

Click for a room

By Subashini Selvaratnam

If you are planning for a holiday and do not know where to stay, check out HolidayCity (www.holidaycity.com). Developed by HCity Sdn Bhd, this Internet-based accommodation reservation service offers over 7,000 hotels in over 400 destinations worldwide.

According to HCity's chief executive officer Lee Lai Huat, one of the unique features about HolidayCity is that the payment is made directly to the hotels. This means users are not required to make any form of payment online to HolidayCity directly. They can pay directly to the hotel at check-out point.

"However, payment arrangement is subject to the terms and conditions of the respective hotel. Users can find more information about payment via the Web site," Lee said.



The other advantage is that there is no fee imposed to use the system. Here, users will be assigned their personal account to manage their bookings. This means users are able to make changes, cancellations or further bookings anytime, anywhere.

"Moreover, users can receive instant feedback on their booking status, thus eliminating any waiting period. This feature is convenient, especially for those who often do last-minute traveling arrangements," Lee said.

The Web site also comes with a feature called Guest Review that contains feedback from customers on the hotels' facilities, ambience, services, location, value for money and other general comments.

There is even an average rating list for the hotels as a useful guide for potential customers.

According to Lee, in 2005 the company recorded over 190,000 room nights with a transaction value of US\$25 million (RM87.5 million).

On average, HolidayCity attracts over one million visitors monthly from all over the world, with the majority coming from Europe, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore.

"We see many instances where bookings are made by each country's domestic travelers. For example, Europeans book hotel rooms for stay in European destinations. A similar pattern also occurs in the United Kingdom, Australia and Singapore," Lee pointed out.

In the future, the company plans to add another 12,000 hotels in over 600 destinations worldwide.