

94%

of travelers use metasearch to research travel

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FREE EBOOK

Metasearch Advertising Pro-Tips

Use the techniques the pros use to maximize your metasearch production and increase direct reservations.

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Pro-tips to optimize your metasearch advertising

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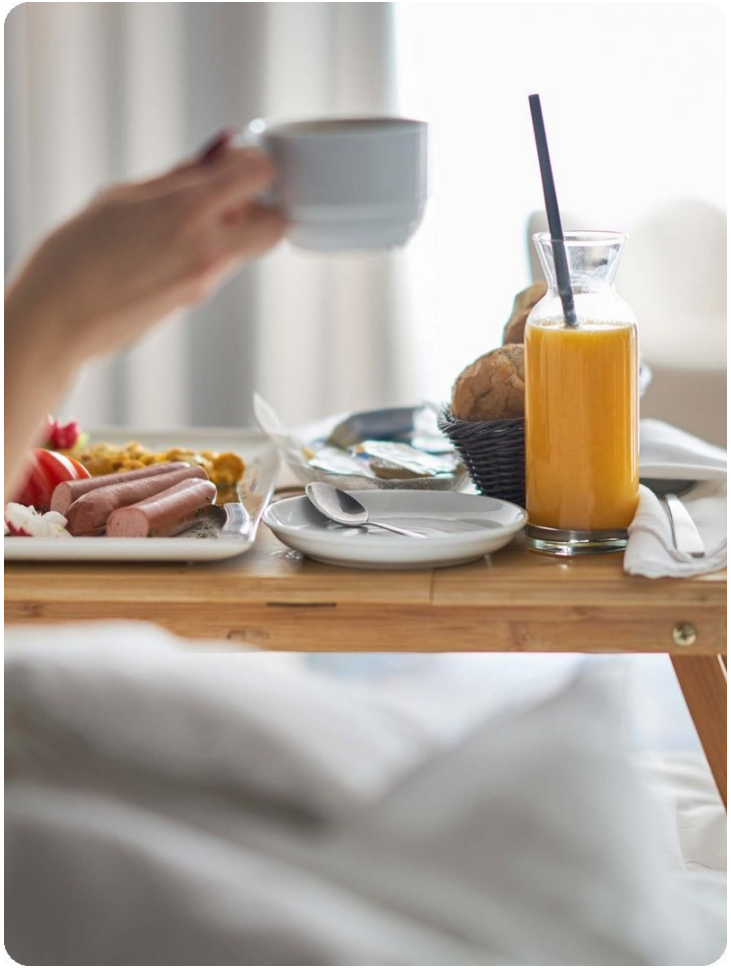
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00 INTRODUCTION

The #1 Battleground to Win Share Back From OTAs

Metasearch is becoming more important for your property every day. In a 2018 travel survey, **94% of travel consumers** used metasearch engines to research travel and ultimately select their hotel or resort.

If metasearch is your guests' preferred way to book and your best tool for direct bookings, optimizing it is a priority. Yet most hoteliers think publishing rates through a technical connection is all they can do.

In fact, there's much more. This guide walks through strategic techniques to maximize your metasearch advertising performance.

01

Your Connection

Before you optimize your metasearch advertising for your property's unique needs, make sure you have the right capabilities.

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YOUR CONNECTION

First, Let's Talk About Booking Engines

Most booking engines simply publish live rates and inventory to metasearch channels, so hotels connected this way tend to set it and forget it.

- ✓ Google Hotel Center still sets up an advertising account for your listing
- ✓ Google requires a minimum budget, so a funded Google Hotel Ads account exists
- ✓ It has the same tools as paid search: campaigns, predictive audiences, bid adjustments

But is anyone managing it? Ask your booking engine provider whether they're managing your campaigns.

