

GAMING BEST PRACTICES FOR THE GAMING AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

# GAMING & LEISURE

15.00 SPRING 2020

INCLUDING RESORT AND ENTERTAINMENT TECHNOLOGY

**Anti-Trust & Employment  
Avoiding "No-Poach"  
Pitfalls**

**Mouse the Truck Driver  
with John Filippe**

**Expanding Channel  
Management Solutions  
on the Golf Course**

**Don't Say No  
with Dr. Mike Essig**

**CRM Landscape in  
Gaming & Leisure  
Surrounding  
Hospitality**

**Cloud Computing Security  
with Marlon Ortiz**

**Modern Facial  
Recognition and  
Its Impact on  
Casino Operations**

**Leading At Risk Employees:  
The Workplace Safety Crisis**

**New Dimensional Chart of  
Accounts Based System**

**The Wild Mechanics  
of Slot Machines**

**Sights and Sounds of Travel Evolution**

**The Data Company  
with Slots and Tables**

**Twenties Tech Tsunami**

**What Guests Crave:  
Simple Ways to Create  
Customized Convenience**

**Tech Trends for the Roaring 20s**

**2020 Security Trends & Strategies**

**2020 Hotel Casino Technology Forecast**

**The Next Decade of Digital Transformation**

**19<sup>th</sup> Annual Casino Gaming Executive**

**Satisfaction Survey**

**AI Implications with Just Jeannie**

Media Partner of



An Official Publication of  
global gaming expo  
**G2E ASIA**  
亞洲國際博彩娛樂展會

*In Every Edition:*

**National Gaming Results  
with Jay Sarno & Associates**

**Gaming, Tourism & Finance Index  
with Applied Analysis**

**Make Your 401(k) Plan Work Harder  
with Morgan Stanley**

# WHAT GUESTS CRAVE

## SIMPLE WAYS TO CREATE CUSTOMIZED CONVENIENCE



As we shift into gear at the start of a new decade, the single most influential factor to the evolution and innovation of restaurant technology is the guest. A few years ago, Gartner predicted that in 2020 as much as 85% of customer

relationships would be managed without direct human interaction. Be it through social media channels, apps, or website widgets, the capacity for guest engagement through mobile technology has grown exponentially since the 2011 prediction. And while we may not have hit the 85% threshold, we are well on our way as restaurant technology investments are propelled by a confluence of factors that put guests in the driver's seat.

### Customized Convenience

Much of what we can expect for the coming years can be summed up with these two words which, at first glance, may seem like a contradiction. Make no mistake – customized service that is also convenient is a growing expectation among modern guests, especially when it comes to their dining choices. Apart from meeting guest expectations, restaurant technologies are also aimed at helping operators improve profitability. Given the rapid pace of technological innovation, this will remain true for the coming decade. The digital engagement trends of self-service and online ordering, with a touch of personalization, will become fundamental to guests' ordering and dining experiences. In restaurants and food service – industries built on the principle of excellent service – there is an active push toward the adoption of data-centric practices as a means to create customized service.

### Data as Intelligence

Just as restaurant marketing has shifted from one-way messaging to two-way conversations over social media and texts, the dining experience itself is getting more personal. Technology today facilitates unique interactions, enabling restaurants to build relationships, and collect and analyze vast amounts of guest data to tailor

their offerings. With this in mind, here are a handful of the most popular trends that restaurant operators are incorporating as part of their guest engagement practices.

**Rewarding Guests.** Savvy operators have not discounted loyalty and reward programs just yet. Most consumers are willing to share some amount of personal data in anticipation of the benefits they get in return. Reward programs help start relationships with guests in ways that are new to many businesses. Every guest should be invited to participate, in particular those who stop in frequently. It's this data that is fundamental to knowing what guests want and delivering to their expectations.

**Name Dropping.** When guests place an order or make a reservation, whether or not they use their reward account, it's an opportunity to make personalized connections. Use the guest's name during the natural course of interacting with them, but don't go overboard. Dropping first names once or twice during the meal is good practice. Alternatively, consider a handwritten thank-you note (e.g., "Thank you Joe") on the receipt for orders awaiting pick-up or delivery. Using their name is a small and simple gesture that makes a big impression.

**Make Them Feel Valued.** When planning a wine and cheese tasting, live music, or other featured event, ask guests what they want. Do they prefer red or white wines? Post specials and events on social media to create interest and send texts or emails to reward members and get them involved. It's easy to increase sales by learning what guests want and then giving it to them. It also fosters relationship-building moments that bring higher value as each guest could well become a brand ambassador. Once they become brand ambassadors, they are more likely to remain loyal even during turbulent times.

**Keep Them Engaged.** Personalization must be applied throughout the journey from visit to visit. Offer incentives to keep them coming back. Invite them to become part of the conversation. Whether a discount on a menu item that

the guest typically purchases, or an upcoming seasonal feature, proactive communication keeps them engaged. Stay in contact by any means accessible, whether email, social, or text.

