



D.K. Shifflet & Associates Ltd.

Excellence in Travel Intelligence®

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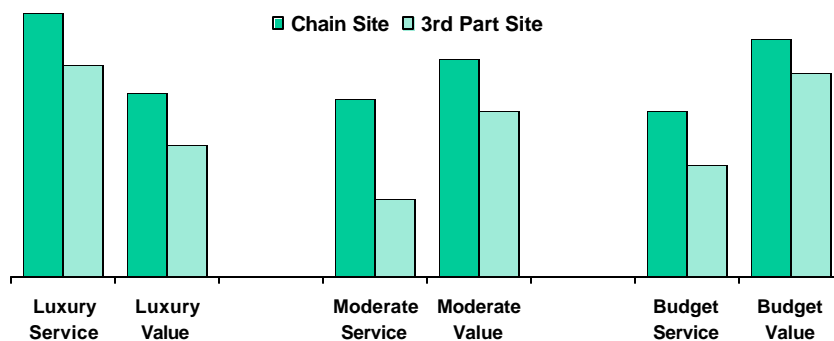
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Third Party Websites Deliver Potential Trouble for Hotels

Falls Church, VA, 4 May 2004:

D.K. Shifflet & Associates analyzed 2003 hotel chain Internet reservations and found that guests who booked through the chain's own website often rate the brand experience much better than guests who booked through 3rd party merchant model websites.

In the Luxury, Moderate and Budget segments, guests who booked via the hotel's website rated the hotel significantly higher in service, and value, than guests who reserved through 3rd party sites, such as Expedia, Orbitz and Travelocity.



“Despite a common belief that the lowest prices are at the merchant model sites, it appears that guests booking through those channels may receive a lower quality experience, calling to mind the adage, ‘you get what you pay for’,” said Doug Shifflet, President and CEO. “The data suggests that in some cases, guests reserving through the merchant models get sub-standard rooms and reduced service. This kind of treatment at the property, while understandable, can be hazardous to a chain’s image, reduce trial conversion to loyal guests, and eventually impact a brand’s long-term profit,” Mr. Shifflet continued.

Hotel chain sites are currently capturing almost 60% of total Internet hotel bookings and this is quite consistent across all hotel segments according to the DKS&A data.

D.K. Shifflet & Associates Ltd., a leading travel research firm located in Falls Church, VA, for over 20 years has provided the most complete consumer based travel data on U.S. citizens and their travel worldwide. DKS&A Directions® Travel Information System collects detailed travel data from over 60,000 households for each month of the year. The DKS&A satisfaction and value brand benchmarks for all hotel chains, airlines, rental cars, cruise lines and destination cities have become the industry standards.

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