

HYB25

















Annual Edition
















Navigating New Dynamics in the
New Year















The Hotel Yearbook

Foresight and innovation in the global hotel industry

		Top 10 Hospitality Trends: What Shaped 2024 and What To Expect in 2025	4
		<i>Dr Jean-Philippe Weisskopf — Associate Professor at EHL Hospitality Business School</i>	
		<i>Philippe Masset — Associate Professor at EHL Hospitality Business School</i>	
		Lessons in Hospitality: Commercial Trends to Watch in 2025	7
		<i>Brian Hicks — President and CEO, Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI)</i>	
		What is AI going to bring hotels in 2025?	9
		<i>Martin Soler — Partner at Soler & Associates</i>	
		Is Simone Puerto the John Titor of Hospitality? 10 Predictions That Might Prove It	11
		<i>Simone Puerto — Founder CEO Futurist</i>	
		Top 10 actionable AV system trends to make you stand out	13
		<i>Michael Kinzel — Global Segment Development Manager Hospitality at Organization d&b audiotechnik</i>	
		9 Shifts Shaping the F&B World in 2025	17
		<i>Judit Szöllösi — F&B Concept Developer, Conceptional</i>	
		The Wellness-Hospitality Axis: Prepare to Pivot	20
		<i>Mia Mackman — Owner and Principal, MackmanES</i>	
		Top 10 Trends Shaping Asset Management in 2025	22
		<i>Alex Sogno — CEO, Global Asset Solutions</i>	
		Why guest retention is the #1 priority for hoteliers in 2025?	24
		<i>Max Starkov — Hospitality & travel technologist and digital strategist</i>	
		Top 10 Reasons to Replace Your POS System in 2025	26
		<i>Rohith Kori — Senior Vice President, Product Strategy, F&B, at Agilysys</i>	
		Top 10 Procurement Strategies Every Hospitality Leader Should Know in 2025	29
		<i>Johannes Vocke — Chief Financial Officer at FutureLog</i>	
		Top 10 Reputation Management Trends Impacting the Hotel Industry in 2025	33
		<i>Tobias Roelen-Blasberg — Co-Founder, MARA Solutions GmbH</i>	
		What Lies Ahead: Hotel Tech in 2025 and beyond	35
		<i>Ira Vouk — Hospitality Technology and Revenue Management consultant</i>	
		Merchandising Trends to Watch in 2025: Elevating the Guest Experience	37
		<i>Jason G. Bryant — Vice President, Nor1 GTM - Oracle Hospitality</i>	
		7 Ways AI is Transforming Personalization in 2025	40
		<i>Sergio Serra — CTO at Guestcentric Systems</i>	

	Top 10 Ways Business Intelligence is Transforming Hotel Revenue Management in 2025	43
	<i>Bill Daviau — VP of Strategic Accounts & Partnerships, Lighthouse</i>	
	Visioning 2025: The Top Trends Transforming The Employee Journey	45
	<i>Custódio Barreiros — Founder & CEO, EIP MGT</i>	
	Top 10 Trends Driving Hospitality Into an Agent-First World	47
	<i>Florian Montag — Vice President of Business Development at Apaleo</i>	
	2025's Top 10 Actionable Trends Shaping Boutique Hospitality	49
	<i>Frances Kiradjian — Founder/CEO of BLLA</i>	
	Top 10 Trends Shaping Digital Marketing in 2025	52
	<i>Chris Egan — Chief Product Officer at Cendyn</i>	
	Emerging dynamics in hospitality in 2025: A future around digital identity	55
	<i>Pedro Torres — CEO and Co-Founder, Youverse</i>	
	10 Tips for Unlocking the Full Potential of Direct Bookings	57
	<i>Christin Haensel — Director at h2c GmbH</i>	
	10 Hospitality Trends Transforming the Digital Guest Journey	59
	<i>Bryan Michalis — VP of Marketing, Canary Technologies</i>	
	Data management trends to transform your hotel in 2025	61
	<i>Karen Stephens — Chief Marketing Officer, Revinate</i>	
	Top 10 Social Media Strategies for Hotels in 2025	65
	<i>DJ Vallauri — Founder, President & CEO - Lodging Interactive</i>	
	Top 10 CRS Technology Trends Revolutionising Hospitality in 2025	67
	<i>Binu Mathews — CEO at IDS Next</i>	
	Top 10 Wellness Tech Trends Transforming Hospitality in 2025	69
	<i>Sal Capizzi — SVP, Spa & Wellness, Agilysys</i>	
	Top 10 Media Content and Distribution Trends for In-Room TV's and Hotel Communal Areas in 2025	72
	<i>Rachelle Peterson — Founder, LOQIA Group</i>	
	Content Strategy for Hotels in 2025: It's Time to Embrace AI	75
	<i>Daniel Craig — Founder & Chief Strategist, Reknown</i>	
	Top 10 ways to maximise F&B revenue with mobile ordering	77
	<i>Kate Fuller — Senior Marketing Manager, IRIS Software Systems</i>	

