

The Overview: In Depth

Autumn 2022

Inspirational leaders awards

Meet those who make
a difference. **Page 6**

Inside

Getting the message: Alliants
on relationship building. **Page 14**

Inside

When will it end? Daniel Fryer,
wellbeing expert. **Page 16**

Welcome to THE OVERVIEW

Taking an in depth look at the trends and issues facing the hospitality sector.

Everyone reading this can confirm one truth: the market hates uncertainty. 'Better the devil you know' is very much its thinking. You can dump any news on it at all - really, anything - and as long as you're upfront, it can be digested.

The only party which doesn't seem to know this is the government, which is a shame really, as it seems to have quite a lot of influence. The latest example of a certain enthusiasm for keeping everyone guessing was brand-new PM Liz Truss, who announced that her plan to help businesses amounted to six months' worth of receiving the "equivalent support" of households, with a review after three months for "ongoing focused support" for vulnerable industries beyond that. We can assume this sector is vulnerable.

Truss also mentioned that businesses could use this time to maybe think about how to limit their energy consumption, and what a light bulb moment that was. Only don't actually turn one on, they're very expensive.

So there will now be three months' uncertainty, but it's OK, there's a new task force and how this government does like a task force. One wonders

whether this task force wouldn't have fancied being formed over, say, the last six months, when this scenario was widely flagged, but this government can also get a bit punchy when these things are pointed out, which is how Keir Starmer ended up being called Captain Hindsight by the last PM.

So here the sector is, facing three months of attending select committees and describing how it can't pass the cost of a pint onto the consumer when that pint would have to cost £14 to justify itself. In the meantime, any kind of future planning or investment is impossible. Many hospitality venues had been speculating over closing this winter to save money and this latest intervention does nothing to make that less likely. Or to guarantee the supply of energy, with no rationing strategy announced.

Once again the business sector has to come up with its own solutions to problems which are not of its making. One bright spot is that the consumer may now be feeling some relief and may be more inclined to get out and about with their knees under a table. A fine festive season may still be in the offing and the chance for everyone to fill their coffers. As for the run up? It's uncertain.

Autumn 2022 Inside this issue

- 03 CEO's message
- 04 HOSPACE preview
- 05 Independent Hotel Show
- 06 Inspirational Leader Awards
- 11 On premise user survey
- 12 Membership PR
- 14 Unlocking loyalty
- 16 A shift in shift work
- 18 Reaching the tipping point
- 20 Technology and service
- 23 Events customers bear costs
- 24 Dealing with staffing
- 27 Unlocking locks
- 28 Tourism recovering
- 30 Food prices surge
- 31 Cost crisis
- 32 Prepare to invest
- 33 Free your revenue manager
- 34 Empower with technology
- 36 The new culture war
- 37 Apex working with Nonius
- 38 The value of a tronc scheme
- 39 Hotels' positive summer
- 40 Compete with the OTAs
- 42 Growing more sustainable
- 43 The power of messaging

CEO
Jane Pendlebury
jane.pendlebury@hospa.org

Editor
Katherine Doggrell
07563272191
katherine.doggrell@hospa.org

Membership & Events
Mary Hutson
0203 418 8196
hospa@hospa.org

Publisher
Hospitality Professionals Association

Treasurer
Diana Mountain

Head of Sponsorship
Helen Marshall
Helen.marshall@hospa.org
07796953221

Helen Rhodes
Helen.Rhodes@hospa.org

Accounts
accounts@hospa.org

Professional Development
Michael Heyward
Head of Professional Development
michael.heyward@hospa.org
education@hospa.org

Media Enquiries
PicPR
01386 882474
hospa@picpr.com

**HOSPA, Uplands Cottage,
Grayswood Road, Haslemere, GU27 2BS**

The Overview online
Visit www.hospa.org

HOSPACE is the place...

Welcome to our second full edition of *The Overview: In Depth* in 2022! I hope you enjoy reading it, and if you want more – then our blog is the place to go.

The HOSPA blog – kept up to date by Katherine, our Overview editor – is regularly updated with opinion pieces and newsworthy developments impacting the sector. So, please bookmark the page, and keep up to date with hot topics affecting our area of hospitality. We're open to feedback and suggestions as to anything we can include, so please let us know what you think and please get involved too by sharing any news or particular topics you'd like to know more about/see more of.

This time of year, as ever for us, is all about HOSPACE for the HOSPA team. We are so proud of what we deliver each year as we constantly strive to maintain all the good elements from the previous years and improve any areas where we think we can be or where feedback has suggested things might work better. In case you've not got it in your diary yet, please add it right now – 17th November at The Royal Lancaster, London. There is a lot more detail overleaf!

One change you may have noticed from last year is that we've stepped up the activity around our inspiring leaders awards for 2022. Our winners are always remarkable professionals in the hospitality industry. We made the decision after HOSPACE 2021 that they needed to be recognised even more than in previous years. So many people are doing so many inspiring things in the industry, and it's important we highlight where this is happening if we're to continue the culture of innovation and excellence that's so prevalent in hospitality. You can read all about it further into this edition of *The Overview*. This year we are also delighted to be sending a video team to each of the shortlisted candidates to find out more about their place of work, and what being nominated and making the shortlist means to them. Each and every year the judging process seems to be harder



than the previous year and this year was no exception. We had a judging panel of experts for every category and their judging sessions generated much debate and at times some very difficult decisions. We'll be announcing the winners at our Gala Dinner, which occurs following the full day of conference at HOSPACE, so please do come to support your fellow industry friends and colleagues to celebrate their achievements.

In 2020 – you may remember – we ran HOSPACE online. The majority of the speakers and presenters were live in the studio, and it was broadcast across the internet to attendees around the world. This was back in the peak days of the pandemic, when we were only allowed up to 30 people at a 'work' meeting. They seem such strange times looking back, but we took full advantage of the opportunity. The slight downside though, was that as we were all driving to as opposed to staying at the Royal

Lancaster (as in usual years!), there was very little – if any, in fact – alcohol involved so the celebratory air of the standard HOSPACE was somewhat missing. It was safe to say though, there was no party-gate at HOSPA! That year we also dropped the charge for delegate attendance. And in 2021, we followed suit despite running a fully in-person event. So, we seem to have now set a precedent! If you are a HOSPA member (and you should be able to join very easily if you work in a position of responsibility in line with our communities within hospitality (see more on page 5) then you are almost certainly guaranteed a delegate place for the whole day! The talks are really insightful, while also offering a broad overview of the state of the industry, so I (of course!) highly recommend coming along for an educational, yet lively day.

Members can apply for complimentary tickets via <https://www.hospace.org/>

HOSPA's annual conference HOSPACE

It's that time of year when the HOSPA office is abuzz with excitement and activity as we prepare to assemble many of the industry's leading minds at our annual HOSPACE conference, which is set to take place on Thursday, 17th November 2022.

It's the highlight of our HOSPA calendar, offering our members and their guests the opportunity to listen to expert opinions on some of the industry's most pressing issues and engage in topical discussions, whilst networking with their peers.

As a hospitality association, this is our chance to deliver one of the core values of HOSPA and HOSPACE, which is to gather pioneers and experts from all corners of the industry so that we can share best practice and learn from one another.

Confirmed once again for the Royal Lancaster, London, we will be running our familiar format of presentations, panel discussions and workshops, followed by our fun-packed gala dinner.

As in previous years, the conference will be hosted by award-winning speaker, presenter, renowned raconteur and long-time HOSPA friend Peter Hancock. Scheduled for a 9am start, initial contributions will come from HOSPA President, Harry Murray MBE, newly appointed Chairman, Bob Silk, and me as CEO.

Our first session will offer insight into the current financial climate with facts and figures set to be succinctly presented by HotStats and BDO.

Influential industry voice, Kate Nicholls from UKHospitality, will then take the stage joined by high profile CEOs from hospitality groups to discuss key topics affecting the sector under the guidance of Katherine Doggrell who will moderate the session. It's no secret that increasing costs, supply chain issues, sustainability and the staffing crisis are front of mind for us, so this will be a fabulous opportunity to hear how our top industry leaders are planning to succeed for the rest of 2022,

into 2023 and the years beyond. Kate's summary of the post-pandemic hospitality climate at last year's conference was noted as one of its most memorable and insightful moments and she will be looking to emulate that impact this year.

Sustainability will also be a primary focus at this year's conference, spearheaded by HOSPA's sustainability expert, Sarah Duncan, who will lead a discussion with well-respected hotel operators who have all successfully navigated the various paths to achieving a more sustainable business approach. Within this, she will also provide functional advice on how to strive for a greener future and to be more carbon conscious (which can also be found in HOSPA's Sustainability Toolkit — a free tool created by Sarah for the betterment of the industry).

The Metaverse – I know I am looking to understand more about this, and I imagine I am not alone! Representatives from leading brands, including Google, The Ivy Group and Accor will endeavour to educate me and the attendees on this daunting yet evolving sub-section of hospitality. Renowned Australian hospitality technology speaker, Ted Horner, will lead the discussion calling on the experts to explain what this all means and how it is likely to affect our industry in the years to come.

In 2021 much of the afternoon of our conference was dedicated to staffing, attracting and retaining talent within hospitality – and the theme will continue this year, with some useful tips on sourcing new team members, keeping your employees engaged and offering them professional development opportunities.

This year I am particularly proud

of the line-up of speakers we have managed to secure and anticipate some extremely insightful discussion throughout the day. Last year's conference was a real success, but given the residual murmurings of the pandemic, it's only natural that there was a lot of reflection on the challenging years prior. However, for 2022, we are very much looking forward to the future and discussing topics that will likely shape the landscape of our industry for decades to come.

Among the array of impressive speakers there will also be an opportunity for guest engagement through six workshops, with topics ranging from financial management hosted by Percipient, and enhancing guest services through technology, hosted by TigerTMS. This will offer a unique opportunity for in-depth discussion and a real insight into the specialisms of hospitality.

We are also set to shine a light on some stand-out individuals when we announce the winners of our Inspirational Leader Awards during the gala dinner - which always proves a popular part of the day!

There are some complimentary delegate tickets still available for senior operators, and if you are based overseas then there is an opportunity to join remotely too. To register for HOSPACE 2022, please visit: <https://www.hospa.org/hospace-tickets>, if you are not already a member, there is (of course) an opportunity to join.

More information on HOSPACE and its programme can be found via <https://www.hospace.org>, while <https://www.hospa.org> provides more information on HOSPA's wider offering. I look forward to seeing many of you in November.

The Independent Hotel Show returns packed with inspirational business solutions

The Independent Hotel Show will return to Olympia London on 4-5 October to reunite the boutique and independent hotel sector with two days of networking, learning and discovery.

Hospitality professionals attending the show will have the opportunity to hear from the UK's leading independent hoteliers, industry experts, chefs and more across two busy stages and to meet with over 200 carefully curated suppliers targeting the independent hotel market.

The Innovation Stage, in partnership with eviivo and designed by Design Command, will host sessions on topics including how tech can improve guest retention, finance and funding in the world of ESG, what it takes to win industry awards, elevating the hotel restaurant and how the industry can come together to fix the hole in hospitality staffing.

Meanwhile on the Hotel Vision Stage, in partnership with HotelPartner and designed by Design Command, the esteemed industry speakers will be tackling subjects like mastering social media, designing the hotel spaces of the future, allyship in hospitality, and meeting the needs of the Gen Z traveller.

A number of discussions on the two main stages will be followed up by complementary roundtable discussions in the Social Business Space, sponsored by Planet and designed by Taner's Sons. These informal fireside chats will give hoteliers a chance to speak with peers facing similar challenges and network with like-minded industry professionals.

Kimberley Wilson, Owner of The Camberley & The Lodge, comments: "We have attended the Independent Hotel Show for about five years now and always gain something from the visit.



It's about networking, gaining insight from your peers and other industry professionals and for myself gives me back my spark and enthusiasm."

A new feature for this year's edition of the show is the Business Solutions Bar, in partnership with HOSPA & the HMA, where guests at the show will be able to meet with industry experts specialising in marketing and hospitality tech to receive confidential advice tailored for their specific business needs.

Jane Pendlebury, CEO of HOSPA, explains: "Technology is an ever-changing sphere in hospitality, yet it will certainly play an increasingly important role for all of us in the future. From guest-facing technology and back-office solutions to infrastructure and networking, there's an abundance of

providers looking to shape the future of contemporary hospitality. We are looking forward to providing hoteliers with functional advice on how to iron out their technology pain points, whilst also introducing them to some of the wonderful solutions out there."

For visitors to the show interested in the ever-evolving world of sustainability benchmarking, the ESG Hub by Green Key will provide insights into what it takes to achieve accreditation and which steps need to be put in place to prepare hospitality businesses for reaching net zero.

To learn more about everything happening at this year's show, and to register for your complimentary trade ticket, head to: <https://www.independenthotelshow.co.uk>

Inspirational Leader Awards 2022

We're delighted to announce that we'll once again be running our Inspirational Leader Awards at HOSPSPACE 2022.

Our expert panel of judges have now selected the shortlisted candidates, and the final winners will be announced during our gala dinner. This will be taking place on Thursday the 17th of November at The Royal Lancaster in London.

