

## **Eighty percent of TripAdvisor users read at least six to 12 reviews before choosing a hotel**

### **Independent Study of more than 12,000 global respondents reveals online travel review trends**

### **Two in three more likely to book hotel with management responses to reviews**

TripAdvisor®, the world's largest travel site\*, today announced the results of an independent study that underscores how essential online traveller reviews are in the research and booking process. The commissioned report, conducted by PhoCusWright\*\* on behalf of TripAdvisor, was conducted at the end of 2013, and reveals that more than half of global respondents do not want to make a booking commitment until they read reviews and find out what other travellers thought about the property.

According to the study, respondents turn to TripAdvisor on a regular basis. Twenty nine percent visit the site several times a month, 12 percent say they check the site at least once a week and 26 percent regularly use the site more than once a week. Overall, this means that 67 percent of respondents check TripAdvisor a few times a month or more.

More than 80 percent say the site's reviews help them feel more confident in their travel decisions, and help them to have a better trip. Of those polled, 93 percent of respondents feel that a hotel stay is very important to the overall trip experience. However, TripAdvisor users aren't just looking at accommodation options:

- 77 percent usually or always reference TripAdvisor reviews before selecting a hotel
- 50 percent usually or always reference TripAdvisor reviews before selecting a restaurant
- 44 percent usually or always reference TripAdvisor reviews before selecting an attraction

The survey also reveals some interesting findings about why travellers write reviews, how they use them when planning a trip and the impact management responses have on their perceptions of properties.

"There is no denying that reviews are a powerful and significant part of the travel planning experience," comments Barbara Messing, chief marketing officer, TripAdvisor. "The results of this study showcase the vital part reviews play, reinforce the idea that we are becoming more social as travellers and demonstrate the essential nature of reviews to hospitality businesses. Not only are travellers referencing reviews before they book, they are clearly more highly engaged by businesses that respond to reviews.

#### **Management responses increasingly important:**

- 87 percent of users agree that an appropriate management response to a bad review "improves my impression of the hotel"
- 70 percent of users agree that an aggressive/defensive management response to a bad review "makes me less likely to book that hotel"
- 62 percent of users agree that seeing hotel management responses to reviews generally "makes me more likely to book it (versus a comparable hotel that didn't respond to travellers)"

#### **How many reviews is enough?**

- When researching places to stay on TripAdvisor, 80 percent of respondents read at least 6-12 reviews before making their decision, and they're most interested in recent reviews that will give them the freshest feedback
- When researching restaurants or local attractions on TripAdvisor, one in five (20%) travellers read over 11 reviews before making a decision.

#### **How travellers use reviews**

We know reviews are important – so important in fact that more than half of respondents (53%) will not book a hotel that does not have reviews. But how do travellers interpret reviews? When asked how they tend to use TripAdvisor, a few key elements

came to the forefront: traveller submitted photos and TripAdvisor awards can tip the scale for properties, but in general, extreme comments in reviews are ignored.

- When asked about traveller submitted photos, 73 percent of respondents said they look at these as they help them make choices.
- 65 percent of respondents are more likely to book hotels that win awards from TripAdvisor.
- 64 percent of respondents tend to ignore extreme comments when reading reviews

And the importance of reviews is not limited to hotels – restaurants need them too. According to the study, 31 percent of respondents avoid eating at restaurants that do not have any reviews

### **Why review?**

The majority of respondents write reviews for positive reasons, with 79 percent of UK travellers stating that they 'wanted to share a good experience with other travellers', and 70 percent saying they 'feel good about sharing useful information with other travellers'.

### **Hotel Price Comparison (meta search) saves time and helps to find the right price:**

When asked about TripAdvisor's recently launched Hotel Price Comparison function (meta search), 51 percent agree that it 'has helped me save time during my planning process' and 52 percent agree that TripAdvisor's meta search 'has helped me find the right hotel at the right price'.

### **How do we differ across the globe?**

- TripAdvisor users in Italy are among the most active restaurant review readers. Seventy five percent "always" or "usually" reference TripAdvisor before choosing a restaurant, followed by Spain (60%), UK (53%) and the U.S. (46%).
- TripAdvisor users in India are most likely to avoid booking hotels with no reviews.
- When browsing reviews on TripAdvisor, respondents are most likely focus on recent reviews (both positive and negative) to get the freshest perspective. Respondents in Russia and Japan were the only two markets to prefer to read multiple pages of reviews to get an overall sense of people's opinions.
- Roughly seven in 10 (69%) Brazil respondents are more likely to book a hotel that has hotel management responses, significantly higher than most other markets.

"Globally, travellers want to see pictures, they like to book properties that have a lot of accolades, and they like to read the most recent reviews to get a fresh perspective of the hotel, restaurant or attraction," continues Messing. "The results underpin the need for business owners to not only monitor their online reputation, but to engage as much as possible with their past and potential customers. The benefits are clear – the more engaged the property, the more likely travellers are to book."

For full infographic and additional information, please visit <http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/TripAdvisorInsights/n2120>

*\*Source: comScore Media Metrix for TripAdvisor Sites, Worldwide, June 2013*

*\*\*According to PhoCusWright's "Custom Survey Research Engagement," prepared for TripAdvisor. December 2013.*

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<https://tripadvisor.mediaroom.com/2014-02-11-Eighty-percent-of-TripAdvisor-users-read-at-least-six-to-12-reviews-before-choosing-a-hotel>