sellers, drive direct bookings through digital and metasearch channels, and establish guest loyalty** with a strategic marketing approach across all channels.

Amadeus. It's how travel works.



At Amadeus Hospitality, we understand the importance of implementing an efficient marketing strategy for a hotel opening.
Reach out to an Amadeus representative today.