Meet Our Judging Panel:

- Sarah Duncan, Sustainability (ESG) consultant, and author of The Ethical Business Book
- Marc Saunders, Group Director of Marketing and PR at Splendid Hospitality
- Paul Nisbett, Finance Director of Valor Hospitality Europe
- Adrienne Hanna, Founder & CEO of Right Revenue
- Andrew Evers, Group Director of IT, Rocco Forte
- Derek Lister, Group FC at Valor
- Bob Silk, Chairman of HOSPA & Relationship Director Hospitality & Leisure, Barclays
- Louise Carr-Merino, Sustainable Hospitality and Leisure Awards Manager at Keep Britain Tidy
- Chris Cows, Chief Executive of Eproductive Ltd
- Jane Pendlebury, CEO of HOSPA
- Hannah Scarborough, Senior Marketing & BD Manager at BDO
- Andrew Evans, CEO of Keystep Solutions
- David Nicolson, Vice President of Finance in Europe at the Jumeirah Group
- Jason Gossop, Recruitment Consultant at Edwards & Finn
- Michael Heyward, Founder of Heyward Group
- Matt Dormer, BT Account Manager
- Ali Powell, Managing Director at Commercial Acceleration

Our Awards

Inspirational Technology Leader

The award for the 'Inspirational Technology Leader of the Year' is sponsored by BT. Finalists will have demonstrated their leadership capabilities and inspired their team, gone above and beyond in their role, and have a personal recommendation on why the individual who nominated them thinks they should win the award. The nominees are:



Andrew Jacques - IT Director at Klarent Hospitality, Andrew inspires his team towards personal and professional success and creates a culture of motivation in the workplace.



Vibhu Gaiind - Vibhu, CIO of RBH Management, has been an inspirational IT leader for several years, with his supplier management allowing RBH to form strong relationships and provide the best technology in the industry.



David Pryde - David, the Director of IT at Millennium & Copthorne, delivers technology solutions across a wide range of properties, whilst educating and developing his diverse teams.

Inspirational Sustainability Leader

The award for the 'Inspirational Sustainability Leader of the year' is sponsored by Save Money, Cut Carbon (SMCC). Finalists will have demonstrated their leadership capabilities and inspired their team, gone above and beyond in their role, and have a personal recommendation on why the individual

who nominated them thinks they should win the award. The nominees are:



Jamila Brown - Jamila, Head of House Foundations at Soho House, began tracking energy/water use, producing Soho's first monitoring dashboards for visibility at board level. She designed her own suite of reporting tools and processes to get regular, reliable data.



Robert Godwin - Managing Director & Founder of Lamington Group & room2 hometels, Robert offers exceptional, sustainable and affordable hospitality, and has created innovative features that use 89% less energy than any other UK hotel.



Danny Pecorelli - Managing Director of Exclusive Collection, Danny's passion and conscientious eye on the environmental and societal impact helps in leading the charge on focusing on sustainability within the hospitality sector.

Inspirational Leader - Asset Management Project

The award for the 'Inspirational Leader - Asset Management Project' is sponsored by Keystep Solutions. Finalists will have demonstrated their leadership capabilities and inspired their team, gone above and beyond in their role, and have a personal recommendation on why the individual who nominated them thinks they should win the award. The nominees are:



SaveMoneyCutCarbon helps the hospitality sector to **reduce their energy & water costs** and achieve their **ESG aims**



Book a **free call** with one of our IEMA qualified Energy & Carbon Mentors
www.savemoneycutcarbon.com/mentor



Wi-Fi for them, a marketing tool for you.

Give your guests Wi-Fi and you get rich analytics and a targeted marketing tool with our guest Wi-Fi.

An intelligent service that's tailored to your business.

Find out more at
btwifi.com/business



Inspirational Leader Awards



Benjamin Chapman - Commercial Director of L+R Hotels, Benjamin, has supported not only his base hotel, the Strand Palace, but also others in the cluster. He oversees a range of teams, managing on a 360 degree basis across the operation.



Jillian MacLean - Drake & Morgan Founder & CEO, Jillian, has established the business as one of the most successful bar groups. Her impressive accolades include an MBE and being named one of 'The Most Powerful People in Hospitality.'



William Gibbs - SRSL Hotels Director, William, is a natural leader. He's been building the value of the hotel portfolio whilst developing his team through nurturing talent and encouraging innovation.

Inspirational Finance Leader

The award for the 'Inspirational Finance Leader of the Year' is sponsored by BDO. Finalists will have demonstrated their leadership capabilities and inspired their team, gone above and beyond in their role, and have a personal recommendation on why the individual who nominated them thinks they should win the award. The nominees are:



Ildiko Szabo - Soho House Finance Director, Ildiko, has grown and maintained a strong UK finance department, covering business-as-usual activities, projects, budgeting, strategy, and house pipeline growth.



Angela Duffy - Angela, Head of Finance Operations for Jury's Inn/Leonardo Hotels supports her team in developing both professionally and personally, whilst taking on new challenges and changing priorities without hesitation.



Stuart Houston - Finance Director of RBH Hospitality Management, Stuart, has worked tirelessly to manage hotel cash flows, applications for funding and management of the furlough process, whilst maintaining a positive outlook.

Inspirational Marketer

The award for the 'Inspirational Marketer of the Year' is sponsored by Profitroom. Finalists will have demonstrated their leadership capabilities and inspired their team, gone above and beyond in their role, and have a personal recommendation on why the individual who nominated them thinks they should win the award. The nominees are:



Dan Rennie - Dan, Marketing Manager at Carden Park Hotel, is a motivational leader, providing support and tools for his team. He aims for success in all sectors of the hotel, executing cohesive marketing strategies.



Rachael Leister - Rachael, Head of Marketing for Devonshire Hotels & Restaurants Group, is a true hospitality ambassador and has shown incredible resilience and an entrepreneurial mind-set over the past couple of years.



Nicola Cook - Nicola, Head of Marketing at Rudding Park, has plenty of experience in the hospitality industry. She's creative, driven and determined to lead her team, delivering results utilising highly effective marketing campaigns.

Inspirational Revenue Manager

The award for the 'Inspirational Revenue Manager of the Year' is sponsored by Edwards and Finn. Finalists will have demonstrated their leadership capabilities and inspired their team, gone above and beyond in their role, and have a personal recommendation on

why the individual who nominated them thinks they should win the award. The nominees are:



Catherine T Smith - Catherine, Revenue Management Director at Awaze Vacation Rentals, has championed a successful RM culture. Her leadership and advocacy means, today, it's a fantastic career and an invaluable resource to the business.



Russell Low - Russell, Group Director of Revenue Management at Klarent Hospitality, is a fantastic, enthusiastic leader and is respected in the industry, offering humour, support and a positive attitude.



Nicola Trew - Nicola, Founder and Director at Vroom, is a natural leader and innovator, experimenting with pricing strategies, challenging the status quo and continually working to maximise revenue/cash flow, whilst leading on winning new contracts.

The final winners will be announced during our Gala Dinner which will be taking place after HOSPACE on Thursday 17th November at The Royal Lancaster London.

Simply more bookings

The premium booking platform for hotels & resorts

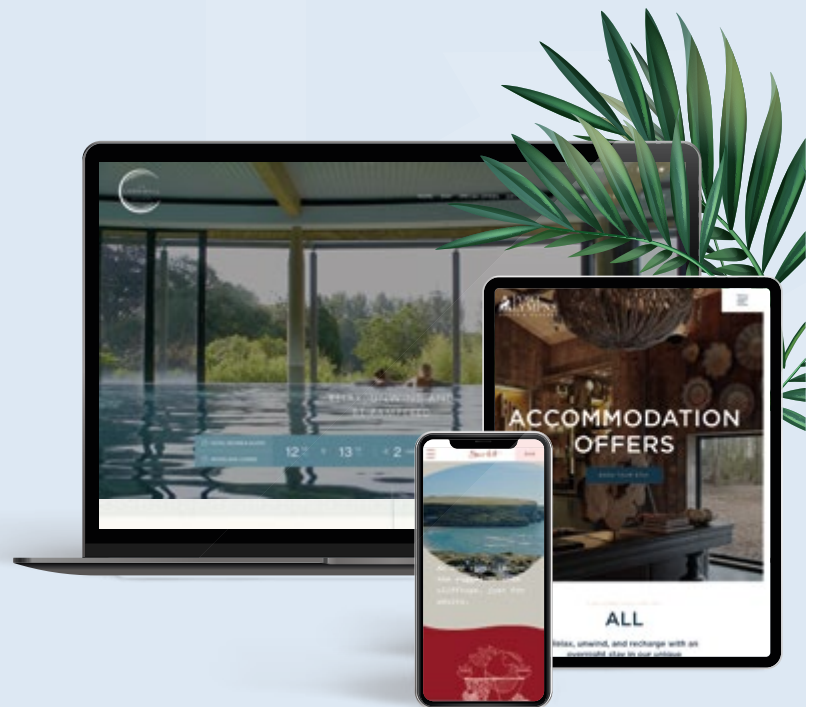
Your brand and property are unique so it demands a platform that can be tailored around your needs. Our award-winning Profitroom platform is more than just a highly converting booking engine, it offers everything you need to maximise your overall booking potential.

A booking solution unlike any other which enables users access to:

- Converting more guests and repeat bookings
- Pre/post stay messaging, campaigns and newsletters
- Synchronised availability and rates across all channels in real-time
- User-friendly and fully automated guest database management system
- Performance monitoring and detailed audits



Find out more or book a demo.
www.profitroom.com



TRUE CRIME
 PODCAST FAN

DEMON TAP
 DANCER

FILM
 BUFF

AUDIT
 PARTNER

MORE THAN AN ACCOUNTING MACHINE

Our people are wonderfully complex. They harness experience, insight and intelligence to uncover the full story behind the analytics.

CLASSICALLY
 TRAINED BALLERINA

LIQUORICE
 ALLSORT
 LOVER

IDEAS | PEOPLE | TRUST

bdo.co.uk





+44 7704 666044



info@edwardsandfinn.co.uk



www.edwardsandfinn.com



Edwards & Finn is focused on the recruitment and development of the commercial leaders of the future within the UK and Internationally, as well as celebrating the achievements of revenue managers, we focus on opportunities from entry-level roles through to commercial leadership positions.

We are proud to be helping develop the future of our industry, by not only sponsoring learners of the year but also sponsoring leaders as well, this is a huge deal for the future of hospitality and we are the ONLY agency sponsoring new starters as well as existing industry leaders too.

Our clients consist of the largest hotel brands in the world, smaller hospitality groups, hotel/asset management companies, holiday businesses, long-stay apartments and prestigious single properties.



DEVELOPING THE FUTURE COMMERCIAL LEADERS

WWW.EDWARDSANDFINN.COM



With decades of experience, Keystep Solutions offers a variety of lock solutions that will suit every type of operation.

We specialise in electronic RFID and Digital Key locks for the hotel, leisure and student accommodation sectors.

Keystep have shattered the stagnation and lack of customer service that has dominated the sector for decades with Keystep being the first company to fit Bluetooth Low Energy (Bluetooth LE) as standard in all its locks.

We are proud of the service we deliver and our market-leading 3-year product warranty.

**www.keystep.co.uk
sales@keystep.co.uk**



Changing occasions: Five shifts in the mix of visits

The latest On Premise User Survey (OPUS) from CGA by NielsenIQ reveals some important changes in consumers' engagement with pubs, bars and restaurants.

Here are five key ways their occasions have evolved:

1. A slower tempo

When venues have reopened after COVID-19 lockdowns over the last couple of years, many consumers celebrated with high tempo visits to pubs and bars with friends. Now that life has largely settled back to normal, the tempo has slowed slightly. OPUS shows that relaxed and quiet drinks visits now account for 28% of all On Premise occasions—a rise of three percentage points from the 25% of earlier in the year.

2. Earlier dayparts

Concerns about COVID-19 led some consumers to switch their On Premise visits to quieter times of the day in order to avoid crowds, and these habits appear to be sticking. Early evenings (5pm to 8pm) have gained the highest

share of visits of any daypart in 2022—another sign of the slight dialing down of tempo. Changes to working habits and the rise of all day concepts have also contributed to consumers visiting the On Premise earlier.

3. Casual visits to bars

Around one in six (16%) relaxed occasions now happen in bars—an increase in share of two percentage points from early 2022. While food and drink pubs remain most popular for these easy-going visits, many bar operators have successfully tapped into demand too.

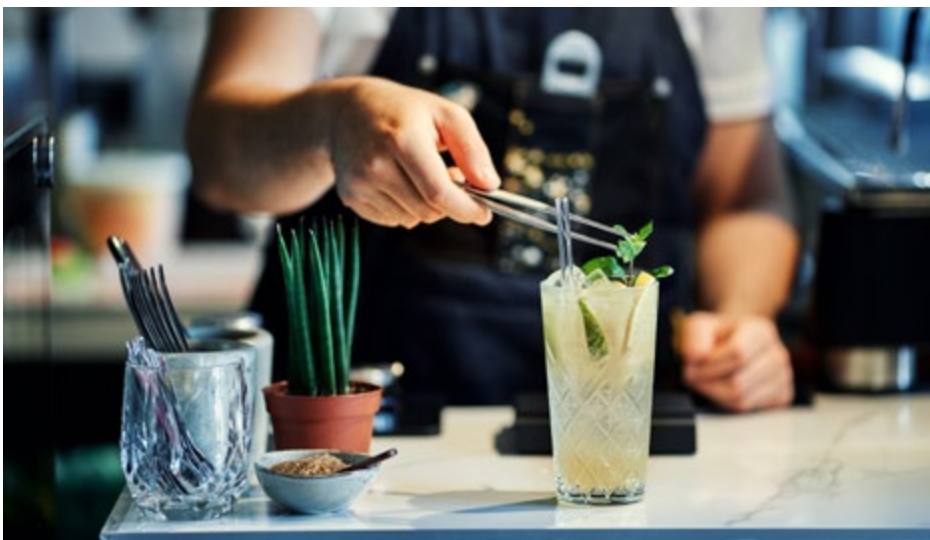
4. More romantic meals

On the OPUS rankings of secondary occasions, we have seen a rise of nearly two percentage points in romantic meals' share of visits. This may partly reflect the higher disposable incomes of couples compared to families.

5. Fewer special occasions

While romantic meals are up, special occasions have lost two percentage points of visits share this year. This is another result of the dip in celebratory mindsets after post-lockdown reopenings. However, with some consumers now reducing their trips to the On Premise, but seeking to make the most of their visits when they do go out, securing share of these special occasions will be crucial.