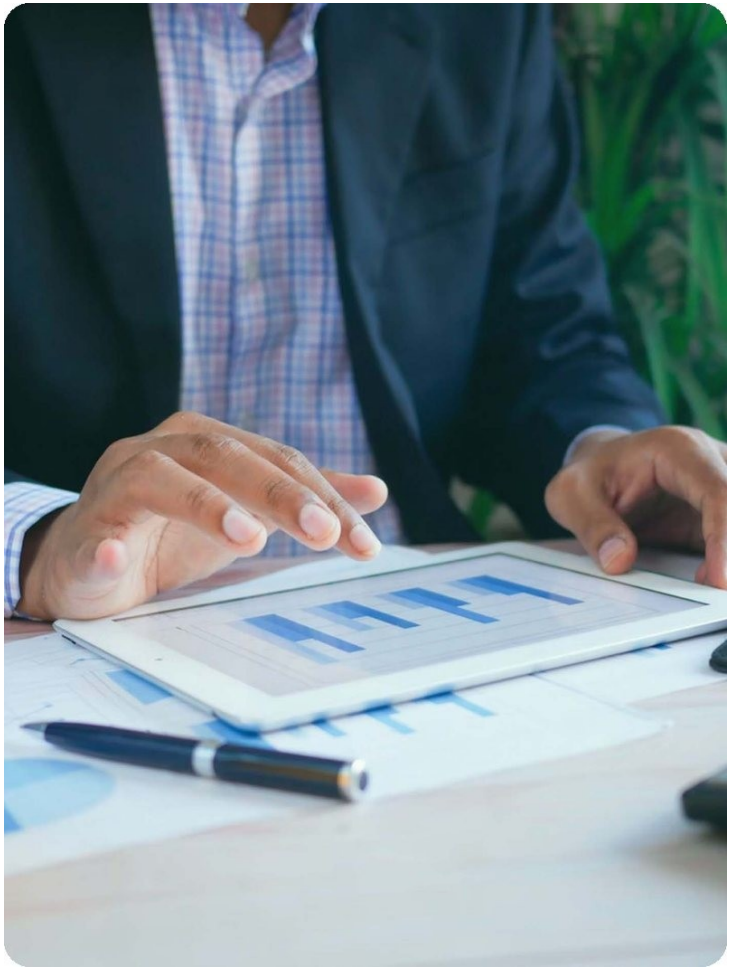
YOUR CONNECTION

Next, 3rd-Party Metasearch Providers

You may use a tech company to manage your metasearch campaigns. But after speaking with hundreds of hoteliers this year, we've learned it's often unclear what they're doing to "manage" them, and many hoteliers don't receive advertising performance data.

If you typically just receive a bill each month, the questions on the next slide will help you understand what optimization your provider delivers.

Hold them to task and start a dialogue about how they're allocating your metasearch budget.



Questions to Ask Your Metasearch Provider

Use these to confirm they're actively managing your metasearch advertising campaigns.

01

How are you using bid modifiers to support our property's unique needs?

02

Which metasearch channels are producing the most revenue?

03

Are you willing to create custom audiences for us using our past guest data?

