

# 13 Tips To Boost Direct Bookings

*“How can I get more direct bookings & more revenue?”*

There's no denying the role of online travel agencies (OTAs) in getting you more bookings. However, increasing direct bookings is better for your hotel business simply because it helps you minimise the cost of OTA fees. After all, 20% saved is 20% earned!

Keeping this simple fact in mind, here are 13 tips to help you get more bookings and boost your revenue.





### Invest in Search Engine Optimisation

Getting your website to the top of the search engines is a sure fire way to get more direct bookings. Think about the types of search queries your target customers are searching for and create purposeful content that answers their questions. Making sure your website is mobile responsive and performs great on mobile is also a key factor.



### Buy your brand names in Google and Bing

If you search for your business name on any search engine, what result comes up first? OTA's and competitors could be sneakily bidding on your brand. To make sure they're not stealing your direct business, you can use PPC to buy your brand names and make sure you come out on top!



### Rewards programs that improves customer loyalty

Incentivise your guests with loyalty programs to book direct with you. Tell them that they can earn points that can be easily redeemed not only at your hotel, but also at outlets of their choice. This is an ideal tactic for transforming a customer that first came through an OTA into a direct booking.



### Speed up your website

Slow site speeds can seriously damage your conversions rates. Research shows that up to 75% of people will leave for a competitor's site to avoid dealing with delays. Run your website through Google's Speed Test tool to get a measure on how it's performing and they'll even give you a suggested list of improvements.



### Use influencers to build brand awareness

Using the right influencers, you can tap into their social media followers to reach a wider audience and promote your brand. This could be a free night's accommodation in return for an article, or even better, piece of video content that promotes your brand and your location.



### Engage with guests on social media

Create contests, post videos and respond to comments that are left on your page. You can also incorporate online booking into your social networking profiles like Facebook, another great way to drive direct bookings.

# 32%

of bookings on mobile devices are abandoned due to slow loading times.



## Utilise the power of social proofing

Good reviews influence a traveller's booking decision in a big way. This is why it is paramount to strategically position and promote positive guest reviews throughout your website.

**80%**

of customers consider reviews extremely important when booking a room.



