

MOBILE APPS ARE CHANGING HOSPITALITY

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Introduction. As consumers are now spending more time on their mobile phones than ever before, travelers are expressing a growing preference to engage in business transactions from their own mobile devices. Today, approximately one half of local searches are performed on mobile devices. Mobile technologies have the unique potential to streamline hotel operations on the backend, and digital solutions for staff allow instant communication for enhanced employee efficiency and accountability.

Materials and methods. Research of literary and Internet sources has shown that Apps are taking over the world, and hospitality industry is not exception. There are many apps that can help travelers and people working in hospitality industry make their life easier.

Results. To meet the growing demand for self-service offerings, hotel companies and technology vendors have developed numerous mobile applications that automate and simplify requests for both on- and off-property services. Properties that deploy self-service mobile apps, whether independent hotels or as part of a chain, almost invariably report improved guest satisfaction scores, increased use of amenities and higher booking rates at onsite outlets. Digital interaction with the guest is possible prior to the guest's arrival, throughout the duration of his or her stay, and continues even after departure, providing ample opportunity to reinforce the hotel's branding messages and gain enhanced long-term guest loyalty. Besides making the service experience more satisfying for the guest, these apps have significant bonuses of streamlining efficiency and boosting revenue opportunities for the hotels.

Mobile apps in use across the hotel industry today provide guests with on-demand services at the touch of a screen. Apps like i-Guest have the capacity to transact a plethora of services, including mobile check-in/check-out, housekeeping requests, room service ordering, requesting valet parking or scheduling spa or restaurant reservations - all possible without the guest having to chat on the phone or being inconvenienced by needing to visit the front desk. Other features include mobile concierge functionalities, like local attraction information, travel guides and current news.

Conclusions. This mobile technology provides as many benefits for the hotelier as it does for their guests. Through the apps, hotel operators gain the ability to gather guest data, understand guest behaviors and monetize guest preferences. Nowadays, it is only a matter of time until guests come to expect such technology at all service-oriented hotels.

References

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