	7 Actionable Revenue Management Trends for 2025	79
	<i>Klaus Kohlmayr — Chief Evangelist and Development Officer, IDeaS</i>	
	Top 10 Booking Engine Features Shaping Revenue and Conversion in 2025	81
	<i>Ethan Wiseman — Sr. Director, Product Management – Head of Distribution, Sabre Hospitality</i>	
	Top 10 Strategies for Mastering Financial Automation in Hospitality by 2025	84
	<i>Kinza Raheel — International Marketing & Communications Manager, Fairmas GmbH</i>	
	10 Reasons Why Upgrading Your PMS is a Must in 2025	87
	<i>Ryan King — Senior Vice President for the Americas, Shiji Group</i>	
	Six USALI Changes Hotel Finance Executives Need to be Aware of in 2025	89
	<i>Robert Mandelbaum — Director of Research Information Services at CBRE Hotels</i>	
	Top 10 Tech Trends Transforming Hospitality in 2025	91
	<i>Markus Feller — CEO of Like Magic</i>	
	Top 5 Event Trends Hotels Must Know for 2025	93
	<i>Nicola Allen — Director, Hospitality Cloud Marketing, Europe, Cvent</i>	
	Top 5 Booking Trends Transforming Hospitality in 2025	95
	<i>Zen Valli — Chief Revenue Officer at RMS Cloud</i>	
	Top 10 Trends in Property Management Technology for 2025	97
	<i>Ruth Whitehead — Chief Operating Officer (COO) of eviivo</i>	
	Top 10 trends in corporate housing and business travel in 2025	99
	<i>Carrie Hartman — President of 3Sixty</i>	
	In 2025, Travelers Want Hassle-Free Trips : How Generative AI Can Help	101
	<i>Emily Weiss — Global Travel Industry Sector Lead, Accenture</i>	
	Top 10 Trends Shaping In-Room Guest Communication in 2025	104
	<i>Dilara Develi — Junior Marketing Manager</i>	

HYB



Top 10 Hospitality Trends: What Shaped 2024 and What To Expect in 2025

Marco Trends from EHL

Dr Jean-Philippe Weisskopf

Associate Professor at EHL Hospitality Business School

Philippe Masset

Associate Professor at EHL Hospitality Business School



The beginning of a new year always presents the perfect opportunity to debate which trends faded and which came to fruition over the course of the past year, while looking ahead to identify new ones that are underfoot. This reflection is all the more relevant given that the hospitality industry is highly dynamic, as it swiftly adapts to shifting consumer trends, technological advances and socio-economic changes.

This article aims to assess which hospitality trends we highlighted 12 months ago have gained or lost significance, and then identify emerging developments. Here, we provide a comprehensive overview of these shifts.

FADING HOSPITALITY TRENDS

GREEN HOSPITALITY

In 2024, sustainability remained a central theme, with many companies adopting environmentally friendly practices as a key selling point. However, by 2025, **sustainability has become less of a differentiator** and more of an industry standard. Tourists now expect hotels, restaurants and other hospitality establishments to operate sustainably, from energy-efficient designs to waste reduction initiatives. While critical, sustainability no longer provides the competitive advantage it did in years past. It now forms an integral part of hospitality operations.

WORKFORCE EMPOWERMENT

Several signs indicate that the emphasis on employee empowerment is on the wane. Hospitality companies have reorganised and are now primarily focused on optimising performance. This trend is not unique to hospitality and reflects a broader **return to pre-pandemic workplace practices**. One example is the reversal of remote work policies by several companies, which signals a shift away from the flexibility and employee-centered approaches that gained traction after COVID-19. As reported in several studies, employees feel less valued at work and discouraged from participating in professional development. Employee engagement has suffered as a result. According to a Gallup poll, employee engagement in the U.S. dropped to a decade-low in 2024, with only 31% of employees feeling engaged. This trend is mirrored in other regions of the world as well.

