



## Case Study: Is TripAdvisor's "Show Prices" CPC Program a Viable Direct Online Distribution Channel in Hospitality?

By Sue Wiker and Tara Dyer

In an ever-increasing world of user reviews, TripAdvisor has become a mainstay in the research phase of travel purchases. With over 54 million monthly visitors and more than 75 million reviews, it is clear that TripAdvisor is a cornerstone in the travel industry.

Over the past few years, TripAdvisor's "Show Prices" hotel rate shopping functionality has become an extremely important travel decision and travel purchasing tool. Last year alone, the "Show Prices" functionality generated over one billion clicks, making it a powerful distribution channel for all hoteliers. Until recently, only the major OTAs and major hotel brands qualified for and could afford the minimum monthly spend required for participation in the TripAdvisor "Show Prices" CPC Program.

How does the TripAdvisor CPC Program work for independent hotels, resorts and casinos? HeBS Digital has been involved with the TripAdvisor CPC Program for several years now with undeniable success. On average, our clients' return on ad spend is between 1,000% and 1,500%, varying by location, brand equity, and rate parity.

By creating state-of-the-art "TripAdvisor CPC Program Single-Property Budget Management" technology, HeBS Digital has opened the door to independent hotels, resorts and casinos to participate in the TripAdvisor CPC Program at the same level as the major OTAs and hotel brands. HeBS Digital is the only digital marketing firm in hospitality to enable any client – hotel or resort, casino or country inn, independent or branded hotel, small or large – to participate in TripAdvisor's CPC program, including the "Show Prices" program, which was only open to OTAs and major brands until recently.

HeBS Digital's proprietary TripAdvisor CPC Program Single-Property Budget Management platform, coupled with our long-standing partnership with TripAdvisor, allows hotel clients to participate in the CPC Program with a minimum spend of just \$500 per month. With HeBS Digital, participating hotels receive campaign set-up, participation in the "Show Prices" CPC program, monthly budget caps, and deep links to the property booking engine for direct bookings. In addition, any hotel can now participate in the AIM Links CPC Program, which features the properties' official amenities and images and connects users directly to the property website. The end result is highly-qualified buyers landing on the property's site instead of OTA sites that undermine the direct online channel.

## Revere Hotel Boston Common ★★★★☆

200 Stuart St, Boston, MA 02116

[Hotel website](#) [Hotel packages](#) [E-mail hotel](#) [Hotel amenities](#)

★ Save

**Special Offer Save 10% Off Your Stay!**



Professional photos



49 traveler photos

Ranked #25 of 75 hotels in Boston

●●●●○ 261 Reviews

Show the lowest price for this hotel\*

Check In: 10/19/2012    
Check Out: 10/21/2012    
Adults: 2

Show Prices

- Expedia.com
- Priceline.com
- ORBITZ.com
- Venere.com
- Booking.com
- RevereHotel.com
- Hotwire.com
- Hotels.com

\*from our partners

Links directly to property booking engine

AIM CPC links take users directly to the property website

## Case Study: Is TripAdvisor's "Show Prices" CPC Program a Viable Direct Online Distribution Channel?

In the case study below, we have reviewed the results for a selection of clients that have participated in the TripAdvisor CPC "Show Prices" Program. These clients were among the first to take advantage of our monthly cap abilities to keep monthly budget spend in check. For each hotel we detail spend, revenue, return on ad spend, their overall rating out of five, and what percentile they are in within their destination (e.g. "Ranked #4 out of 132 hotels in Chicago").

Type of Hotel	ROAS	TripAdvisor Rank (Out of 5)	Top Percentile of Destination
Luxury Hotel Denver	1558%	4	28%
Resort Southern California	1174%	4	48%
Boutique Hotel Manhattan	1223%	4	46%
Spa Resort Arizona	900%	4	7%
Full-Service Hotel Miami	1511%	4	13%
Boutique Hotel Boston	1691%	4	37%
Luxury Hotel Manhattan	863%	4.5	12%

-HeBS Digital, Sept 2012

Year-to-date in 2012, participating hotels generated an average return on ad spend (ROAS) of 1131%. Our analysis shows that revenues generated and ROAS from the TripAdvisor CPC Program are directly correlated to the property's TripAdvisor rank and percentile rank in the respective destination, as well as level of brand recognition.

In our view the TripAdvisor CPC Program offers a way for hoteliers to compete on even footing with the OTAs. With such high returns, budgeting for TripAdvisor CPC is a must for any 2013 hotel marketing budget- HeBS Digital recommends allocating five to ten percent of your 2013 budget to the "Show Prices" program. Not only does it bring highly-qualified online travel consumers directly to the property's booking engine, but it also levels the playing field with the OTAs, providing a direct booking option to users.

### Conclusion

TripAdvisor's "Show Prices" CPC Program is a major distribution channel that provides high return on ad spend for hotels big and small, branded or independent. Used as a tool to lessen dependency on OTAs, this program can boost direct bookings, thereby increasing overall revenues and strengthening brand identity. Contact HeBS Digital today at [success@hebsdigital.com](mailto:success@hebsdigital.com) to see how you can get started with TripAdvisor's "Show Prices" CPC Program.

**About the Authors and HeBS Digital:**

Sue Wiker is Manager, Copy + SEO Department and Tara Dyer is an online media planner at HeBS Digital, the hospitality industry's leading full-service digital marketing, hotel website design and online channel strategy firm, based in New York City ([www.HeBSdigital.com](http://www.HeBSdigital.com)).

HeBS Digital has pioneered many of the best practices in hotel Internet marketing, social and mobile marketing, and direct online channel distribution. The firm has won over 220 prestigious industry awards for its digital marketing and website design services, including numerous Adrian Awards, Davey Awards, W3 Awards, WebAwards, Magellan Awards, Summit International Awards, Interactive Media Awards, IAC Awards, etc.

A diverse client portfolio of top-tier major hotel brands, luxury and boutique hotel brands, resorts and casinos, hotel management companies, franchisees and independents, and CVBs are benefiting from HeBS Digital's direct online channel strategy and digital marketing expertise. Contact HeBS Digital's consultants at (212) 752-8186 or [success@hebsdigital.com](mailto:success@hebsdigital.com).