

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Ritz-Carlton collates news and recommendations with new social presence

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Ritz-Carlton Flipboard

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The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company is providing its enthusiasts with a one-stop shop online by establishing itself on Flipboard.

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The social magazine site is Ritz-Carlton's latest addition to its social media portfolio and features 12 different branded magazines covering a range of topics. Social media serves as the primary liaison between consumers and online content, so venturing to new platforms and finding new ways to package material will grant a brand more visibility.

"Stories about The Ritz-Carlton are shared around the world, every day, on a variety of Web sites, blogs, social networks, etc," said Lisa Holladay, vice president marketing, [The Ritz-Carlton](#). "These stories range from Vogue features about a new Ritz-Carlton Reserve in Bali's Ubud region, to influencers like Trey Ratcliff photo-walking across the United States, to the story of a bride and groom in Cancun.

"Flipboard is one of the best platforms for collecting, and sharing these stories in a one place, making it easy for travelers to seek inspiration for their next discovery," she said. "This initiative is really aimed at providing our guests with a single, authoritative source of stories from The Ritz-Carlton hotels around the globe.

"Much like on Twitter - where we have one account, hosted by a different hotel each day - on Flipboard we aim to provide guests with a single source to visit, for inspiration, tips, trends and memories shared from destinations around the world."

Flipping through pages

Flipboard is a social media platform in which users collect articles, images and other content from other social platforms to form magazines, which users can follow or share on their own flipboards. Magazines can be as broad or specific as the user wants, and there is no limit to how many magazines users can form.

Flipboard was first launched in January 2010 and today boasts 90 million users across 20 different languages and continues to expand.



Ritz-Carlton Mandarin language flipboard

Ritz-Carlton currently has 12 magazines covering topics ranging from culture, luxury, weddings and mixology, as well as German-, Mandarin-, Japanese- and Arabic-language magazines.

Upon opening a magazine, users are greeted with relevant Ritz-Carlton editorials sourced both from the brand or elsewhere. Each magazine therefore provides a central location for enthusiasts to discover information about a particular aspect of the brand.

Consumers trust third-party recommendations significantly more than information that comes directly from the brand, so including third-party editorial allows Ritz-Carlton to maintain control of its image while also providing content that consumers find more trustworthy.

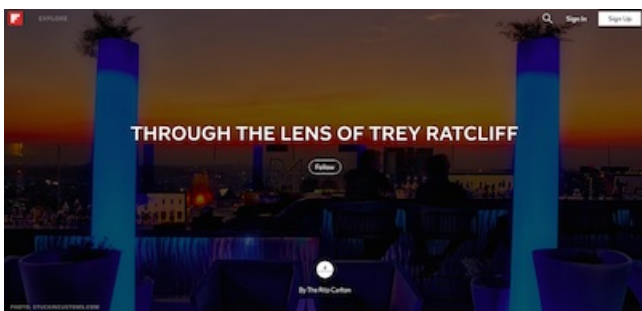


Ritz-Carlton, Budapest

"With the surplus of digital platforms on the rise, users are looking for a space that is personalized, simplified, organized and aesthetically pleasing," Ed French, chief sales & marketing officer for The Ritz-Carlton, said in a statement.

"We are thrilled to present our new digital publication with the popular content-sharing platform Flipboard, to continue inspiring and exciting all generations of traveler through our crafted magazines," he said.

Going forward, the Ritz-Carlton Flipboard will aggregate and push news of its global portfolio, ranging from reviews to cultural experiences to features about food and weddings. Additionally, the "Thought Leadership" magazine will feature editorial from company executives, helping to convey a clear set of brand values while also providing advice to bolster consumer sentiment.



Ritz-Carlton Trey Ratcliff flipboard

Photographer and writer Trey Ratcliff will also have his own magazine on the flipboard via a partnership. Mr. Ratcliff will share images and convey stories that suggest the beauty and wonder of travel, helping to spur viewers to book a trip at one of the brand's hotels.

Regaining margins

Recent reports have suggested that a strong digital presence will help hotels recoup eroded margins in light of the dominance of online travel agencies.

Online travel agency Priceline and home-sharing service Airbnb have higher valuations than any hotel chain, according to a recent study by L2.

Over the last five years, the market share of the top 10 luxury hoteliers has remained stagnant at 27 percent but home-sharing platforms could offer a future threat to the business. As such services attract tomorrow's luxury consumer and OTAs eat away at margins, hotels must focus on superb digital platforms and unique experiences to instigate direct bookings ([see story](#)).

Just as Ritz-Carlton's Flipboard is available in multiple languages, other hotels are also making an effort to make themselves available to a larger group of clients.

Noting the value of localization, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts has reconstructed its mobile application to make bookings easier for Chinese guests.

Four Seasons launched an app earlier this year, but rather than merely translating it into Chinese, the chain instead decided to design an entirely different app for the new market. The dedication and precision required in tailoring an app to a specific market is emblematic of Four Seasons' focus on service and the consumer's convenience ([see story](#)).

"Our mission is to inspire life's most meaningful journeys - whether that's the journey of a guest who has traveled with The Ritz-Carlton for years, or for a traveler embarking on their very first journey with us," Ms. Holladay said. "To that end, the stories we share on Flipboard will be curated for current and future guests."