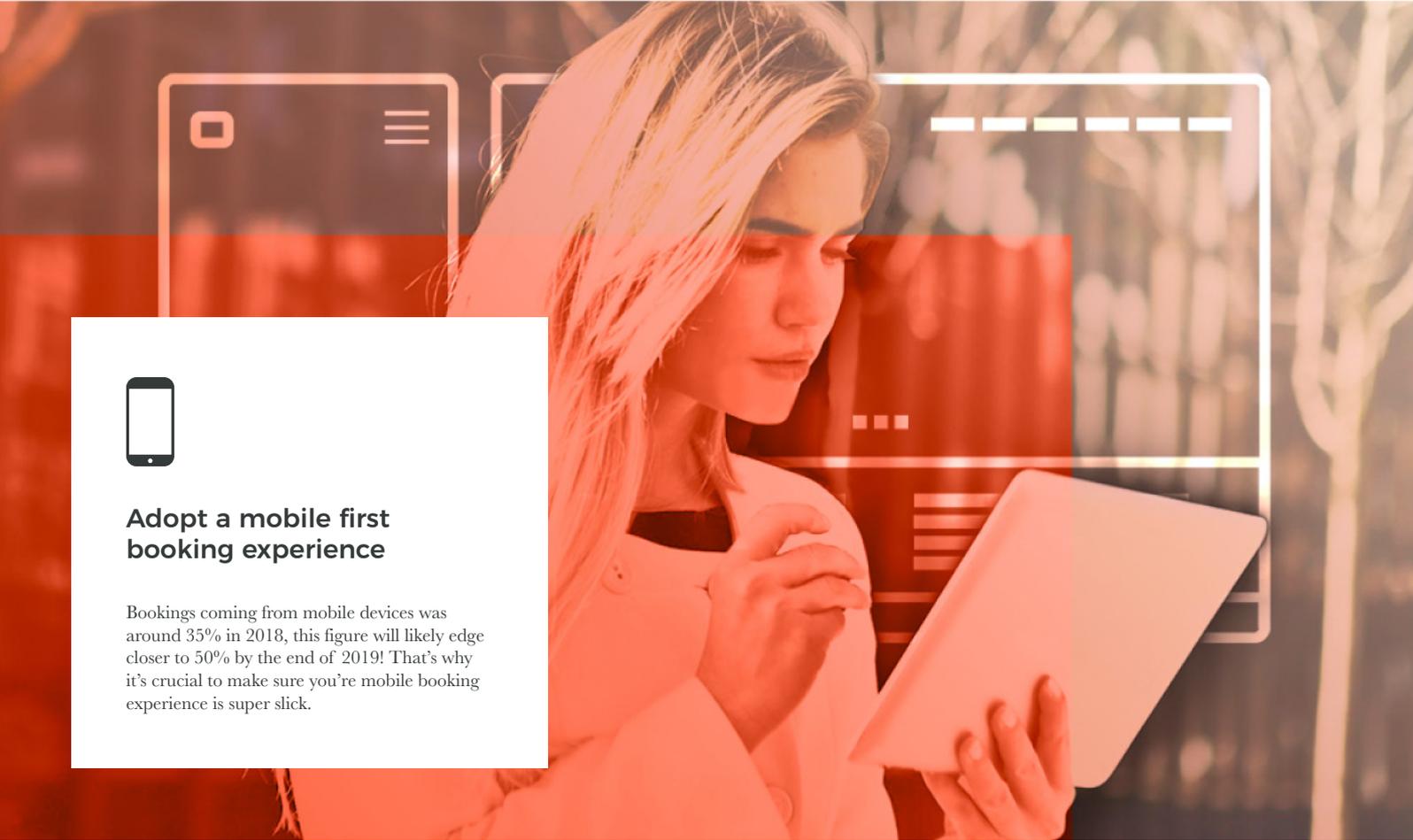
## Entice website visitors with exclusive incentives when booking direct

Everybody wants more and hotel guests are no exception to this. Once visitors are on your website, you can give them compelling reasons to book directly with you. This could be in the form of free breakfast or late checkout.



## Recover lost revenue with personalised retargeting

Using tactics such as automated emails and social media ads when a visitor has left your website without booking, you can retarget them with ads based on the rooms they browsed to show off your best room rates and exclusive perks. This gives you a second chance to win over guests!



## Adopt a mobile first booking experience

Bookings coming from mobile devices was around 35% in 2018, this figure will likely edge closer to 50% by the end of 2019! That's why it's crucial to make sure you're mobile booking experience is super slick.



## Use a personal assistant

Installing live chat functionality on your website allows potential guests to get quick answers to questions or address any concerns that might be the difference between them making a reservation or not.

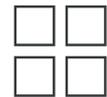


## Make your best rates message multi-channel

The fact that you offer the best rates when booking direct should be a consistent commercial message throughout your search, social media and website touchpoints.

**30%**

Price comparison widgets on a hotel website increase conversions by 30%



## Make your hotel gallery page sparkle

Your hotel gallery page is where potential guests come to find out more about you. Think beyond just putting up static pictures of polished but empty rooms and use high-res 360 images and videos that show off your personality.

We've outlined 13 ways to help boost direct bookings but the truth is it's about finding the right combination of tactics for your business. Try new designs, try new social media marketing campaigns, try new room galleries - whatever it takes. If you truly want to increase your direct bookings, you should never stop experimenting.

**To book a free 1 hour consultation to discuss your website and marketing strategy with Joe, our Digital Marketing Manager, drop us a line.**

**01785 279985**  
[hello@kanukadigital.com](mailto:hello@kanukadigital.com)

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