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The Role of Online Reviews in Shaping Hotel Booking Behavior

Online reviews play a significant role in shaping hotel bookings, strongly influencing customer preferences and choices. This study examines the impact of reviews on hotel reputation, pricing policies, and consumer decision-making. The discussion centers on three aspects: the ways hotels manage their online image and modify prices, the influence of unfavorable feedback on booking decisions, and the varying effects between independent properties and established hotel chains. Evidence from multiple empirical studies indicates that positive reviews can enhance booking volumes and enable higher pricing, whereas negative reviews discourage potential guests—particularly when the feedback is perceived as authentic or relatable. Independent hotels, which lack the brand strength of larger chains, tend to be more vulnerable to such negative evaluations. The findings stress the importance of proactive reputation management, engaging with customer feedback, and aligning pricing strategies with online perceptions. For hoteliers and marketers, these insights are valuable for strengthening visibility on booking platforms, fostering customer trust, and improving reservation rates. Overall, the study underscores how guest-generated content has become a critical factor in maintaining competitiveness in today's digital hospitality landscape.

Keywords

Hotel bookings, Online reviews, Customer behavior, Pricing strategies, Reputation management

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