

HY824

Technology Edition
Entering The
Everything-Data Decade



The Hotel Yearbook
Foresight and innovation in the global hotel industry



Do's and Don'ts for Successful Process Automation in Hotels



Linda Girrbaach
Co-Founder & Head of Hospitality Consulting, RobosizeMe

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Getting Started with Process Automation in Hotels

Understanding Process Automation

Process Automation is a technology that uses software bots to emulate human interactions with digital systems to execute business processes. These bots can interact with various applications, including user interfaces (UIs), application programming interfaces (APIs), databases, and flat files like CSV and Excel. Process Automation can handle repetitive and rule-based tasks, such as data entry, report generation, and booking management.

✓ Do's

1 Be Open to Automation & Encourage Your Team to Embrace It

Automation can significantly enhance hotel operations, but its success depends on the willingness of both management and staff to embrace change. Encourage your team to see automation as a tool to simplify their tasks rather than a threat. Providing training and showcasing the benefits can help in gaining their support.

2 Get Started - You'll See, It's Addictive

Starting with small, manageable automation projects can demonstrate immediate benefits and build momentum. Once you see the efficiency and accuracy improvements, you'll likely find additional areas where automation can be applied. Start with simple tasks to build confidence and experience.

3 Start with an "Easy" Process to Get Automated

Begin with a straightforward process to automate, such as sending confirmation emails or updating booking information. This helps your team get accustomed to the new technology without overwhelming them.

4 Analyse and Optimize Current Processes Before Automating Them

Before implementing automation, it's crucial to thoroughly analyse and optimise your existing processes. Automating a flawed process will only replicate its inefficiencies. Use tools like process mapping to identify bottlenecks and streamline workflows first.

✗ Don'ts

1 Don't Think Your Existing Tech Stack Doesn't Allow for Automation

Modern automation solutions are designed to integrate with a wide range of existing technologies. Don't assume that your current systems cannot support automation without exploring available options. Modern automation solutions are designed to integrate with a wide range of technologies, whether a modern web application or a legacy system from the previous century.

2 Don't Be Afraid - You Don't Need to Be a Tech Expert to Get Started

Fear of technology can hinder the adoption of automation. It's important to understand that you don't need to be a tech expert to implement automation. Many solutions are user-friendly and designed for ease of use by non-technical staff.

3 Don't Expect a Messy Process to Improve by Process Automation

Automating a disorganised process will not magically make it efficient. If a process is inherently flawed, automation will only replicate and possibly exacerbate these flaws. It's essential to streamline and optimise processes before applying automation.

4 Don't Fear That Automation Is Replacing You or Your Job

Automation is designed to augment human roles, not replace them. It should be seen as an opportunity to shift focus from routine tasks to more value-added activities. Emphasise to your staff that automation can create career growth and skill development opportunities.

5 Plan Ahead for What Can Be Done with the Freed-Up Time

Automation frees up valuable time for your staff. Plan how this time can be repurposed for more strategic tasks, such as enhancing guest interactions or focusing on upselling opportunities. This shift can lead to higher job satisfaction and better guest experiences.

6 Involve Your Teams in the Use Case Exploration Process

Involving your team in identifying which tasks to automate ensures that the solutions meet their needs and improve their workflows. Their first-hand knowledge of daily operations can provide valuable insights into which processes would benefit most from automation.

7 Identify Mundane, Time-Consuming, and Repetitive Tasks

Focus on automating repetitive and time-consuming tasks, such as data entry, inventory management, and report generation. This can significantly reduce staff workload and minimise human error.

8 Identify Processes That Directly Impact Guest Satisfaction

Automate processes that directly impact guest satisfaction, such as reservations, check-in/check-out, and guest requests. Enhancing these touchpoints can lead to better reviews and higher guest loyalty.

9 Always Have a Contingency Plan

Ensure you have a contingency plan in place. Partner with reliable automation vendors who can provide support when needed and ensure there are team members who know how to perform tasks manually in case of system failures.

5 Don't Automate Tasks That Have Many Exceptions and Variations

Avoid automating tasks that involve numerous exceptions and require frequent human judgment. Such tasks are better handled manually to ensure accuracy and personalised service.

6 Don't Just Look at the Financial ROI - Consider the Bigger Picture

While financial ROI is important, consider other benefits, such as improved employee satisfaction, better guest experiences, and reduced error rates. These factors contribute to long-term success and sustainability.

7 Don't Automate Processes That Will Be Changed Soon

Avoid automating processes that are likely to undergo significant changes, such as those related to system migrations or major operational overhauls. Automating a stable and well-defined process is more beneficial and cost-effective.

8 Don't Confuse Automation with AI

While both automation and artificial intelligence (AI) are transformative technologies, they serve different purposes but can intersect. Automation handles repetitive, rule-based tasks like data entry and report generation, following predefined rules without decision-making. AI involves simulating human intelligence, learning from data, recognising patterns, and making decisions. Sometimes, these technologies overlap, such as when AI enhances automated processes by adding intelligent decision-making capabilities. Understanding the difference and potential intersections ensures proper expectations and application, making automation a more accessible starting point for improving efficiency while gradually incorporating AI's advanced capabilities.



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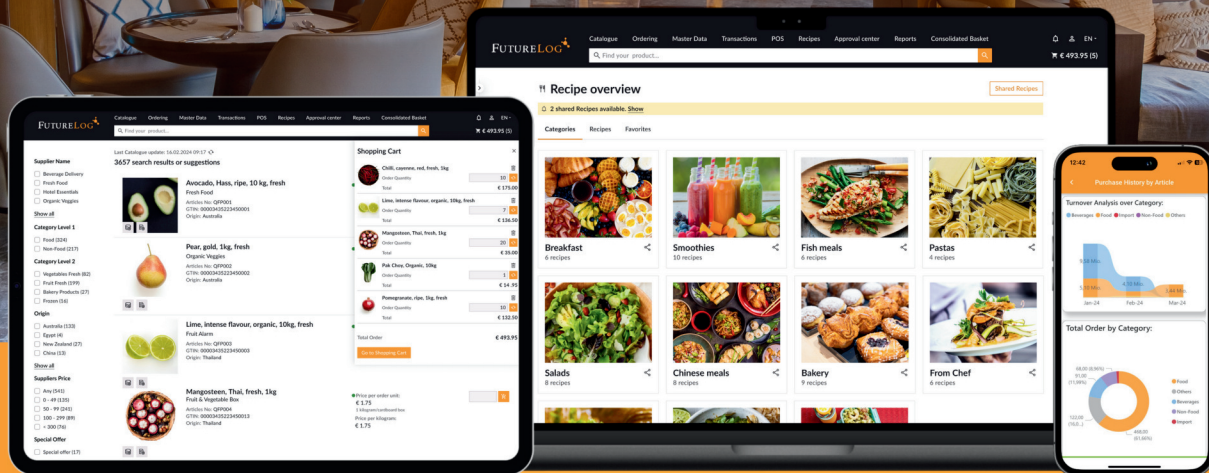
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