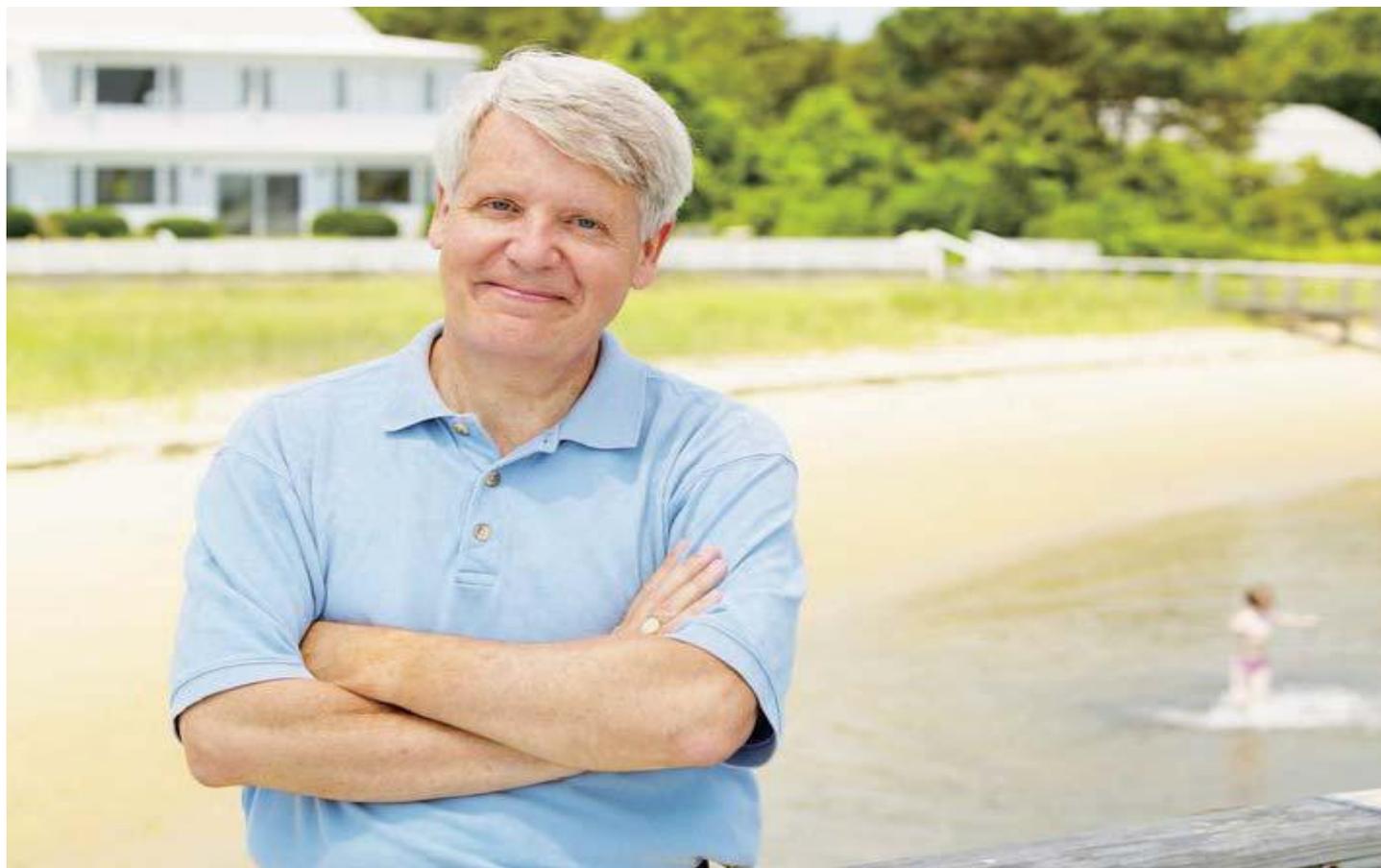


A resource to help you quickly and easily get your holiday accommodation listed online. Use the information in this resource over and over again to increase your bookings and improve your return on your investment.

How to Market Your Holiday Accommodation Online



How To Market Your Holiday Accommodation Online

by Christopher Van Eenoo

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Published by Christopher Van Eenoo

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Introduction

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” – Lao-tzu, The Way of Lao-tzu

When my wife and I took our initial foray into Internet marketing for our first short term holiday accommodation, we were very naïve in our understanding of it all. We thought that we knew where to start and what we needed to do but, as it turns out, we didn't know the half of it. There were a multitude of websites to list on, advertising copy to write, ads to place, personal website to build, analytics to configure, calendars to synchronise, the list goes on. We needed to learn all of that quickly if we were to get our accommodation filled with guests.

Once we realized that there was so much more to learn about advertising and marketing online, we began spending a great deal of time researching different aspects of online marketing. We then tested those techniques with our own property. We've made a lot of adjustments to our approach over the years based on the lessons we've learned about what works and what doesn't. Our number of bookings continues to increase year on year through the application of the tools, tips and techniques outlined in this eBook.

