

A man in a dark suit and tie is looking down at his smartphone. He is standing in a hotel room, with a suitcase visible in the foreground and a lamp in the background. The entire image has an orange tint.

Improve Hotel Guest Engagement With Mobile Guest Services

Mobile apps that provide a wide range of hotel guest services are quickly becoming an expectation rather than a perk for the modern traveler. Hotel brands that understand the many benefits an app brings to the guest experience can use that knowledge to better engage guests throughout their stay, enhancing brand loyalty along the way.

Plus, mobile guest services are extremely effective in driving guests to download and use a hotel's app. Increased app usage creates greater opportunities to upsell guests on room upgrades, spa services, room service, and many other revenue-driving features.

A hotel that integrates the following guest services functions into their mobile app will streamline communication with guests, reduce costs, drive revenue with special guest offers, and increase loyalty and RevPAR through a superior hotel experience.





BOOKING

A memorable guest experience begins far before a guest sets foot on a hotel's property. Providing travelers with the ability to book rooms through a hotel mobile app makes it easy for guests to search for available rooms. Since guests will be using a hotel brand's app, it's more likely that they will book with that brand and not the competition.

App-based booking has become so essential to the industry that travel companies report 60% of transactions now occur through a mobile app in comparison to 11% on desktop and 4% through mobile web.

Mobile app booking also provides significant convenience for travelers that are increasingly booking spontaneous getaways. The flexibility of both mobile devices and apps propels the popularity of these last-minute bookings, with 72% of all mobile bookings now occurring within 48 hours of the stay.

In addition to being offered within a more popular channel, booking via mobile app possesses many of the same benefits of other digital booking channels:



Guests can easily search for rooms by location, local interests, or nearby amenities



An app can integrate pictures, videos, and information on the property and rooms



Guests can conveniently manage and change a booking from a single interface



Establishing a profile allows guests to save their preferences for future bookings



PAYMENT

Speed and ease-of-use define the modern consumer experience as seen with the variety of fast payment options now available throughout the marketplace. For instance, Apple Pay transactions have tripled since mid-year 2017, and 60% of travelers in China now say mobile payment options play a key role in choosing a hotel. Payments through a guest services app allow a hotel to meet these new guest expectations for convenience while also elevating the hotel's brand by exuding innovation and creativity.

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MOBILE GUEST REQUESTS

The ability to send requests directly from a mobile app without assistance from the front desk provides guests with the flexibility, speed, and efficiency they've come to expect from a hotel. No matter the time of day or night, requests sent through a mobile app also give guests confidence when they receive a confirmation after touching just a few buttons on their smartphone.

Popular mobile requests with guests include:



**HOUSEKEEPING
ISSUES
AND NEEDS**



**FRONT DESK
SERVICES**

Like item requests, noise complaints, wake-up calls, etc.



**ROOM
SERVICE/DINING**



**VALET
SERVICE**





MOBILE CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT

Guests want to speed through the check-in process as fast as possible.

73% of guests would actually prefer to skip the front desk entirely at check-in.

Mobile apps with mobile check-in/out functionality (as provided by OpenKey) can essentially become a guest's personal associate that checks them into their hotel room.

Hotels also greatly benefit from providing guests with mobile check-in and out. When a mere five minute wait at the front desk to check-in results in a 50% drop in guest satisfaction levels, hotels that integrate this critical ability in their mobile app can realize a distinct competitive advantage. 60% of guests are likely to choose a hotel that offers this functionality through their smartphone.



MOBILE KEY

A mobile key function within a guest services app can work hand-in-hand with mobile check-in, although mobile key also works with a traditional front desk check-in. Once checked-in (via mobile or front desk), guests can go straight to their room using OpenKey's seamless mobile key solution. The secure Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) technology used by OpenKey allows a guest to easily unlock their door with the tap of a button on their smartphone.

The following facts reinforce why hotels should offer mobile key within any guest services app:



2/3 of hotels' guests say they would rather use their smartphone as their room key



46% of guests say mobile key is an important feature that directly influences their booking decisions



Hotels can send highly-secure encrypted digital room keys, unique to a guest's mobile device



Hotels can save hundreds (or thousands) of dollars on discarded plastic keycards



Mobile key helps hotels reduce their carbon footprint and helps the environment





MOBILE CONCIERGE

Traditional hotel concierge services have always been about making the guest experience more enjoyable. Offering similar services through a mobile app provides guests with this experience through an additional convenient channel.

Some of the more popular mobile concierge services include:



Local transportation options with maps and directions



Recommendations on nearby shopping, dining, and amenities



Notifications and calendars for events



Simple booking for activities



On-site dining, spa, and fitness options





MOBILE MESSAGING

Simple and effective staff communication is another hallmark of a memorable guest experience. Embedded messaging and chat functions within a hotel mobile app can provide guests with an easy way to get answers to many frequently asked questions, saving everyone involved both time and effort.

Hotels can even integrate AI-driven chatbots into their apps to reply to simple guest questions and requests. Automated Guest Engagement platform, Go Moment, can answer common guest questions and concerns instantly, helping to reduce call volume and wait times. Any question that cannot be answered through an automated chat function can be routed to a staff member that maintains the ever-important human element of communicating with guests.



79% of customers already prefer live chat over other channels

Some mobile technology developers, like Runtriz and its “Two-way chat” feature, allow guests to chat with a live staff member through a convenient app interface. Messaging functionality will continue to grow in importance since 79% of customers already prefer live chat over other channels because of the immediacy it affords them.



