



January 2013:

Mobile Technology: The Biggest Challenges

Editorial Copy Deadline: October 24, 2012

Advertising Copy Deadline: December 14, 2012

The Age of Mobile is upon us. Nine in 10 Americans and 70 percent of people worldwide use mobile phones to text, email, exchange pictures or video, and interact via social networks more often than they talk with each other. 50 billion apps will be downloaded in 2013 and major hotel corporations are creating their own apps which employees

utilize to track sales, monitor systems, or check-out customers without being tied to their stations. Equally significant is the rapidly emerging trend that permits consumers to make purchases or transfer funds through their mobile device. In addition, hotel guests are now routinely using their devices to select rooms, unlock hotel doors, make restaurant and golf course reservations, book a massage, order from room service, and track the location of family and friends using GPS technology. Furthermore, hotels are still facing the perennial issue regarding wi-fi – to charge or not to charge for high-speed internet access. It is no longer a question whether the hospitality industry will fully embrace this revolution but rather when, how and to what extent. The January Hotel Business Review will investigate what some hotels are doing to maximize their opportunities in this mobile space, and will report on the solutions that are proving to be most beneficial for both companies and their guests.



February 2013:

New Developments in Social Media Strategies

Editorial Copy Deadline: November 28, 2012

Advertising Copy Deadline: January 18, 2013

Social Media continues to grow in importance. From marketing professionals who are realizing its immense power to identify and communicate directly with a broad audience, to SEO specialists who are using social media to impact search placement and rankings, hotels that are embracing this trend are seeing significant benefits in

revenue enhancement. Social media is also an effective means to shape brand image, to incentivize existing and potential customers, and to build customer loyalty. Through the use of blogs, there is also an opportunity to establish professional expertise which can directly influence customer choices and behavior. However, one of the challenges hospitality providers are facing is how to make sense of all the data they are collecting. The number of available information sources continues to grow as technology evolves, and companies have access to all kinds of customer-focused data, but much of this information is treated in silos. Providers need to develop strategies to not only "warehouse" all this data, but to dedicate resources to analyze it collectively in order to make informed business decisions. Optimization of website content based on visitor profiles is also an area that holds opportunity and promise. The February Hotel Business Review will explore what some leading hotel businesses are doing to successfully integrate social media into their operations.



March 2013:

[Hotel Human Resources: The Biggest Challenges](#)

Editorial Copy Deadline: **December 19, 2012**

Advertising Copy Deadline: **February 15, 2013**

In an ongoing and ever-evolving effort to attract the best available labor talent, human resource managers are facing some challenging new issues. In an industry that traditionally relies on a younger workforce, managers are adapting their practices to the characteristics which define the Millennial Generation. These younger workers are digital natives which seems to promote a technology-driven mindset, but it also

seems to inhibit their ability to engage in personal and social interactions. Training programs are being specifically created to improve and enhance their social IQ. Among the Millennials, there is also a burgeoning gap between applicant job skills and the requirements of available positions. Corporate training programs and cooperative efforts with hospitality schools are being utilized to address this issue, though return on investment is still a concern. Finally, human resource managers are being forced to confront the depersonalization of the recruiting process due to the explosion of Internet-based application procedures. The March Hotel Business Review will examine these critical issues and document the strategies that leading companies are employing to address them.



April 2013:

[Best Practices in Guest Service & Customer Experience Management](#)

Editorial Copy Deadline: **January 23, 2013**

Advertising Copy Deadline: **March 15, 2013**

Given today's fierce global competition, the identification and use of best practices is a critical component of managerial excellence and a means of producing the best possible performance. For hotels and resorts, customer service is the single most important element for its success. Though their operations may vary in size, themes, resources and customer

profiles, the goal is always the same – to create a customer experience that is compelling, ensures repeat business, and establishes a positive public reputation. In order to achieve these results, hotel managers are implementing standards for customer service, and then monitoring and measuring guest satisfaction via statistical performance metrics. They are also putting into place best practices to standardize the process pertaining to guest complaints and resolutions. These efforts are intended to provide a clear framework for all customer-facing employees to follow when interacting with guests, and to empower them to make decisions that will benefit the customer and the organization. The April issue of the Hotel Business Review will report on what some leading hotels are doing to foster a customer service culture which drives guest satisfaction and retention.



