

Extending the marketer's palette: Hotels and restaurants add social media to the mix

Have you heard of the Roger Smith hotel in New York? Being an independent boutique lodging property in the land of hotel giants can leave you a little bit off the beaten path, with no global marketing or recognizable brand name. But the Roger Smith hotel is not standing back and hoping for conventional word-of-mouth to drive business. They are taking advantage of the real power of social media to create buzz about their unique lodging experience.

Making the social media community aware of special events of interest to them is an effective marketing tool. An example of the Roger Smith hotel's program was creating a special 'beer and dinner' offering in conjunction with the annual Craft Beer Week and using Twitter to engage the followers of the craft brewers group with information on the hotel and the special beer and dinner event.



Building online relationships doesn't end with the special event. Many friends and followers can easily become a part of your community and help spread your message. Social media can be used to turn customer feedback into process improvements and filter out promotions. You can also showcase your unique dining environment or local celebrity chef through videos on YouTube and photography on Flickr.

Right now, the social media landscape is a blank canvas. What artistic measures are you applying online to stand out from the crowd?