

Mobility's Role in Hospitality Digital Transformation



Of all the technologies that have advanced digital transformation in the hospitality industry, mobility is perhaps the most impactful, connecting users and providers and enabling both to interact at levels outpaced only by face-to-face communication. A positive mobile experience can go a long way in creating a positive guest experience, which can lead to higher guest loyalty.

Mobility plays a critical role in the overall trend toward customer experience, which was ranked the most exciting business opportunity in 2018, according to a survey on digital marketing trends.¹ Another survey pegged improving digital customer engagement and guest loyalty as the top tactical tech objective for companies in 2018.² As mobility plays an ever larger role in consumers' lives—not just for communication but also for information and entertainment—hotels must place a greater emphasis on the quality of the mobile experience they provide.

Mobile apps can have an impact on both customer-facing and back-office operations, helping hotels gain and retain customers through easy-to-use self-service capabilities that also capture valuable data for use across multiple systems. Mobility also enables personalization, a feature guests have come to expect in today's digital environment,

whether it's enabling guests to choose their own travel perks or only receive relevant communications from the hotel.

A hotel's mobile app could be equally useful for the mundane, enabling guests to skip the registration desk and instead check in electronically. The app then can send guests relevant information such as their room number and floor, location of services on the property, things to do or places to visit during their stay. If guests are attending a conference or event at the hotel, the app could also provide information such as location of badge pickup, agendas for each day of the event and contact information of conference providers, for example.

In operations, mobile apps can help housekeeping and maintenance departments keep track of guest requests to ensure their needs are filled quickly and efficiently or track which rooms are occupied and need servicing, helping ensure employees are working at their most productive. Such apps also can help managers review bookings on the fly and access detailed reports on information including average length of stay, guest satisfaction ratings and comments to pinpoint areas of improvement.

Mobility can be paired with artificial intelligence to take the guest experience even further. Chatbots within the mobile app can answer questions, make restaurant or spa reservations, check a guest's rewards points or rebook a room for a later visit,

all without the intervention of a hotel employee. In hotels with connected technology, guests could use verbal commands through the chatbot to adjust the room temperature, open curtains or even change the channel.

The power of mobility in the hospitality sector is truly transformational, empowering guests and enabling hotels to provide high-quality, personalized experiences. However, it—and all technologies related to digital transformation—need an infrastructure capable of handling

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the constant flow of data necessary to take full advantage of their benefits. Mobility and other hospitality technologies need a network powerful enough to provide the speed, agility and flexibility necessary to provide services that foment loyalty and keep guests coming back.

1 "2018 Digital Trends," survey report, eConsultancy, February 2018, <https://econsultancy.com/reports/digital-intelligence-briefing-2018-digital-trends/>

2 "Deconstructing Innovation: Tech Spending Increases as Hotels Eye Data and Digital to Empower Guests," Hospitality Technology, December 2017 <https://hospitalitytech.com/2018-lodging-technology-study-deconstructing-innovation?from=gate>