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GMs TO WATCH

OUR ANNUAL LIST OF INDUSTRY LEADERS

DIRECT BOOKINGS

Are brand campaigns working?

4 WAYS TO AVERT DESIGN DISASTERS



ONE-ON-ONE WITH HAMPTON'S SHRUTI GANDHI BUCKLEY

This former Marriott executive has switched teams and is now leading one of the most successful select-service hotel brands in the business. It's a position she has been readying herself for and one that will test her mettle: How to keep one of Hilton's brightest brands fully lit.



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4 QUICK STATS

23%

HAVE NOT UPGRADED RECENTLY

Twenty-three percent of hoteliers who have not upgraded their PMS within the past three years plan to do so in the next 12 months.

Source: Starfleet Research

89%

BELIEVE TECHNOLOGY IS IMPORTANT

These hoteliers believe that hospitality technologies are key to not only addressing many of their current challenges, but also to reaching ever-higher levels of operational performance and guest satisfaction on an on-going basis.

Source: Starfleet Research

91%

SAY COMPATIBILITY IS KEY

Almost all hoteliers "agree" or "strongly agree" that technology platform interoperability and compatibility are key success factors for hotel process improvement.

Source: Starfleet Research

87%

SAY REPORTS DRIVE PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

The vast majority of hoteliers view the ability to generate analytical reports that reveal actionable insights that can help drive performance improvement as a key success factor with PMS.

Source: Starfleet Research

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

5 PMS considerations for smaller hotels

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Small hotels are not simply smaller versions of large hotels, which means their needs often are different when it comes to technology. To determine what those needs are, Springer-Miller Systems suggests hoteliers perform a thorough needs assessment in advance of issuing a request for proposal and beginning to participate in system demonstrations.

"With a documented needs assessment you can more accurately check-off that the new system meets your functional requirements and integration needs," said Amanda Wisell, marketing manager for SMS. "In addition, documenting your current network environment, hardware inventory and connectivity speeds will better prepare you to choose a system that will perform best at your hotel."

Next comes the hard part: taking systems for a test drive and deciding which is best. HOTEL MANAGEMENT interviewed property-management-system experts about what small hotel operators should consider before buying a new PMS so that it fits their requirements. We narrowed the list down to five key things:

1 Security: Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard compliance is a must for a PMS. "Without it, it's a nonstarter; don't even consider that solution provider," said Skytouch Technology CEO Todd Davis.

2 Ease of integration, including channel management and distribution: Make sure APIs have inbound and outbound connections to ensure a fast-as-possible integration with whatever solutions you might use, Davis said. That includes customer relationship management and rate management that integrate with the platform. Warren Dehan, president of Maestro PMS, said PMS providers should invest in solid partnerships with other vendors for deeper integration options with third parties the property prefers to work with. This can enable easier sharing of guest profile data and real-time two-way exchange

of information, rates and availability across all channels.

3 Ease of use: With turnover at hotels as high as it is, the system must be functional for novices and expert users. This element also includes a superior, intuitive guest self-service experience from booking through check-out, said Luke Pfeifer, director of PMS product management at Agilysys.

4 Mobile capability: Hotel staff and executive teams cannot be limited to receiving information only when they are at their desks, said Jos Schaap, CEO and founder of StayNTouch. Modern technologies and delivery methods now ensure that all the information hoteliers need to not only run the hotel at its optimal effectiveness but also deliver amazing guest service is available on their mobile device. Look for features that prioritize communication and mobility.

5 A proven vendor with a track record of delivering and evolving technology: The vendor can offer protection for a hotel's PMS investment with technology that will sustain market trends, and maintenance fees that cover all new software versions and enhancements free of charge because this can present itself as a significant investment if they are faced with product obsolescence, Dehan said.

Lee Horgan, CEO of Amadeus Hospitality, Amadeus IT Group, said hoteliers must consider a vendor's training and learning material. "Does the PMS provider offer online e-learning for new and existing staff?" he asked. "You can tell a lot by the quality of product documentation and the support they offer. How long did it take you to get a person on the phone and did that first person just get your info to have someone call you back or were they prepared to troubleshoot with you?" **HM**



UNSUNG QUALITY: UNIFYING FRAGMENTED SYSTEMS

The property-management system is the master of all inventory, rates and reservations data for your guests. Most external systems within a hotel operation need to have access to that information—whether it's point of sale, call accounting, spa systems, sales and catering systems, or group sales systems. Visit HM's website to read about how the right PMS can make operating your hotel easier.

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