

Hotel deals are hotting up — so get wired to a company that guarantees the best price

TRAVEL buyers are finding more and more ‘bargains’ on the web, and while many purchase online, others are using the web to leverage their deals with travel agents and other third party travel organisers.

Take for example the discount travel site Hotwire.com, which guarantees travellers the lowest prices on hotels, with savings of up to 60 per cent off published rates and prices lower than are available anywhere else — including the hotels’ own Web sites and other online travel agencies.

“Even in New York city, known as one of the most expensive and in-demand markets for hotels, Hotwire still offers substantial savings on hotels compared to other sources,” said Scott Hintz, Hotwire’s senior vice president of product. “Recently a 3-star hotel in Midtown East that Hotwire offered for US\$233 was \$300 more on Travelocity — US\$579 — and priced at US\$409 on Orbitz. This is for the exact same hotel.”

Hotwire’s says its hotel savings aren’t limited to the Big Apple. In the popular family destination of Orlando, Florida, a 3.5-Star hotel near Universal Studios and Sea World was priced at US\$62 on Hotwire, while a room at the exact same hotel was nearly twice as much on Orbitz and Travelocity, costing US\$120 and US\$129, respectively. A 4-star hotel room near the Dallas Galleria was just US\$54 on Hotwire, but the same hotel room was US\$99 on both Orbitz and Travelocity. Additionally, just outside the nation’s capital in Alexandria, Virginia, a 3.5-star hotel room that was US\$56 on Hotwire was nearly twice the price — US\$109 — on both Orbitz and Travelocity.

While the examples above paint Hotwire in a positive and appealing light, Hotwire is not alone. Wotif, Site59 and many others all can provide ‘proof’ that their prices are the best on earth. What you need to look for is a ‘best price guarantee’ that lets you surf with confidence.

Here’s Hotwire again: Hotwire’s discount hotel rates are backed by the industry’s most aggressive guarantee. If a customer finds a lower rate within 48 hours of booking, Hotwire will refund double the difference.

But wait, there’s more: Hotwire also offers an easy way to find, compare and book hotels. Travellers have increased choice and detail on their hotel booking, with the price shown up front; no bidding is required. When booking hotel stays on Hotwire, customers can search many different neighbourhoods and star ratings.

After selecting dates for their hotel stay and desired destination, travellers can select up to five neighbourhoods to search



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simultaneously. Hotwire displays hotel search results including amenities such as beachfront, fitness centre, spa services and restaurants, and enables customers to search by price, star rating or neighbourhood, based on their preference.

This is the sort of information that’s useful for both the company travel buyer and his/her agent. By using it, you get to the best deal quicker, and by using just one company as your guaranteed ‘best-price’ provider, you can do the web search donkey work knowing that if you find something cheaper elsewhere, you’ll make money on the difference.

Hotwire PS: Competitive rates cited by Hotwire for hotel rooms on Travelocity, Orbitz and Hotwire were searched simultaneously for the exact same hotel room and dates of travel. All prices shown are based on hotel rates offered on Hotwire and listed travel sites between February 5-22, 2005 for travel dates between February 22 and March 10, 2005. Hotel rates shown for all sites do not include taxes and fees.