### What the Future Holds

Never before has guest engagement been more critical. Guests are not only changing the way we think about technology, but their expectations are driving entirely new service models at a steady pace. Not every remarkable guest experience will include human touch either – more often, it will be the result of seamless digital interactions. For seamless engagement to be possible, restaurants need to evolve from merely managing guest service, to leveraging data in a way that transforms it into guest service intelligence. Guest experiences and their evolving – sometimes fickle – expectations shape how restaurants use digital mediums to manage workflows and serve guests more efficiently. Data is the key to unlocking customized service experiences that guests crave.

*Don DeMarinis is the Senior Vice President Sales & Marketing, Americas for Agilysys, a leading provider of hospitality technology for more than 40 years. Since joining the organization in January 2018, Don has been driving the organization's growth and expansion across gaming and hospitality markets. Don previously served as Vice President, Sports & Entertainment, Foodservice Management globally at Oracle/MICROS, and as Vice President, Leisure & Entertainment at MICROS prior to its acquisition by Oracle. During his tenure, Don led sales growth of 30% per year for the Leisure & Entertainment group, focusing on food & beverage relationships within North American-based hotels, sports & entertainment, stadiums, casinos, cruises and amusement parks. With his extensive industry experience and a track record of delivering technology and services to global clients, Don is passionate about helping casino resorts enhance the guest experience through collaboration and the use of technology.*



# Agilysys...

## 4 Ways Direct Bookings Bring Sustained Value to Resorts

Direct bookings are an essential part of a resort's business strategy that brings them closer to ideal margins. Although OTAs help position businesses toward the top in search results, their steep commission rates, ranging from 15% to as much as 25%, are a big reason why the industry has started looking at opportunities to compel guests to book directly through resort websites. Direct reservations not only translate to higher margins by way of OTA commission savings, but they also give resorts immediate access to guest data, which offers sustained value in the form of ongoing digital engagement like mobile check-in and digital keys. Equally important, a proprietary booking engine gives resorts a vehicle to upsell the stay – be it a room upgrade or added amenities. Here are a few strategies that you can use to help recruit direct bookings:

1. **Smartphones.** According to a recent study, more than 68% of American travelers booked hotels on their smartphones or tablet in the prior 12-month period. When it comes to being accessible on smartphones, keep it simple. While more travelers are booking from their

devices, the study also indicated the importance of a mobile-friendly digital experience that simplifies navigation and booking.

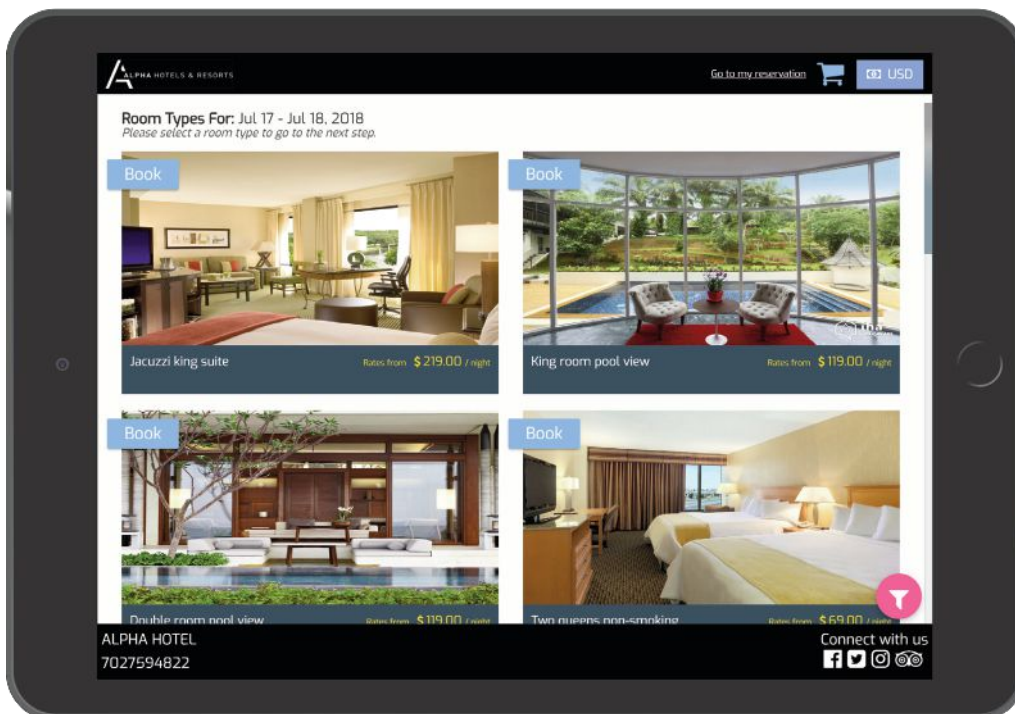
2. **Websites.** Capitalize on your site visitors by incorporating pop-ups and other graphical features that promote competitive rates if visitors book direct. Creative digital elements are known for their proven ability to capture the attention of potential guests and entice bookings quickly. Equally important, don't assume web visitors will understand what sets your property apart. Use your website to state value-adds like free breakfast, shuttle service, parking, wi-fi, etc.
3. **Guest Reviews.** Guest-generated content is extremely valuable in bringing in more visitors and driving direct bookings. Positive reviews and imagery may give your visitors the extra confidence they need to make a reservation. You may also consider leveraging your existing guest profile data to proactively communicate with past guests to encourage future stays.
4. **Rewards.** Loyalty programs remain prevalent across the industry, and for a good reason. Guests are loyal to and trust hotel brands that

