

INTERNET

Jumeirah lets consumers roam free with detailed interactive tour

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Burj Al Arab Jumeirah hotel, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

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Dubai, United Arab Emirates-based international hotel chain Jumeirah is transporting its guests behind its walls.



"Jumeirah Inside" offers consumers 360 degrees of luxury, allowing for exploration of the brand's Burj Al Arab hotel in Dubai and parts of its other hotels. Consumers are inundated with options when traveling, so giving them a look inside will help Jumeirah stick out in the minds of prospective clients.

"First and foremost this platform is about our guests and their experience," said Ross McAuley group vice president of brand, digital and loyalty, at [Jumeirah Group](#). "At Jumeirah, the digital journey development is driven by users and not by technology.

"It's imaginative and exhilarating - we have helipad access, you can control the fountain in the lobby and atrium, jump to the Frankfurt and stand on the roof of the hotel," he said.

Inside Jumeirah's latest platform

The Web site, built in collaboration with Google, begins by showing off the Burj Al Arab hotel, which is equipped with a helipad and rests on its own artificial island. At 1,053 feet, it is the third tallest hotel in the world, comparable in height to the Chrysler Building in New York and taller than the Eiffel Tower.

"What we have created is a digital experience that more closely mirrors the physical one," Mr. McAuley said. "The tool really aids pre-stay planning and anticipation a lot of pleasure in going on a luxury break is the planning and talking about it with friends and family. Jumeriah Inside also offers us a very unique and relevant way for our global sales teams to use the technology in Google cardboard and bring the experience to life for our travel agency partners."

Burj Al Arab Jumeirah - Jumeirah Inside Introduction

When the user chooses to "start exploring," a video demonstrating the hotel's service, including helipad landing and a chauffeured Rolls-Royce, begins to play. When it ends, the user is placed within the lobby of the hotel, where they can click to learn about the cascade waterfall fountain, which can be controlled with the slider; about the aquarium, which includes sharks and eels; and about the in-house florists, personal shopping team and the 24-carat golden iPad that serves as personal concierge.

From a menu, users can move from the lobby to the atrium, suites, restaurants, spa, bar and helipad, each being introduced with a brief video and contains more icons to explore, all of which are helpfully displayed on a map anchored to the bottom-left corner of the screen.

Childhood Memory of Dubai

For example, the helipad includes videos of a stunt gallery, the restaurant has a brief "childhood memory of Dubai" animation and another on turtle rehabilitation, a cause the hotel has long been dedicated to. While touring the royal suite, including its dining room and 24-hour menu, users can peek into the signed guest book.

The guest book includes the signature of President Bill Clinton, the Manchester United Football Club, Nelson Mandela and Tom Cruise, among others.

Next to the icon that allows the user to move between sections of the hotel is the option to book a stay. Those impressed with the seemingly endless array of luxuries may impulsively plan a vacation.

Moreover, despite the initiative's focus on the Burj Al Arab hotel, another icon allows the user to select another hotel. After selecting a location, an exterior faade will highlight sections of the hotel, which can then be explored in the same detail as the flagship.

A large share of hotel booking is now done online, meaning that a user-friendly Web site is a necessity to encourage reservations. Jumeirah's interactive effort stands out in encouraging potential clients to explore on their own, giving them the freedom to learn about the hotel and parts of the hotel they are most interested in.



Pera Palace Hotel Jumeirah

"The Jumeirah brand continues to enhance their digital presence to match the level of service and amenities found at their international properties, and this microsite is a prime example of this technology," said Damon Banks, editor-in-chief of [LuxeGetaways Magazine](#).

By showing off services and offerings through an interactive tour, the user is empowered to make discoveries on her own, thus making the experience feel less like a marketing push than a tool to enhance research. Such an approach will likely resonate with a more independent or younger consumers and with those determined to get as full, accurate and assuring a look at a property as possible before booking.

Inside Jumeirah can be found [here](#).

"It's more important than ever for hotels to have a strong digital presence, and with added enhancements to the websites by brands such as Jumeirah, The Ritz-Carlton Hotels and others, the 'digital bar' continues to be raised," Mr. Banks said."

Virtual tour

Other hotel chains have also found ways to let consumers preview the experience before booking.

Hotel chain Shangri-La is rolling out virtual reality headsets to transport potential guests to properties across its global portfolio.

Shangri-La's Samsung Gear virtual reality headsets, along with 360-degree view YouTube videos, will bring the hotel chain's properties to life to allow guests to travel to far reaching destinations. According to Shangri-La, it is the first luxury hotel chain to implement fully integrated virtual reality technology into its sales process, a tactic often used by automakers ([see story](#)).

The technique is equally popular in adjacent sectors.

For example, Monaco-based cruise line Silversea Cruises is prioritizing the journey over the destination with its

latest ship.

The "Silver Muse" will take its maiden journey in early 2017, but those interested can take a virtual tour of its exteriors, restaurants, public areas, suites and more on a new Web site while awaiting future updates. The launch of a separate Web site to promote a new ship, complete with tours and video, presents it as a major event and could build anticipation and create early sales ([see story](#)).

"This platform has been now positioned at the heart of our brand-building activities allowing our worldwide brand campaigns to engage prospective guests," Mr. McAuley said. "Its culturally connected - the tool gives an insight into the uniqueness of each hotel based in it's locale.

"Jumeirah Inside is available in 5 languages, and it has pushed Jumeirah to the forefront of the luxury industry in terms of the scope and scale of a digital brand experience," he said. "Jumeirah Inside is a brand journey with a commercial edge, it also has a booking engine, so when a guest wants to book we make it as easy as possible for them."

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