# Tourism Overview

The emergence of tourism in India has become a substantial source of foreign exchange and is an enormous generator of employment for the Indian Travel & Tourism industry. Tourism has been highly influential for the nation's economic growth.

Due to the influence of one of the fastest growing middle-class demographics, infrastructural reforms as well as an increase in international tourist arrivals & tourist friendly visa policies such as the extension of e-tourist Visa to 150 countries. Factors such as affordable airfares, growing air travel & train travel networks, have increased travel spending among millennials due to rising disposable income.

The United States of America (15.1%), Bangladesh (14.1%) & the United Kingdom (10.8%) are considered the top three source markets for India during the 2013-2015 period.

Hotels in Mumbai with Regards to Number of Rooms

Number of Hotel rooms in Mumbai
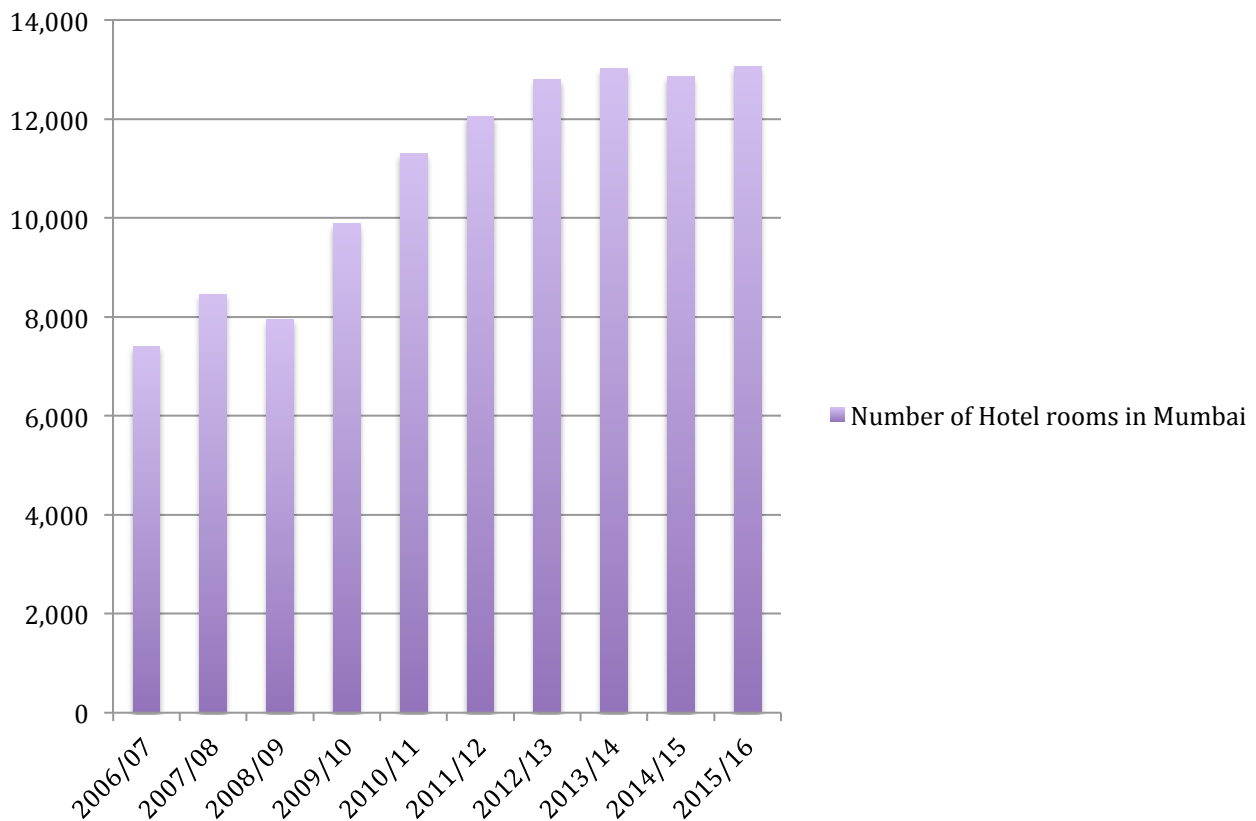
Since the age of the millennials, social media has significantly impacted our daily lives. The emergence of the digital age has had a profound effect on industries all over the world. Moreover, the rate at which new technologies are created everyday is growing at an exponential pace.