CGA client director Mark Jackson says: "COVID-19 has triggered some of the most significant changes in consumers' On Premise occasions that we have seen in years. From tempo to venues to dayparts, behaviour is in constant flux—and with the cost of living crisis biting, we can expect to see further shifts in the months ahead. It has never been more important for suppliers and operators to understand what consumers want from their visits and be quick and flexible in their responses."



"COVID-19 has triggered some of the most significant changes in consumers' On Premise occasions that we have seen in years. From tempo to venues to dayparts, behaviour is in constant flux - and with the cost of living crisis biting, we can expect to see further shifts in the months ahead."

HOSPA membership: For the professionals

With hospitality facing a new set of challenges each year, being part of an industry-wide support network can be an invaluable resource and provide a much-needed sense of togetherness, with functional advice available from some of the leading minds in the industry.

HOSPA recognises that in this fast-changing business world, with its constant advances in technology and best practices, it's more important than ever for professionals to keep abreast of the latest issues and developments in hospitality.

But what exactly does it mean to be a HOSPA member?

A recognised, industry-wide network

As part of the HOSPA community, members have access to an unrivalled network of hospitality professionals, whose knowledge, expertise and experience are available to all. This is facilitated by regular member meetings and networking events, including probably the most notable, the annual HOSPACE event. You will also have the opportunity to socialise with like minded individuals and professionals at social events such as invitation-only dinners with industry leaders — with the option to attend community-specific meetings that appeal to your interests, which ultimately help you stay informed, build your network and ensure you get the most out of your HOSPA membership.

Resources exclusively for members

Being a HOSPA member also grants you access to an array of exclusive resources, including the HOSPA e-newsletter, which allows you to keep updated on HOSPA's events and activities — as well as explore how sponsors and their wealth of experience could help you develop. There is a members' area of the

website packed with leading expertise on hot topics within the industry such as sustainability and technology. Meanwhile, you will also have access to searchable UK and international articles from the online library alongside a collection of industry-related blogs on the HOSPA website — offering another invaluable pool of information that can really take your business or your own personal journey to the next level. Discussion is a key element of HOSPA's ethos, with an understanding that often the best outcomes stem from a meeting of minds. With this in mind, members can also join exclusive online HOSPA communities and discussion forums, such as LinkedIn and Facebook, to share thoughts on current issues within the industry.

Developing your career

Exposure to best practices and the latest industry standards will help to ensure you keep up with the contemporary trends in hospitality — whilst also helping you grow as a professional. Professional development is key at HOSPA and in light of this,

Being a HOSPA member also grants you access to an array of exclusive resources, including the HOSPA e-newsletter, which allows you to keep updated on HOSPA's events and activities - as well as explore how sponsors and their wealth of experience could help you develop.

members have access to a wide range of CPD opportunities, debates, professional development workshops and HOSPACE — the association's conference and exhibition. The HOSPA Professional Education

programmes also provide hospitality-specific flexible learning courses in Finance, Revenue and Asset Management.

Find a membership that suits you

Member

As HOSPA's complimentary membership type, this caters for any individuals working in a leadership role within a hospitality business, such as Finance, Revenue Management, Technology, Sales, Marketing and HR — working on-site or at a head office. As a 'Member' you will have access to sponsored events, the members' portal and HOSPA events.

Fellow

The 'Fellow' membership is designed for those individuals working in senior operational roles within a hospitality business and ensures you stay connected and up to date with the industry — whilst fellowship also helps elevate your status within the sector, as a mark

of professionalism and seniority. For an annual cost of £165 + VAT, 'Fellow' members have access to sponsored events, the members portal, priority invitation to sponsored private events

and forums, and complimentary invitations to HOSPA events — as well as an exclusive Fellows event.

Associate

This membership is designed for consultants and suppliers who provide advice, services or goods to hospitality businesses and are not working in an operational role within a hospitality business. For an annual cost of £250 + VAT, the membership includes invitations to selected sponsored events, access to sponsored private events and forums by invitation only, access to HOSPA events for a nominal fee and access to the Fellows event by invitation only.

Student

The 'Student' membership is designed for anyone studying towards a qualification in hospitality, which can either be obtained via an application or as recommended by a college lecturer. Within the membership, you will have access to selected sponsored events, the members' portal, sponsored private events and forums by invitation only, HOSPA events at a nominal fee and the Fellows event by invitation only. 'Student' members will also receive regular newsletters to ensure they are up to date with HOSPA news and events.

Retired

This membership provides the opportunity for retired hospitality professionals to stay in touch with the industry after retirement and is only available to those who have previously been an active HOSPA member. This membership includes invitations to selected sponsored events, access to the members' portal, access to sponsored private events and forums by invitation only, access to HOSPA events for a nominal fee and access to the Fellows event by invitation only.

To find out more about becoming a HOSPA member and the endless benefits that come from being part of the industry's largest professional community, please visit: <https://www.hospa.org/membership-options>

The Overview Sponsors listings



Amadeus

Amadeus' award-winning portfolio of solutions equips hospitality organizations of all sizes with the technology needed to drive profitable demand, increase operational efficiency, and deliver memorable guest experiences.



BT

BT Wi-Fi has been at the forefront of BT Group's connectivity services since 2002. We are the UK's leader in wi-fi, with over 5.5 million public hotspots and more than 1.6 million daily users.



Eproductive

Eproductive provides EPS, the leading people management system for hotels. EPS gives hoteliers access to real-time information to improve productivity and control costs and, through the MyEPS app, enables better engagement with staff.



FreedomPay

The award-winning FreedomPay Commerce Platform operates on a single, unified technology stack across multiple continents allowing enterprises to deliver an innovative Next Level experience on a global scale.



Infor

Infor Hospitality provides end-to-end scalable cloud-based solutions to serve hotels including PMS, RMS, Room Pricing, Sales & Catering, financials and analytics. Your trusted hospitality tech partner.



Google

From bed and breakfasts to resorts, hundreds of millions of travelers around the world search for hotels on Google. Connect with them using our free and paid products, and watch bookings grow.

Continued on page 15 →

Get the message - creating loyalty through messaging

Here's what's happening at a traditional hotel in the early evening. The good news is that the hotel is busy; the bad news is there's a queue of guests waiting to check in.

The hotel has needed to employ fewer people so there is only one receptionist. He's staring intently into his computer, finding each guest's name, making sure their booking is authorised, checking them in, creating their room key and taking their credit card details.

This process is repeated again and again and the stress on his face is visible as the line of tired and disgruntled guests grows longer.

In spite of the rapid rise of contactless and automated solutions, this sad and unnecessary scene is still playing out in countless hotel lobbies around the world. Sad, because no one likes standing in line and no one likes performing repetitive tasks under pressure; unnecessary because almost everybody would much prefer to pre-register for their stay via their phones.

Our phones are now the fulcrum of our lives; we use them for a wide range of daily tasks, preferably without having to speak to anyone. Apps and messaging are how we stay informed and get things done, but some hotel businesses have been relatively slow to adopt them.

When it comes to messaging, particularly in the luxury segment where we operate, there can be concerns over maintaining brand standards when using a medium that is a) inherently informal (mostly used for chatting with friends and family) and b) easy to mistake for a chatbot.

Such concerns are entirely valid. Luxury brands do not want to risk alienating their loyal and high-paying clients with a clunky, robotic approach to important communications. So while we strongly believe in the power of guest



messaging, we fully understand that it has to be designed and deployed in an appropriate on-brand way.

There's a careful balance to strike. In our experience, it is possible to write plenty of automation, triggers and templated responses into the software, making life easy for employees, while still ensuring that the flow of communication is natural.

If a guest writes to the hotel in a formal style ('Dear Sir / Madam ...') then the hotel's response should mirror that email-style formality. If the guest makes an informal enquiry ('Yo! What time's the pool open? Smiley face'), then the hotel response should, again, mirror the guest's style, include the same smiley face and perhaps add an image of a swimmer diving into the pool to keep things fun.

Staff can even be trained to drop in the occasional deliberate mistake ('sorry I meant to say ...'). This helps to

dispel any doubts guests may have that they are dealing with a real person, and has proven to actually increase positive impressions and engagement.

Hotel owners and operators might assume they need to employ someone specifically to deal with the volume of messages. However, messages do not create an extra burden on staff. In fact, it's the opposite.

Compared to telephone or in-person exchanges, messaging is far less time-consuming. A call from a single guest to book a round of golf, a spa treatment and a restaurant reservation can tie up a receptionist for twenty minutes, whereas the same receptionist could easily have five queries or conversations running concurrently on WhatsApp during the same timeframe. We all know this from personal experience!

Auto-translation is another key feature of messaging that's positive for guests who receive answers to their requests quickly and in the language of their choice. It's also good for hotel labour schedules and costs. When communication was mostly telephone-based, luxury resorts needed to employ staff who could cover several languages between them. That's no longer necessary.

I recently spoke to the CIO of one of our most longstanding clients, Four Seasons and Resorts. Marco Trecroce told me that messaging is a technology investment that has particularly resonated with his guests.

He said: "It's actually conversational and once you've moved into the conversational, it completely changes the dynamic and the interaction you have with the guests. The key is making a true connection and once you have

that, they stay very loyal to the brand.”

“Our guests satisfaction scores are substantially higher,” he continued. “I think messaging really has made a material difference: the ability to connect in your local language, the consistency around the world that you can travel and leverage the application and technology regardless of where you are. It emulates what we do today and everything in our conversations with our families and how our children communicate. It really is the way of the world.”

So, returning to our traditional hotel lobby. How many of those guests standing in line will stay loyal? Not many. They will consider trying another hotel brand the next time they travel.

Such needless guest attrition could easily be avoided by sending a well-designed and friendly text message to guests on their preferred platform before they arrive, inviting them to check in online and asking how they would like to tailor their stay.

About the author

Tristan is the co-founder and CEO of Alliants and has spent his career focusing on using technology to make companies and industries more seamless and accessible to consumers. Alliants helps high-end hotels deliver on their luxury promise and was conceived while Tristan was a director at Opodo.

Tristan has made his home in the sector, and through Alliants, is helping hotels embrace a new way to deliver exceptional service. A frequent speaker at industry events, he has also contributed to research on transforming the hotel experience through technology, the role of messaging in enhancing the customer experience and reshaping the future of hospitality.

Tristan has sought to innovate throughout his working life, having built a successful startup in the education sector before spending 10 years at Accenture working with companies including Prudential, American Express and British Airways. He worked on the Travelport IPO and consulted on the Avis Digital Transformation, Four Seasons Digital Experience and Samsung Digital Strategy.

He has three great kids, loves to sail and enjoys a dark chocolate Digestive.

The Overview Sponsors listings



Percipient

Percipient’s cloud-based finance solutions are ideally suited to the hospitality sector, helping hoteliers to improve efficiency and drive innovation from the heart of the business.



Yooz

Yooz provides the smartest, most powerful and easiest-to-use cloud-based Purchase-to-Pay (P2P) automation solution. It delivers unmatched savings, speed and security with affordable zero-risk subscriptions.



Alliants

Alliants has helped some of the world’s most respected luxury hotel brands transform their entire digital guest journey to deliver exceptional customer experiences.



RMS

The fastest growing Property Management System in the world, RMS Cloud is renowned for leading technology solutions for the global hospitality industry.



Agilysys

Agilysys is known for its long heritage of hospitality-focused technology innovation. The Company delivers modular and integrated software solutions and expertise to businesses seeking to maximize Return on Experience through personal and profitable hospitality encounters.



IDEAS | PEOPLE | TRUST

BDO

BDO’s Leisure and Hospitality team provides accountancy and business advisory expertise. Our experienced specialists understand the unique challenges and opportunities that hotels, restaurants and bars face.

Continued on page 19 →

When will it end?

Daniel Fryer, mental health and wellbeing expert, thinks shift work requires a shift in thinking.

One hot Saturday afternoon at the height of summer, I was enjoying a late lunch with friends in a great barbecue restaurant overlooking Bristol harbour. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given its location and the weather, it was very busy. But our waiter, even though he was clearly rushed off his feet, still found time to be amiable. I asked him how much longer his shift was. "I don't know," was his weary reply. I enquired as to why. "That's hospitality, isn't it?" he said, and went on to explain why it was common to be expected to work until the work was done, or until you were told you could finish up and go.

In hospitality (as well as many other sectors), 12-hour shifts are common, and eight-hour working days are de rigueur everywhere but, shifts of indeterminate duration? That's new, isn't it?

Also, it's not good for anybody's mental health and wellbeing. Mind you, neither are our current working patterns. But have you ever wondered why we work the shifts that we do?

Those 12-hour shifts (or longer) are actually throwbacks to the Industrial Revolution, when factories needed to be kept running 24/7 and labour laws were few and far between.

The eight-hour day or 40-hour working week was a social movement fighting to get away from the excesses and abuses that workers of the time were subject to. Although the eight-hour day began in 16th-century Spain, the modern movement here in the UK began a few hundred years later.

In 1817, Welsh textile manufacturer and philanthropist Robert Owen coined the slogan "eight hours labour, eight hours recreation, eight hours rest," as a backlash against working patterns designed to keep those factories going both day and night. And so, the notion of a 40-hour working week was born. We've been stuck with it ever since.

In fact, many people the world over

are working much longer than that, which is why work stress is the number one cause of staff absenteeism. So much for that predicted technological liberation.

However, in the same world over, countries and organisations are turning towards the idea and benefits of the four-day working week (common to many people working those 12-hour shifts but not in a good way).

In fact, 70 companies (involving over 3,000 employees) here in the UK signed up to a four-day working week trial at the beginning of June.

The pilot, which runs for six months, has been organised by the 4 Day Week Global in partnership with the thinktank Autonomy, the 4 Day Week

not only our wellness but also our sense of purpose. With that in mind, what interests me more than the current trial, however, is a previous study that found that when it comes to our mental health wellbeing, we only need to work eight hours a week.

Yes, you read that right.