RISING INTEREST RATES

High interest rates and inflation shaped markets in the first half of 2024, creating challenges for hotel developers and operators. By 2025, however, **interest rates have fallen significantly in most developed markets, thus easing financial pressure**. This shift may revitalise hospitality investment, namely the renovation or construction of new hotels and restaurants. This is good news for development projects in the pipeline and for current establishments that seek to offer more flexible pricing strategies in an effort to attract cost-conscious travellers.

HOSPITALITY TRENDS CONTINUING TO SHAPE THE INDUSTRY IN 2025

1 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

This field is evolving at a frenetic pace that few could have predicted. New tools are emerging on a regular basis,

while others have proven to be less impactful than initially expected. A particularly salient example is the use of Virtual Reality (VR) tours as a booking tool. While VR was touted in 2024 as a way for potential guests to preview destinations or accommodations, its novelty has clearly worn off. Prospective guests perceive user-generated content and online reviews as more authentic and reliable sources of information when making booking decisions. On the other hand, **technology is enabling hyper-personalisation, which enhances the guest experience in more meaningful ways**. Advances in AI and machine learning help companies anticipate customer needs with remarkable accuracy so they can tailor everything from what to have for dinner to room amenities. Travel and tourism brands that excel at delivering bespoke services will be rewarded with stronger guest loyalty and increased spending.

2 DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

The combination of precise, real-time data and the technological advancements mentioned earlier is creating new opportunities that industry players are eager to seize. One key example is AI-driven revenue management strategies. **Machine learning algorithms are stepping in to analyse real-time data** that optimise pricing, forecast demand and dynamically adjust offerings. These tools enable hoteliers to maximise occupancy and revenue streams while responding quickly to market changes.

3 THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social networks remain a 'must' for engaging audiences and driving bookings in 2025. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube will continue to shape travel trends. The greatest strength of social media lies in the fact that content is driven by the users themselves. This **proximity creates a direct impact, which can be further amplified** by engaging influencers and trendsetters to promote new destinations.

4 FINE DINING AND CULINARY EXPERIENCES

Fine dining will remain relevant in 2025, blending traditional luxury with innovative concepts. Culinary experiences that focus on sustainability, hyper-local sourcing (think 'farm-to-table') and storytelling through food are particularly popular. In addition, open kitchen concepts and chef-led tasting menus remain key draws for food lovers who seek unique and memorable experiences. **Cultural immersion** has become popular among tourists looking for an authentic, community-based experience. Whether it is cooking classes led by locals, heritage tours or opportunities to participate in community projects, businesses that help guests and locals connect in a meaningful way will enjoy lasting relevance.

5 BARS AND DRINKS REDEFINED

Bars have cemented their role as experiential destinations in the hospitality sector. Demand for **immersive cocktail experiences and mixology-driven concepts** will only increase in 2025. Speakeasy-style bars, flair bartending and storytelling are just some of the innovations driving this trend.

6 VOLATILE FINE WINE MARKET

In 2024, the market for fine wines was weighed down by sagging consumer demand, a general shift away from alcoholic beverage consumption and the spectre of looming economic uncertainty. In 2025, the market will remain highly volatile, with some wines continuing to see market-driven price corrections, while others are expected to show greater resilience due to limited supply following the challenging 2024 vintage. The downtrend is affecting the entire supply chain, including producers and retailers. The outlook is foggy, but one thing is crystal clear: **2025 is a buyer's market.** This could spur restaurants to expand their wine cellars.

EMERGING HOSPITALITY TRENDS FOR 2025

7 REGENERATIVE HOSPITALITY

As sustainability becomes an operational baseline that is taken for granted, regenerative hospitality is emerging as a transformative approach. **This trend focuses not only on minimising harm but also on actively improving the environment and local communities.** From net-zero to net-positive. Examples include resorts that fund reforestation projects, hotels that train and employ locals in underprivileged areas and restaurants that promote zero-waste cuisine while sourcing ingredients from regenerative agriculture. In short, regenerative tourism is making sustainability look... so 2024.

8 ADVANCED AUTOMATION IN OPERATIONS

While automation is not new, **its scope and sophistication are poised to increase** significantly in 2025. From robotic housekeeping solutions to fully automated check-in and check-out processes, technology is transforming operational efficiency. For example, voice-activated room controls and facial recognition for secure access may find their ways into upscale properties. These technologies increase convenience while freeing up staff to focus less on routine tasks and more on high-touch, personalised services.

