

The story of *TripAdvisor*

- 4 Work with a partner and discuss the questions.
- 1 How do you plan trips and holidays?
 - 2 Have you ever used *TripAdvisor*?
 - 3 What are the advantages and disadvantages of reviews written by hotel guests?
- 5 Work with your partner.

Student A read the story of *TripAdvisor* on this page.

Student B turn to page 164.

Ask and answer questions to complete the missing information in the text.

How long has Steve Kaufer been running the company?

Since its birth, in 2000. Why did he start it?

Because he couldn't ... Who ... ?

- 6 Read *TripAdvisor Trivia*. Did anything surprise you?

What do you think?

- Can you think of ways to solve the problem of fake reviews on *TripAdvisor*?
- Which reviews do you take most notice of – the positive or the negative ones?
- Go on *TripAdvisor* and find out which are the top ten restaurants in your hometown. Do you agree?

 Go online for more grammar practice



TripAdvisor – the traveller's friend

Steve Kaufer

TripAdvisor was founded in a small office above a pizza shop in Massachusetts, US.

The CEO is Steve Kaufer, and he's been running the company ... (How long?). He started it **because he couldn't find reliable hotel reviews** when planning a trip to Mexico – they were all by hotel owners and travel agents, saying how wonderful the hotels were. ... (Who?) suggested starting a website with reviews written by real hotel guests. She told him to 'keep it easy to use', and *TripAdvisor* has always tried to **follow that advice**. It has become ... (How big?), reviewing hotels, restaurants and tourist attractions, and is now worth \$3 billion. It has **over 3,000** employees, and has received reviews from ... (Where?).

TripAdvisor has shown **that success can come by accident**. The original site had only professional reviews, and it was ... (How long?) before reviews from users appeared. Someone thought it might be fun to have a button on each page saying 'Add your own review', and it's this **user-generated content** that has attracted 450 million users.

Success has brought ... (What?), however. Hotel owners have become anxious about *TripAdvisor* feedback, **because it can make or break their business**, and some have offered discounts to guests ... (Which?). One senior executive of a big hotel group posted fake negative reviews of his rivals' hotels. *TripAdvisor* has been trying to solve these problems **by screening all its reviews**, and stresses that fake ones are a tiny minority.

TripAdvisor Trivia

- Have you noticed that the *TripAdvisor* owl logo has different colour eyes? One eye is green, for 'GO!', and the other is red, for 'DONT GO!'.
- Steve Kaufer still runs the company from a modest office block in Massachusetts, where his own office doesn't even have a window.
- The most *TripAdvisor* reviews have been written by an American expat, Brad Reynolds. He's been writing reviews since 2010 and has posted nearly 6,000, with 68,000 photos.