I was having lunch by myself in Santa Fe, NM. When I eat alone I like to have something to read, so I was thumbing through the Official Santa Fe Visitors Guide.

The expensive full, half and quarter page hotel ads all had a website listed. Just listed. No reason to visit the site, just the address for the homepage. The website addresses in the ads were all the same.

I knew that at least 3 of the hotels had Virtual Tours because I produced 2 of them. Those 3 hotels listed the website just like telephone numbers or street addresses. They were there, but there was no incentive or encouragement to use it. The hotels weren’t telling potential vacationers they could take a tour of the property if they visited the website.

Simply changing the text from “www.OurHotelWebsite.com” to “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com” would make those 3 hotel ads stand out from the 50 other hotel ads in the Visitors Guide. “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com” would give the potential Guests one more reason to visit those 3 hotel websites that none of the other luxury hotels in Santa Fe had; the potential Guests could see the hotel in 360° virtual images.

And it doesn’t cost a penny more than the ad did in the first place!

Hotel managers and sales directors seem to forget that while they see their beautiful hotel or resort everyday, the rest of the world doesn’t. The idea eludes them that before vacationers make reservations at an expensive resort, they want to see the property. And there’s a “disconnect” between the website and their other advertising and marketing tools.

It’s always puzzled me why hotels keep their Virtual Tour a “secret.” Some don’t put a link to the tour on their website main navigation menu and don’t guide callers to the tour over the phone.

Using other advertising and marketing media to drive traffic to your website (hotel or franchise) should be the purpose of that advertising and marketing media, because a potential guest can’t make a room reservation from newspaper or magazine ads, radio or television commercials or a brochure or banquet menu. They can from your website!

With a Virtual Tour mentioned in the ads there’s one more reason to visit the website. Even if you don’t have a website specifically for your hotel, a Virtual Tour on your franchise site can be used as an lure too.

By giving potential Guests a reason to visit your website or franchise site before they visit the Online Travel Agencies (OTAs), like Expedia, Travelocity and Orbitz, you may do better than the 80% net rates you get from them. It just makes “bottom line” sense to lure them to your website.
More places to use “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com”;

Four-color 3 fold brochures
Hotels spend thousands of dollars on these most basic of hotel advertising tools with little return on the investment. Using them to drive potential Guests to the hotel or franchise website where they can make a reservation, see a layout of the meeting rooms or download a dinner menu, makes them pay for themselves.

Business cards
They get handed out and mailed to everyone. Why not turn them into an invitation to an Online Property Tour by replacing “www.OurHotelWebsite.com” to “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com”

Print ads in newspapers
Using a “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com” tagline in Thanksgiving, Easter and Mothers Day buffet ads lets your restaurant customers see where they’re taking the family to that special holiday dinner.

Radio ads
If you’re advertising a holiday dinner buffet, wedding receptions, getaway weekends, weeklong vacations, etc., make the last line of the commercial “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com.” This moves the potential Guest from an “audio only media” to the “visual media” of the Internet where they can see your newly renovated hotel.

Television ads
Not the most used media in hospitality advertising, but in the month before the grand reopening, the Inn of the Mountain Gods was all over New Mexico television. As each commercial ended I kept thinking how powerful “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com” would be after talking about all the new features at the rebuilt hotel.

Billboards
In-town billboards are seen by more than direction-seeking Guests. Promoting your fine dining restaurant, ballroom, spa, etc., and including “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com” will encourage the locals on their morning drive to take a look at your hotel online sometime.

News Releases
Announcing your recent renovation has real impact when the press release tells the reader where on the Web they can go to see how the thousands or millions of dollars were spent by saying “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com”

Banquet Menus
Adding a Virtual Tour icon where the camera was in the meeting and banquet room layouts and the line "Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com" at the bottom of the page will let the bride-to-be know she can come back and visit the ballroom she want hold her reception anytime she wants to. Something she probably can’t do with the other hotel she’s considering.

Signature line in e-mails
Why not add “Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com” to the auto-signature of everyone’s e-mail from the hotel? It gives the recipient much more reason to visit your website.
than just the plain website URL.

**Online hotel indexes**

In the numerous Online Hotel Indexes you may not be able to use the tagline where websites are listed for technical reasons, but if there is a place for a short description, use “**Take a Virtual Tour at www.OurHotelWebsite.com**” or something that tells the reader there’s a Virtual Tour to be seen.

**A Virtual Tour Flyer**

One concept is to make up a special flyer with a layout of the hotel marked with Virtual Tour icons showing what locations have a 360° Image. Half letter-size of 8.5x11 works great. Then use it in banquet menus, confirmations, correspondence, etc.

In the full page ad from the Official Santa Fe Visitors Guide, I suggested Heritage Hotels and Resorts change the website URL to the tagline use “**Take a Virtual Tour of each of our hotels at www.HHandR.com**”

Independent Hotels need to show their hotel even more than a franchise. A franchise is a “known quantity”, potential guests know what to expect. An Independent Hotel has to show a potential first time guest what the property offers in rooms, restaurants, pools, etc.

Following are 2 magazine ad suggestions
Presenting luxurious accommodations at the all-new Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort & Casino. The Inn’s elegance extends far beyond its 38,000 square foot casino. It can also be seen in its rooms. Much more than just places to sleep, rooms here are sanctuaries, providing guests with spectacular mountain views, a relaxing atmosphere, and all the modern conveniences anyone could ever need. A well-appointed room is just another one of the many things to experience at the Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort & Casino. A land of legends. A place of beauty. One Mountain. Many Sides.

Mescalero, NM, near Ruidoso.
For reservations, call 800-545-9011

Take a Virtual Tour at
www.InnoftheMountainGods.com

World-class Resort  Casino Apache  Ski Apache  Championship Golf

A Mescalero Apache Enterprise®
STAY WITH US A WHILE,
WE’LL STAY WITH YOU FOR A LIFETIME.

**Hotel Albuquerque**
at Old Town

Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town offers a one-of-a-kind, landmark hotel experience. One that blends all the diverse, rich cultures of New Mexico into its enchanting edifice and intimate interiors. Elegantly

800 Rio Grande Blvd., NW Albuquerque, New Mexico • 505-843-6300

**Plaza Real**
The B's have it at Hotel Plaza Real in Santa Fe. A beautiful, boutique hotel with private balconies and blissful views. A few steps away from the historic Plaza, and a hundred years away in atmosphere. Simply the best.

125 Washington Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico • 505-988-4900

**Hilton Las Cruces**
A unique Mexican Colonial hotel awaits you near the jagged spires of the Organ Mountains in Southern New Mexico - the Hilton Las Cruces. Its classic interior spaces radiate a sense of history and tradition.

705 S. Telshor Blvd., Las Cruces, New Mexico • 505-522-4300

**The Lodge at Santa Fe**
At the Lodge at Santa Fe, a circular 28-foot kiva tower stands sentinel outside. And hand cut stone floors, vigas and latillas await within. Timeless design and innovative craftsmanship - resplendent atop a hill.

750 North St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, New Mexico • 505-992-5800

**Nativo Lodge**
Nativo Lodge celebrates the culture eclectic. And electric. Our Grand Lobby hums with video, neon and LED lighting - a vibrant, exciting interpretation of Native American art. This is definitely not your average hotel.

6000 Pen American Freeway, NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico • 505-798-4300

Take a Virtual Tour of each of our hotels at www.BuyNewMexico.com