9 RISE OF SUBSCRIPTION-BASED TRAVEL

A growing number of hospitality brands are adopting subscription models, offering tourists access to exclusive benefits for a monthly or annual fee. These programmes often include discounted stays, priority bookings or access to members-only experiences. **Subscription travel caters to frequent travellers who expect to be rewarded for their loyalty in the form of greater convenience and better value.**

10 CATERING TO 'GENERATION ALPHA'

As children born after 2010, who have been dubbed Generation Alpha, **begin to influence family travel decisions**, hospitality brands are adapting their offerings to appeal to this demographic that is both tech-savvy and socially conscious. Child-focused wellness programmes or immersive technology-driven experiences are becoming a part of family travel packages.

HUMAN CONNECTION STILL REIGNS

The hospitality industry of 2025 continues its transformation, with technological innovation and evolving consumer expectations driving change. The decline of 'green hospitality' as a differentiator signals a shift from sustainability as a competitive advantage to a basic expectation, highlighting the need for the industry to move beyond mere compliance towards true change. Furthermore, while AI, automation and data-driven decision-making offer immense efficiency gains, the industry must ensure that technological advances do not come at the expense of personalised service, genuine human connection and places to enjoy - elements that remain at the heart of hospitality.



HYB



Lessons in Hospitality: Commercial Trends to Watch in 2025

Commercial Trends

Brian Hicks

*President and CEO, Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International
(HSMAI)*



As we enter 2025, I'm reminded that change remains our only constant. From AI integration to distribution challenges and talent gaps, trends are emerging. Based on insights from HSMAI's Executive Roundtables and Advisory Boards, here are 11 trends that hospitality commercial leaders should watch in 2025.

1 LEADING THROUGH ORGANIZATIONAL SHIFTS

Sales and marketing teams are grappling with faster-than-ever transitions in structure, roles, and responsibilities. Leaders must juggle near-constant change with maintaining team morale and long-term growth. **Tip:** *Schedule brief, regular touchpoints—like weekly virtual standups—to keep everyone aligned and motivated.*

2 WORKFORCE RETENTION AMID TALENT GAPS

Labor strikes, high turnover, and talent shortages are affecting both sales and revenue teams. Offering professional development, cross-training, and clear career paths is crucial to retain top performers. **Tip:** *Build mentorship programs pairing new hires with seasoned team members to accelerate learning and foster camaraderie.*

3 MASTERING AI WITHOUT LOSING THE HUMAN TOUCH

From sales coaching to dynamic pricing, AI promises efficiency gains but also raises fears of depersonalizing the guest experience. The key is balancing automation with genuine human interaction. **Tip:** *Pilot AI tools on smaller scales and gather feedback from staff and guests before rolling out fully.*

4 BALANCING BUDGETS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

Inflation, unexpected costs, and fluctuating travel demand put pressure on marketing and revenue budgets. Leaders must constantly re-evaluate spending to maximize ROI and remain agile. **Tip:** *Adopt zero-based budgeting once a year to reset priorities, ensuring funds go to the most impactful initiatives.*

5 MEASURING IMPACT AND DEMONSTRATING ROI

Whether it's sales training or a multi-channel marketing campaign, hospitality leaders face growing demands to prove tangible results. Clear KPIs and real-time analytics help justify investments. **Tip:** *Develop a simple KPI dashboard that tracks both "leading" metrics (engagement, inquiries) and "lagging" ones (bookings, revenue) for a full performance picture.*

6 PERSONALIZATION AND RISING GUEST EXPECTATIONS

Modern travelers crave curated experiences—like bespoke packages and hyper-localized activities—that extend beyond the room. Personalization now spans the entire guest journey, from pre-arrival to post-stay. **Tip:** *Gather data from loyalty programs or feedback surveys to craft targeted offers that resonate with individual guests.*

7 THE DISTRIBUTION BALANCING ACT: OTAS VS. DIRECT CHANNELS

High commissions and rate parity issues continue to complicate direct-booking strategies. Striking the right balance among OTAs, brand.com, and other channels is critical for maximizing profitability. **Tip:** *Provide exclusive perks on your direct channels—like complimentary upgrades or flexible cancellations—that incentivize guests to book directly.*

8 DATA PRIVACY, REGULATION, AND ETHICAL CONCERNS

Changing privacy laws and fee-transparency regulations will shape how hotels collect, store, and use data. Meanwhile, AI and personalization raise ethical issues that demand responsible implementation. **Tip:** *Conduct regular audits of data practices and clearly communicate your policies to guests, reinforcing trust through transparency.*