The 2019 study, published in Social Science & Medicine, found that working just eight hours a week was enough to gain the wellbeing benefits of full-time employment and that happiness and wellbeing did not increase alongside hours. Simply put, people working eight hours a week felt just as happy as (if not happier than) those working a full 40-hour week or more. And they felt

"We'll be analysing how employees respond to having an extra day off, in terms of stress and burnout, job and life satisfaction, health, sleep, energy use, travel, and many other aspects of life,"

Campaign, together with researchers at Cambridge University, Oxford University, and Boston College.

The trial is based on a 100:80:100 model, which means that workers will receive 100 percent of pay for 80 percent of the time, in exchange for maintaining 100 percent productivity.

Juliet Schor, a professor of sociology at Boston College and lead researcher on the pilot (which rolls out soon in Spain and Scotland), described it as an historic trial. "We'll be analysing how employees respond to having an extra day off, in terms of stress and burnout, job and life satisfaction, health, sleep, energy use, travel, and many other aspects of life," she said.

Work stress, workplace wellbeing and burnout are of particular interest to me and so I will be looking forward to the results of the trial. After all, we are told often that work is essential to

that their contributions to society were just as meaningful.

Whilst I'm not saying that the hospitality industry (or any industry for that matter) should only employ people for eight hours a week, I am sure the sector can do better than archaic 12-hour shifts and the more modern phenomenon of shifts where you don't know when it's going to end.

Daniel Fryer is a mental health and wellbeing expert and founder of the workplace wellness consultancy How To Be. He uses rational emotive behaviour therapy (REBT), positive psychology and hypnotherapy to help people achieve their goals. Daniel is the author of *The Four Thoughts That F*ck You Up (and how to fix them)*, published by Penguin Random House. He is currently figuring out how to work just eight hours a week.



Centelli

IMPROVE EMPLOYEE MORALE. SAVE MONEY. CLOCK OUT BY 5PM.

A happy workforce that's also great for the bottom line... seems too good to be true, right? Hardly, but it does require the right resources and team behind the process. **Meet Centelli & their Digital Workers.**



Centelli solves pressing challenges in the hospitality sector by designing and deploying digital workers that are able to execute repetitive and mundane tasks which in turn frees up current staff members to execute tasks that require more cognitive thinking.

For Hotel groups, we automate:

- Reservation / cancellation / amendment processing of different OTAs
- Advanced booking deposits
- Rate management
- Back-office processes like commission management, staff onboarding, invoice processing and vendor creation

For Restaurant groups, we automate:

- Reporting across multiple sites
- OpenTable Reporting
- End of Day Reconciliations
- Onboarding of Staff

We work with organisations such as Village Hotels, GLH Hotels, Ivy Collection, Jurys Inn, Dalata Hotels, Soho House and many others.

Centelli is able to transform the guest experience while driving revenue growth, increasing efficiency across the organisation and improving the employee experience.

Digital Workers:

- Automate routine, repetitive tasks
- Free up employees to focus on the guest
- Work 24/7

Digital Workers can work on any business process where you could have a person operating it, as well as work with any **business application and PMS** (including Opera/Clock/Stayintouch).

Centelli is an Oracle Certified Integration Partner and has it's own connector to OPERA.



THE OVERVIEW MAGAZINE SUBSCRIBERS RECEIVE A FREE DISCOVERY WORKSHOP.

Scan the QR code and meet with a member of the Centelli team to see how much time and money you can save by using a Digital Workforce.



Centelli

SALES@CENTELLI.COM



Tipping point reached for discretionary service charges by RSM UK

The government has recently confirmed it will support legislation obligating employers to allocate all tips to workers.

Many service workers in the hospitality sector rely on tips to supplement their incomes, but there is evidence that a large number of businesses that add a discretionary 'service charge' to their bills keep the money instead of giving it to their staff.

What will the Bill do?

The premise of the Bill is that 100 per cent of tips must go to the workers.

In its current form, the Bill introduces a statutory code of practice (to be designed by BEIS) that will promote fairness and transparency over the allocation of 'qualifying' tips, and that all stakeholders (unions, employers, trade bodies and professional advisers) will be invited to contribute to its design. The code will first be published as guidance and consulted on before the relevant sections of the legislation come into force.

The Bill will create a legal obligation for employers that either receive tips directly from customers, or that have control or significant influence over the distribution of tips that workers receive directly, to distribute tips to workers fairly and transparently. The obligation will apply to the total amount of the qualifying tips paid at, or otherwise attributable to, an employer's place of business. The tips must be allocated fairly between workers at that place of business. So, in the case of a chain, the tips will be distributed to everyone who works at a particular venue, rather than across the whole chain.

However, the Bill will not cover

The Bill will create a legal obligation for employers that either receive tips directly from customers, or that have control or significant influence over the distribution of tips that workers receive directly, to distribute tips to workers fairly and transparently.

instances where the customer gives a tip directly to the employee, unless that tip was paid via credit card, or where the employees have a tip jar.

The Bill will also prohibit employers from making deductions from tips, including credit card payment processing fees.

Who will it apply to?

It will apply to employees and workers but not the self-employed.

What about tronc systems?

The Bill will not regulate the operators of independent tronc systems; however, it will introduce the right for workers to bring a claim to an employment tribunal if they believe the employer's use of the tronc system is unfair.

How will it be enforced?

Workers may bring a claim to the

employment tribunal if they do not believe their employer is complying with the code, or not maintaining sufficient records regarding their tipping practices. Employment tribunals must have regard to the provisions of the code of practice when determining whether an allocation of tips or the making of certain tronc arrangements is fair.

The employment tribunal will have the power to:

- revise the allocation of tips the employer has made;
- recommend the employer deals with tips in a certain way; or
- require the employer to make a payment to one or more of the workers so that they receive the tips they should have received.

In addition, the employment tribunal will have the power to compensate workers by up to £5,000 for financial loss attributable to a breach of the provisions, or if the employer has failed to keep sufficient records relating to tipping practices.

What about the taxation of gratuities and tips?

Nothing in the Bill will make changes to taxation for employers and employees.

Issues the code will need to address

The code will have to address the rules around allocating tips among workers. For example, must tips be shared equally

among all workers, or will certain roles (such as waiters in the hotel restaurant) be entitled to a greater share? And what about the allocation of tips for those working part time? Will that be on a pro rata basis?

In addition, while tips have been excluded from the obligation to pay National Minimum Wage since 2009, could such legislation create an additional holiday pay liability because the allocation of tips will more likely meet the definition of 'normal remuneration' to count towards holiday pay? If so, that will further increase the cost for some businesses – perhaps unfairly, if they have no control over the size of the gratuity paid by customers to workers.

What should affected hotels be doing now?

During its second reading in the House of Commons, the Bill received wide cross-party support. With a fair wind, indications are that it could become legislation within the next 12 months.

However, it still requires a third reading in the House of Commons and must pass through the House of Lords. The statutory code will also need to pass through both houses before the enacting legislation commences. A 12-month timeframe is therefore ambitious, particularly with a recent change of Prime Minister.

For the time being, affected employers may want to take a wait and see approach to see how the Bill progresses through the Houses of Parliament. Should it gather momentum, though, employers will need to turn their attention to any draft statutory guidance that is published and consider what steps they can take to prepare for the change.

If you have any concerns about how this change may impact your organisation, please contact:

Article written by:

Charlie Barnes

Legal Services Director
RSM UK

E: charlie.barnes@rsmuk.com

T: +44 (0)1256 486830

All information correct as of submission date on 7 September 2022.

The Overview Sponsors listings



Bizzon

Bizzon is transforming the hospitality industry with the most agile end-to-end restaurant management platform for hotels. By minimising the need for integrations, we typically replace POS, digital 'order and pay' and payment gateway with one solution.



Centelli

Centelli

Centelli is an award-winning automation services provider to the hospitality industry. Village Hotels, Jurys Inn, GLH Hotels, and Ivy Group are just a few companies using automation to transform guest experiences while increasing organisational efficiency.



Elavon

Elavon, a leading global payments company and U.S. Bank subsidiary with more than 1.5 million customers, enables all types of businesses to accept payments from customers.



Euronet

Euronet Merchant Services offers a specialised range of innovative services, including card acceptance, DCC solutions, tax refund, consolidated payment services, reporting, accounting, and management functions.



Crave

Crave Interactive are expert in creating outstanding digital guest service solutions for hotels worldwide. Our solutions delight guests, increase sales and reduce costs and are either delivered on in-room tablets, guest mobile, web or kiosks.



IDEAS

IDEAS, a SAS company, is the world's leading provider of revenue management software and services. Forecast accurately, price confidently and achieve greater profitability fast with the latest in automated, advanced data science technology.

Continued on page 21 →

Making your hotel coherent

Martin Chevalley, founder & CEO of InnSpire, answers questions on integrating technology with service to maximise revenue for your property and experience for your guests.

Why, in these straitened times, should I make this investment?

"The main reason to invest in technology is to create a seamless, integrated guest experience which allows you to drive added revenue, while also reducing expenses.

"In terms of costs, you need fewer employees and your available staff can be more efficient. In terms of offering a better experience, you can add in activities, food and beverage; anything you have at your hotel or resort that drives both revenue and guest satisfaction. For example, F&B spend typically increases by between 20% and 25%."

Is it difficult for the team and guests to use?

"It's very accessible and it's very graphical. We're on the television, but we're also on the app. You could be ordering on your phone, from the beach or from the pool, and orders are delivered to you wherever you are. So, when you order on the beach, it tells the kitchen exactly who you are and a map will even drop a pin, so servers know where to deliver your order.

"The ease of use then helps to drive orders. Before this, servers had to be looking around to see who wanted to order, which is a tedious process. Now the orders just come in, which drives revenue, and adds tips with more orders, saving time and making it easier for guests to order.

"There is also a marketing aspect. It's on TV, so with a larger picture, the F&B items offered look excellent. It's making recommendations, so it might just be as simple as that it reminds you that you're hungry. Then you start looking at the menu and ordering.



"It's built around upselling. It's a learning system, so it learns how people are using it and makes recommendations based on that, although initially we set it up with a sommelier making the selections. People tend to add more items to their bill because it's so easy.

"It's also nonintrusive. No-one is pushing you to get a glass of wine. It's just there and it sounds good, and you click it. We work with a lot of luxury hotels and resort hotels, and people tend to be in the mood to splash out when they're on those breaks. We make that easier.

"We see ourselves as an integration powerhouse, tying different technologies and products together. So as a guest, you're not realising that you're integrating with maybe 20 different technologies. You're checking in, you're getting your key, you're opening your door, you're ordering food, you're setting the temperature in your room, you're turning on the lights, you're turning on the TV, you're casting, it's a whole myriad of different technologies that you're dealing with. But all you deal with is your phone. It's seamless and super easy."

Do you cover the whole guest journey or just the stay?

"As soon as there is a booking, you will receive an email or an SMS saying, 'Hey, welcome to X hotel click this link to start the experience'. That opens in a web-based version of the app because we don't believe that, at this early stage, few people are interested in actually downloading an app before they know the value of it. The web-based version looks like an app, but it's actually just in the browser.

"You have all the information, all the pre-bookings and experiences and we have an agenda where you can drag and drop options. Let's say that you're planning to go scuba diving and you want to have dinner on the beach, you can build your own schedule. This creates value for the guests because they're going to enjoy their stay more, but at the same time, it's giving the hotel all these upsell opportunities.

"So, the experience starts at that stage and then it continues, even as you're approaching the hotel. For example, when you land at the airport, that can be geo-fenced, so it can trigger and say, 'welcome to this airport, your car is waiting for you outside' or 'take this boat or take this plane or take the taxi'. While you're on your way, you can check in by scanning your passport and retrieving your booking. The solution will then pull that reservation up and guest can check in and if the hotel has a smart door lock system, then will even access to the key - all before you arrive."

How are luxury hotels adapting to this changing view of service?

"There was resistance before the pandemic, but this has shifted. Because

you have already checked in by the time you arrive, that means that the staff, instead of hiding behind the desk and typing at their keyboard all day long, can be out in the lobby and greeting guests. They might even recognise guests, because they know what they look like from the check-in process. I think it will be more personal rather than less so."

There are lots of these products on the market. Why you?

"There are many products in the space that are scattered and they do only one thing. They may do a door lock integration, they may have an F&B service, somebody might have a TV system. But if you were to buy all of these, you would get the most incoherent and disconnected experience ever.

"And that's what it's been like in hotels, the TV is not the same as the app or the door lock, or where you order food, it's just different ways. And it's just very confusing for the guests. We are on the opposite spectrum of that, as we are a 360-degree solution, which means that we do all the above in one seamless package.

"But not everyone is ready for that leap. That's why we're working with key groups to grow with them. It's very modular, like Lego. You can pick and choose what you need and you can start anywhere. You need a TV system right now, next year, an app or the year to enhance your Wi-Fi. We do all these things, but always with one basic system at the foundation of it.

"We keep growing and we keep integrating, I believe we are different from others because we don't want to grow too much, and we don't want every customer. We believe in aligning with like-minded hoteliers and groups that share our vision of a seamless guest journey, resulting in extraordinary service and convenience.

We want to stay small and nimble and grow together with our clients and partners – as they grow and evolve and as they add new hotels and have new needs. That's how we grow. We really are a comprehensive platform that keeps evolving, both in terms of integration and also in terms of front end."

The Overview Sponsors listings



HotStats

HotStats' reporting platform measures performance across more than 500 KPIs of revenue, expense and profit. Don't you owe it to your hotel?
www.hotstats.com



Nonius

Nonius provides the most complete Guest Technology solutions portfolio for a Digital Guest Journey. All solutions are built in-house allowing highly integrated and competitive offers.



Oracle

Oracle Hospitality brings over 40 years of experience in providing technology solutions to independent hoteliers, global and regional chains, gaming, and cruise lines.



Profitroom

The award-winning Profitroom platform is more than just a highly converting booking engine - it's a user-focussed, powerful marketing automation tool, advanced channel manager and website builder all in one.



Sky

Sky provides unrivalled entertainment to a wide variety of commercial premises across the UK and Ireland. From unmissable live sport, entertainment and breaking news, to the best drama, comedy and documentaries.