The dependence on technology is slowly but surely becoming crucial in our personal and professional lives. The use of technology is critical for the service industry, especially the hospitality industry, which needs to be at the apex for this drastic change. The ability to garner leads through customer

awareness and customer loyalty are imperative to any service organisation's arsenal. The steady decline of trust amongst users with traditional advertising has led to the rise of online peer recommendations. Therefore, developing one's community has never been more essential.

In order to determine the best and most effective examples of a social media presence of 4 and 5 star hotel categories in Mumbai, Zefer Brand Consultants conducted an independent study to showcase the growth of social media platforms for hotels in Mumbai.

Zefer began its analysis in February 2016 and started collecting social media data on hotels in present in Mumbai. Since then it has gained valuable insights of the selected brands including their individual properties, their corresponding number of followers as well as further findings from three of the most popular social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram & Twitter).

All of the brands selected for the study have a domestic as well as an international presence and are categorised as 4 star and 5 star hotel brands. To give the reader a basic demographic, Zefer features an estimated 200 social media accounts of 65 hotels in Mumbai.

Social Media Platform Performance in Mumbai

The world's largest social media platform, Facebook has close to 1.86 billion monthly active users. In regards to active users, India currently holds the number one position with 195.16 million active users, while America (191.3 million) and Brazil (90.11 million) hold the number 2 and 3 spots respectively. It comes as no surprise that hotels in Mumbai saw an increase of 2,65,391 users (from February 2016 to February 2017) their highest increase in Facebook followers to date. This adds to a 20.5% growth from the previous year's total number of followers.

The world's favourite image sharing app Instagram is owned by Facebook currently, has approximately 600 million users. Hotels in Mumbai saw a whopping 131.8% increase in their number of followers on this platform over a one year period. This is the highest in terms of growth for any social media platform.

Microblogging site twitter averages at about 319 million monthly active users. In terms of online activity, the United States leads the pack with 67.54 million users and India holds the second spot with 41.19 million monthly active users. On Twitter, hotels in Mumbai saw a 45.31% increase in the number of followers from the previous year.
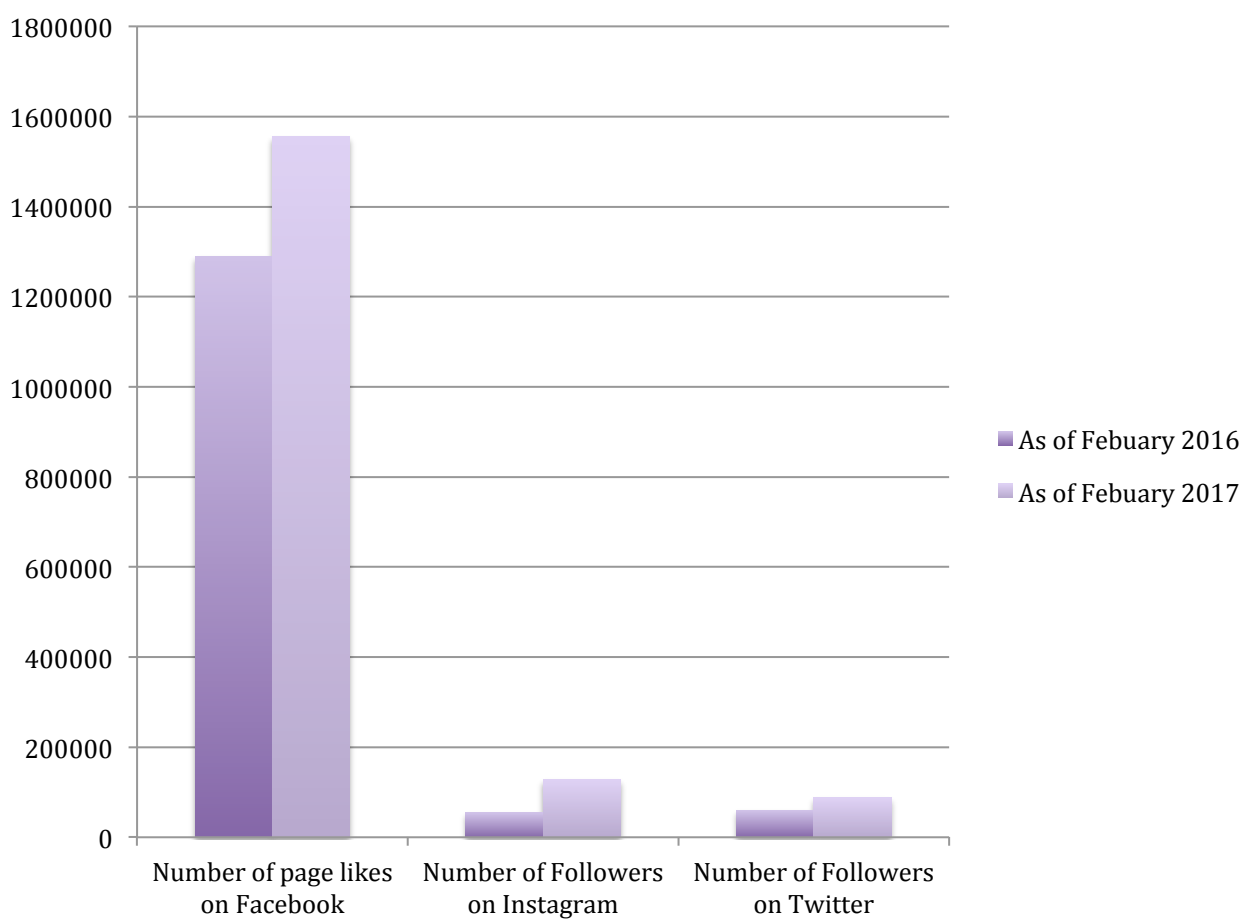
Top Hotels in terms of growth on Social Media in Mumbai