9 INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY AND BREAKING DOWN SILOS

Fragmented systems (CRMs, marketing platforms, revenue management tools) impede holistic decision-making. Unifying data sources can streamline operations and spark better cross-department collaboration. **Tip:** *Start by identifying overlapping data points—e.g., guest profiles across sales and marketing—and integrate them into a single, shared platform.*

10 ECONOMIC VOLATILITY AND ADAPTIVE PLANNING

Global downturns, regional instability, and unpredictable demand require a readiness to pivot at a moment's notice. Scenario-based forecasting can mitigate risks and guide swift strategic changes. **Tip:** *Maintain multiple forecasting models and establish clear triggers to shift resources when certain thresholds are met.*

BONUS TREND: ALIGNING PARTNERS FOR CONSISTENCY

Franchises, third-party management companies, and local vendors each have distinct goals and processes. Harmonizing these relationships is vital to ensure brand consistency and service standards. **Tip:** *Create unified brand guidelines and conduct routine training across all partner channels, ensuring everyone is aligned on core values and guest expectations.*

HYB



What is AI going to bring hotels in 2025?

Artificial Intelligence

Martin Soler

Partner at Soler & Associates



Let's cut through the noise for a moment. AI is not just hype anymore—it's the biggest shift in tech since the internet made floppy disks obsolete.

— *But, wait a second, before you read the rest of this. Did you know that this is just an excerpt from the complete newsletter that is available here? Sent out once a week, original viewpoints, insights and interesting things to read.*— If you think about it, we've gone from a world where you had to tinker with RAM, "hello world" scripts, and endless *if-else-end* loops to...well, now you can tell a computer, "Make me something cool," and it does—without knowing a line of code. That's new. Really new. For hotels, this means both opportunity and some risk. AI raises big questions around privacy and security, especially for an industry built on trust. But I don't think this genie is going back into the bottle. Any tech that *doesn't* understand context, typos, or guest needs will quickly feel outdated—frustrating both teams and guests. So, what's actually going to change in 2025 thanks to AI? Here's what I think:

- **Content Creation on Turbo Mode:** Marketing teams can crank out more content—faster. No excuses for stale Instagram feeds and outdated room descriptions anymore.
- **Hotels Will Have Their Own GPTs:** Imagine this—upload all your PDFs, price lists, event schedules, and local tips into an AI chatbot. Share the link with guests so they can ask for answers instead of calling reception to find out when the pool closes.
- **Upselling Without the Pushiness:** Guests will ask the hotel's AI for recommendations—spa packages, late checkouts, dinner reservations—making upselling feel natural, not spammy.
- **Automated Review Replies:** Responding to reviews becomes a breeze, ...AI-generated reviews might start popping up too.
- **Communication Supercharged:** AI handling guest messages, emails, and texts will go from "nice-to-have" to the norm. Guests will expect replies in *minutes*, not hours—and it will drive more direct revenue.
- **Meetings and Events Will Get Smarter:** AI will help sales teams respond to RFPs faster, suggest multiple tailored options, and close deals without the back-and-forth.
- **Ending Repetitive Tasks:** Many small, annoying workflows will get automated. They already are, but AI will expand what's possible here, saving teams time on boring things that are slightly too unique to code, but too repetitive to be human tasks.

And personalization? I don't think AI-driven personalization will *feel* like a revolution next year. Instead, it'll be a slow, quiet evolution—things will gradually feel less and less irrelevant. One day, everything will just work, and the whole experience will seem "magical." But it will not be a sudden shift.

Long-term? What we're calling AI today will simply become... normal. Every system will interpret instructions and execute tasks more intuitively. The real risk for hotels? Falling behind. For guests, waiting at the front desk while someone clicks through 25 screens to check them in feels like a mystery. I'm sure it makes sense to someone who built the system. But it doesn't make sense to the guests. They've given you their data, they've prepped their ID—why 25 clicks?

The great thing is that AI isn't coming to replace hospitality—it's coming to help hotels do hospitality better.



HY8



Is Simone Puerto the John Titor of Hospitality? 10 Predictions That Might Prove It

AI-Driven Transformation

Simone Puerto
Founder | CEO | Futurist



The hospitality and tech industries are navigating a liminal space where the boundaries between human and artificial are increasingly blurred. Generative AI, hyper-personalization, and digital workers are not merely disrupting established norms but challenging the foundational frameworks that define them. This is not just the era of automation; it represents an ontological shift, compelling us to rethink the essence of hospitality.