Aruba

Aruba is redefining wired, wireless and WAN access for today's intelligent edge mobility and IoT requirements in the global hospitality industry.







Continued on page 25 →



TIERNEYS
When IT Matters

HOSPITALITY IT EXPERTS

HARDWARE : NETWORKING : SOFTWARE : SUPPORT : HOSPITALITY SOLUTIONS

-  MSP (Managed Service Providers)
-  IT Hardware and Networking
-  Hospitality Point of Sale Solutions
-  Microsoft 365 Suite
-  Guest Wi-Fi
-  IT Security



Events customers bear cost rises

Peter Heath, managing director, Venue Performance, has yet to see an impact from cost inflation on demand in the sector.

"At the moment the sector is facing a very challenging time. Everything is flying at everybody all at the same time.

"You have the issues in the supply chain: the cost of food, the availability of food and the same can be said for people. You have what will be the end of the pent-up demand, that will probably come at the end of the year when venues stop allowing people to roll over delayed events.

"And we have this new ugly thing on the horizon with energy prices. At the moment it doesn't appear to be hitting the events sector. I don't think events are going to be that affected in terms of bills, but there might be a long tail in terms of a fall in demand from companies planning internal events who find they just don't have the money to put any on. As we know, when there's a tough economy the first things to go are marketing, PR and events, because they are perceived to be a 'nice to have'.

"People know that it's a good



but they are slowing. The frenzy is abating. And things will calm down. At the moment the numbers are way above what they should be compared to before the pandemic.

"You have the issues in the supply chain: the cost of food, the availability of food and the same can be said for people. You have what will be the end of the pent-up demand, that will probably come at the end of the year when venues stop allowing people to roll over delayed events. And we have this new ugly thing on the horizon with energy prices.

thing, meeting face to face. Seeing your customers, your colleagues, your partners, your stakeholders, shaking hands or bumping elbows, how can that not be a good fit? But it's intangible, it's hard to put a value on unless you can come back with deals signed.

"There is still an appetite for bookings,

"We are seeing prices rise, but we are also still seeing people paying them, because we are still in a period of huge demand. The danger is that everybody is getting used to this period of gorging, but it's not sustainable. Everybody needs to calm down a bit.

"We also need to get used to having

less staff, which probably means that there is a need to invest a bit more in tech.

"If you're very smart, you will do some process investigation and realise that actually a lot of your staff were being paid to do lots of very dull tasks that computers should be doing - and would do better.

"One of these would be instant book, for example. So the small, simple meetings for 10 people should be 'click, credit card, click book, turn up, job done'. You don't have to phone people up, send emails, get requests for proposals, you could just do it through tech.

"A bit of investment will mean that you are then less reliant on manual tasks and processes, less reliant on junior people that cost time and money. Tech should be a saviour for the industry. Should."

Venue Performance provides whole market trends that enable you to instantly compare the key metrics of your establishment with the sector in general.

But the real power and value is unleashed when you compare your venue's performance with that of your competitors. From this competitive data set Venue Performance generates:

A unique set of competitive benchmarking metrics specific to your business

Forward bookings intelligence and historic performance data

Performance Radar™ (a revolutionary tool that immediately surfaces areas of performance that stand out and deserve further attention)

Dealing with the staffing crisis

One of the things about working in Hospitality for decades is that I have lived through many staffing crises but this one is as bad as I've ever seen it.

Over the past few years we have had three big hits to contend with:

Brexit

In March this year a report by the Office for National Statistics said that almost 100,000 EU Nationals had left jobs in Hospitality in the two years to June 2021, the highest level of any industry.

Covid

Many staff left Hospitality and are not coming back.

Inflation

A recent Barclays report highlighted a 7% wage increase this year across Hospitality whilst there are currently 400,000 vacancies.

The result is desperation amongst some operators with golden hellos, poaching, restaurants staying closed, hotel rooms not being let etc. So, what can operators do to help deal with all this doom and gloom? I think there is much that can be done to alleviate the situation!

There are two sides to the staffing coin – the demand side - staff required, and



the supply side - staff available. Here are several things you can do on each side of that coin to make a real difference.

Firstly, on the demand side, where the aim is to minimise the staff required:

1. Effective scheduling – forecast at a granular level, by department and by shift and schedule accordingly. Really understand the numbers that your people management system is giving you, even

invest in a 'staffing analyst' – I'm always surprised that many Hospitality groups have well developed disciplines for managing other cost centres e.g. food & drink, utilities, property, etc but not for their biggest cost and driver of customer satisfaction – staff!

2. Remove tasks – many companies are looking hard at all aspects of their customer offer to see what is still relevant.

3. Improve process - through more automation in kitchens, admin, cleaning etc. Removing repetitive work allows staff to focus on added value activity e.g. customer interaction / upselling.

On the supply side, here are three things to maximise output from existing staff:

1. Focus on developing and retaining your core group - which I see as the 'one-year stayers' - through training, promotion, rewards etc. For example, some companies now offer free healthcare insurance for this key staff group, which can be surprisingly cost effective. Report regularly on the percentage of core staff by department to emphasise their importance to the business.

2. Engage with all existing staff - build your tribe, people work for people. Be visible as a leadership team, in person and virtually through your staff's mobiles. When staff go to your app regularly to see their rota, holidays, pay, contract details etc you can also engage them with company updates, promo videos etc. Many companies are putting a real focus on wellbeing, particularly good mental health.

3. Improve the productivity of existing staff. Benchmarking is a huge opportunity - why can one hotel clean a



room in x minutes when another hotel with a similar profile in the same group takes y minutes? Why can one restaurant serve x covers per productive hour at the lunch daypart whereas another can only serve y?

And finally, here are three things you can do to recruit new staff – again to maximise the supply side:

1. Align customer marketing to that of staff marketing. Attract and engage with new staff using the same professionalism, techniques, multiple channels etc that you use to attract and engage with customers. Just as we segment the market and personalise offers for customers, we need to do the same for staff.

2. When advertising for new staff don't over ask for qualifications, as people may be put off applying for a role because they don't think they are qualified when they may well be excellent candidates.

3. Use the visa sponsorship scheme - <https://www.gov.uk/uk-visa-sponsorship-employers>

I know several Hospitality companies that are recruiting kitchen and FOH staff through the visa sponsorship scheme – it's complicated but you should get years of loyalty.

Sum up

The effective delivery of your offer to customers during the ongoing staffing crisis requires both sides of the coin to be managed through minimising the staff required whilst maximising the output from existing staff and recruiting new staff. This will be achieved through a combination of the hard stuff – really understanding and working your staffing numbers, together with the softer stuff – attracting and engaging with staff. The right approaches and systems will help you to do both.

About the author

Chris Cows MBE is Chief Executive of Eproductive Ltd, provider of EPS, the leading People Management System for hotels. He is also a HOSPA Director and Visiting Professor at the University of Surrey's School of Hospitality & Tourism Management.

The Overview Sponsors listings



Keystep

Keystep Solutions is a global supplier of commercial access control solutions, specialising in contactless electronic locks, digital key and access management systems for Hotels and Resorts.



PPM Support

PPM Support are highly experienced in providing bespoke packages for warehouse solutions, storage and Stock management, photographic inventories, as well as transport solutions and supply chain management.



RSM

RSM is a global provider of audit, tax and consulting services. Our specialist teams work with international hotel brands, family-run boutiques, serviced holiday accommodation providers and holiday resorts.



CRS CRM RMS

SHR

SHR delivers solutions for hotels to improve guest satisfaction at each touchpoint – from marketing to booking to check-in to post-stay follow-up – while maximizing revenue every step of the way.



Tierney's

Tierney's provide a trusted and reputable range of IT solutions, support and consultancy services to the International Hotel, Restaurant and Leisure industry across the UK and Ireland.



LiBi

LiBi - Love it. Buy it - is an innovative, new ecommerce platform that makes hotels shoppable - a stock and hassle-free incremental revenue stream.

Continued on page 29 →

International Payments Made Simple...

With a market leading All in One payment solution, Euronet Merchant Services provides:

- Merchant Acquiring
- Dynamic Currency Conversion
- Tax Refund Services

Consolidate your client payment services with one supplier, reduce your business costs and enhance your client experience.

OUR PAYMENT SOLUTION SUPPORTS:



+44 (0) 7775 764418 | euronetmerchantservices.com | zshepherd@euronetworldwide.com

Nothing lasts forever.

“I keep predicting the death of Mag Card, but hoteliers just won’t turn off life support, so it’s been taken out of their hands by the electronic lock suppliers”

The receptionist greets you with a smile; you listen to the usual details of times for breakfast, the gym opening times and head off to your room impressed with the efficient and welcoming reception staff. The glass lift wafts you effortlessly up to your floor and you wander down a contemporary corridor to your executive room. You push the key card into the lock and all you get is the red light, you try a couple more times and then resign yourself to the long walk back to reception, the illusion of luxury shattered!

Sound familiar? Is the “you must have put the key card next to your phone excuse?” from the reception staff wearing thin? What sort of door system can’t cope with a mobile phone being next to the key card you ask yourself? The answer is a door locking system that is 25 years old. The classic magnetic card is a dangerously insecure and needs to be replaced and the manufacturers have stopped making the locks so you can’t get spares. Mag Card can’t go fast enough for the guests; hoteliers are operating on borrowed time.

For a decade I have been predicting the end of mag card, but it just never seems to happen. I thought Covid would tip everyone over the edge, but I was wrong. So, what Covid couldn’t do the electronic

For a decade I have been predicting the end of mag card, but it just never seems to happen. I thought Covid would tip everyone over the edge, but I was wrong.

lock suppliers have done and they have all ended support for mag card systems. This has left many hoteliers in a precarious position with lock systems that are decades old, no spare parts and no support.

Although there have been massive leaps in the technology the magnetic key card is still king and used by most hotels in the UK. The reason being that it is incredibly expensive to change every lock in a hotel for a newer system and will continue to be a barrier to advances such as guests using their mobile phone to open their hotel rooms.

The next generation of hotel door locking solutions such as “Opendoor” enables the use of guests Smartphone’s to gain door entry. The Locks read keycards and guests Smartphone’s without the need for any direct contact with the lock itself. For guests weary of long queues at reception after a lengthy journey or business travellers on a tight schedule, Smartphone Access to their rooms is the silver bullet that can allow them to save vital time and ensure their satisfaction.

If you think guests don’t care about the locks on the bedroom doors, during a recent installation of our “Opendoor” Lock Solution regular guests started asking for rooms that had been converted to our RFID locks as there were so fed up with the old Mag Card locks failing. From a guest satisfaction point of view, it really made a difference to them!

In the past one large global company has dominated the door locking sector with magnetic card lock systems, but with no easy upgrade to RFID and eye watering costs they have lost their hold on the sector. More agile and service driven companies like Keystep Solutions have taken the lead in developing RFID

solutions from the ground up instead of clinging to the past.

The industry is about to be forced to deal with some challenges that have been ignored for the last decade, failing legacy mag card systems with no upgrade path, the end of support for Windows 7 and rising guest expectations means that operators who have managed with their old mag card system will almost find it impossible to operate their hotels within the next 2 years if they don’t make the move to the next generation of RFID locks. Senior decision makers need to start planning for the capital expenditure and implementations they will have to carry out over the next few years.

Keystep Solutions was the first lock supplier to fit the Bluetooth Board as standard in RFID locks, meaning that hoteliers who had installed our Opendoor Solution are ready to upgrade to “Digital Key” without having to upgrade the locks. If you are serious about guest satisfaction and streamlining your “check in” process Keystep Solutions should be your first point of call.

With our new “beaconing Digital Key App” guests don’t even have to get their phone out of their pocket to open the door. As the guest approaches the door the lock is opened automatically. In the long term as the guest enters the room, they will find their room amenities such as lighting, window shades, room temperature, music and TV. will be set to meet their preferences. Often called “building intelligence,” these capabilities deliver a much smarter guest experience.

About the author

Andrew Evans is the Chief Executive Officer of Keystep Solutions who are the leading supplier of locking solutions to the Hotel Sector with a comprehensive range of intelligent locking and security solutions. Our clients include a selection of the largest groups, as well as many smaller independent operators. If you would like more information please contact us on: sales@keystep.co.uk

International tourism recovering, despite looming challenges

According to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, international tourism saw a strong rebound in the first five months of 2022, with almost 250 million international arrivals recorded. This compares to 77 million arrivals from January to May 2021 and means that the sector has recovered almost half (46%) of pre-pandemic 2019 levels.

“The recovery of tourism has gathered pace in many parts of the world, weathering the challenges standing in its way”, said UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili. At the same time, he also advises caution in view of the “economic headwinds and geopolitical challenges which could impact the sector in the remainder of 2022 and beyond”.

Europe and Americas lead recovery

Europe welcomed more than four times as many international arrivals as in the first five months of 2021 (+350%), boosted by strong intra-regional demand and the removal of all travel restrictions in a growing number of countries. The region saw particularly robust performance in April (+458%), reflecting a busy Easter period. In the Americas, arrivals more than doubled (+112%). However, the strong rebound is measured against weak results in 2021 and arrivals remain overall 36% and 40% below 2019 levels in both regions, respectively.

The recovery of tourism has gathered pace in many parts of the world, weathering the challenges standing in its way.

The same pattern is seen across other regions. The strong growth in the Middle East (+157%) and Africa (+156%) remained 54% and 50% below 2019

levels respectively, and Asia and the Pacific almost doubled arrivals (+94%), though numbers were 90% below 2019, as some borders remained closed to non-essential travel. Here, the recent easing of restrictions can be seen in improved results for April and May.

Looking at subregions, several have recovered between 70% and 80% of their pre-pandemic levels, led by

is now at 70% to 85% of pre-pandemic levels, while spending from India, Saudi Arabia and Qatar has already exceeded 2019 levels.

