The Importance of Internet Technologies For Booking Accommodations

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Absrtact: Mobile check-in and check-out tools are among the most popular digital technologies in the hospitality industry today. This technology allows guests to easily check in and check out of their hotel via their smartphone or other mobile devices. Guests can also use this technology to quickly access their reservation details and other important information, allowing them to enjoy a seamless and stress-free experience. Mobile check-in and check-out technologies also allow hospitality businesses to streamline their operations, improve customer service, and reduce costs associated with traditional check-in/check-out procedures.

Keywords: reservation, booking, reception, internet, online.

Introduction: Technology impacts and assists the growth of practically every industry in the present age. Hotel industry too isn't insulated from its effects. The importance of technology in hospitality industry today is irrefutable. From a small B&B to a global hotel chain, every single accommodation provider across the world is indebted to technology in one way or another! The scene has changed dramatically with the advent of information technology in the hotel industry.

Hotels, globally, are tapping into the power of technology in order to catalyze their sales and to improve customer relations. This makes it evident how the internet is playing a key role in the development of the hotel industry today. Social networking portals like Facebook, Twitter etc. are increasingly playing a dominant role in strategies of hotels all over. User generated feedback and reviews on such websites play a huge role in popularizing the services of hotels by word of mouth. Further, the use of information technology in hotel industry has also enabled hoteliers to stay in touch with and nurture relationships with guests by making use of online tools.

Information technology in the hospitality industry has redefined the way the ecosystem functions. The whole hospitality ecosystem revolves around the concept of hotel bookings and the role that information technology plays in hotel industry is irrefutable. The internet has opened up several windows for hotels to explore when it comes to increasing bookings and occupancy. Be it channel managers who help with distributing inventory and rates across global OTAs, or social media that has created a myriad of opportunities for hotels to tap into, review sites that psychologically encourage/discourage prospective bookers to make a decision, web booking engines that entice website visitors to make a booking, aggregators, metasearch, the mighty Google itself! – the importance of technology in hotel industry is well established.

Several other types of websites are working round the clock to bring travel related products and services closer to end-user, either by way of making them available on the clients' desktops or via the exponentially rising number of mobile phone internet users. Many utility portals are springing up nowadays as well, that merely work as aggregates of hotel reviews, feedback and other data for consumers. So, how big an impact do you think online bookings have on the hotel industry? Taking Europe as an example, almost one-third of the travel arrangements in 2011 were done via internet,

through online hotel affiliates and booking websites like Travelocity, TripAdvisor, Expedia etc. This trend has seen a massive rise over the years in other parts of the world as well. Especially in Asian markets where the hotel and travel industry leaders are technologically up to the mark with the Western world. Online travel companies that were until now only invested in western countries are seeing the potential in growing markets and are shifting focus towards Asia where online travel is yet to enjoy the kind of penetration it has in UK and USA.

Hotel managers everywhere acknowledge the fact that the internet provides a good alternative to take bookings for their establishments. Although many are still skeptical about its capability to increase travel purchases and hotel bookings, many agree that online promotions are a great way to create interest and awareness among guests.

While on the topic of the importance of technology in today's hospitality industry, one simply cannot ignore the impact it has had on communication and coordination. Instant communication has really changed the way interactions work and live. Given that the hospitality industry is all about delivering impeccable service, being able to communicate and coordinate with peers instantly is a huge plus. The cloud has given the industry several boons of which a cloud-based PMS is one of the best! A cloud-based PMS lets hoteliers communicate via the platform, a feature that takes efficiency to the next level. A decade or so ago, if a front desk staff had to communicate to the travel desk about picking up a guest from the airport that evening, it would have had to be done manually, without any guarantee of the message reaching the travel desk in time.

Today, inter-departmental communications can not only happen in real-time, but also centrally allowing no important communication to get lost. So, all that the front desk staff has to do today, is this- whenever there is a communication that needs to be done with any department, they leave a note to the concerned department via the PMS and the receiver gets notified in real-time. When the task assigned is done, they mark it as 'done' and Voila! It's as simple as that. Not only that, a cloud PMS also helps with inventory and rate distribution across multiple sales channels (and vice versa) in real-time.

Information technology in hotel industry has empowered modern hoteliers to run their business on data-driven insights. No more "guesstimations", as they say! There are integrations that connect with cloud based PMSs to give you every little detail hen it comes to reporting, accounting, business intelligence, revenue management, pricing intelligence and competitor intelligence. There is a tool for every requirement of yours and a world-class PMS will help you connect with only the best integrations so you can run your hotel business smoothly, efficiently and sustainably.

Quite obviously, with all the hoopla surrounding the use of information technology in hotel industry, one can easily lose sight of the most important and basic purpose solved by internet – easy dissemination of information. Guests can easily access a wide variety of data like check-in/check-out timings, rate charts, restaurant details etc. anytime via internet. Potential patrons too can use publicly available information like events, value propositions, room furnishings, missions, special rates etc.

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