GENERATIVE SEARCH (GEO): FROM QUERIES TO CONTEXT

TEXT: The next generation of travelers won't even know the concept of search engines. Generative search doesn't just answer questions—it anticipates them. GEO flips SEO and digital presence paradigms by synthesizing information instead of aggregating results. Rather than curating a list of blue links, these algorithms derive meaning from scattered data points. **TIP:** Forget about writing for Google. Rewrite your copy around deeply valuable, context-driven insights these algorithms can harness. Also, forget about minimalistic web design. For GEO, the more text, the better (welcome back to the '90s!).

THE END OF CLICKS? SEARCH ADVERTISING EVOLVES

TEXT: Traditional cost-per-click advertising may soon be eclipsed by generative AI platforms that sidestep clickable links in favor of direct, conversational answers. Platforms like Perplexity and Google are already experimenting with cost-per-impression models, suggesting a future where user queries are resolved within the interface. **TIP:** Rethink how to capture attention and deliver value in a landscape where clicks will no longer be the main currency.

HUMANS-AS-LUXURY: THE NEW FIVE STARS

TEXT: When AI covers all the basics of service, authentic human interactions become scarce and, therefore, premium. It's what I call the "Humans-as-Luxury" paradigm. Guests seeking bespoke attention and genuine connection will pay for (human) staff who can deliver it. **TIP:** Elevate staff training to foster empathy, problem-solving, and storytelling. Let humans shine where AI cannot (yet).

DIGITAL WORKERS: AUTOMATION BEYOND EFFICIENCY

TEXT: Forget "tech replacing humans," at least for now. Think "tech amplifying humans." **TIP:** Identify redundancies and train your staff to work symbiotically with digital colleagues for seamless operations. In an era where one-third of Amazon's workforce is non-biological, ensure your (human) staff is prepared to thrive in this new synergy.

GOODBYE AGENCIES, HELLO ADBOTS

TEXT: AI-driven chatbots are moving into the role of advertising agencies. They can design, test, and optimize campaigns autonomously. **TIP:** Explore tools like the Gemini-powered Google Ads platform and evaluate how it stacks up against your (costly) advertising agency.

FROM "SEARCH ENGINES" TO "DO ENGINES": THE RISE OF AGENTIC AI

TEXT: Want to book a trip to Paris? Tools like OpenAI's Operator can now autonomously sift through hotel rates, compare reviews, and complete payment steps in a single seamless action. These "do engines" eliminate friction, transforming travel planning from a series of clicks into an AI-driven, end-to-end experience. **TIP:** Conduct an "AI Audit" of your booking engine and website to identify barriers (CAPTCHAs, excessive form fields, or fragmented data) that could derail autonomous agents. Focus on "agent experience" rather than on "user experience." If you build it (for AI), they (the guests) will come...

THE RISE OF CUSTOMGPTS IN HOSPITALITY

TEXT: Bespoke AI for hotels will transform FAQs, check-ins, and guest services into seamless, always-on experiences. CustomGPTs scale the brand promise in ways standard chatbots cannot. **TIP:** Start small: train an AI model with your brand's voice and gradually expand its capabilities. Then, upload semantic data, staff surveys, analytics, and revenue metrics to create a digital assistant. Shift your focus from chatbot-to-guest interactions to chatbot-to-staff, capable of delivering value for just a few cents per query.

HARD SKILLS? OUT. SOFT SKILLS? IN.

TEXT: In an automation-driven world, empathy and creativity will be the new technical proficiencies. As AI handles operational tasks, human workers who excel in creativity, cross-cultural communication, and critical thinking will become indispensable. **TIP:** Rewrite hiring practices to emphasize adaptability and emotional intelligence. Knowing how a particular PMS works will hold zero value in five years, as that role will be better suited for digital workers/AI agents anyway.

GOODBYE SPREADSHEETS; HELLO CONVERSATIONS

TEXT: AI-driven reporting moves beyond rows and columns. Conversational reporting interprets complex data sets in natural language, accelerating decision-making and fostering a culture of curiosity. Want to know how many more martinis guests from Texas, aged 35 to 55, with kids, drank at your bar compared to two years ago? That's just an LLM query away. **TIP:** Start by uploading data into CustomGPTs asynchronously, then move to real-time integration with your existing tech stack.