Facebook

A "heritage class" property, The Taj Mahal Palace Hotel has over 600 rooms and takes number one spot for growth in the number of page likes over the past year. The hotel saw an increase of 30,564 new page likes in a year.

The JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar, Marriott Hotels newest Property in Mumbai saw its Facebook page likes grow by 29,730 users over the past year making it the second in terms of growth and it's increase in followers

Mumbai's first Mariott Hotels property, the JW Marriott Juhu takes the third place having gained 22,483 new page likes over the past year.
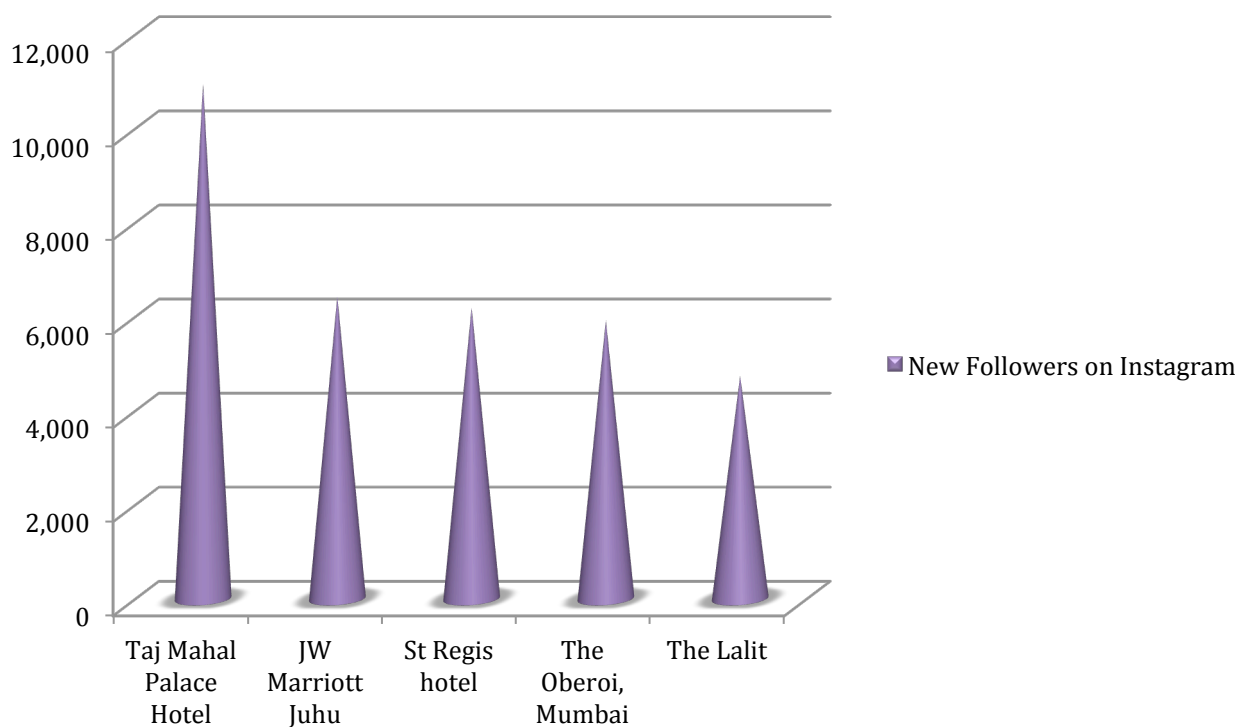
New page likes on Facebook
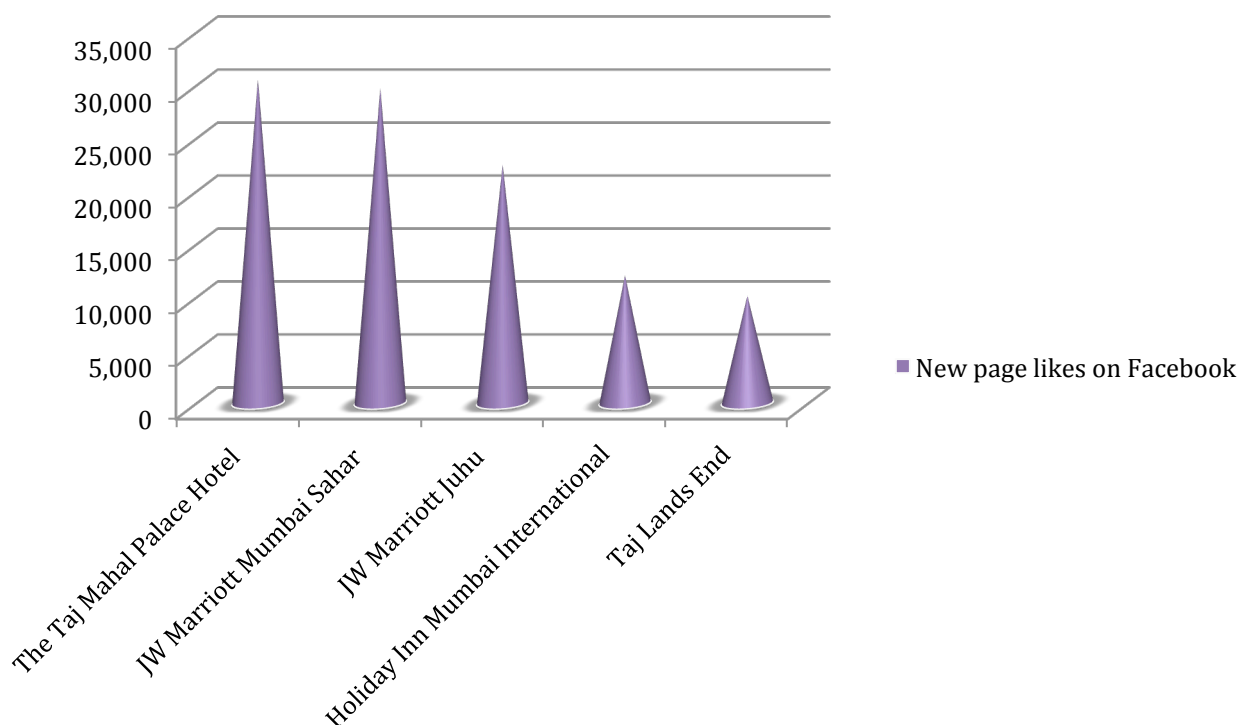
Instagram