May 2013:

[Green Hotels: Eco-Friendly Principles and Best Practices](#)

Editorial Copy Deadline: February 20, 2013

Advertising Copy Deadline: April 19, 2013

In our modern world today, every human activity has a significant impact on the environment and companies can no longer promote growth without a commitment to preserve our resources. Within the hotel industry, sustainable development is emerging as a critical and necessary component of corporate strategy; one that influences every aspect of its

operations. A policy of sustainable development affects architecture, financial, regulatory, operational, human resources, and sales and marketing departments. Hotels that are successfully integrating eco-friendly practices into their operations are finding ways to maintain a focus on careful stewardship of their resources, as well as attention on the people who use and work in the hotel. The sustainability initiative goes beyond such well-known ideas as reusing guest linens, recycling waste materials, and changing to compact fluorescent lamps. The strategy also includes community involvement by buying locally, supporting charities, and encouraging employees to volunteer in the community, as well as participating in global award and certification programs. In addition, leading hotels are finding that by investing time, energy and resources into improving their green credentials, there are great promotional opportunities for their stakeholders, especially their guests. Operating sustainably helps an operation to gain a competitive edge by appealing to the growing share of consumers seeking greener travel products and services. And all of this must be accomplished while maintaining a profitable operation. The May issue of the Hotel Business Review will document how some leading hotels are integrating these strategies into their operations and how they are profiting from them.



June 2013:

[New Trends in Hotel Architecture and Design](#)

Editorial Copy Deadline: March 20, 2013

Advertising Copy Deadline: May 17, 2013

On any hotel design project, architects are generally serving at least three masters – the owner/developer, the hotel operator, and the general public who will utilize the hotel – and each have their own goals, objectives and demands. The owner/developer is concerned with brand standards, the target market and the hotel's locale, while the operator is concerned about achieving the highest possible revenue

through efficient design. The public is demanding that architecture and design be fully integrated into the guest experience, based on prevailing tastes and preferences. The architect's role is to respond professionally and efficiently to meet the demands of all and to develop a unified solution. Though each project has its own prerequisites and obligations, there are some general design trends which seem to be prevalent across the industry. First, there is an increased emphasis on the importance of the lobby. The principle here is that first impressions matter and that a hotel has only a few minutes to convince a guest that they have made the right decision. Hotel lobbies are being completely re-imagined – from eliminating front desks altogether to turning lobbies into warm, intimate social spaces, replete with fireplaces and comfortable furniture. There is also an increasing use of ambient natural light, even in large spaces like ballrooms and meeting rooms. In addition, there is greater emphasis on incorporating the distinctive attributes of any given location into the hotel design, which guests are defining as central to their experiences. The June issue of the Hotel Business Review will report on all these exciting developments in the fields of architecture and design.



July 2013:

Hotel Spa: The Biggest Challenges

Editorial Copy Deadline: April 24, 2013

Advertising Copy Deadline: June 14, 2013

The best hotels are not merely hotels; they are incubators for the next great trends in the hospitality industry and this includes spa services as well. Like all aspects of a hotel's operation, the spa sector must continually assess and adapt to the needs and tastes of their patrons and to create captivating programs to fulfill them. Some of these programs are placing an emphasis on specialization, while others are

offering creatively packaged services. Some spas are promoting new technologies, while others are expanding the definition of wellness in general. Among those that are specializing, feet are being given particular attention. Some spas are offering computerized gait analysis and treatments in zero-gravity chairs, while others are teaching their patrons how to improve their posture and strengthen the muscles in their feet. There are even 100% foot-focused med-spas which combine podiatric medical care, along with a menu of foot-pampering treatments. Kids are also receiving special attention due to an emerging trend that finds they are attending spas much earlier than in the past, around the ages of 12 or 13. The industry is evolving to accommodate them, from opening kids-only spas to offering services on everything from childhood obesity to the development of lifelong wellness practices. The July issue of the Hotel Business Review will examine all the trends and challenges that the spa industry is experiencing, and how they are adapting in order to thrive.



August 2013:

New Developments in Hotel Food and Beverage

Editorial Copy Deadline: May 22, 2013

Advertising Copy Deadline: July 19, 2013

The hotel industry is finally rebounding from the Great Recession. The economy is modestly improving and so, business and vacationing consumers are traveling more frequently and spending more on hotel foodservice when they do. In fact, according to a recent study, hotel foodservice sales are expected to grow 2.2% annually through 2016, making lodging one of the fastest growing segments in the

foodservice industry. Food & beverage has been recognized as an important contributor to a hotel's positioning within its market. A guest's experience with food & beverage plays a critical role in his or her overall hotel experience, which provides greater opportunities to enhance a property's overall performance, and to add value to the asset as well as the real estate. Though the immediate future looks bright for the hotel foodservice industry, competition is at an all-time high and operations must continually evolve to meet the demands of its customers. In order to address these concerns, some hotel ownership and management companies are creating wholly-owned restaurant companies as subsidiary divisions. Others are emphasizing the development of in-house, retail-style restaurant concepts. Still others are partnering with celebrity chefs, and some hotels are adding more food and beverage services in their public spaces. In addition, there is an increased focus on the banquet, lounge, room service and catering sectors in order to exploit their profit potential. The August issue of the Hotel Business Review will document these business developments and report on how some leading hotels are fully exploiting their Food and Beverage opportunities.



