

HOTREC principles/ review site

1. Editorial control

Guest reviews should only be published after verification by qualified editorial staff of the authenticity and reliability of the entry.

We agree.

In order to avoid any kind of harassment, verbal slander or content that does not meet our general review guidelines, reviews are checked

- a.) through an automatic algorithm, that detects peculiar content.
- b.) through our Content Quality Team, which reassesses new entries manually.

If for any reason a review does not meet both- our automatic and manual check guidelines- the review will not be approved and thus not displayed.

2. Prevention of manipulation

2.1 Site providers should ensure that reviews of a hotel are provided only by guests who have actually stayed in the hotel.

We agree.

Trivago does only accept reviews that are based on a real travel experience. If biased content of a review leads to further internal inspection, trivago keeps the right to also contact the user in order to request an official document that gives proof to the validity of the reviewed experience. Any evidence that identifies a review as fake (by agencies, competitors or the hotelier himself) will lead to the deletion of such content.

2.2 Guests should indicate their date of stay in the hotel.

Users are given the opportunity to add their date of stay but are not required to do so.

2.3 The number of ratings in relation to the number of hotel rooms should be a factor in the calculation of any ranking.

We disagree.

trivago decides to treat each hotel in the same manner. We believe that this makes the review system more transparent and gives each hotel the chance to be listed in top ranking positions on our site.

A distinguished treatment of hotels would lead to unequal weight of classifications and thus only gives hoteliers limited possibilities to actively encourage guests to write reviews.

2.4 The review site should indicate the source of input of individual reviews if they are originally stemming from a third party's website in order to give guests and hoteliers the possibility to trace back the review.

We agree.

trivago always indicates each reviews source. If a review stems from a third parties site, a link to the actual entry is provided.

2.5 Information displayed on review sites should be truthful and not biased impurely towards the user in order to divert him to third parties booking channels.

We agree.

Reviews are shown independent of booking options.

3. Quality assurance

3.1 Site providers should ensure that hotel contact coordinates, basic content data, availability or rates figures shown on their sites are displayed accurately.

We agree.

trivagos' content management team continuously monitors its content in order to assure that all partner connections are smoothly connected. All review partners are updated on a weekly basis so that the overall average is steadily including new amounts of guest comments. Booking connections on partner sites are monitored on a continuous basis. Each partner that is not able to provide required technical resources and thus delivers wrong information is immediately taken off the site.

3.2 Reviews should only refer to the hotel facilities that are actually offered by the hotel. For example, an evaluation of the gastronomic performance of a hotel offering breakfast only should not influence the rating of this hotel.

We agree.

trivago users can only comment on existing facilities of a hotel. If a hotel e.g. does not provide spa facilities, the option to comment on it is automatically not provided. Non-existing facilities are thus not reflected in trivago reviews.

3.3 The hotel guest should be led to comment exclusively upon the services and offers he/she actually took advantage of during his/her stay in the hotel. For example, a guest not using the spa facilities or the restaurant of a hotel should refrain from posting a review on these hotel facilities.

We agree as can be obtained in foregoing statements.

3.4 Review sites should provide the user with evaluation criteria, which are

- relevant;*
- with appropriate levels of detail;*
- commensurate with the characteristics of the hotel; and*
- open for additional questions on request by the hotel.*

trivago gives users the opportunity to comment on up to 47 opinion fields according to existing facilities of the corresponding hotel.

Each opinion sub group can be reviewed individually which then accumulates the overall result of the review.

3.5 The user should be given the opportunity to express the evaluation not only via ratings, but also via "open" texts.

We agree.

Users are requested to write open texts as main body of a review. Each opinion field can be evaluated via a numeral system but also via texts.

4. Anonymity

Reviews should not be anonymous to the site provider, through whose intermediation the hotelier should have the possibility to react. The site provider should reconfirm e-mail addresses used by guests and exclude temporary e-mail addresses.

We agree.

In order to write a review on trivago, users have to setup an account where they initially have to add their valid email address. Invalid or temporarily email addresses will not be approved in order to minimize the possibility of fraud content.

5. Minimum number of reviews

5.1 Sites should only display reviews when the number of reviews for a specific hotel is meaningful in relation to the number of rooms.

We disagree.

trivago does not see a relation between the amount of reviews and the size of a hotel. With this, every premise is given the chance to become a top hotel within the city or region.

5.2 In order to avoid a “chicken-and-egg problem” during the construction phase of a review site, its provider should take particular care in supervising the individual reviews until a critical number is reached.

We agree.

6. Business relations

For the sake of independent choices and transparency for consumers and hoteliers, hotel review providers should communicate the basics of sources of their revenues.

All important information on trivago can be obtained via our [company site](#).

7. Right of reply

In case a review is posted (positive or negative), sites should automatically inform the hotel about it (e.g. by an e-mail “alert” system) and offer the hotel the chance to react. Such a procedure will allow the hotel to assess and manage guest complaints actively and promptly. When available, use should also be made of the official ombudspersons for the hotel industry and their mediation services.

We agree.

Hoteliers can setup their own account through our [hotelgateway](#) at no costs. Apart from the possibility to enhance their hotel site with own descriptions, images or news and offers, they are also entitled to comment on each review which is displayed right underneath the user's opinion. Our International Hotel Relations Team is available via email or telephone to also give further advise on how to place such comments in a beneficiary way.

8. Legal certainty

Reviews should be truthful and based on the personal experiences of their authors. Hoteliers have a legal right of protection against defamatory criticisms. False factual statements should be removed from sites in a quick and non-bureaucratic manner.

We agree.

New review entries are assessed before being approved on our site. trivago follows strict criterion in this context and does not allow any type of harassment, abusive criticism or verbal slander, e.g. against member of staff.

If a hotelier identifies an approved review as bogus content and thus inappropriate, our team will re-inspect the content of such review.

9. Up-to-date data

Sites should only display current reviews. After a maximum of two years, reviews should no longer influence the rating and should be deleted automatically.

We agree.

The influence of older reviews on the overall average is automatically diminished within above mentioned time scope.

10. Official star classification

10.1 In order to increase transparency for consumers, hotel review providers should always supply information about the official star classification of hotels in accordance with the system in place in the country(ies) concerned, including a link to the applicable classification criteria and specify when they use their own classification system.

We agree.

In Germany, trivago strictly relies on star classification data provided by the IHA. Through this, updates on are regular basis assure the correct disposal of hotel stars and with this help to categorize hotels appropriately.

Associations shall agree on a common and thus transparent international star classification. If that was the case, then such conventions can also be met by review sites in the most appropriate way.

10.2 Review sites should check star levels of establishments at least yearly together with the official classification providers. Review sites are invited also to include reference to quality schemes.

We agree as stated in 10.1

The current star system is from our perspective highly fragmented and thus consumer unfriendly and difficult to accommodate on review sites. We believe that a general adaption amongst all hotel star associations as groundwork sets the basis for review sites to display classifications properly and would help to setup processes to update those on a regular basis.

10.3 Under no circumstances should star symbols be used for reviews, so as to avoid any confusion with official hotel classifications.

We agree.

Review platforms should develop their own mode of displaying reviews and thus not use star symbols.

trivago uses a transparent rating system based on a 1 to 100 scheme and additionally displays it via a fulfillment bar ranging from 1 to 10.