This eBook is an excellent resource for any property owner at any stage of their online marketing experience. New property owners, property owners looking to take over the management and marketing of their property from their existing property managers, or even experienced owners can all learn from the tips, tricks and techniques described in this eBook.

It is my hope that with this eBook, you can fast track through the learning curve that my wife and I went through to go straight to being a savvy online marketer and get the most bookings for your holiday property.

Let's get started!

There are hundreds of thousands of holiday accommodation properties across Australia. All of them are competing for bookings. This eBook was developed as a way for you to try to stand out among the multitude of accommodation options so that potential guests will be compelled to want to book with you. They may not book an accommodation the first day they look, but with proper techniques, a professional online presence, and consistent efforts, you will be first in line when they are ready to book!

In this eBook I have tried to share with you the secrets I have learned through my efforts developing an online accommodation business from scratch. The information found here should help you begin to develop a system that will show your professionalism and allow you to be consistently successful.

To help you begin your journey, below I outline the chapters found in this book, along with the main concepts you will learn in each. As you begin, be sure to take your time to read and absorb the information found here. There is a lot of information packed into this small e-book. I don't expect you to implement or even remember all this information instantly. Instead, this eBook begins your journey and starts the wheels rolling. It is my intention and hope that this eBook becomes a fundamental resource that you come back to again and again when considering how to market your holiday accommodation. At each turn you will learn how to improve your process, do something a bit differently and turn your accommodation into a profitable business.

Chapter 1 - Preparing Your Material. Developing your marketing materials before you begin listing your accommodation online will save you a lot of hassle and allow you to keep the process organized. This chapter includes a checklist of materials to prepare along with many helpful hints.

Chapter 2 - Listing Your Accommodation. This chapter is full of resource information you can use to choose the right accommodation listing websites for you.

Chapter 3 - Your Own Website. This Chapter will give you for developing your own website online. The advantages to having your own site are: 1) more control over content, 2) no more listing fees, and 3) more control over marketing and getting your accommodation out to online browsers.

Chapter 4 - Getting The Word Out. An addition to the concepts developed in Chapter 3, this chapter explains how to spread the word and get your new website listed in the major search engines such as Google, Yahoo! and Microsoft's Bing.

Chapter 5 - Driving Traffic To Your Website - Whether you have your own website or you list your accommodation on a listing service site, you can use many different marketing means to drive traffic to your accommodation sites. This chapter tells you how to get started.

Each chapter builds on the techniques learned in the previous chapters but having all of the information up front will certainly help. There is a lot of information and concepts presented in this eBook and at first could seem a bit overwhelming. I suggest reading quickly through the chapters once, then coming back and working your way through each chapter slowly. Take your time the second time around to go through the information, follow a few of the links and do your own research into the information contained in these pages.

Be sure to check out the exclusive content available only to purchasers of this eBook on my website www.BoostYourBookings.com.au. There is loads of additional material and links to help you with you marketing your holiday accommodation online. The content is being updated all the time to be sure to come back often as you progress through your marketing journey.

This eBook is a guide to start you on your path to increased bookings and a greater return on your investment in not only your property but also your time. So with that, let's get started!

Preparing Your Material

"Failing to plan is planning to fail." - Alan Lakein

Good planning will get you far. In the case of listing your accommodation online, it will keep your listings consistent and keep your information organized so you it can be relied on again and again.

When my wife and I purchased our first holiday accommodation and decided to list it online, we jumped straight onto the laptop and headed to Stayz.com.au without much thought. We were overwhelmed by just how much information we were asked to provide just to get our accommodation listing posted. We had a look at a few of the other online property listing websites and found that they too wanted a pile of information, none of which we had prepared yet. We learned the hard way the importance of preparing our material first so that it would be well written, spell-checked and consistent before we considered uploading it to any sites.

This eBook was developed to help save you the hassle of our hard earned mistakes. You can save time and effort through proper preparation. By preparing listing material ahead of time, you will save a lot of hassles too.

The Listing Material Checklist below lists twelve items common to most online property listing websites. Once you have initially prepared these materials for your accommodation, they can easily and quickly be repurposed to save you time on future listings. The material is also completely reusable should you decide later on to create your own independent website to promote your accommodation.

Keep your material in one folder or document on your computer so that you can refer to it each time you list your accommodation on a new website. That way you know that you're always posting consistent content across each site.

Listing Material Checklist

- A Name for Your Accommodation
- Property Details
- Features and Facilities
- 7 Selling Points about Your Accommodation
- Brief Description of Your Accommodation (less than 100 characters)
- Long Description of Your Accommodation
- Long Description of the Features and Facilities
- Short Descriptions of 3 Local Attractions
- 10 Photographs
- Pricing Plan
- Proof of Ownership
- Optional: Australian Business Number (ABN)

Good organization and planning will help make your efforts more productive and save you from a lot of hassle and rework along the way, trust me. The checklist above provides you with a fairly comprehensive starting point for developing your listing material. I'll now describe each of the checklist items in greater detail.

