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17. Latest technologies for hospitality business

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Introduction. Technology in all spheres of our life is constantly evolving and there is always something new. Here is some of the latest technology for hospitality business. Each company of such branch is really need some modern technologies like these. They are developing every day.

High definition televisions (HDTVs) are the focal point of every hotel room and there are a huge variety of models for hoteliers to choose from to suit differing room sizes and budgets. They should provide a range of high quality HD channels to reflect the needs of guests and most major suppliers including Samsung and LG, for example, offer a range to suit all requirements and budgets.

High speed internet access (wired and wi-fi) in hotel rooms is a must for any business traveller and now many leisure travellers too. Almost all hotels now provide internet access, but the main challenge for hoteliers is offering guests the same level of broadband service in a hotel room as they receive at home, in terms of speed, reliability and

security. One way of doing this is by offering a tiered bandwidth service, i.e. pricing the broadband service according to usage, where those who use less bandwidth pay a smaller fee than those who require more.

MP3 docking station and alarm clock are two essential gadgets for many travellers. Apple has sold over 100 million iPods and many travellers use them to listen to favourite songs, watch movies, or view family photos, so any docking station that couples as an alarm clock should be at the top of any hotelier's list for in-room gadgets. Alternatively, most in-room televisions also double up as an alarm clock.

Convenient power sources - sounds obvious, but you'd be surprised how many times hotel guests have to dive under a desk to access power sockets to connect and charge their laptop and mobile. Another option is for hoteliers to provide a connectivity panel which enables content from a laptop, digital camera or MP3 to be viewed/listened to via the television so they don't have to keep recharging their batteries.

Mirror televisions are more commonly found in bathrooms, saunas and swimming pools at luxurious hotels. They are equipped with high definition technology, digital tuners and touch screen functionality. In fact, there were some impressive Mirror i TVs being demonstrated at the recent CES in Las Vegas.

Lighting and climate control may not seem at first an advanced piece of technology, but allowing guests to set these remotely to suit their changing moods, whether they're just waking up, working, or relaxing is becoming an important feature of a hotel room. West End hotel, St Martins Lane, is a good example of mood lighting and The Peninsula Shanghai has weather gauges on its in-room control panel, allowing guests to decide if they should put on an extra layer before heading outside.

RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) door lock for keyless entry to a hotel room and other areas of the hotel is becoming more popular in hotels across the world. In addition to this, new technology has been developed to allow guests to use any brand of mobile phone to gain access to their hotel room, so they don't have to worry about their keys at all. Face recognition key locks and LCD screens connected to a digital camera to let guests know instantly who's outside their door could also be an intriguing guest security proposition for future new build properties.

Energy management systems which adjust the temperature and lights in a hotel room upon detection that the room is empty and an air-powered hair dryer to help save water and energy usage are interesting concepts. A combination of energy-efficient air conditioning, a rainwater harvesting system and low energy lighting can reduce a hotel's carbon footprint by 75 per cent compared to the average establishment.

Guest sensors have been fitted in Hotel 1000 in Seattle that monitor when a guest enters and leaves so that lights and other technology in the room can be switched on and off accordingly. In addition, The Upper House in Hong Kong uses infrared signals to allow housekeeping staff to tell if the room is occupied by pressing a button.

Conclusions. No hotel owner in today's environment can afford to ignore technology. Almost every stakeholder talked about the crucial help technology has rendered in their growth and competitiveness. The benefits far outweigh the cost of technology. Technology has increased profits for restaurants and hotels, and also helped in reining in costs on a long-term basis by reducing manpower and improving the quality of service. From entertaining guests and planning menus to monitoring employees, technology has dramatically changed the way the hospitality industry works today.

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