

THINK PINK

This double-double Pink Room at InterContinental Milwaukee is dominated by soft shades of pink balanced with earth tones. The Pink Rooms have raised approximately US\$50,000 for a local breast-cancer-support organization over the past five years.

The color pink abounds in October for Breast Cancer Awareness Month, but some staffers at InterContinental Milwaukee decided to look for ways to extend the goodwill year-round. The results are two Pink Rooms that recently celebrated their fifth anniversary. A portion of the proceeds from each stay in the rooms is donated to a local

breast-cancer-support organization — a total of approximately US\$50,000 since the rooms' inception — and General Manager Tim Smith says the two rooms combined have posted 88% occupancy over the five-year period, mostly thanks to women affected by breast cancer interested in staying in the rooms.

“Within the rooms we have pink

computers, and when you check in you're given a password-protected login to get you on a blog where you can tell your story,” Smith says. “It has become this living, breathing blog for people to communicate with one another.”

The rooms also were just renovated pro bono by two local designers. “Just like they say in Ireland there are a thousand shades of green, we found there are a thousand shades of pink,” Smith jokes. “We used a bunch of different ones mixed with some earth tones to make it a subtle design.”

Smith credits the hotel's owner and management company, Marcus Hotels & Resorts, for supporting the rooms, and adds other Marcus properties plus other hotels in the InterContinental brand have implemented or are considering similar initiatives to support charitable organizations. “It's kind of a grassroots effort to get the word out,” Smith says of the Pink Rooms' success. “Guests know there's a commitment from our hotel to make this work over the course of time.”

BACK TO THE BLOGS

While hotel companies are increasingly using the newer visual-photographic social networks, the tried-and-true blog format is still paying dividends, as a recent campaign by Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group for its Radisson Blu brand showcases.

For the “Social Eyes” contest held this past August, a new Radisson Blu blog resembling a travel magazine invited travelers to share insider tips about one of the destinations in which Radisson Blu hotels are located. The best tips were highlighted, and the authors received a free room night at a Radisson Blu.

Carlson Rezidor reported 4,200 tips were

MORE THAN
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AND THE BRAND
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received from throughout the EMEA region. One winning tip was, “Typically the last two hours the Prado museum is open are free. Given how close the Radisson Blu is you can go a few times to see the sites for free!”

More than 43,000 users visited the blog, and Radisson Blu saw a 25% increase in qualified Facebook likes. “Following a standard calculation to value social engagement and likes and adding this to the increase of our referral traffic linked to our social media conversion, we estimate an ROI of 1:10,” says Rémy Merckx, vice president – digital marketing, The Rezidor Hotel Group, Brussels.