A Name for Your Accommodation

One of the most important things you can do for your accommodation's success is to give it a name. The name that you give to your accommodation will become its brand. Branding is one of the first steps towards successfully preparing your material to list online. It will be how guests come to recognize your accommodation amongst the thousands of other properties out there. Don't try to

save time on this step by using the address of your accommodation as its name. The only time that an address will pass for a name is if the number or address holds special significance to you or the general public.

Take a moment to choose a name now to help you focus your thoughts as you read through this chapter. Your accommodation's name, if chosen wisely, can eventually become your Internet domain or site name when you set up your own website. I'll cover choosing effective Domain Names later on in this eBook, but for now know that the name you choose is one of the most significant efforts you can make for your accommodation business.

Not only does a name give your accommodation a brand, but it can give it the sense of escape that your guests are looking for. Where would you rather spend your vacation, "23/467 Park Road" or "Chelsea Terrace", "128 Truko Street" or "Keshili", "3406 Sebel Street" or "Seaside Reflections"? Ensure that the name of your accommodation suits the location it is in. For example, if your accommodation is in Central NSW, a name like "Beach Views Apartment" would be inappropriate and misleading.

When choosing a name for my properties, I always try to choose a name that means something to me personally. It instils a sense of pride within me that permeates into everything I do with that property. Brainstorm for a name for your accommodation with your partner, family, friends or anyone that can provide constructive feedback. For example, perhaps there is a traditional English cottage name that you fancy? Maybe you could put a spin on the name of your favourite winery. Is there a Spanish, Italian or even Aboriginal word that sums up the mood of your accommodation? Look for a name that ties in the region, locale or the ambience of the accommodation to something that means something to you, then put your own personal spin on it.

Once you have decided on a name, do a quick search on the Internet for it. The last thing you want is to have six other accommodations listed in your area all with the same name. After all, the name you choose is your brand and over time it will be how your guests come to recognize and refer to you. If you find that the name you have chosen is too widely used by other accommodations or is associated too closely with something inappropriate, consider altering the name slightly or go with your second or third choice.

Keep in mind that the name that you choose to give your accommodation will be used repeatedly when advertising your property. The name will be used not only on your Internet listings but also on your letterhead, brochures, pamphlets, invoices and receipts.

Property Details

Collecting your accommodation's property details is relatively straightforward yet no less important than any of the other listing material you will need to prepare. In fact, nine times out of ten, the property details are what you need first when listing your accommodation; all other information is uploaded only after you have supplied this basic information first.

Property details can include your name, the name of your accommodation or business, full address, lot numbers, mailing address, where the accommodation is on the map, regional classification, type, bed configuration, accreditation details, ABN, website paths, forwarding email addresses, telephone numbers and even floor plans.

Have the above information written down or collected in one place. I find that this helps when signing up for multiple online accommodation listing sites since it ensures that I enter consistent details on each site.

Features and Facilities

There seems to be an endless array of features that you can select when listing your accommodation on the various property listing sites. Prepare your list of features and facilities and keep it handy. If you are anything like me, you only visit your own accommodation once a year so it is quite easy to forget just everything that your accommodation has to offer. Having a single list also helps you to remain consistent when listing your accommodation across the many different property listing websites.

When cataloguing the features and facilities that your accommodation has, do not overlook some of the less obvious or non-tangible features. For example, is your property wheelchair accessible? Is it pet-friendly or non-smoking? Is the accommodation close to shops, beaches, boat ramps, golf courses or bike tracks? Do not just look within the accommodation for a list of features; look beyond the accommodation and think about what guests will be able to take advantage of should they choose to book with you.

7 Selling points about your property

Prepare a list of seven selling points about your property and the region. The points should describe activities that your guests can partake in and/or local attractions that they can visit. Keep each point short and down to one sentence.

Start each point with an action; you want your guests to feel like there is a lot to do and explore when staying at your property. Listing exciting or interesting activities will entice your guests to want to discover the region and encourage them to stay longer.

Depending on the unique selling position of your property and how you choose to market your property, the selling points you choose to list can either be focused on a single set of activities or demographics such as young couples, golfers or families. You can also vary the selling points to appeal to a wider demographic of potential guests.

The selling points that you create here will be used again on your own website (should you choose to create one). They can also be repurposed and used in any printed promotional material that you create such as brochures or flyers. They are also great to have handy when making your sales pitch to potential guests.

The following are a few examples of selling points:

- “Enjoy romantic sunset walks along the pristine beach.”
- “Climb Mount Coolum to view the majestic landscape and ocean below.”
- “Surf one of the greatest coasts in Australia.”
- “Completely unwind in the serenity of the forest.”
- ...

I hope you have already found some useful tips for improving the marketing of your holiday accommodation with these sample pages. To continue reading, please [purchase the full version](#).