In recent years many events have brought human space flight, outside of space agencies such as NASA, into the present. After a long history of government-sponsored space exploration, the first “space tourist,” Dennis Tito, rode a Russian Soyuz spaceship to the International Space Station on April 28, 2001, at a cost of $20 Million US dollars.

In the coming years plans are being made to create all types of orbital and suborbital crafts as well as a space station or two to be used by human tourists. The “desire for new experiences” and the ability of more people to afford such luxuries will contribute to the push for these technologies to be made more widely available.

For an “out of this world” experience, come check out the Adventures in Space exhibit at the Rosen Library, on display throughout the Spring semester.
Click: What Millions of People Are Doing Online and Why It Matters by Bill Tancer

Every day millions of Americans enter keywords into search engines, visit social networking sites, surf their favorite blogs and news sites, and otherwise click and mouse their way through the online world. If one could capture all this clicking and tapping, the collective data would be a marketer’s dream—essentially a bird’s eye view of our interests and inclinations, our hopes and dreams, our fears and insecurities. As the general manager of research at the online competitive intelligence firm Hitwise, author Bill Tancer does just that.

In Click, Tancer (a leading online market research analyst) explains how collective online search data can help us “compile an ever clearer picture of who we are and what exactly is on our minds.” Sometimes the data merely confirms what we already know—that many Americans seem to be obsessed with porn, pills, gambling, and the cult of celebrity. On the other hand, sometimes the data reveals unexpected consumer behaviors or can help analysts to predict new trends, the winners of reality TV shows, or the results of elections.

From a business standpoint, all of this matters because “having a view into the feedback loop is invaluable” and “understanding how we change will be paramount to businesses’ success, as they adapt to the market and serve its evolving needs.” Such concerns are especially relevant for the hospitality industry, where consumer behavior continues to evolve alongside rapidly changing technologies and societal expectations. If you want to know more about your customers, you could begin by better understanding their online behaviors. “After all,” Tancer writes, “we are what we click.”