In terms of international tourism receipts earned in destinations, a growing number of countries - the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Seychelles, Romania, North Macedonia, Saint Lucia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Albania, Pakistan,

According to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the overall reduction in international air capacity in 2022 will be limited to 20% to 25% of seats offered by airlines as compared to 2019. Such resilience is also reflected in hotel occupancy rates.

the Caribbean and Central America, followed by Southern Mediterranean, Western and Northern Europe. It is noteworthy that some destinations surpassed 2019 levels, including US Virgin Islands, St. Maarten, the Republic of Moldova, Albania, Honduras and Puerto Rico.

Tourism spending also rising

Rising tourism spending out of the major source markets is consistent with the observed recovery. International expenditure by tourists from France, Germany, Italy and the United States

Sudan, Türkiye, Bangladesh, El Salvador, Mexico, Croatia and Portugal – have fully recovered their pre-pandemic levels.

Defying mounting challenges

Strong demand during the Northern Hemisphere summer season is expected to consolidate these positive results, particularly as more destinations ease or lift travel restrictions. As of 22 July, 62 destinations (of which 39 in Europe) had no COVID-19 related restrictions in place and an increasing number of destinations in Asia have started to ease theirs.

According to the International Civil

Aviation Organization (ICAO), the overall reduction in international air capacity in 2022 will be limited to 20% to 25% of seats offered by airlines as compared to 2019. Such resilience is also reflected in hotel occupancy rates. Based on data from the industry benchmarking firm STR, global occupancy rates climbed to 66% in June 2022, from 43% in January.

However, stronger than expected demand has created significant operational and workforce challenges, while the war in Ukraine, rising inflation and interest rates, as well as fears of an economic slowdown continue to pose a risk to recovery. The International Monetary Fund points to a global economic slowdown from 6.1% in 2021 to 3.2% in 2022 and then to 2.9% in 2023. At the same time, UNWTO continues to work closely with the World Health Organisation (WHO) to monitor the pandemic as well as emerging public health emergencies and their potential impact on travel.

Regional Scenarios for 2022

UNWTO's forward-looking scenarios published in May 2022 point to international arrivals reaching 55% to 70% of pre-pandemic levels in 2022. Results depend on evolving circumstances, mostly changing travel restrictions, ongoing inflation, including high energy prices, and overall economic conditions, the evolution of the war in Ukraine, as well as the health situation related to the pandemic. More recent challenges such as staff shortages, severe airport congestion and flight delays and cancellations could also impact international tourism numbers.

Scenarios by region show Europe and Americas recording the best tourism results in 2022, while Asia and the Pacific is expected to lag behind due to more restrictive travel policies. International tourist arrivals in Europe could climb to 65% or 80% of 2019 levels in 2022, depending on various conditions, while in the Americas they could reach 63% to 76% of those levels.

In Africa and the Middle East arrivals could reach about 50% to 70% of pre-pandemic levels, while in Asia and the Pacific they would remain at 30% of 2019 levels in the best-case scenario, due to stricter policies and restrictions.

The Overview Sponsors listings



Wifirst

Wifirst provides Fully Managed WiFi as a Service. Increase your guest satisfaction and benefit from financial peace of mind. No capital required, low monthly cost.



Avenue9

The Avenue 9 Analytics platform compares and contrasts defined KPIs across business units and our new Business Continuity platform prepares hotels to manage potential disasters.

Medallia

Medallia

Medallia is the No. 1 enterprise experience platform. Medallia pioneered and leads the market in customer, employee, citizen, and patient experience.



Harri

Harri is the end to end employee experience platform for hospitality. From hiring staff, to scheduling, payroll and training, Harri supports the entire employee journey.



FM Recruitment

FM are specialists in UK and international hospitality financial recruitment at all levels. In the business for over 35 years, with a reputation for delivering for clients and candidates alike, they go beyond recruitment, creating long-lasting relationships.



Dataplan

Our specialist Troncmaster service provides advice, set up and the management of Tronc schemes, with the aim to support employees and employers to save on their National Insurance costs.



InnSpire

InnSpire create that magical experience - Innovation for a better journey, digitalising the guest journey. By enhancing every digital touch point. Be that in an App, connected TV Experience, Voice-control, secure Wi-Fi, fast and stable networks.



Food prices surge again in June as drought fears cause concern

Latest edition of the CGA by NielsenIQ Prestige Foodservice Price Index reveals a fifth consecutive month of double-digit percentage inflation

Inflation in the foodservice sector reached 11.5% in June, the latest edition of the CGA Prestige Foodservice Index reveals.

All 10 food and drink categories in the Index moved upwards year-on-year, with three—Fruit, Dairy and Oils & Fats—recording inflation of more than 20%. Several categories surged month-on-month as the impacts on key commodities from Russia's invasion of Ukraine continued to mount.

Concerns are also growing about drought conditions in many parts of the UK in the wake of the recent heatwave. Strategies from the National Drought Group to deal with very dry weather could include a ban on farmers watering

their crops in the crucial period of August and September, which would put root vegetables including potatoes under particular threat. Shortages of seasonal labour are adding to growers' problems by threatening their ability to get their product to market, while poor grass growth is impacting dairy and livestock yields.

Beyond the UK, drought is already a major problem in Italy, with crops including tomatoes and durum wheat already affected, and conditions across the rest of the EU are also causing concern.

Prestige Purchasing CEO Shaun Allen said: "Instability continues to be the dominant feature of food and drink

markets, and we predict that this will continue into 2023. It's essential for operators to mitigate the impact on gross margins by investing in skills and resource levels to effectively manage this volatile environment. Doing so in a timely manner can eliminate even these high levels of inflation."

James Ashurst, client director at CGA by NielsenIQ, said: "Drought is the latest in a very long line of threats to global foodservice supply, and alongside the ongoing war in Ukraine it means inflation is likely to remain high for some time. With consumers as well as businesses feeling a tightening squeeze on their spending, the outlook for all food and drink businesses remains challenging."

Hospitality numbers stable in second quarter but costs crisis threatens recovery

Britain's licensed sector has stabilised in the second quarter of 2022, the latest Market Recovery Monitor from CGA by NielsenIQ and AlixPartners reveals.

It shows there were just under 106,000 licensed premises at the end of June 2022—almost exactly the same number as in both June 2021 and March 2022. CGA's research recorded nearly 1,000 closures over the second quarter of 2022, as some operators found trading unsustainable—but virtually the same number of new openings as other businesses swiftly took their place.

However, the Market Recovery Monitor suggests more net closures are possible in the second half of 2022 as cost pressures mount for both businesses and consumers. Sharp rises in food and energy prices, labour shortages, supply chain issues and high consumer inflation are all likely to threaten many venues that have been left fragile by two years of COVID-related challenges.

The research from CGA and AlixPartners also highlights key contrasts in fortunes in the licensed sector. They include a stronger performance for managed operators, whose sites have increased by 1.8% in the last 12 months, than for independents, where numbers dipped 0.4%. The casual dining, bar and bar restaurant segments all grew in the last year, while the number of restaurants fell by 1.2% in the same period.

The new report has a special focus on London, which has been slower than other cities to recover from COVID but has been in fractional growth over the last 12 months. Analysis reveals a robust performance in northern and eastern parts of the capital, where many businesses have benefited from the growing number

of residents working from home. However, parts of central London have suffered from a shortfall of office workers—including the City, which now has 14% fewer sites than in March 2020.

Karl Chessell, CGA's director for hospitality operators and food, EMEA, said: "These numbers are a welcome indicator of stability in hospitality, and proof that operators have built back well from the turmoil of COVID. But this solid recovery is now under severe threat from a powerful combination of inflationary pressures and other challenges, and

"Clearly, after the challenges of the pandemic, the industry is still in recovery mode and adjusting to various challenges, such as clear shifts in demand, brought about by some significant changes to the operating landscape. This is graphically illustrated with the impact evolved working patterns and indeed the work-from-home culture has visibly had on bar and restaurant numbers in business districts, such as the City of London.

"While the fundamental, longer-term outlook for the sector is strong, there

"Clearly, after the challenges of the pandemic, the industry is still in recovery mode and adjusting to various challenges, such as clear shifts in demand, brought about by some significant changes to the operating landscape. This is graphically illustrated with the impact evolved working patterns and indeed the work-from-home culture has visibly had on bar and restaurant numbers in business districts, such as the City of London.

we are likely to see a lot more churn of openings and closures over the second half of 2022. Hospitality's long-term outlook remains very positive, but it is clear that many businesses have a bumpy road ahead."

Graeme Smith, AlixPartners' managing director, said: "In the context of the past two years and the shock of Covid, the stability of overall numbers (of hospitality venues) revealed in this latest study is very welcome.

are clearly some near-term challenges and it is highly likely a higher degree of volatility will return. Many businesses are experiencing a significant step change in their cost base, and with the Bank of England forecasting recession, consumer discretionary spending will likely come under further pressure, too. For the sector, this inevitably means more closures and more churn, but significant market share opportunities for the best businesses and brands."

3 Steps to Consider Before Investing in New Hotel Technology

Take a second and think back to 2019. After everything, it feels more like 30 years ago, never mind three years ago. Many of us can't remember aimlessly wandering the supermarket, favoring now the quick process of ordering our everyday essentials in just a few clicks.

Some changes are likely here to stay but there's no crystal ball that can tell us for sure. Because of this uncertainty, businesses across the globe have relied on the latest technology to meet the rapidly evolving needs of today's consumer.

But now, as the world feels the impact of labor shortages and rising costs, the question we should all be asking ourselves is: how much should we rely on what worked before COVID-19, and how much should be informed by the new and unknown?

For many, recent technology investments have been about how to improve the on-property experience for today's more hygiene conscious, tech-savvy consumer. But before hotels rush to invest in the latest trend, it's essential to stop and consider what's actually important to today's guest.

To support this process, we've created a handbook to help you identify the needs and priorities of your organization. But before you get started, here are a few tips to keep in mind:

1. Consider your teams first

Technology is an increasingly important asset for workers and may be more important than ever as you look to attract new talent or optimize current staffing. Research has also found that teams who are further along in their digital transformation are more high-performing and find it easier to attract staff than those with lower

digital adoption.

It's important to consider though how any investment could impact your staff. Think beyond any initial training and plan for how this technology will become engrained in your team's daily work.

2. Data is your best friend and ally

Use data to understand how guests are shopping, booking, and interacting with your property. Then analyze key performance indicators, response times, and anything else that can give you a complete picture of your

But now, as the world feels the impact of labor shortages and rising costs, the question we should all be asking ourselves is: how much should we rely on what worked before COVID-19, and how much should be informed by the new and unknown?

property. Combine this with the insights you received first-hand from your staff to identify trends and areas for improvement or optimization. With this complete picture, you're already one step closer to making informed, justified business decisions.

3. Understand what can be done now and for the future

Depending on the type of technology you invest in, it's often the case that there is a

time gap between identifying a need and reaping the benefits of that technology. As you work through the guide, you will likely identify both short-term and long-term technology needs. If this is the case, try to think beyond the pandemic fog, and focus on what will set your property up for success in the long run.

Examine the variety of solutions available on the market – product features, integrations, and provider history and reputation. Don't just look for a technology vendor, but a partner with deep industry knowledge, security protocols, and dedicated customer service.

Download the complimentary Technology Investment Handbook and spend some time evaluating what investments could have the most impact on your business:

<https://www.amadeus-hospitality.com/resources/technology-investment-handbook>

Read the full article at: <https://www.amadeus-hospitality.com/insight/investing-in-new-hotel-technology>

Automated Systems Give Revenue Managers Freedom & Flexibility

Just like much of our world today, the hospitality industry is constantly changing and evolving beyond what revenue managers and hospitality leaders of the past could have ever imagined.

During a time of unprecedented change, automation and new technology have become essential to the successful navigation of the post-COVID hospitality landscape. But with any change, comes reservation and distrust. As the industry continues to automate, hoteliers worry that automated systems may not have the ability to respond to change and make decisions as well as human staff. Not only are automated systems capable of responding quickly to change, but they are better equipped to pick up signals of unexpected changes to the industry before they occur.

The role of a revenue manager is shifting. No longer are they the keepers of manual, rules-based systems and the numbers they produce. Instead, they have become strategists. Revenue management has never been about system upkeep and function, but rather the beginning steps of a strategic plan for success. Automated systems allow revenue managers to focus on strategy rather than the thousands of pricing decisions made each day by revenue optimization technology.

Automated systems give revenue managers freedom and flexibility without having to worry about daily optimization. This has allowed the revenue management field to broaden beyond data. Revenue automation is one of the tools revenue managers must leverage in order to build confidence in strong, clean data and have the time to focus on revenue strategy and elevate themselves by being seen by operations, marketing, and distribution



as guardians of data at the hotel. As the hospitality industry continues to recover from the global pandemic, the combination of staffing challenges and the rise in demand will require hotels to be running as efficiently as possible. The time saved by revenue management systems allows revenue managers to manage multiple properties and participate alongside other strategists to help develop and implement commercial strategies that are driven by accurate and abundant data. This data has the power to impact every aspect of a hotel, ultimately improving guest experience and increasing profitability. Time is money and automation opens the door to a goldmine.

While revenue management technology can make many decisions

automatically, a revenue manager guides the results of those decisions with strategy and possesses the ability to see the real-life scenarios a system may not know how to react to.

Automation does not replace the role of a revenue manager but instead elevates their work and provides managers with new opportunities to lead using data. The revenue manager and the system they use are a well-oiled machine. One without the other is inefficient and lacks strategy. Automation is the present and the future. Embracing automation is the only way revenue managers can reach the full potential of their role. They are not servants to the machine but the person behind the curtain.

The Economy: Let's Talk About Something Else.

The Economy. Ugh. It's not a topic to bring up lightly these days. At best, the subject kicks off arguments in which no one walks away with anything useful. At worst, it's dead boring. This is especially true when there's nothing new to add beyond the reality of higher costs and prices, and lower disposable income and revenues. Right now, it feels like everyone is losing out.

