



Hotels Find Help in Fight Against OTAs

New Technology Empowers Independent Properties to Increase Direct Bookings **BY JENNIFER NAGY**

The primary sales and marketing channels for hotels have evolved over time from direct to travel agents to online travel agencies (OTAs). When the internet arrived, many hotels somehow lost control of the marketing and selling of their own property.

OTAs, like Expedia, perfected radical new Internet marketing platforms and quickly attracted massive global audiences of travel shoppers. Today, the OTAs are often the primary revenue channel for many hotels, extracting costly commissions for every booking generated in that channel.

One innovative hotel marketing and technology company called Tambourine set out to develop a solution that would make success in the online channel easier

to achieve and less stressful for hoteliers – and they seem to be succeeding.

By integrating traffic generation, booking engine optimization, rate distribution and ROI tracking into one unified system called Symphony, Tambourine has fundamentally changed how hotels sell their rooms online... taking back control of their traffic and revenue.

“Most hotels do not have the staff to implement all the digital tools they need to outperform their compset and are frustrated by juggling multiple vendors,” said Dave Spector, a Partner at Tambourine. “There was a massive need in the market for a single unified system that would increase direct bookings and reduce stress.”

Spector’s assessment is validated by Tambourine’s rapid growth, doubling



DAVE SPECTOR
partner at Tambourine

in size each of the last three years and poised to disrupt larger competitors, such as Travelclick and Sabre. Tambourine’s service consolidation model is similar to rising stars in other related vertical sectors; in the restaurant industry, SinglePlatform and ReachLocal quickly captured massive market share and revenues of more than \$250 million.

A Hotelier’s Perspective

Trust Hospitality is a global hotel management company based in Coral Gables, Florida and has experienced the significant impact of Tambourine’s technology firsthand. When their hotels began using Tambourine, they were struggling to decrease their reliance on the OTAs.



PATRICK GODDARD
COO at Trust

“Until Tambourine implemented their integrated system across all online channels, we struggled to drive direct bookings at a tolerable cost,” said Patrick Goddard, COO at Trust. “The OTAs have consolidated marketing, booking and analysis teams, and now, Tambourine gives us that same integration.”

Symphony is Music to the CFO’s Ears

One of the primary reasons for Tambourine’s rapid growth is the simplicity of its business model: there are no contracts required for Symphony, no hidden fees, no commissions and no extra costs. Hotels are charged a flat fee per room. The entire program is up and running in less than 30 days and users receive one unified report.

“We save a lot of money in soft costs every month by not having to manage disconnected vendors, Goddard reports. And, we have no more vendor finger-pointing; Tambourine is accountable for everything.”

Unlike a number of other firms which offer do-it-yourself platforms,

Tambourine’s team actually manages the system for clients at no additional cost, further reducing soft costs for time-starved property-level staff and enabling them to do what they do best - operate their hotel.

“It’s impossible for hotels to keep up with all the new marketing, booking and distribution technology today,” Spector said. “Our team acts like an extension of the property marketing department to boost direct bookings and minimize the cost of acquisition.”

Take a closer look at Symphony

TRAFFIC GENERATION

- » Coordinated promo campaigns each month
- » Search engine optimization (SEO)
- » Pay-per-click ads (PPC)
- » Meta-search ads on TripAdvisor and Google
- » Monthly eblasts to past guests
- » Weekly social media posts
- » Retargeting ads
- » Expert team with deep hotel experience

WEB/MOBILE SITES

- » Dazzling visual experience
- » Auto-responsive for mobile/tablet screens
- » Automatic language detection
- » Market-tested for high conversions
- » Fresh new copywriting
- » Interactive maps
- » Live chat to engage visitors
- » Make your own updates, or we’ll do it all for you
- » Dynamic personalization
- » Expert team with deep hotel experience

INTEGRATED BOOKING ENGINE

- » PMS-friendly
- » Recovers abandoned bookings
- » Automated Best Rate Guarantee
- » Auto-detects country and currency of visitors
- » Dynamic pricing rules
- » Market-tested for high conversions

CRS/CHANNEL/GDS

- » Manage rooms & rates across all channels
- » Connect to GDS, OTAs, consortia, call centers
- » Simple, fast activation
- » One-click rate parity
- » Automatically pre-populate RFPs

SERVICE & REPORTING

- » 24/7/365 Support
- » Online ROI dashboards
- » Actionable insight from hotel experts
- » Dedicated Account Manager

T A M B O U R I N E
Increasing direct hotel revenues since 1983



About Tambourine

Tambourine was launched in 1983 as a completely self-funded venture (as it still is today!), initially offering custom publishing services to Caribbean hotels. The company reinvented itself as a digital firm in the early 2000s.

In 2012, a new senior leadership team joined Tambourine from a large Silicon Valley technology firm. For the last two years, the company has doubled in size each year, while attracting top tier clientele, including Four Seasons, Hilton, Destination Hotels, Trust Hospitality and hundreds of independent properties worldwide.

Today, Tambourine’s comprehensive solutions - including powerful web, booking and traffic generation technology, as well as sophisticated online distribution technology, are offered in one integrated platform, with one bill, one point-of-contact and one real-time ROI report.

Client perspective



STEVE MIGLIARA,
Regional Vice President of Sales & Marketing at Destination Hotels & Resorts

“We chose Tambourine because of the impressive speed-to-market offered, which got us up and running on the platform in only four weeks. Also, the real-time reporting function was of special interest to us; as our industry is constantly changing, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, we needed to ensure the most accurate tracking possible.”