MARKETING & BRAND EXPERIENCE

An effective mobile app can enhance the overall hotel brand by providing an intuitive tool of convenience from search to stay. Guests then feel empowered, influencing how they think about a hotel's brand. The best hotel apps cause guests to see brands as forward-thinking and committed to providing excellent service.

A guest services app can also improve marketing campaigns by allowing a hotel to personalize their message to the individual traveler. App user behavior can be tracked and analyzed over time, empowering hotels to learn what individual guests like and don't like. Hotels can then promote personalized offers and messaging based on these insights, increasing the chances of cross-selling or upselling guests.



36% of travelers would actually be willing to pay more for services if the overall trip experience was tailored to their person

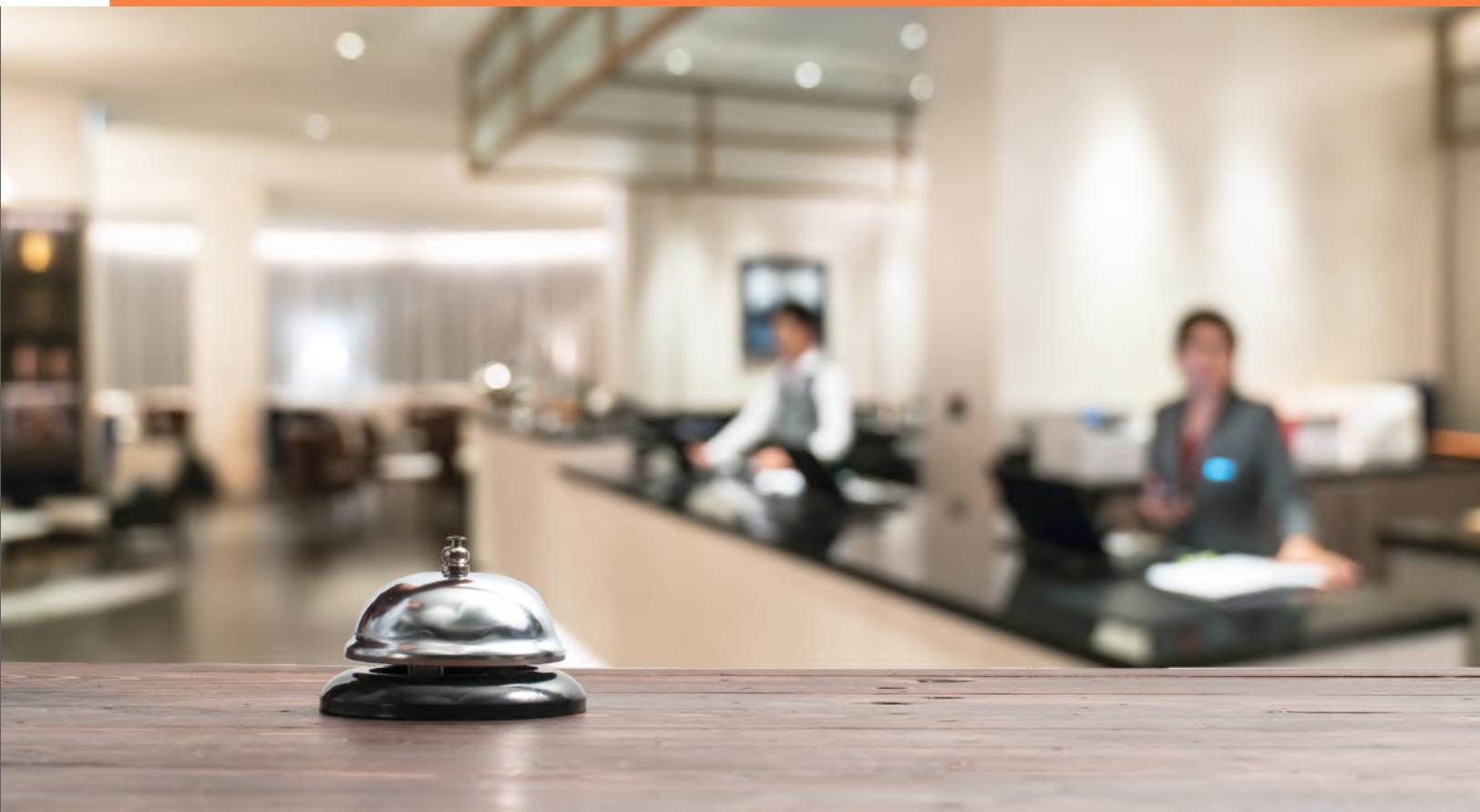
And guests are increasingly open to this kind of personalization. In fact, 57% of travelers now feel that brands should customize information according to their preferences and past behaviors. 36% of travelers would actually be willing to pay more for services if the overall trip experience was tailored to their personal tastes.

Integrating a loyalty program into an app can also allow a hotel to get a far better sense of those specific guest preferences to help personalize future offerings.



OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Success in any industry is based on operational efficiency and the ability to do more with less. Hotels can use mobile guest services to realize these efficiencies by streamlining specific functions and processes into an app. Many hoteliers might think about these mobile guest services in terms of how they benefit the guests, but these solutions free up hotel staff members to work on more value-added tasks that improve the guest experience and operations as well.





FINAL THOUGHTS

Mobile apps that provide a wide range of hotel guest services are quickly becoming an expectation rather than a perk for the modern traveler. Hotel brands that understand the many benefits an app brings to the guest experience can use that knowledge to better engage guests throughout their stay, enhancing brand loyalty along the way.

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CONTACT US TODAY

(469) 661-0841 | www.openkey.co | sales@openkey.co