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Strong sales channel for hotels: Cultuzz initiates direct link to Expedia

Direct XML connection from the hotelier's in-house property management system to Expedia deployed

Berlin, 30 May 2008

Distribution on the Internet has become even a little easier again. Cultuzz Digital Media, a leading provider of booking and distribution technologies for hotels, has created an XML-based two-way interface to the world's biggest online travel agency, Expedia. It is now possible to send room availability data and prices to Expedia directly from the front office system (PMS) of the hotel. Reservations received by Expedia are also transferred directly to the hotel's system.

With the direct connection to Expedia, Cultuzz is providing its customers with another strong partner in the booming business of Internet reservations. All hotels and B&Bs using an associated hotel program (e.g. Velox, hotline, Deltra HS/3, Medusa, Gubse and others) can use this direct link to Expedia.

Expedia has joined the ranks of Cultuzz's strong distribution channels, such as HRS, hotel.de, Booking, ehotel and eBay. "We want to create direct links to all major distributors, if possible, as well as to regionally significant portals", says Dr Reinhard Vogel, Founder and Managing Director of Cultuzz. "In doing so, an important factor in terms of technology is that we can not only send, but also receive information. Only in this way can we speak of a closed information circuit."

The success of Cultuzz is based on in-house software solutions, such as CultSwitch, CultBay and CultBooking. Cultuzz stores all the relevant information of the respective hotel in a central database, along with availabilities, prices, cancellation policy and payment methods all the way through to images and descriptions of rooms and street maps. In fully automated processes, the data in question is exchanged between the hotel management program (PMS) and numerous booking platforms. Incoming reservations are immediately returned to the hotel systems, ensuring that the data circulation system is completely closed.

Hotel owners have three major benefits in using this system: enormous time savings thanks to a single point of entry to rates and inventory management, rate parity on all booking platforms and an effective system to prevent overbooking. "And if a hotel owner is not represented on a particular distribution channel, we're pleased to help", adds Director of Sales Michael Jarugski.

With a booking volume of USD 20bn, Expedia is the world's biggest online travel portal. Expedia-branded websites feature airline tickets, hotel reservations, car rental, cruises, and many other in-destination services from a broad selection of partners. Expedia sells 140'000 room nights per day.

Cultuzz Digital Media GmbH was founded by Dr Reinhard Vogel in Berlin in the year 2000. Subsidiaries exist in Europe, the U.S. and Australia, as well as in India. The company is specialized in online sales and distribution for the hospitality industry and is the global market leader in selling hotel rooms on eBay.

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