

INTERNET

Starwood helps SPG members seize the weekend

May 11, 2015



SPG Pro promotional image

By JOE MCCARTHY

Starwood Hotels and Resorts is augmenting its Starwood Preferred Guest loyalty program with new offers designed to get the most out of weekends.



The SPG loyalty program is known for its embrace of mobile, but the conglomerate regularly caters to consumers in the channel of their choice. Across sectors, loyalty programs have become essential for both gaining consumer data and retaining customers.

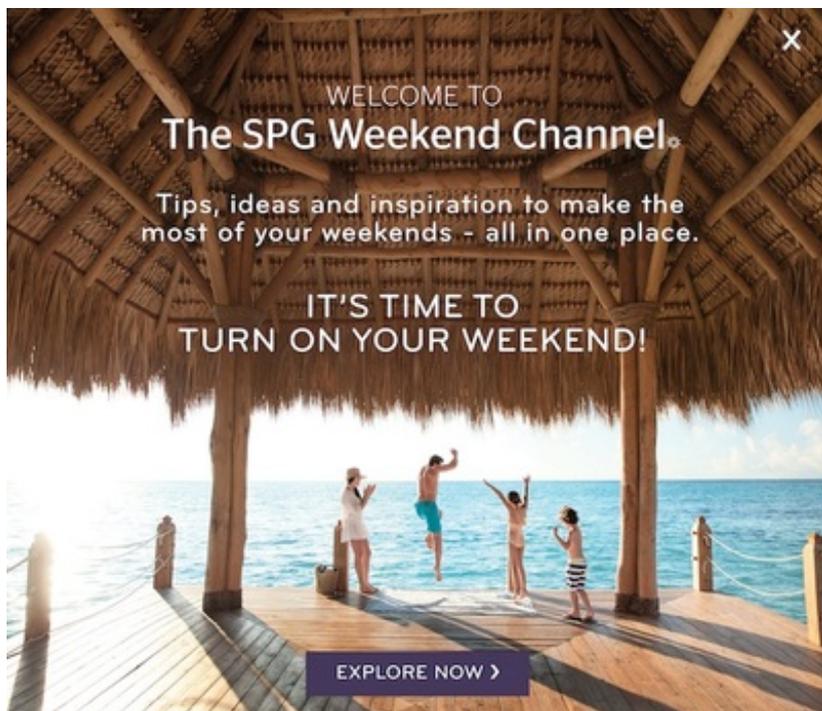
"Nearly 30 percent of Americans report working during the weekends, we believe folks need to reclaim their me-time, but realized they may need guidance on how and where to do that," said Lori Strasberg, vice president of field marketing for **Starwood Hotels & Resorts**, New York. "We also know our SPG members want to get as much out of their weekends as they put into their weeks.

"There's an energy and sense of adventure about people who love SPG, and our content is really designed to speak to that."

Getting away

For more and more consumers, time is becoming the superlative luxury. Whether it is freedom from work, freedom from technology or freedom from the stress of modern living in general, consumers across demographics are seeking out escapes.

Starwood is aiming to give consumers a helping hand in this pursuit, knowing full well that the momentum of habits can keep a person from change.



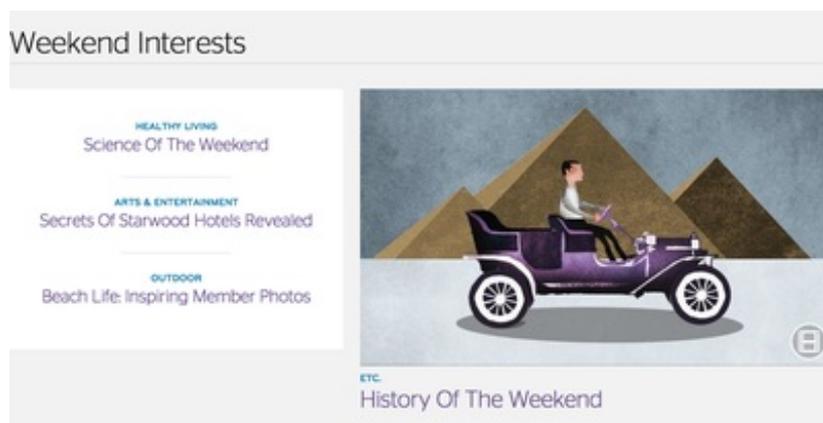
The SPG weekend channel

On a special "Weekend Channel" Web site, consumers can receive tips and inspiration before planning their next weekend trip.

Consumers will be able to access insights from local experts about how to best "discover" a city.

The enterprise is empowering each brand in its portfolio to provide curated information to consumers about their distinct areas.

The Web site includes editorial articles, immersive videos and shareable content on various, frequently updated locations. Consumers can also book rooms.



SPG weekend Web site

Also, a series of rewards are available to SPG members.

Starting in June, SPG members can register to earn 1,000 bonus Starpoints toward a weekend trip at more than 1,200 hotels and resorts in Starwood's stable through Aug. 21.

Standing out

The SPG program has become a key point of differentiation for the brand, and its name recognition certainly helps.

Starwood aimed to increase loyalty among Starwood Preferred Guest members with its SPG Hot Escapes flash sale travel site that features exclusive offers with a minimum of 20 percent savings.

The SPG Hot Escapes Web site will replenish its deals and destinations every Wednesday and supplants the company's previous Beat the Clock and StarPicks products. Ultimately, the flash Web site will bolster SPG's attempts to ward off online travel agencies that prey on consumers looking for deals ([see story](#)).

Starwood Hotels and Resorts anticipated the potential surge in consumer interest for wearables with a Starwood Preferred Guest application for Google Glass.

Designed by the conglomerate's in-house team, the app leverages Google Glass's functionality while carrying over basic components of its conventional SPG app. Starwood will likely be applauded by the growing number of wearable advocates who are pushing to make Google Glass and similar items more mainstream ([see story](#)).

"From learning where to drink in the best ocean views to hearing unique travel stories from your favorite designers, models, chefs and media personalities all inspired by the Luxury Collection, travelers will find inspiring ways to spend their weekends at the most luxurious destinations," Ms. Strasberg said.

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/ie9VeKIU1hE>

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