The Taj Mahal Palace Hotel Mumbai grew the highest in terms of number of followers on Instagram over a year with 10,944 new followers

The JW Marriott Juhu also incurred a similar growth trend and gained 6427 new followers on Instagram over the past one year

Mumbai's first St Regis Hotel located at Lower Parel saw an increase of 6188 new followers on Instagram
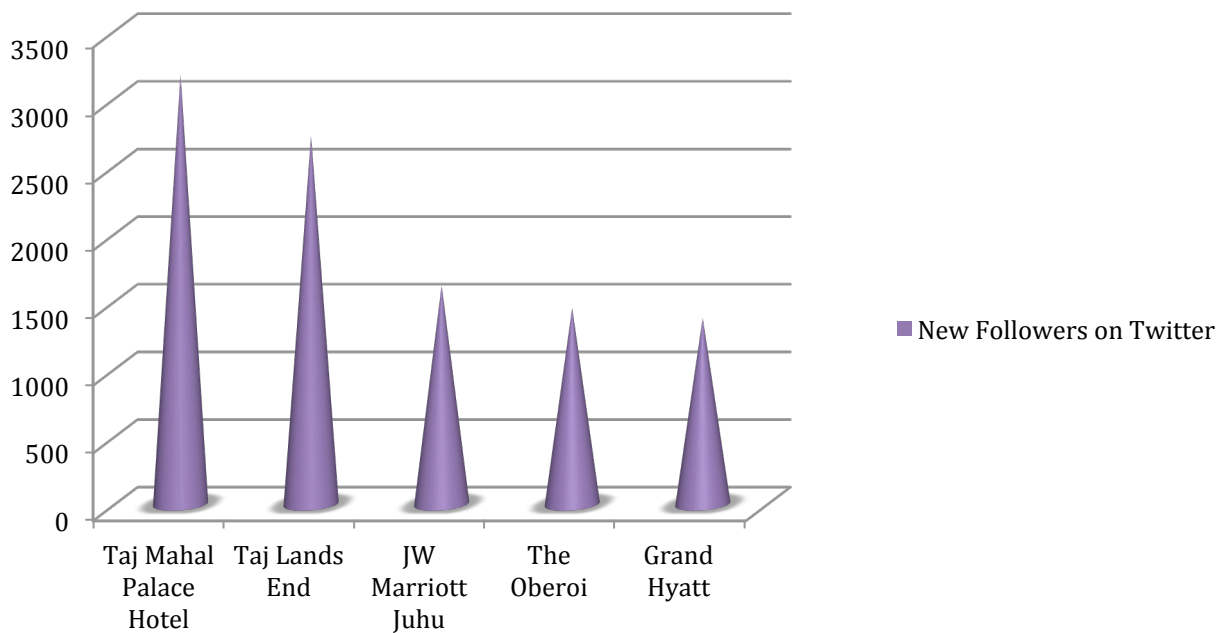
New Followers on Instagram

On Twitter, the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel Mumbai grew by 3175 new followers over the past year

The Taj Lands End obtained 2721 new followers on Twitter granting it the second spot in terms of total number of new followers

