



Technology

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Technology drives on-property spend

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[Hotel and Motel Management](#)

National Report—When the Internet revolutionized how guests research travel plans and book rooms, the industry was slow to adapt. The door was left open for online travel agents to make their mark. The lesson? Society gravitates to better access of information and easier paths of payment. Several business models, like Amazon.com and iTunes, continue to prove this point.



Intelliconnect mobile ICE

Bauer said 82 percent of his guests use ICE to order room service (most predominant), spa treatments, reservations and more.

Bauer said two big benefits of self-service technology are upselling and updating capabilities.

"There's a certain amount of human error in the room service [upselling] process," Bauer said. "Versus voice orders, our upsell and average check is about 60 percent greater [on ICE]."

And with no need for paper, Bauer can update menus and service items so guests always know what is available and what it costs.

"The next generation of guests growing up with this technology will have high confidence using it," Lema said.



Lema
DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Mobile

Between Apple's iPhone, Google's Nexus One, Motorola's Droid and BlackBerry, the smartphone revolution is just beginning.

"The on-property mobile opportunity ... it's the Holy Grail in some respects," said Brian Deagan, CEO of Knotice, a direct digital marketing solutions provider.

Shutters on the Beach, a luxury hotel in Santa Monica, Calif., contacted Runtriz, an interactive software firm specializing in Web design and touch-screen solutions, to implement its mobile e-concierge. Guests can access the hotel's services from a regular Web browser, a smartphone or an iPod Touch that the hotel supplies.



Bauer
HOTEL DUVAL

"If somebody is on their 3G device at a bar ... and they want a hamburger, they can place a room service order, tell them to deliver it at a certain time and it will be there [when they get back]," said Gregory Day, the hotel's GM.

Day said this service gets the most use at the pool, where guests can order a drink and have it brought right to their chair.

"I think the technology has jumped ahead of us. I think we're hung up on how we think of service," Joseph Lema, assistant professor of hospitality management at Drexel University, said. "There's some serious disconnect [between] what guests want and what we give them."

Smith Travel Research reported average daily rate dropped 8.8 percent in 2009, and PKF Hospitality forecasts a further 1.1-percent drop in 2010. So, as demand increases, maximizing guest spend with new devices is even more crucial.

Self-service

Gas stations and grocery stores have mastered self-service, and the hotel industry is slowly getting there with kiosks in lobbies. Kiosks normally are associated with check-in and check-out, but any device giving the guest control presents an selling opportunity.

Marc Bauer, GM at the Hotel Duval in Tallahassee, Fla., said his property uses Intelliconnect's Interactive Customer Experience, a self-service kiosk that

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