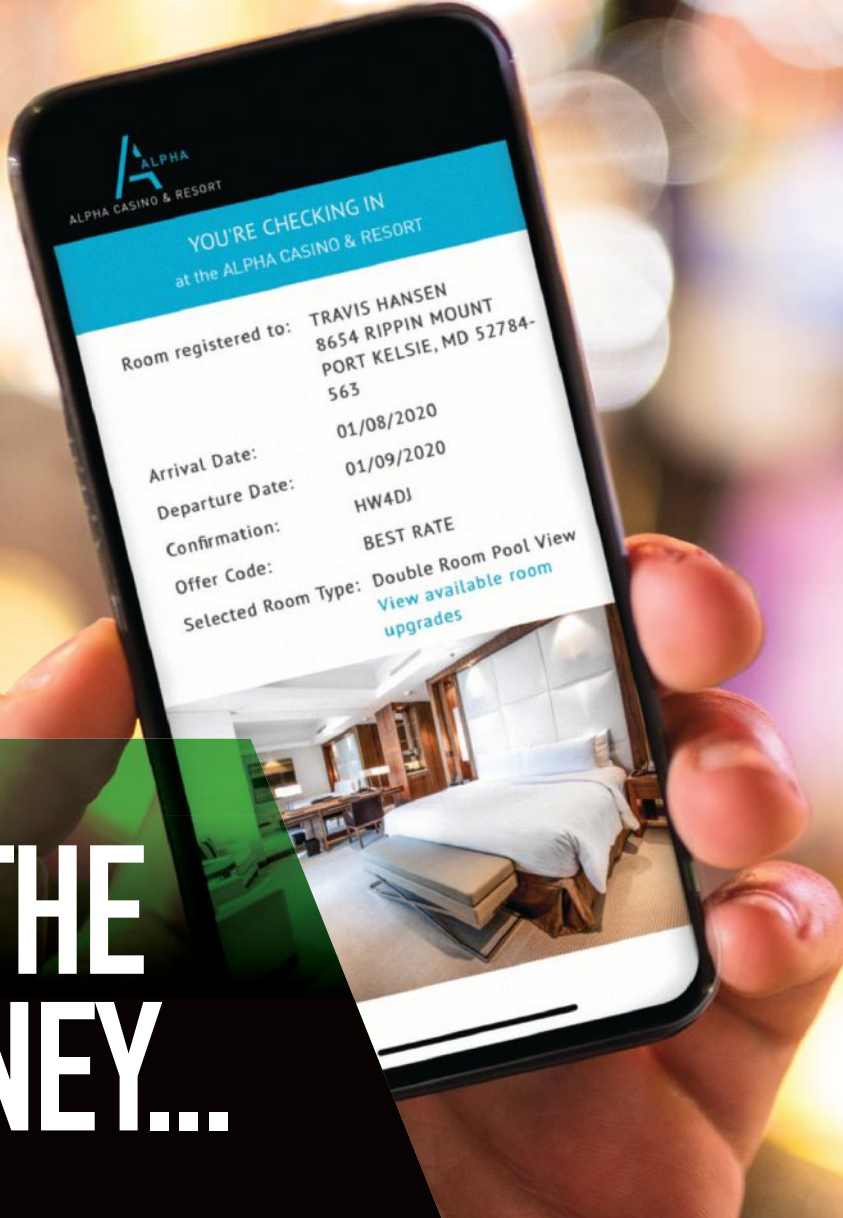
demonstrate consistent values and service levels. Reward redemptions and even new bookings via reward programs have seen steady growth over OTA bookings, which is helping operators cut their guest acquisition costs.

In addition to providing the economic advantage of repeat visits and upsell revenue, direct bookings also lead to a more personalized experience than third-party sites by creating an immediate connection to your property.

Ready for a booking engine that saves you commission fees? Talk with Agilysys today about rGuest® Book.

Email: [Sales@Agilysys.com](mailto:Sales@Agilysys.com)  
Call: 1-866-369-6208





# MODERNIZE THE GUEST JOURNEY...

Direct bookings, automated upsells and mobile check-in make for a modern, seamless patron experience.



**Talk with Agilysys Today:**  
877-369-6208  
Sales@Agilysys.com  
www.Agilysys.com

Copyright ©2020 Agilysys NV, LLC.