The JW Marriott Juhu achieved the third position for growth in new followers and saw an increase of 1616 new followers over the past year
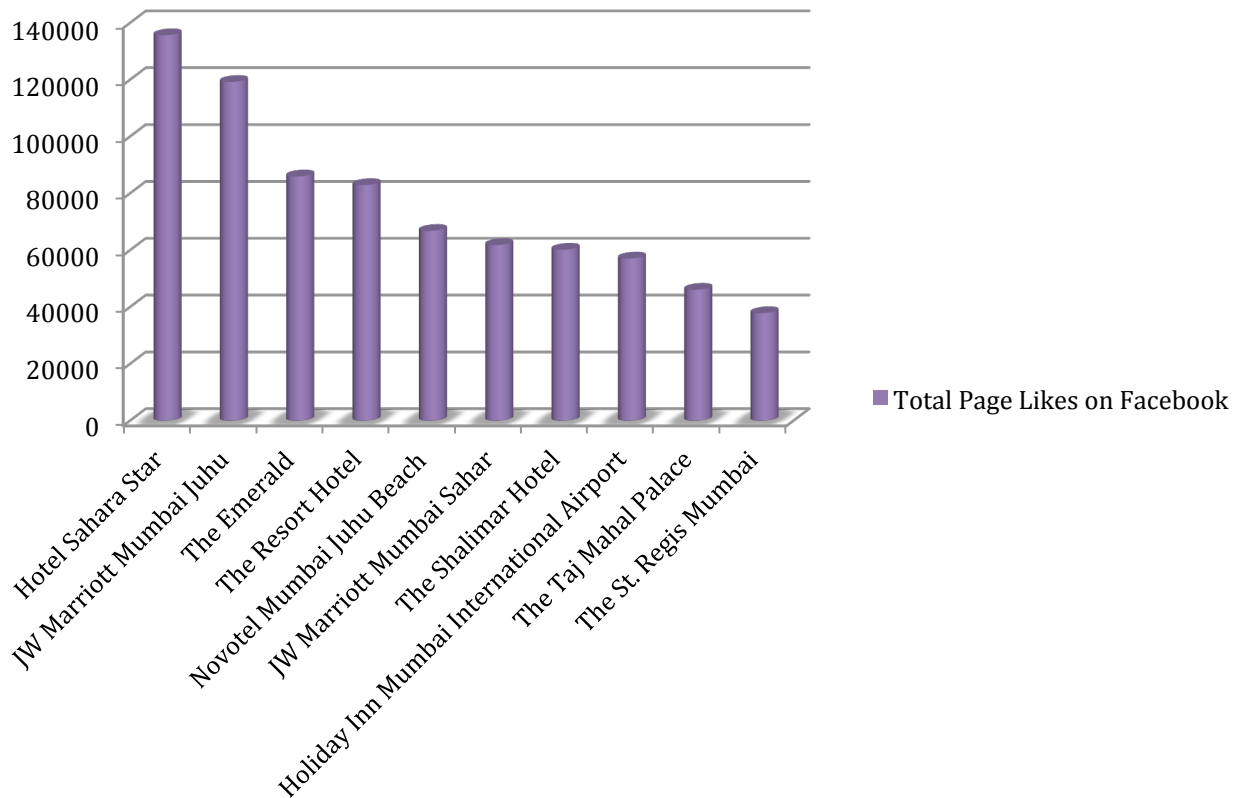
New Followers on Twitter

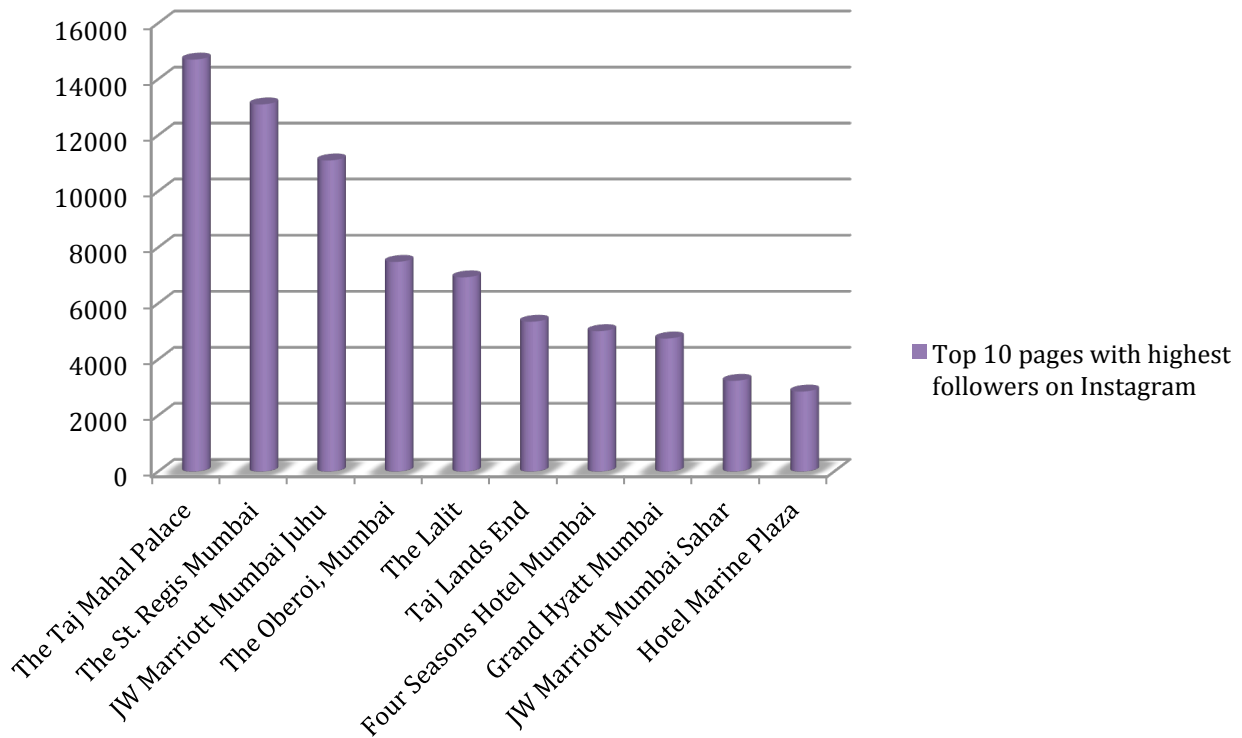# Mumbai Hotels Social Media pages with largest number of Followers