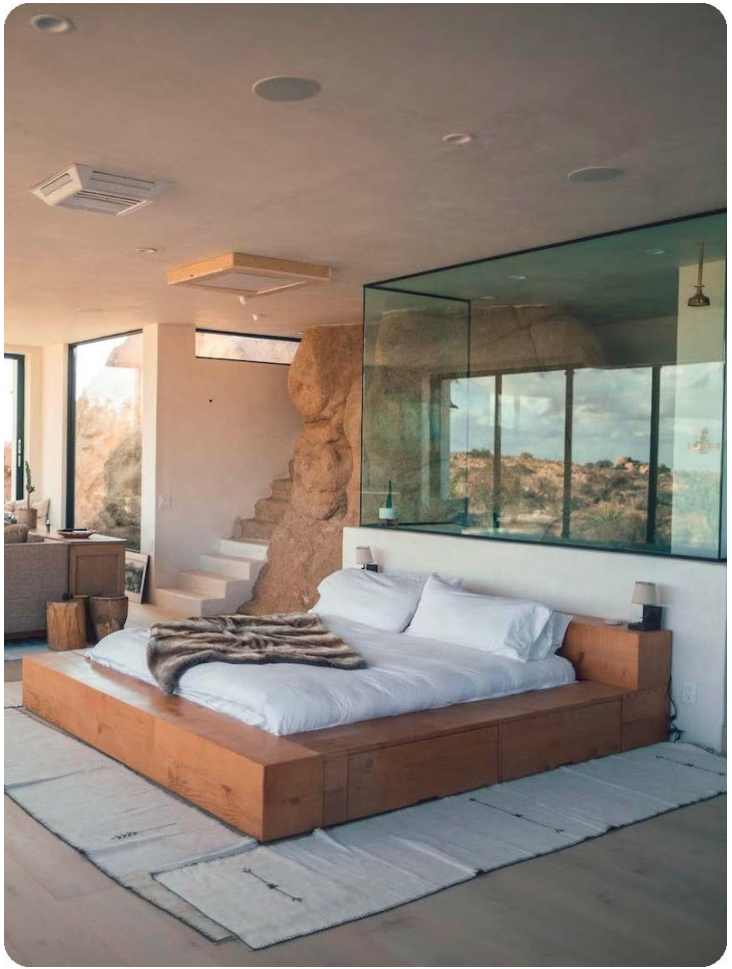
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02

Campaign Optimization Techniques

Tailor your campaigns to your property's ever-changing needs by managing budgets and bid modifiers.

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CAMPAIGN OPTIMIZATION

Tailor Campaigns With Budgets and Bid Modifiers

Bid modifiers available through your metasearch campaigns:

- ✓ Device type
- ✓ Length of stay
- ✓ Day of week
- ✓ Booking window / days to arrival
- ✓ Default date / user-selected date

Note: *you can't bid on specific dates yet, but in-market audiences can target travelers within a date range.*

USE CASE #1

Fill Need Dates

Say select dates in the next 45 days need help. Here's how to combine bid modifiers to increase your exposure on those dates.

01

Raise bids by days to arrival

Increase bids for searches under 45 days to arrival.

02

Target need days of the week

Increase bids for searches that include those days. Reduce or cut spend where occupancy is high; full dates drop off metasearch automatically.

03

Tighten as dates approach

Step days-to-arrival bids down to <30, <21, <14 and <7. If you'll take one-night stays on need dates, allow 1-night searches in your bidding.

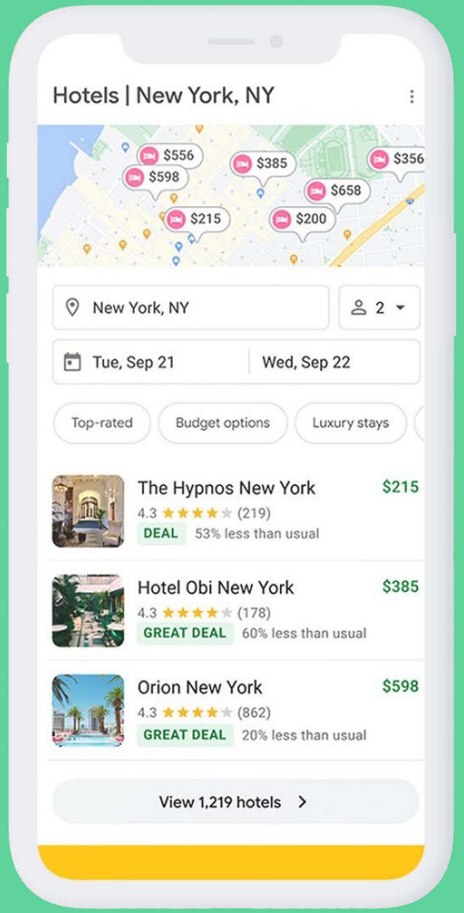
Result: *maximum visibility for your property during its need dates.*

USE CASE #2

Build a Base for the Future

Say you're a summer-centric hotel approaching your high season. Shift spend toward building an occupancy base:

- ✓ Decrease or cut bids for searches 0-30 days out if you'll likely fill organically
- ✓ Increase bids for dates more than 30 days away
- ✓ Eliminate bids for 1 and 2 night stays and bid only on 3+ nights



Not all channels offer multiple bid modifiers. Some offer only one or two.