PLUG-AND-PLAY AI

TEXT: It's tempting to sign a contract with companies offering bespoke AI solutions for hotels. While these solutions are effective, they're often built on existing models. Nothing inherently wrong with that, but consider the long run: these intermediaries may soon become unnecessary when you can directly integrate AI widgets into your PMS. **TIP:** Focus on the existing stack: pick vendors offering open APIs and seamless integration—you'll need your stack connected to multiple LLMs and agents sooner than you think.

HYB



Top 10 actionable AV system trends to make you stand out

AV Systems

Michael Kinzel

Global Segment Development Manager Hospitality at Organization d&b audiotechnik

Hospitality operators strive to deliver the right atmosphere: it's a core aim. Whether hotel lobby, bar, restaurant or club, you want your guests to feel comfortable and relaxed. You want them to want to be there, and to want to stay. And afterwards you want them to tell everyone how good it was, and to come back again.

That right atmosphere is a harmonious balance of influences: for the customer, it's about how you are treated, what you can sense around you and how it makes you feel. Operators put heart and soul into interior design, create outstanding menus and install comfortable lighting to deliver that all-important ambiance. But there is one key element in our enjoyment of any space that is often little more than a tacked-on afterthought – and that's the AV system. **Here're the top trends to unlock potential from your AV systems and to provide exceptional experiences for your guests.**

1 IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

Immersive AV systems embrace your guests with top level experiences and enhance the sense of arrival in your space. They captivate audiences by engaging multiple senses – spaces can be transformed and users can be transported into new worlds. **Tip:** *Instead of applying low budget loudspeakers and screens, invest in a holistic and sustainable solution (high-resolution projectors and screens, advanced audio systems and innovative lighting) to deliver the right atmosphere. Interaction is the key to entering these new realms.*

2 TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Every event in a hospitality space has an impact on the environment. Dedicated manufacturers, organisations and associations provide software prediction tools that include recommendations to limit negative impacts to the environment. On top comes the increased availability of certified pre-owned AV products. **Tip:** *Use available online planning tools to prepare your events/conferences and measure their impact on the environment. Also consider the use of pre-owned products in their second lifecycle.*

3 AVOIDANCE OF DISTRACTION BY NOISE

Increasingly, operators are understanding that good acoustics and good sound play a vital role in their strategy to minimise guest distraction coming from audible sources like background chatter, clatter, traffic, shouting etc. Sound masking avoids unwanted noise spill over and distraction within and outside of hospitality spaces. **Tip:** *Always do sound design hand in hand with acoustic design.*

4 SOFTWARE BASED NOISE CONTROL

Entertainment offerings in hospitality spaces could cause conflicts with neighbours through unwanted noise emissions. A proper pre-planning will provide peace of mind. Nuisance-free vibes 24/7. Keep the ambience alive - and the Local Authority from your door - with tablet-controlled audio across private rooms and separate spaces. **Tip:** *Use existing software prediction tools from sound system manufacturers or acoustic engineering companies.*

5 ADVANTAGES OF MULTIFUNCTIONAL SPACES

Tailored AV systems enable hospitality operators to change functionality of spaces. The optimized multi purpose use of a space will have positive impact on all business metrics. **Tip:** *Make use of system presets that can be simplified enabling untrained staff to control the AV system setting on a touch screen.*

6 SUBSCRIPTION INSTEAD OF PURCHASE

Turning CAPEX into OPEX to avoid budget limitations is a trend across industries. Using "Sound as a Service" gives access to latest technology standards under a full service umbrella and is a low risk alternative to ownership. **Tip:** *Subscribe to a high-quality sound system and benefit from latest technology, full flexibility and service packages.*

7 INTEROPERABILITY AND 3RD PARTY INTEGRATION, REMOTE CONTROLLED

High quality AV systems can be integrated in existing IT networks to have remote control functions available throughout the venue. A media control system or processing platform can centralize and manage multiple inputs. In case of emergency, seamless integration of the performance system in a voice alarm system is a critical requirement for many spaces. **Tip:** *Watch out for certified and compatible devices and integrate your AV system into the existing networks.*

8 WORLD RENOWNED CONCERT SOUND IN YOUR SPACE

High end media players and mobile control interfaces together with advanced sound systems enable hospitality operators to have the same sound signature in their spaces like major artists – all controllable at your fingertips. **Tip:** *Work with experienced AV consultants in the planning phase and invest in high end devices along the entire signal chain.*

