

Phoenix Marriott Tempe at The Buttes



Managed by [Interstate Hotels and Resorts](http://www.interstatehotels.com/), [Phoenix Marriott Tempe at The Buttes](http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/phxtm-phoenix-marriott-tempe-at-the-buttes/) is a resort unlike any other. Built into a mountain, the resort stuns guests with its incredible views and warm hospitality. Just ten minutes from the airport, yet set among the incredible desert landscape, the hotel is a favorite among business travelers to the area looking for something different than the average downtown hotel.

Throughout last year, Interstate Hotels notified each of its properties that it was instituting a formal procedure for [online reputation management](http://blog.revinata.com/2012/08/revinate-success-story-anvil-media.html). Recognizing the impact that reviews were having on bookings, executives wanted to ensure that hotel staff was paying attention to what was being said about the properties online. The new procedure outlined requirements for responding to reviews, both positive and negative. While many of the hotels managed by Interstate have Reputation Management Liaisons, Phoenix Marriott Tempe at The Buttes does not. The responsibility of managing the online review program, instead, fell to the hotel's Director of Rooms, Michelle Shelstead.

Nevertheless, Shelstead like Interstate saw the value of reading and responding to online reviews. She says, "Given our location and flag, our guests are usually very seasoned travelers who, in addition to looking for good rates and a great location, are reading online reviews before booking their rooms." However, the truth was that reading and responding to online reviews was an incredibly arduous and time consuming process given the sheer volume of review sites – until the hotel signed up for Revinata service.

When Shelstead first heard about Revinata, she was dubious. In fact, her first reaction was, "Here's another program I am expected to learn and use, and yet another password that I need to remember." But when she joined her first training Webinar to see how Revinata worked, she quickly came around. She recalls, "When the trainer began showing me the dashboard and I saw how all our reviews were aggregated and sortable by date, review site and sentiment, I really got it. [I remembered thinking] this service is going to save me hours every day."

When the hotel first started monitoring its online reviews, its TripAdvisor Popularity ranking was hovering between the #14 and #17 range in the Tempe, Arizona market. Now, by actively using Revinata and encouraging guests to contribute reviews, the hotel has risen to #3 out of the 47 hotels listed on the site. Appearing on the first page of results on the site has lifted both sales and staff spirits at the hotel. Michelle adds, "I love forwarding the Revinata Scorecard to my colleagues at the hotel. It's amazing to be able to spread such good news about how our reputation has improved. Since everyone plays a part in making guests feel special, it's something we can all come together around. Revinata has become our STR report for reputation."

It is also apparent that there is a direct correlation between the colleagues' renewed positive energy and the resort's online review sentiment score. Since getting property buy-in to paying close

attention to online reviews, overall positive sentiment about the resort has risen 13 points year-over-year. Drilling down even further, review sentiment about the hotel staff specifically has jumped eight points over a twelve-month period – from 73% last year to 82% year-to-date.

The hotel is not only performing much better than its competitive set when it comes to online review sentiment and score, but also in terms of volume, consistently outpacing the competitive set volume average throughout 2012. Moreover, Shelstead points out the competition aren't responding to reviews at all, which she identifies is a competitive differentiator for the resort. She elaborates, "When our guests see that we take the time to respond to reviews, they know that we're serious about providing a great guest experience. We run a 24/7 operation and things are going to happen that might not be ideal. But if we can respond to feedback and recover a guest publicly, we can win over not only that guest, but also prospective guests."

The method the resort utilizes in crafting their public responses is also equally important. The resort has found that, by taking a personalized and truly human approach to review response, they are able to immediately create goodwill with potential future visitors and, in the process, set a positive conversational tone for potential reviewers to mirror in their post-stay reviews.

In addition, Shelstead and her team have found that, by publicly responding to the reviews received, the TripAdvisor reviewer community has been more inclined to advocate for the resort in their own reviews. For example, Shelstead has seen numerous positive review contributions come in that lead with authentic pro-resort statements like "unlike the other reviewer who said X or Y, this hotel is awesome because..." – reviews that are essentially the most impactful kind any property could hope for.

What is clear is that, by fully committing to proactive online reputation management, the Phoenix Marriott Tempe at The Buttes has designed a perfect storm for success. By integrating guest feedback into the daily operation, Shelstead and her team have seen significant improvements across the board – from review score to guest service levels – that have sustainable online and offline impact.

Revinat e, Inc. San Francisco, CA T +1 (415) 671-4703 E info@revinate.com <http://www.revinate.com/>