Google Hotel Ads and TripAdvisor provide the most robust options.

03

Booking Engine Best Practices

Price accuracy improves conversion. Remember the old adage: a confused mind does nothing.

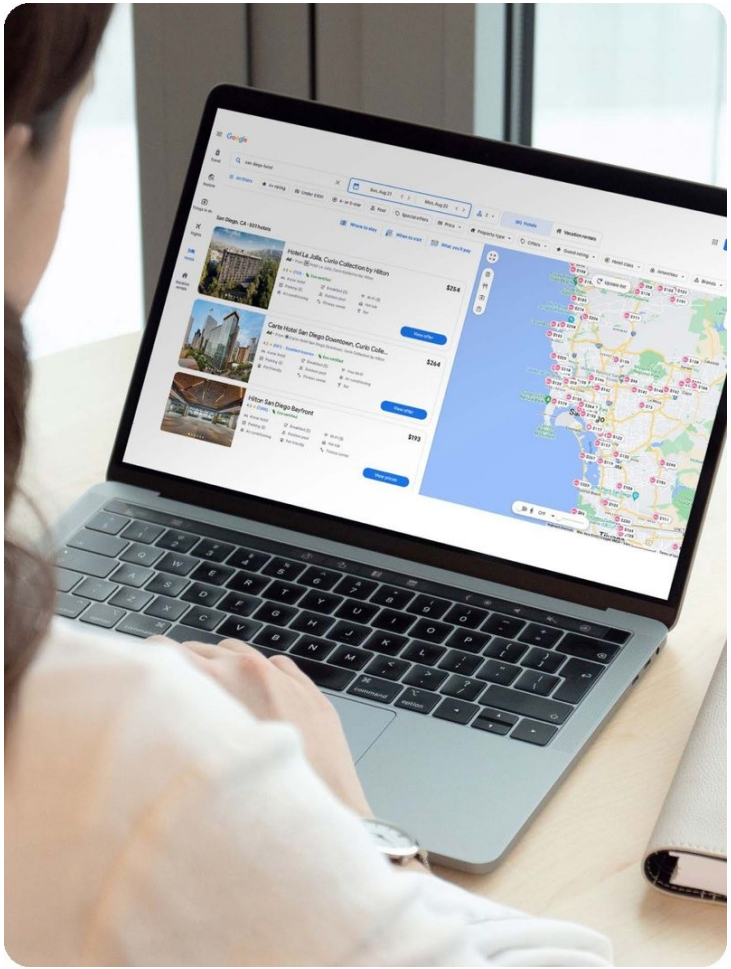
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BOOKING ENGINE

Price Accuracy Improves Conversion

Focus on usability so guests understand the information and can easily book a room that fits their criteria, at the price they saw on metasearch.

- ✓ Publish your BAR rate
- ✓ List your lowest rate first
- ✓ Add all public promotions to your metasearch rate and inventory feed
- ✓ Be thoughtful about how many rate types you display
- ✓ Use clear language to describe your offer and room types



04

Custom Audiences

Reach the travelers most likely to book with you, using your own data and Google's.

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CUSTOM AUDIENCES

Custom Audiences: What Are They?

You may know custom audiences from paid search: a cohort of users who have interacted with your brand or property in some way. Examples:

- ✓ **Past guests:** emails and phone numbers of people who have stayed with you
- ✓ **Lookalikes:** new audiences that mirror the makeup of your past guests
- ✓ **Web visitors:** segmented by specific events or actions

Only available through Google Hotel Ads.

CUSTOM AUDIENCES

Custom Audience Examples

Three ways to put first-party data to work in Google Hotel Ads.

1

Past guests

Create a dedicated campaign for past guests, then use metasearch callouts for relevant messaging, like promotions for loyalty members.

