Article published on December 5th 2011 | Seo

In mid-November, the CEO of Living Social, Mr. Tim O'Shaughnessy, announced the launch of their Instant Escapes product during the PhoCusWright travel industry conference, held in Miami. This digital marketing product will provide users with last-minute weekend hotel packages. Immediately on making this announcement, Oâ€™Shaughnessy was grilled by Chris Loughlin (CEO of TravelZoo) on the profitability of daily deal websites, and the availability of funds for further expansions.

While O'Shaughnessy did not give any information on the financials of the company, the tension caused by statements between the two showed just how competitive the travel industry had become in the digital marketing arena. It also indicated that most big-wigs in the travel agency sector didnâ€™t really trust daily deal sites like LivingSocial or Groupon.

The Instant Escape product of LivingSocial will offer hotels and other accommodation providers the chance to sell un-booked weekend inventory, just a few days before the weekend begins, at discounted rates. These lucrative deals will be made available to prospective customers through various digital marketing channels, namely, LivingSocialâ€™s main website, subscriber emails, and a tab on their mobile app.

A fine example of the digital marketing deals that LivingSocial is offering is the Hudson hotel deal. According to it, people can avail of a room at The Hudson Hotel in New York City for $265 per night on the weekend, instead of the regular rate of $529. This hotel deal also includes the provision of continental breakfast for two, WiFi and late check-out. The Instant Escapes digital marketing product is an enhancement of LivingSocialâ€™s Escapes vacation product, which they had launched in November 2010. According to the company, Escapes sold around 600,000 room nights, globally.

Since then, the company has continuously expanded its scale of operations, introducing two other beta products, a couple of days before it launched Instant Escapes. The first is an online system for ordering food from restaurants, similar to Seamless. The second is called Room Service, and aims to partner LivingSocial with fine dining restaurants, for providing white-glove delivery services. Some of the other discounted digital marketing schemes offered by the website are Instant Deals, Daily Deals, Families and Adventures.

Tim O'Shaughnessy also said that his four-year-old company has about 4,000 employees, around the world. The current expansion of the company has made it obvious that the companyâ€™s ongoing digital marketing competition with Groupon and Google is set to continue for a long time.

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/seo-articles/digital-marketing-launch-of-living-social-s-instant-escapes.htm - Article Side

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Article Keywords:
Digital Marketing Consultancy, Digital Marketing Agency, Digital Marketing Strategies, Online Marketing Companies, Internet Marketing Consultancy, Internet Marketing Consultants, Internet Marketing Agency, Digital Marketing Solutions, Online Marketing Age

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