

## Checklist to strengthen Direct Distribution September 2015

1.	<b>Build up knowledge and know how</b>	Yes	Planned in future	No
1.1	You know how many bookings and what turnover you generate through which online booking portal and especially via your own website?			
1.2	You can identify where the booking process originally started / from which end-user website the customer started his booking process?			
1.3	You know what affiliate marketing is, how it is used by online booking portals and what this might mean for your distribution strategy?			
1.4	You have an overview which online-portals (OTAs, review sites, etc.) place advertisements on your hotel name on Google, Yahoo, Bing or similar?			
1.5	Do you know whether online-portals use your hotel name or your brand in their own ads?			
1.6	Do you intend to do something against that?			
1.7	You know the average costs per booking that result from the particular online booking portals and your own website (monthly fees, reservation fees, commissions)?			
1.8	You know the percentage of your online-marketing budget on the total marketing budget?			
1.9	Does your business have one full-time employee, who has expertise in the area of online marketing, online distribution and social media?			

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1.10	Have you or your employees ever taken part in a course or seminar regarding online marketing, reputation management, search engine marketing, social media etc.?			
<b>2.</b>	<b>Establish an own profile</b>	Yes	Planned in future	No
2.1	You know why guests book your hotel?			
2.2	You have clearly defined your competitors (local & regional)?			
2.3	You have unique selling propositions (USPs), which set you apart from competitors in your region?			
2.4	You actively communicate these USPs on your website?			
<b>3.</b>	<b>Optimize your hotel's website</b>	Yes	Planned in future	No
3.1	Your hotel has its own regularly updated website?			
3.2	Visitors of your website find all the information they need with only few clicks and can contact you, check the availability of offers and purchase very easily in real time at any point?			
3.3	You make purchasing as easy as possible. You guarantee a simple booking process offering availability, alternative dates, immediate booking option and contact information for every offer and every product (such as conference rates, weekend-specials, etc.).			
3.4	You only request data from guests that is absolutely essential to process the booking?			

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3.5	You provide the methods of payment which your guests like to use?			
3.6	You know the deeplink (not the general URL of the homepage!) of your favourite online booking channel, so that you can give it e.g. to your classification company/agency?			
3.7	You have unique and up-to-date content on your website which can exclusively be found on your website?			
3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you present helpful and unique content regarding your business on your website, which helps the guest with his decision-making and which he can only find on your website?</li> </ul>			
3.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have professional and up-to-date pictures of your hotel on your website and you own the copyright for all published pictures?</li> </ul>			
3.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have an own video of your hotel, which one can find displayed on your website and for example on YouTube (<a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a>), Google or use the services of Google Business Photos?</li> </ul>			
3.11	You link your own website to other webpages (e.g. with regional event webpages, tourism organizations, museums, etc.) and they back link to your website?			
3.12	You advertise your webpage intensively (e.g. by inserting a link into E-Mails, setting the hotel-pc browser's home page to the hotel website, in letters and on invoices)?			
3.13	You use software to measure success on your website and you know which search terms are used to find your website?			
3.14	You have targets set up in the website traffic analyser (e.g. Google Analytics)?			

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3.15	You track the booking engine traffic on your website separately?			
3.16	Are there goals tracked in this part (to check at which stage you “lose” the guest)?			
3.17	Your website is available in different languages for the different source markets you address.			
3.18	You propose a mobile/ responsive version of your Website?			
3.19	Your website can be loaded on a mobile device (smartphone / tablet)?			
3.20	Your hotel is easily bookable on this mobile website?			
3.21	You have a special “members-only/access code-only” part in your booking engine?			
3.22	If yes, you use it for corporate customers, promotional rates or loyalty programmes?			
3.23	You have linked your website with social media applications (G+ button, facebook button, etc.), in compliance with applicable privacy policies?			
3.24	Did you ensure that the imprint, the terms & conditions and the privacy statements on your website are legally secure?			
3.25	Did you verify the legal certainty of your website within the last 12 month?			
<b>4.</b>	<b>Control prices and availability</b>	Yes	Planned	No