2

First-party segments

Google builds audience segments from your data. Run unique campaigns for each and bid more on segments that convert best or match your known targets.

3

Website behavior

Raise bids for users who viewed your specials and packages, or reached your booking engine without completing a reservation.

NEW INNOVATION

Affinity & In-Market Audiences

Unlike audiences built from first-party data, affinity audiences use anonymized data points from billions of travelers globally. You can target:

- ✓ In-market audiences
- ✓ Niche segments like adventure or health and wellness travelers
- ✓ Travel segments like business, family and leisure

Ask your metasearch provider if they can use affinity audiences in your campaigns.

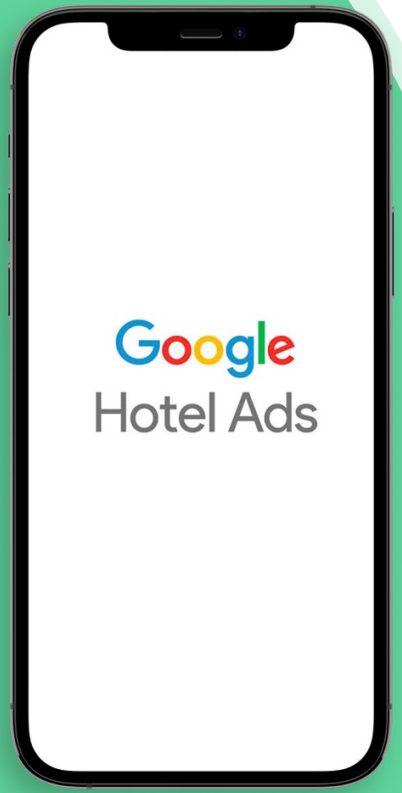


05

Metasearch Channels Overview

Google is king, but smaller channels can pay off in the feeder markets that matter to your property.

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CHANNELS

Google Hotel Ads Is King

Depending on a number of factors, it may also make sense to list your hotel on smaller metasearch channels.

These engines are often popular in certain feeder markets. If a channel is used in a feeder market important to your property, maximize your presence there.

Next: a breakdown of key metasearch engines and how they can help your property.

Bing & TripAdvisor

Bing

Great performance in terms of conversions, but low volume. It captures only a small fraction of the impression share Google receives.

TripAdvisor

#2 to Google for impression volume. A great branding tool for destination or activity-centric markets, especially if your property is geographically advantaged.

Channels for Key Feeder Markets

Most fringe metasearch engines are popular in specific feeder markets. If those markets matter to your property, maximize your presence there.



Skyscanner

Key feeder markets: Israel, United Kingdom, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands



Trivago

Key feeder markets: Turkey, Japan, the Netherlands, Malaysia and Italy



WeGo

Key feeder markets: Mostly Pacific Asia



Kayak

Key feeder markets: Puerto Rico, France, Costa Rica and Colombia

Participate in a variety of channels and continually monitor performance.

See which channel works best for your market and property.

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06 RECAP & CONCLUSION

Your Metasearch Pro-Tips Recap

- ✓ Make sure you have optimization capabilities
- ✓ Quiz your provider on how they use bid modifiers to keep optimizing your campaigns
- ✓ Optimize your booking engine for conversion
- ✓ Use custom audiences to maximize performance
- ✓ Use and monitor a mix of metasearch advertising channels

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Strategic targeting is how you win on metasearch.

Conclusion

If you take one thing from this ebook, we hope it's that there are many ways to maximize your metasearch advertising performance through **strategic targeting**, and even tailor your metasearch presence to meet your property's ever-changing needs.

Ready to put these pro-tips to work? Metadesk can help.

About Metadesk

- ✓ Managed metasearch advertising
- ✓ On-demand reporting and insights
- ✓ Easy-to-use platform
- ✓ No out-of-pocket expense
- ✓ Fair pricing model

Currently offering guided onboarding and setup.

Book a Demo at Metadesk.pro →

