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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hotels Build Connections Through “Friends” and “Fans” on Social Networks

TravelCLICK Launches Social Media Optimization Solution at ITB in Berlin

CHICAGO and BERLIN (March 11, 2009) With the increasing number of social media and consumer-generated content (CGC) sites, people are spending their time online differently. Today it's about conversations—interactions that go beyond the one-on-one to one-to-many through a series of networked relationships that connect us to people, places and events like never before. To avoid being left behind, hotels need to consider being on the sites where consumers now spend their online hours. According to Jerome Wise, vice president of eCommerce for TravelCLICK International, the challenge for hoteliers is to understand these evolving channels and how they can be used to reach new markets. “Social media can provide an essentially ‘free’ sales and marketing channel for building connections, community and, ultimately, commerce for hoteliers who are savvy in the new order of online marketing,” said Wise.

Understanding how to leverage this trend to grow brand awareness and consumer reach through proactive product placement in the social media sites is an essential element of the marketing mix for today's hotel marketers. Consistent, targeted branding and relevant messages are the keys to leveraging the power of these networks.

In response to this need, TravelCLICK is introducing a new Social Media Optimization (SMO) solution for hotels. The personalized program is designed to harness the viral power of the social networks—such as Facebook, Bebo, and StudiVZ—to connect hotels with new target audiences worldwide. The offering leverages the expertise of TravelCLICK's award-winning Internet Marketing Services team to develop and implement a hotel-specific social media plan, including:

- Research and strategy to determine the most appropriate sites, depending on the hotel's profile and target guest demographics
- Creation of customized profiles on at least 10 sites (social networking sites, consumer review sites, media sharing sites, mapping and CGC business sites, and user-generated content sites)
- Submission of content and reviews on all target sites
- Support and ongoing monitoring of engagements
- Quarterly reporting on interactions and responses

The benefits of SMO go beyond leveraging social networks for their marketing value. By having a targeted strategy across sites, hoteliers can increase traffic to their website and also enhance their search engine optimization ranking by increasing the amount of strong content and relevant links to and from their hotel website.

“According to Google™, networking is going to be the second-most popular online activity by 2012, overtaking shopping and surpassing both communication—such as email—and entertainment,” added Wise. “Hoteliers who explore social networking early on in its development will have a clear competitive advantage as it matures.”

With this new capability, TravelCLICK brings even more power to its comprehensive Internet marketing solution, which includes award-winning website design, robust content management, customized landing pages, search engine optimization, pay-per-click advertising, email marketing, and linking—all designed to drive bookings through a hotel's most profitable channel, its own website.

About TravelCLICK Inc. (www.travelclick.net)

TravelCLICK, the leader in hotel ecommerce solutions, provides a continuous flow of high-value online bookings to hotels worldwide. A uniquely comprehensive one-stop solution, TravelCLICK offers market intelligence, distribution, electronic marketing, and media solutions delivered with personal attention and local market expertise. With revenue optimization experts in every global market, we help our clients make better business decisions, generate greater demand from the right mix of channels, convert more shoppers to high-value guests, and increase revenue and profitability. Serving the hospitality industry since 1999, TravelCLICK has more than 13,000 customers in 140 countries with offices in Barcelona, Chicago, Dubai, Houston, Phoenix, Melbourne, Shanghai, and Tokyo.

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