Facebook

Total Page Likes on Facebook

Instagram

Top 10 pages with highest followers on Instagram

Chart legend: ■ Top 10 pages with highest followers on Instagram

X-axis categories: The Taj Mahal Palace, The St. Regis Mumbai, JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu, The Oberoi, Mumbai, The Lalit, Taj Lands End, Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai, Grand Hyatt Mumbai, JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar, Hotel Marine Plaza

Y-axis: 0, 2000, 4000, 6000, 8000, 10000, 12000, 14000, 16000

Top 10 pages with highest followers on Twitter
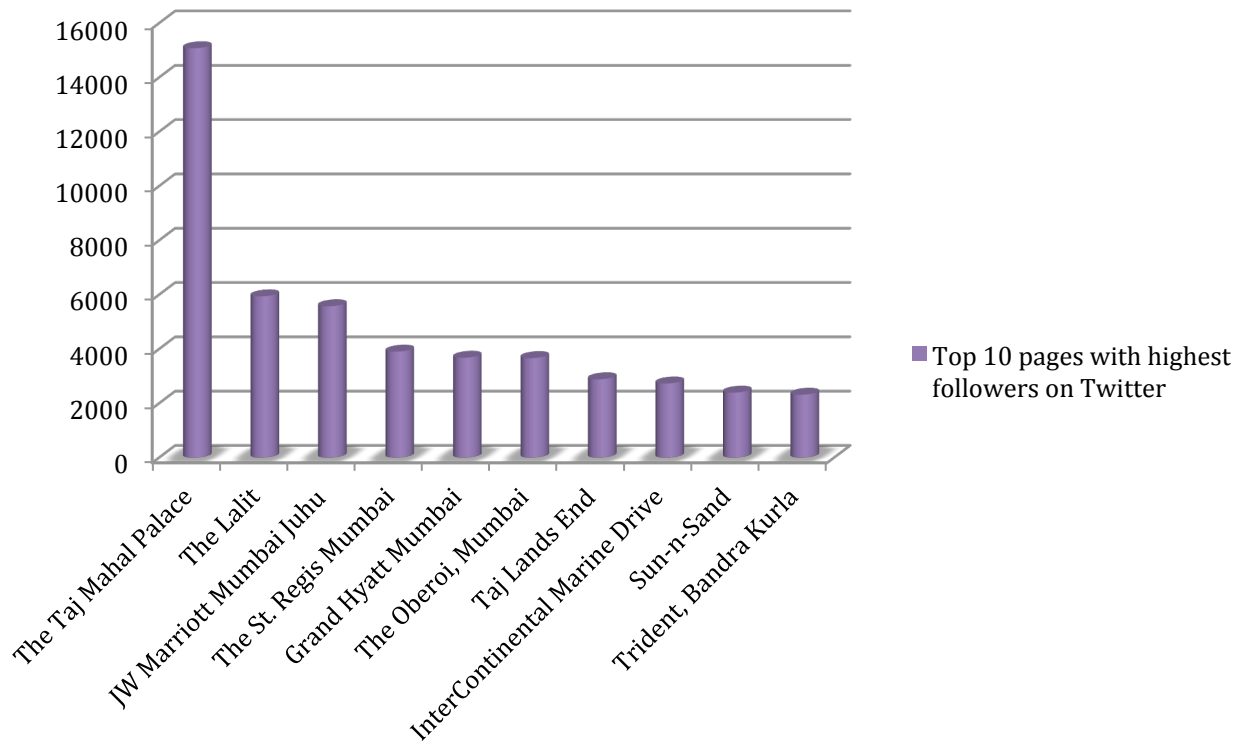
BRAND CONSULTANTS LLP