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			in future	
4.1	Do you know on which online booking portals, travel sites and “deal-portals” your hotel can be booked?			
4.2	Do you have an overview of the rates, availabilities, conditions and information that can be found in the internet concerning your hotel?			
4.3	Are you aware that some OTAs in their terms and conditions allow you to offer better prices and conditions offline to your guests, than available with them online?			
4.4	Do you propose your customers on your website to contact you by phone for special / better offers?			
4.5	Nobody, not even the best sales partner can sell anything better than you yourself via your own website?			
4.6	You make all products, room categories and optional additional services available to purchase online on your own website?  This also applies to weekend prices and additional services, such as early check-in, late check-out, car park or airport shuttle.			
4.7	You have a best price guarantee on your own website with clear and comprehensible rules for guests who book your hotel directly (online or offline)?			
4.8	You offer benefits / amenities to customers, who book directly (free parking, free newspaper, upgrades etc.)?			
4.9	You offer exclusive arrangements / packages exclusively bookable on your website?			
4.10	Do you make sure (contractually) that tour-operator rates, which are exclusively intended to be sold to guests in travel-packages, cannot be depacketized and booked freely via online booking portals on the			

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	internet?			
4.11	Do you use a channel manager?			
4.12	Do you administer these actively and regularly?			
<b>5.</b>	<b>Ensure attention and detectability</b>	Yes	Planned in future	No
5.1	Your hotel can be found via search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo) easily?			
5.2	Your hotel is present on Google-Maps / Google Places/ Google+?  Have you already taken possession of the entry?			
5.3	Your hotel can be found in online-yellow pages and booked there via your own booking tool?			
5.4	Do you know who has inserted links to your website (recommendations) and do you know, how you can make people or companies insert a link to your website?			
5.5	Do you maintain your hotel content on trivago, holidaycheck, tripadvisor and other important travel sites proactively and regularly?			
5.6	Do you know your ranking on these sites?			
5.7	Do you ensure that links to booking sites from e.g. Tripadvisor are sites that your company has an agreement with?			
5.8	Do you know of the specific deals for advertising for hotel businesses, which some travel sites display?			

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5.9	Do you carry out search engine marketing (Google AdWords / SEM)?			
5.10	Do you or does your agent apply "monitoring software" for such search engine advertisements?			
5.11	You use a modern Content Management System and carry out regular updates (ideally daily, but at least weekly) which help search engines to bring the right visitors to your website (e.g. descriptions of current events in the region to offer guests a hotel room).			
5.12	You (or your agency) update every page and every content field with unique content, which include important keywords.			
5.13	You have nonetheless a 'standard' description of your products, used at all channels?			
5.14	You know and actively use meta descriptions, HTML titles and so-called "friendly URL's", i.e. browser addresses, which correspond to your guests' searches as much as possible.			
<b>6.</b>	<b>Improve customer retention (CRM):</b>	Yes	Planned in future	No
6.1	Do you have a database of regular guests, which you keep up to date?			
6.2	Do you contact your guests via direct marketing (special offers, newsletter, etc.)?			
6.3	Do you use professional software to organise your newsletter marketing?			
6.4	Do you know which channels your regular guests use to book your hotel?			

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6.5	Do you have a bonus / loyalty scheme for regular guests and is it integrated in your own website?			
6.6	You develop creative ways to say "thank you" whenever a regular guest books through your website by using your fully automated online booking tool?  For example you offer a surprising welcome drink on arrival (and the important information that this is a thank you for booking directly) or another small added value to reward guests?			
6.7	Do regular guests have their own personal login to your booking system?			
6.8	Regular guests have quick access to their data?			
6.9	Do you have a policy regarding the use of the guests' profile in your booking system or Property Management System? This may help to keep focus on individual guest booking through your own channels.			
6.10	You store all the agreed contractual prices and you personally invite companies, conference booking guests and other target groups to get to know your online booking conditions.			
<b>7.</b>	<b>Strengthen recommendation marketing:</b>	Yes	Planned in future	No
7.1	Do you already collect evaluations by your guests on your own homepage, to become more independent from booking and review portals (e.g. <a href="http://www.customer-alliance.com">www.customer-alliance.com</a> , etc.)?			
7.2	Do you actively communicate these possibilities to evaluate on your homepage?			

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7.3	Do you comment evaluations, positive as well as negative ones?			
7.4	Do you encourage your guests to give reviews (e.g. request per e-mail after the stay, flyer, cardboard stands, direct address, etc.) on internal or external websites (e.g. Google Places, holidaycheck, Tripadvisor)?			
<b>8.</b>	<b>Use social media:</b>	Yes	Planned in future	No
8.1	Do you make use of social media such as Facebook, Google+, Twitter or Instagram to attract attention to your hotel?			
8.2	Do you have a hotel blog?			
8.3	Do you update it regularly?			
8.4	If not, do you have a blog dedicated to the hotel industry embedded in your homepage?			
8.5	Do you monitor what is said about your hotel on social media platforms (social media monitoring)?			
8.6	Do you have a social media strategy?			