When it comes to the hospitality industry, it's useful to think of slowed growth and tighter budgets as another set of prompts to inform every hotelier's unchanging mission: to always meet guests where they are. How can hotel businesses do that more efficiently at a time when the numbers have dipped so much?

What hotel technology platforms must provide

More informed and focused strategy through frequent examination of an offering is more important than ever right now. It's a daily effort of judging and recalibrating cost and spend in support of a competitive offering, while always guaranteeing value for the guest.

Solutions must represent a lower cost of ownership while helping decision-makers to discern what business data is telling them via automation, alerts, and detailed in-solution reporting.

This exercise must roll with the times, not to mention with inflation rates. It must be dynamic.

Business performance platforms and

integrated revenue and financial systems in support of these efforts must inform cost-effective, efficient, and timely business strategy. Solutions must represent a lower cost of ownership while helping decision-makers to discern what business data is telling them via automation, alerts, and detailed in-solution reporting. Operational unity across locations and between teams, and business data gathered into one ecosystem are essential to getting this right. But what does that look like, exactly?

Hospitality technology – the vehicle, not the journey

Advanced and integrated solutions enable businesses to see what guests really want out of their experiences via

That helps them to better see the paths to reducing operational waste while creating value for guests in support of an adjustable, resonant, and competitive offering.

Within that though, it's important to remember that technology is only a vehicle for the journey, not the journey itself. Gaining a competitive foothold, especially during economic downturns, requires a refreshed approach to serving people. That means a constant focus on the guest experience, of course. But it also means empowering staff across the organisation with meaningful, rewarding work that's centred on the right things when they count the most.

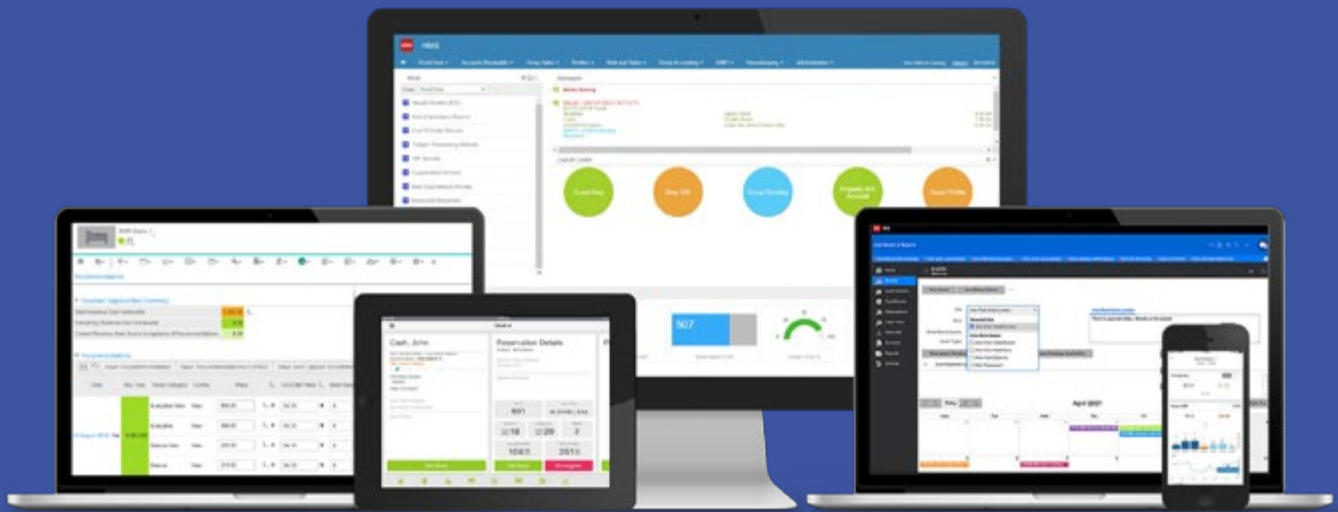
Something to feel good about

The good news is that these are factors over which executive teams and leaders at every level have control. Decisions to unify, empower, and enable people with the right mechanisms and with the support of the right technology partners are the levers to help maintain a clearer course through challenging times.

That is something everyone can walk away with and feel good about; a way forward to serve in times of scarcity and in abundance alike.

INFOR HOSPITALITY

Delight guests and achieve your business goals



Unite diverse locations and empower your teams, with powerful multi-tenant cloud software designed for hotels and restaurants.

We enable our customers in more than 135 countries to achieve:

- Consistently superior guest experiences
- Strategic clarity
- Operational efficiency
- Maximised revenues

In this quickly evolving industry, Infor® Hospitality customers are equipped for today's challenges and ready for future ones.



How Culture can help Win the War for Talent by FM Recruitment

As we reflect on the last two years of a recruitment crisis in the hospitality industry, we take a look at how employers have adapted and how important company culture is in winning the War for Talent.

What happened?

“The Big Quit” and “The Great Resignation” are just two of the phrases that arose in the last couple of years. The pandemic precipitated employees around the world to collectively reset and reassess both their professional and personal goals and priorities. This exacerbated the normal cycle of employee turnover and concentrated the timeline to a specific shortened period.

This turnover sparked a real battle to attract and retain employees, not just between competing businesses, but across industries, where some were far more willing to recruit the right personality with experience from a different industry.

Hospitality employees were particularly badly hit as many businesses were forced to close multiple times, forcing businesses to make positions redundant. Many of these employees applied for roles in different industries and chose to stay there. In addition, many school leavers, who may have applied for their first jobs in bars, restaurants and hotels found jobs unavailable as businesses had closed, or were operating with a reduced workforce.

What is the situation now?

The UK’s Office of National Statistics recently reported that for the first time since records began, job vacancies have outstripped unemployment. However, wages have decreased in real terms with inflation continuing to rise, increasing the cost of living and making it tougher to do business. Many hospitality businesses

are struggling to attract employees as confidence in the hospitality sector has been rattled by events of the last few years.

How has the hospitality industry reacted?

“Culture eats Strategy for Breakfast”. It’s a memorable quote often attributed to Peter Drucker, but is particularly relevant now.

We have found that the businesses that have focused on their company culture and engaged with employees throughout the pandemic were able to recover much better. As restrictions eased and demand to travel started to increase, they were the ones best placed to scale back up with an existing workforce, and also able to attract talent by offering the stability that comes from a happy workforce that feels like they belong and can develop and achieve their goals.

The Future

Many employers have already increased wages by adopting the national living wage, and adding financial benefits will always help attract the best talent. However, cultures that embrace diversity,

equality and inclusion, while offering a better work-life balance and aligned values have become more important than monetary reward alone.

The recruitment process is now very transparent as candidates have access to so much information on businesses, through their website, social media channels and review sites. By the time it comes to an interview, many candidates will be asking probing questions to ensure that everything is aligned and may prioritise other opportunities if this is not the case.

FM Recruitment can support both the recruitment and retention strategies for hospitality employers. Attracting the right people to a business demands looking at everything that communicates the company culture, and as an external resource, we can do the heavy lifting. We look at all aspects of an available position to ensure we match the perfect candidate with the perfect employer. This gives the candidate the information they need to commit and adapt quickly to a new role and saves the employer time and resources so that they can focus on their day-to-day operations.

If you would like to speak to us about your recruitment strategy, please contact:

Chris Denison Smith
Tel: +44 7775 711923 | Email
chrisdenisonsmith@fmrecruitment.co.uk

Andrea Shaw Tel: +44 7714 236469
Email andreashaw@fmrecruitment.co.uk
Office +44 20 8600 1160

Apex Hotels launch mobile app powered by Nonius

The Apex Hotels & Rewards app is available for download on iOS and Android devices.

Luxury UK hotel group, Apex Hotels, have partnered with Nonius to develop and launch a brand-new app, Apex Hotels & Rewards, now available to download! Created to enhance, optimise and customise the guest experience, the app offers a range of services and the opportunity to engage with the brand before, during or after a stay at any one of the 4-star contemporary properties in Bath, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and London.

Guests can take control of their adventure from start to finish with mobile check-in and express check-out as well as having the capability to book a room, make a spa or restaurant reservation and even use live chat with staff to make enquiries about services, add-ons and request amenities.

The current functionalities included in the app's launch include:

- Explore destinations, browse hotels and book a UK city break
- Implementation with Infor HMS to

- allow guest authentication
- Pre check-in, billing and express check-out through an integration developed with MyCheck (Shiji Group)
- Ability to make spa and restaurant reservations
- City guide and public transport information
- Live chat through app or WhatsApp

“Choosing Nonius to build the custom Apex Hotels & Rewards app was essential in further digitising the guest journey to make their experience more personalised and seamless, allowing them to interact with Apex Hotels from wherever they may be at any part of their journey.”

App users will be treated to exclusive offers and rewards over time to encourage app downloads and use. The first version of the app is already available for download on iOS and Android, the roadmap promises exciting new functionalities to make the Apex experience even more unique.

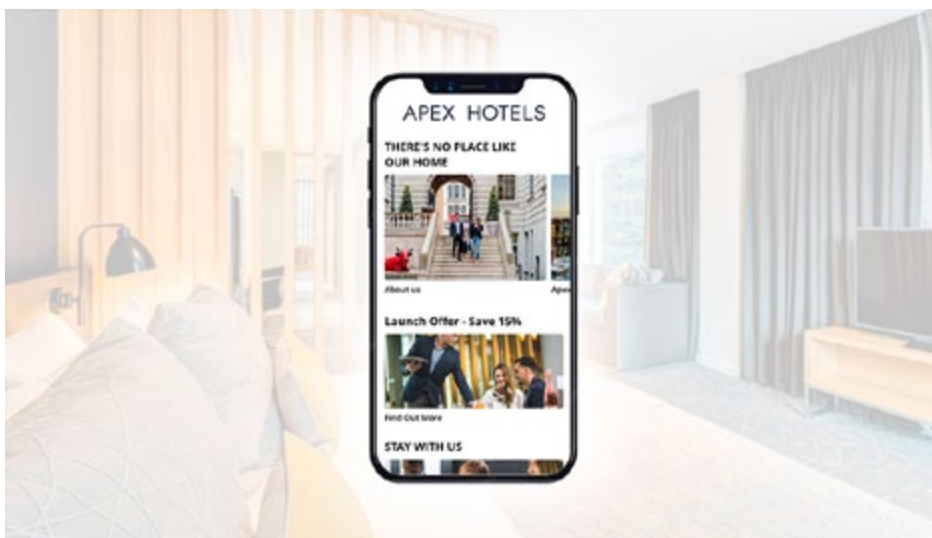
Soon, guests will be able to order

and pay for food and beverage whether staying or dining in the hotels, participate in a new loyalty program and use their own devices as a mobile key – following the contactless trend in hospitality properties all over the world allowing guests to access their room without a physical key card.

By giving autonomy to guests, Apex

Hotels are optimising operations, allowing staff to focus their attention on guest needs. The pre-check-in, for example, is the perfect way to speed up the process at reception and to also seamlessly collect guest data for marketing. Having a dedicated app allows for optimised workflows, revenue generation and hotel service innovation – providing a digitally led experience to aid satisfaction and increase efficiency.

“Choosing Nonius to build the custom Apex Hotels & Rewards app was essential in further digitising the guest journey to make their experience more personalised and seamless, allowing them to interact with Apex Hotels from wherever they may be at any part of their journey. We look forward to the continued collaboration and support in implementing the further technologies and functionalities in the application to aid our destination-led customer-centric mobile journey as the development phases progress.” said Michael Stott, Apex Hotels Commercial Director.



Weathering the budget storm this winter

A guide to how to put more money in your employees' pockets and reduce your staff costs with a tronc scheme.

It seems every morning the hospitality news brings more economic doom and gloom. It's no secret that we are edging closer to, if not already in, a fiscal crisis of a magnitude not seen for decades. Are there any options left to make some savings?

Tronc schemes have been around for a while, but although there may be an awareness of the name amongst hospitality businesses, we are finding that thousands of businesses are still unclear about how tronc compliance works and are not taking advantage of the potential savings.

Let's start at the beginning

A tronc scheme is a pay arrangement that allows for the fair distribution of pooled tips and service charges given by customers to employees.

Tronc Schemes are becoming more prevalent as customers move away from paying by cash towards card payment. When tips land in the business bank account, it becomes mandatory to pay the tips to employees through the payroll, and there begins the challenge as to how these should be distributed to employees.

It may seem as simple as adding to their pay, but by doing this, the tip amount attracts not only tax but also National Insurance for both the employer and employee. However, with a correctly set up tronc scheme, the tips are allocated to employees by a Troncmaster (someone who manages the scheme) and do not incur National Insurance payments.

A financial win for all parties

If we take a sum of £100 in tips as a simple example; without a tronc scheme, the employer will pay £15.05 (15.05%) National

insurance (ERs), and the employee would pay £13.25 (13.25%) in NI (EE's) in addition to their income tax, for employees earning above the NIC thresholds.

Using a tronc scheme to distribute the tips, the same £100 would not attract National insurance, either ERs or EEs, saving costs for the employer and giving more of the tip amount to the employee. With tips often making up a considerable part of a hospitality employee's take-home pay, this percentage increase is valuable, especially as we are in the midst of a cost of living crisis.

Troncmasters x Vagabond Wines

Vagabond Wines joined Troncmasters in April this year, with 10 sites going live immediately and a further new concept site going live with a custom tronc distribution later in the summer after consultation with staff.

To ensure a smooth set-up and keep employees informed, Troncmasters worked with the Vagabond HR team to produce communications that aligned to their branding and voice.

Since the tronc scheme has been set up and staff have received their agreements, everything is running well.

Employees are happy knowing that they are saving NI payments, and the business is saving money too. Natalia, Finance Manager, commented, "It's all going very smoothly, we have never had any issues... Employees have all had positive feedback when we introduced them to Troncmasters."

Want to know how much you could save with a Tronc scheme? Contact our Troncmaster experts and download our guide here: <https://www.troncmasters.co.uk>



Vagabond wines is a multi-location chain with 10 bars and an additional restaurant at Heathrow.