Advantages of Social Media for Hotels

With over 2.5 billion active social media users globally, one can bank on the fact that social media and its marketing drivers are crucial for any individual in the service industry. Social media platforms empowering hotels to showcase the best they have to offer and provide a common platform where brand advocates can share their views that can optimally be leveraged by the hotel.

According to Accenture Global Pulse research, 66% of potential customers explore the Internet to browse hotels before booking, and 93% of travellers' booking decisions are impacted by online reviews. One cannot stress the value of having a loyal fan base on social media enough as and are a great source for peer opinions.

Encouraging guests to share their experiences via images on social media or asking them to review their stay can be a great way for a hotel to learn about the areas they could excel in as well as the services they need to work on. As reviews are crucial in the decision-making process, the link between the grade of reviews, rankings and the guest's decision to stay at the hotel must not be taken lightly. Numerous studies have shown that potential guests even place reviews over price in their decision-making process. If a hotel has the best price in town but its reviews are not up to the mark, there is almost no chance that potential leisure guests will choose to stay there.

Positive reviews, on the other hand, can greatly help your hotel build brand advocates and a fan base, it is important the way hotels use these reviews. Great reviews help in persuading and reassuring the potential guests to go forward with their booking.

For anyone in the hospitality industry, a Facebook presence is imperative as this platform is a great customer service channel. It is public in nature and the addition of Call to Action buttons allow potential guests to directly make inquiries for properties on this platform. Facebook is like an extension of an on-property service and is a great platform to help guests plan their trip, connect with a particular hotel during their visit and to stay connected to it post departure. It has the ability to create a truly meaningful engagement experience.

If the content that you upload on social media is unique, relevant and interactive, it will lead to your social media platforms actively engaging people. Tracking metrics is integral to overall online success. Likes, shares, #hashtags, comments and the newly introduced Facebook reactions emoticons help you analyse and evaluate both positive as well as negative feelings of your followers. These features can also be a creative way to run polls on your pages.

In order to influence opinion and behaviour at scale, it is important to have the ability to leverage social media influencers such as celebrities, journalists or social media experts who have a large following on social media. For example, JW Marriott Hotels & Resorts' recent collaboration with Ann Tran (one of the top 50 social media influencers identified by Forbes) led to a significant growth in the brand's social media following and its engagement numbers.

Social Evolution

The age of the millennials has brought about a transformation in the ways the hospitality industry looks at social media. We live in a time where anyone can publish a review or photos and videos of their experiences and share it with the masses. The reliance on digital social platforms for research, connecting or booking requires marketers to keep up with the speed at which changes take place. Hotels can greatly benefit from this transformation. Information is available in real-time, which enables them to best showcase their hotels and make any corrections almost immediately. Gone are the days where mystery shoppers would be expected to arrive at a hotel, examine its facilities and the level of service to provide the hotel with a score which higher ranking executives in the hotel would have to analyze to provide the information to the rest of the employees. All of this and more is now available just a click away. Choosing platforms which best embody your hotel's inbound as well as outbound marketing activities is soon becoming a silver bullet in any hospitality company's arsenal.