

VFM Interactive and Omni Hotels Complete Study on the Impact of Rich Visual Media On Hotel Bookings

Toronto (October 5, 2007) -- VFM Interactive and Omni Hotels announced today the completion of the first comprehensive study on the impact of hotel online rich visual content on consumer hotel booking decisions. The purpose of the study was to determine whether consumers who view a hotel's online rich visual content such as hotel 360 degree "virtual tours" and videos are more likely to book that hotel. The study was also designed to compare the effectiveness of different types of media in increasing online look-to-book conversion rates.

As part of the study, VFM created virtual tours and different types of videos for ten Omni hotels and then tracked consumers who viewed the media on both the Omni website as well as VFM's network of third-party distribution partners, including major online travel agencies and travel research websites. Four of the Omni properties involved only had virtual tour images while the remaining six properties had both videos and virtual tours. Among the six video properties, three had full-motion videos while the other three had a VFM "photomontage" video (a more cost-effective video production created using a property's existing still images).

The study tracked nearly 130,000 unique consumers over a period of 34 days. Importantly, the study included a blind control group for comparison purposes. Specifically, consumers who visited the Omni website were randomly divided into a study group and a control group. Consumers in the study group (50%) were presented with links to the hotels' rich media on various Omni website pages and were therefore able to view the media if they so chose. Consumers in the control group were not shown any links to the videos and virtual tours and were therefore not given the ability to view any hotel rich media other than the hotels' photos.

The results of the study confirm that viewing rich media significantly increases the likelihood of a booking. Overall, consumers who viewed an Omni hotel's rich media were 67% more likely to book than those who did not. Importantly, the richer the media viewed by the consumer, the higher the impact on look-to-book conversion rates. The increase in conversion rate for consumers who viewed a hotel video was 2.9 times that for consumers who only viewed virtual tours. The increase was even greater (3.6 times) for consumers who viewed both virtual tours and video. Interestingly, there was no material difference in the effectiveness of full-motion videos and VFM's more cost effective photomontage videos.

The study also demonstrated the value of having a hotel's rich media distributed to third-party websites as a key customer acquisition tool. Close to 30% of consumers who viewed an Omni hotel's rich media on a third-party website to which the media was distributed by VFM then visited the Omni website, with a significant percentage of those consumers then making a booking there.

These results of the clearly demonstrate the value of rich media and its impact on the decision making process for those who are researching and/or shopping online. For more information of this study, or how VFM's services could assist your hotel, please contact Randy Lyons (randy.lyons@vmii.com or 416-263-5672) or visit us at www.vmii.com.

About VFM Interactive

VFM Interactive is the leading end-to-end provider of online media management, production and distribution for the hotel and travel industry. VFM helps travel companies maximize brand penetration online through the power of rich media marketing that includes still images, rich media videos, 360° virtual tours and Flash productions. VFM offers clients access to the largest and fastest-growing distribution network of more than 25,000 distribution points where consumers most often research and purchase travel products. These distributors include online travel agencies, travel suppliers, search portals and Global Distribution Systems such as Travelocity, Orbitz, Priceline, TripAdvisor, American Airlines, Yahoo!, SideStep, Galileo and Worldspan. VFM's clients include more than 10,000 hotels and resorts from brands and management companies such as Best Western, Carlson Hotels, Choice, Crowne Plaza, Hilton, Holiday Inn, Interstate, Le Meridien, Marriott, Outrigger, Radisson, Regent, Sheraton, Sol Meliá, Westin and Wyndham. For more information, visit www.vmii.com.

About Omni Hotels

Omni Hotels creates compelling, memorable guest experiences by tempting the senses in innovative ways, surrounding them with a balanced blend of scents, sounds, sights, textures and tastes. Omni Hotels offers luxury accommodations at 45 hotels and resorts in leading business gateways and leisure destinations across North America. From exceptional golf and spa retreats to dynamic business settings, each location features four-diamond services, including award-winning signature restaurants, Wi-Fi connectivity and unique fitness options. Omni's mission for total customer service is further supported by its "Power of One" program that empowers associates to make on-the-spot decisions to meet or exceed guest expectations. Guests can locate hotels and book accommodations by visiting <http://www.omnihotels.com/> or by calling 1-800-THE-OMNI. <http://www.omnihotels.com/>