September 2013:

Hotel Group Business for 2014

Editorial Copy Deadline: June 19, 2013

Advertising Copy Deadline: August 16, 2013

Cautious optimism seems to be the prevailing sentiment today for those professionals involved in hotel group sales. Hotel rooms, conference centers and other meeting venues that were sold to groups in the recent past at steeply discounted prices are finally off the books, and managers are re-examining their pricing structures and making positive upward adjustments, without fear of scaring off potential customers.

They are also instituting more flexible pricing policies. In the past, a hotel might set its room and facility prices for an entire upcoming year; now their group business rates are being adjusted according to foreseeable demand at the hotel level. Given these circumstances, some hotels are making investments in the group business sector, primarily driven by new technologies. At some hotels, guests are able to make service requests, check email/weather, use the Business Center, print documents, and receive customized messages from meeting planners – all through a virtual concierge service on guest room TVs. Other hotels are making technology ubiquitous by providing laptops in restaurants, bars and lobbies for complimentary customer use. Perhaps even more important, some hotels are hiring on-site IT teams to ensure that their conferences function smoothly. The need for a knowledgeable IT team that really understands technology and can cater to group business is substantial. The September Hotel Business Review will examine issues relevant to group business and will report on what some hotels are doing to promote and retain this sector of their operations.



October 2013:

Best Practices on Maximizing Revenue Management

Editorial Copy Deadline: July 24, 2013

Advertising Copy Deadline: September 20, 2013

As it pertains to the hotel industry, revenue management is a complex set of strategies and tactics which are employed to generate revenue by taking advantage of available segments of occupancy. The primary strategy involves the adjusting of rates and inventory based upon room demand. Factors that typically influence these adjustments are current reservations,

historical data, local market analysis and demand forecasting. Revenue management strategists also frequently collaborate with other hotel departments when designing and implementing their tactics, typically gleaned from operations, marketing and financial management personnel. In traditional revenue management, discounted rate tiers are closed as occupancy increases and as occupancy increases, remaining hotel rooms are sold at higher rates. One conventional strategy that many hotels employ involves providing discounted rates to group business. By dedicating a portion of their discounted rooms to groups, it actually enables the hotel to end up with stronger average rates overall. Because the art and science of revenue management is still emerging, there are several significant issues that hotel owners and operators must continue to address; the most decisive is whether to hire a revenue management specialist in-house, or to outsource this responsibility to professional companies that are specialists in this field. The October issue of the Hotel Business Review will address these important subjects and examine how some leading hotels are maximizing their revenue management options.



November 2013:

[Hotel Sales & Marketing: The Biggest Challenges](#)

Editorial Copy Deadline: **August 21, 2013**

Advertising Copy Deadline: **October 18, 2013**

In the rapidly changing world that hotel sales and marketing professionals inhabit, they must consistently address an annual question – how much of their budget should be spent offline and how much should be dedicated to online endeavors. Though the percentages are not static across the industry, it is apparent that online sales and marketing budgets are becoming increasingly predominant, and the

reasons for this are becoming increasingly clear. The number of travelers researching and booking online is continuing to grow. More than 114 million people will research travel online this year, while 94 million will actually book reservations which means that more than 50 percent of all travel bookings will be generated through the Internet. In addition, according to Forrester Research, more and more travelers are using their mobile devices to not only research lodging and travel options, but to book and communicate room preferences directly with the hotel. Plus, Google is projecting that by 2013, mobile will overtake PCs as the most common Web-access device. Given that travelers are adopting smartphones and tablets at an astonishing pace, it's crucial for sales and marketing professionals to formulate and implement comprehensive strategies in order to attract and capture their share of the online market. The November Hotel Business Review will explore in-depth the challenges that some leading hotel professionals are facing and what kind of strategies they are devising to meet them.



December 2013:

[The Hotel Concierge: Principles and Best Practices](#)

Editorial Copy Deadline: **September 25, 2013**

Advertising Copy Deadline: **November 15, 2013**

During the darkest years of the financial downturn, the role of the concierge was being called into question. Compared to the strenuous work of housekeepers and the arduous labor in the kitchen, the concierge position was deemed dispensable by some hotel managers. Hours were slashed and in some hotels, the position was eliminated altogether. But

management soon began to realize just how vital and essential the concierge position is to a hotel's reputation and ultimately to its financial well-being. Today most four and five-star hotels are not only maintaining the concierge position, they are finding new ways to expand it. Some hotels are adding staff and supplying them with better computer hardware, software and Internet databases. Concierge software enables hotels to create mini-Yelp systems exclusively for their clientele. Mobile apps and websites offer reviews and imagery to supplement the concierge's advice. Some hotels have begun to equip concierges with iPads to assist with directions, advice and reservations, while others are offering remote concierge service accessible via text messages. One new program calls on concierges to come up with a new list of local tips each week, which they then share with front-desk staff and porters, who pass along the tips to guests. The December issue of the Hotel Business Review will investigate what some hotels are doing to support and modernize the concierge position as a means to distinguish itself from their competition.