With 140 members of staff they were previously administering tips via their rota system through payroll. This attracted NI payments for the employers and deductions for staff.

Moving to a tronc scheme has reduced costs to the business and put more money in the pockets of staff.



Savings on employer and employee NI contributions £160,000 per year.



Employer savings timely in supporting their first restaurant concept at Heathrow.



99% of tips going to staff as Vagabond are covering half the Troncmaster fee.



Increased employee satisfaction.

By IRIS



Summertime: Revenue and Profit Up, Costs Too

HotStats reports on a positive summer as travel returns.

The global hotel industry has a strong summer story to share: Revenue and profit are creeping back to or exceeding 2019 levels. Problem is, expenses are also making a strong comeback.

Consider Europe: It's been a swell summer for its hotels. RevPAR in July was up to €159, the highest level it's been in three years, and 17% higher than in the same time in 2019. It's a similar trajectory for the UK, where RevPAR has reached its highest level in almost four years.

Profit has been on a similar course, but as revenue has climbed, GOPPAR has levelled off as costs begin to eat into the top line.

GOPPAR hit €94 in July. The good news: It's almost €20 higher than in July 2019, but down versus the previous month. The trajectory is still strong: GOPPAR is now up 1,935% since January 2021. The bad news: expenses are showing some teeth and cutting into the impressive revenue gains, which have been fueled by strong rate growth that hit €222 in July, 43% higher than at the same time last year.

Total payroll was recorded at €55 on a PAR basis in July, which though down versus the previous month, has now exceeded its July 2019 level by more than €2. Total other expenses hit an all-time high of €43, €4 higher than in July 2019. A portion of the expense jump was attributed to a rise in utility costs, which are now at €8 on a PAR basis, a full €3 higher than at the same time in 2019. The largest portion of that are electric costs, which are soaring throughout Europe, due in part to the war in Ukraine and its impact on natural gas prices. Electricity at Europe's hotels is now more than €5 on a PAR basis, its highest level ever recorded and €2 higher than at the same time in July 2019.



U.S. Flat

The U.S. trajectory has been a bit more muted than Europe's. January through March saw electric growth in profit, but has since stabilized and remains below 2019 levels, though almost on par. GOPPAR in July hit \$82, \$1 below July 2019.

Like profit, revenue has been somewhat flattish since March, with RevPAR recorded at \$154 in July, \$13 lower than July 2019.

The one silver lining is that payroll costs remain well below 2019 levels, as employment levels stay below 2019, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Hourly earnings, however, are now above \$20 for the first time ever, and \$4 higher than at the same time in 2019.

Up and Down Middle East

It's been a roller coaster of a ride for the Middle East year-to-date. The World Expo 2022 in Dubai helped push revenue and profit levels up during the

back half of 2021 and into Q1 2022, but after its completion, performance dropped dramatically.

RevPAR in July 2022 is at \$116, which is around \$50 less than its peak in March 2022, but still above its 2019 level—good news since summer months in the Middle East tend to draw less visitors. GOPPAR, meanwhile, was around two times higher than its 2019 level at \$62. The Middle East has been one of the most resilient regions on a performance-wide basis, also aided by average rates that are well above their 2019 levels.

Total payroll in the region has been flat since February, having only moved around 50 cents.

China Groove

After successive months of down performance, due in part to widespread COVID lockdowns, China has seen its fortunes turn, with GOPPAR now up three consecutive months to \$34.50 in July, which is still below its 2019 level, but only by \$4.

Don't Let Your Competitors Outsmart You

OTAs are actively working to improve the guest journey and, in many cases, are offering an easier and more rewarding booking experience. To truly compete, it's time hoteliers start thinking more like OTAs. Thankfully, modern tools are available to help level the playing field.

For several reasons, hoteliers today are acutely focused on building better connections with their guests. Whether it's pre-booking, at the time of conversion, while the guest is on property, or after they've checked out, hoteliers are improving their engagement with travelers at each touchpoint.

Hasn't that always been the focus? Yes, but the stakes have intensified. Alternative accommodations are rising in popularity for leisure guests and hotels see their unique, service-oriented nature as a differentiator. At the same time, third-party distribution partners continue to add pressure to margins, which have been slow to recover post-pandemic.

OTAs are actively working to improve the guest journey and, in many cases, are offering an easier and more rewarding booking experience. To truly compete, it's time hoteliers start thinking

OTAs are actively working to improve the guest journey and, in many cases, are offering an easier and more rewarding booking experience. To truly compete, it's time hoteliers start thinking more like OTAs. Thankfully, modern tools are available to help level the playing field.

more like OTAs. Thankfully, modern tools are available to help level the playing field.

A Smarter Approach

The strategies have been outlined and the digital tools are available for hotels to capture as much direct business as possible. A critical component is tailoring the booking experience to provide the traveler with the right offer that speaks to them and will convert at the highest rate.

Like OTAs, hotels can use simple guest recognition programs to reward guests booking via their direct channels while remaining in true parity with OTAs.

Today, some Central Reservation Systems have moved beyond their powerful distribution capabilities to now include lightweight Customer Relationship Management functionality. What does a booking experience look like when it's powered by a "Smart CRS?"

- The guest is provided a seamless transition when browsing the website, booking engine or calling the contact center. The offers available to book are clearly communicated or displayed to the guest.
- Guests are then met with a compelling message to access exclusive benefits and services which encourages them to register. Guests then register and book their stay.
- Hoteliers now have the ability to recognize the guest each time they stay. With the data in your system, you can begin to anticipate

their needs. Guest information is now on file for marketing and future bookings.

A Cohesive Guest Experience

Hoteliers often pride themselves on providing a positive guest experience. Much of that discussion focuses on the on-property experience. While on-property happenings are certainly important, it's also imperative to remember the guest experience doesn't start when travelers arrive at a hotel. There are many different touchpoints before, during, and after the stay that work together to make a cohesive guest experience.

1. Personalize pricing.

Even without a revenue management system (RMS), a customer relationship management system (CRM) can tell the central reservation system (CRS) the personalized offers guests qualify for based on their past stay history and preferences. From there, hoteliers can price deals as part of a dynamic revenue strategy.

This allows hotels to run exclusive offers for repeat or known guests or a specified segment of these individuals to boost occupancies over need periods and shoulder dates without reducing retail rates. This strengthens the relationship between the guest and the brand and can make booking special offers easier for the guest.

2. Don't forget the call center.

Digital transformation has been keen

during the pandemic. Just because customers might think digital first doesn't mean strategies should be digital only. The call center is still a crucial channel. The contact center isn't a dying channel; it's a necessary step that becomes especially important if guests can't complete their intended tasks online. That means the contact center is just as important as an online booking channel.

The call center should have the same booking flow as the booking engine, giving agents the ability to personalize pricing like a booking engine.

3. Recognize guests to increase ADR.

Hoteliers should consider adding a recognition program—one that provides instant gratification to guests either via offers, special rates, discounts, or more. Guests who are part of recognition programs will spend more on property, leading to a higher average daily rate. Even though guests are booking a discounted room, their room rate is

still higher because they are booking direct so the hotel doesn't have to pay commission to a third party.

Guest recognition needs to be meaningful to add to the guest experience. With a consistently well-run recognition program, guests will be less price sensitive and will routinely rebook a hotel or brand. Knowing they will receive a specific level of service and quality, price becomes less of an issue. For brands that reward based on stay patterns, guests will be increasing their status within the program and be eligible for more benefits.

Win-Win for Hotels and Travelers

For hotels, even if a guest books with you at a slightly lower rate, that booking to you is now a higher value. You've saved some on commission costs, and now you're able to collect the guest's information, meaning you own the customer data instead of the OTA.

For travelers, the direct booking path leads to a better guest experience, which

helps to build loyalty. You can use the information you collect from guests to enhance their stay. Additionally, trust is built between you and the guest. As you build a relationship with guests, they will be more likely to continuously engage with you.

Now, you can better personalize the guest experience. You can then more easily market to guests for future bookings based on the details and preferences you have on file. And, in turn, as you continue with these guests on their journey with you, they will become less price sensitive as their expectations for the value you provide are reinforced.

Contact SHR to learn more about how a Smart CRS can help you convert more direct business + add some contact details: info@shr.global and +34 93 522 28 84

By Sarah Jones, Senior Director of Product Marketing & Communications at SHR (Sceptre Hospitality Resources).



Hotel Britain 2022: Growing more sustainable

Hotel Britain is BDO's annual report on the UK hotel sector.

The hotel industry utilises the planet's natural resources to attract its guests. Yet, by continuing to operate with its current methods, it is endangering the very resources it relies upon. This year's Hotel Britain is therefore designed to raise awareness of the direct impact of hotels on climate change; and conversely, the influence of sustainability on the hotel industry. This reciprocal relationship means that all fields of the hotel industry, from stakeholders to suppliers, are now realising the need to grow more sustainable.

Hotel Britain 2022 will particularly celebrate those who have championed the growth of sustainability in the industry so far. Our feature, 'Sustainability Success Stories', will uncover the UK's most eco-friendly hotels, including an interview with Robert Godwin from Lamington Group, who has pioneered the world's first whole life net zero hotel.

A variety of sustainability experts will also share their experience and advice, such as Ufi Ibrahim, Founder of Energy & Environment Alliance and former CEO of the British Hospitality Association, and Jonathan Hale, Partner and Head of ESG Consulting at Knight Frank.

As ever, our report features additional insights from BDO's Leisure & Hospitality team, who share their guidance on the current commercial and financial issues affecting the hotel sector.

If you would like to receive Hotel Britain 2022 and our regular industry reports on UK hotel performance, please contact Lucy.Cole@bdo.co.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.

Our Services

BDO's Leisure and Hospitality team provides accountancy and business advisory expertise. We understand that hotels, restaurants, and bars face unique challenges and opportunities. As a

result, we have experienced specialists operating in each area, delivering valuable and actionable advice to clients. We can offer regulatory guidance, work with you to fine-tune your business model, or help you to overcome barriers to growth.

In addition, we recognise that the hospitality sector is dealing with unprecedented issues in the aftermath of the pandemic; therefore, survival and revival is key for many firms. Inflation, rising energy costs, a build-up of debt, supply chain disruption, labour shortages, and lease negotiations are just a few of the many obstacles the industry is facing in this turbulent climate.

If you are seeking guidance on any of the above, or wish to speak with one of our Leisure and Hospitality experts, please visit our website, www.bdo.co.uk/en-gb/industries/leisure-and-hospitality or contact Partner Mark Edwards at Mark.Edwards@bdo.co.uk.



Unlocking Loyalty Spend Will Be the Currency of the Future

As we face into 2023, the hospitality market will be challenged with providing a next-level guest experience fuelled by personalisation, loyalty, and VIP treatment.

Over the last two years, we've seen self-service check-in and kiosks as well as mobile ordering and delivery excel beyond belief, leaving us asking – what is the next thing to come?

It will soon become clear that successful businesses in the future will be those best able to embrace new platforms and partnerships, leveraging relationships and technology, both new and existing.

Subsequently, the key to sustaining profitability will be how businesses build, develop and nurture loyalty among customers. However, this can only happen when we create streamlined, seamless experiences that keep up with how consumers operate in today's connected world of increased brand loyalty and consumer relationships.

Easier said than done given the market conditions expected in the near future. But there are many elements within each company that we can control. Unfortunately, many of us overlook these actions as being too difficult, complex, or expensive.

We all aim to have a healthy balance sheet at the end of any fiscal period, but how do you put a value on customer loyalty that stakeholders will look at favourably?

Critically it is through hyper-targeted loyalty programmes, pricing, and leveraging technology platforms like FreedomPay that businesses can unlock data-driven consumer conversations and interactions that will drive engagement. The opportunities are immeasurable if CTOs can connect with customers and

establish long-term brand relationships using behavioural insights.

Today, everything has flipped. Value is not about revenue growth but commercial sustainability, customer retention and satisfaction. This is particularly true when it comes to data commerce. CTOs will struggle to keep their facilities relevant if they ignore what the data tells them.

Without a cohesive strategy that embraces mobile apps, digital channels, and contactless payments, businesses are behind the growth curve and may not survive the looming crisis. Loyalty and customer retention in the future will be the new currency of success.

Consumers know their inherent value, and it is time to recognize it across all channels. In addition, we must realise a customer's ability to have multiple profiles and attributes that reflect their specific behaviour and preferences. With

FreedomPay's Multi-Merchant Network, millions of consumers can unlock previously untapped revenue streams, unlocking a loyalty spend that opens up alternative currency and value.

Successful businesses should be aware of an inextricable link between payment solutions and consumer loyalty. In hoping to dig deeper into peoples' digital wallets, how better to manage customers' payments than using a digital platform?

There is an ever-increasing shift in focus on technology to get ahead in the highly competitive and rapidly evolving marketplace.

A race to digitization now dominates the payments space, where we must address two driving factors. Firstly, today's retail customer is obsessed, and rightly so, with their entitlement and expectation around the flexibility and options available within their purchase experience.

Secondly, how can you upsell or cross-sell unless you fully understand your loyal customers and how to communicate with them? Customers need and expect to feel valued and rewarded for their loyalty.

In the race to secure customer loyalty through better-connected user experiences, the winners will be those that can connect the data dots within their businesses and the multiple touchpoints along their channels.

FreedomPay intrinsically intertwines the payments process and the loyalty journey. We track each brand-loyal customer to interpret their purchase habits and how certain variables affect consumer behaviour. We can't predict the future, but we can prepare you for it and help businesses take back control.





HOSPACE 2022

Building Future Prosperity
Brought to you by HOSPA

17 NOVEMBER 2022 ROYAL LANCASTER LONDON

HOSPACE is the most established conference for senior hospitality leaders and professionals in the UK

Register your interest at HOSPACE.org

Technology

Marketing

Finance

Asset Management

Owners

Investors

Revenue Management

