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HolidayCity introduces Online Chat feature on each hotel information page

Following a positive and encouraging response from its customers, Internet-based accommodation reservation service HolidayCity (holidaycity.com) has launched 'Online Chat' feature throughout the entire website.

The company underwent a test phase from November 2005 until February 2006, where the Online Chat facility was only available on small sets of HolidayCity's webpages.

The Online Chat allows HolidayCity's customers to contact customer service officers (CSOs) in real-time during operational hours. They can talk about a variety of topics, from information on hotel room rates and availability, requests for cancellation and amendment, to queries on hotel information, booking status, and how to make online reservation.

Sharing information about type of query for HolidayCity Online Chat during February 2006, room availability and rates with 39 percent, followed by enquiry

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on hotel information (26 percent) and curiosity/initial interest (21 percent).

Lee Lai Huat, HolidayCity's chief executive officer, said, "We find that most of our customers are appreciative of the 'personal touch' accorded by the 'Online Chat'. They feel more comfortable and assured knowing that they are talking to a real person in real-time; someone who can give them the information they seek and ease their worries. On average, they spend more than five minutes chatting with our CSOs".

The facility is now available on each respective hotel information page. This allows customers to browse for information and chat with our CSOs at the same time for clarification. "The main goal here is to make it easy for our customers to make bookings with us. And over a period of time, we are confident that the 'Online Chat' would ultimately play an important role in increasing our conversion rates", Lee reiterated.

The company also plans to expand this facility by offering a copy of their conversation with CSOs for their own reference.

In 2005, HolidayCity recorded more than 190,000 room nights with a transaction value of US\$25 million. HolidayCity receives more than one million unique visitors monthly.

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