9 CARDIOID SOUND SYSTEMS

Most hospitality spaces have complex room acoustics and sound-diffusing objects. Not all of these acoustic challenges can be solved by interior design and acoustic planning-/treatment. A new generation of "cardioid sound systems" provides a much higher directivity than traditional products to avoid unpleasant sounds and increase speech intelligibility. **Tip:** *Ask for sound systems with a cardioid characteristic.*

10 CUSTOMISATION TAILORED TO YOUR REQUIREMENTS

Each hospitality space and brand deserves individual treatment. Everything can be defined and tailored using new technologies and materials. And there is more to customization than color – even special materials and weather resistant outdoor versions. **Tip:** *Don't go for standard products, ask for the extra touch.*

DISCOVER UNTAPPED POTENTIAL OF HIGH END AV SYSTEMS AND STAND OUT FROM THE COMPETITION

Competition to engage and retain customers is stronger than ever, and great sound should not be considered a luxury, but a necessity. It should rank alongside fabulous cuisine, stylish décor and impeccable service in delivering a profitable hospitality environment, in maximising dwell time and repeat custom. Today's high-end nightclubs, bars or hotel lobbies, often required to be versatile, multi-use spaces with needs changing according to time of day, should be enjoyable, comfortable and relaxing destinations. Without great AV systems, that's not going to happen.



WORLD RENOWNED CONCERT
SOUND
INSTALLED IN YOUR
SPACE
AVAILABLE AT YOUR
FINGERTIPS



HYB



9 Shifts Shaping the F&B World in 2025

Food & Beverage

Judit Szöllősi

F&B Concept Developer, Conceptional

CONCEPTIONAL

F&B CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT • F&B PLACEMENT • F&B PERFORMANCE & GROWTH

Customer demands have pushed the F&B industry to extremes, with expectations for immersive experiences, environmental consciousness, and hyper-personalized services. Meanwhile, rising inflation, labour shortages, and skyrocketing energy costs challenge restaurants to balance evolving customer needs while maintaining high margins. In 2025, we expect restaurants to shift toward a more balanced approach, focusing on convenience, immersive experiences, sustainability, and quality, all while maintaining value for money. The key challenge will be creating and communicating this value effectively to their guests.

1 THE RISE OF RESTAURANT GROUPS

In the past, restaurant chains or franchise groups benefiting from economies of scale were often associated with fast food of low to reasonable quality and uniformity in offer and design—at best, mediocre casual dining. However, the current economic landscape and market volatility, which cause margins of restaurants to shrink dramatically—has shifted the perspective of restaurateurs.

More and more restaurant groups, such as Big Mamma in Europe or Sunset Hospitality Group from Dubai, are emerging with a new approach: they create premium dining brands designed for scalability and international expansion while maintaining the “one-off” restaurant feel. These groups not only leverage economies of scale in procurement and operational expertise but also allow for workforce security, fostering an environment where chefs can move within the company, providing employee growth and driving innovation through circulating knowledge in-house, across locations.

2 MULTI-FUNCTIONALITY AND ALL-DAY RELEVANCE

With increasing economic volatility, the need to maximize efficiency goes beyond leveraging economies of scale—it also means optimizing asset turnover. For restaurants, this translates into creating all-day dining concepts and multi-purpose (experience) spaces that generate revenue from morning to night.

The rising trend of social-competitive dining is set to gain even more traction in 2025, as operators are looking for new and creative ways to make the most of their spaces throughout the day. This may come to life by cross-utilizing ingredients in an all-day dining format or developing hybrid concepts—such as a listening bar that transforms into a lively evening party venue, or social spaces providing opportunity for organizing events such as tasting or chef-led dining. Restaurateurs will continue to explore creative strategies to maximize their footprint and enhance guest experiences. In places like Lock, Stock and Barrel in Dubai, guests not only dine throughout the day but can end up spending their whole night at the club-turned-restaurant space.

It is however not only the functionality of the restaurants that restaurants are being flexible with. Pop-up and mobile restaurant concepts are gaining popularity as they offer unmatched location flexibility, bringing dining experiences directly to the customers—without the need for permanent locations. These temporary setups are often leveraged by

established restaurant brands to promote their larger portfolio, creating buzz around the “family” of restaurants. Additionally, pop-ups are a powerful tool for launching limited-time offers (LTOs), exclusive merchandise, and product drops, capitalizing on their ephemeral nature to drive excitement and urgency among diners.

3 BRAND TRUST – THE CURRENCY OF HOSPITALITY

There are two key reasons why restaurant brands hold value: **trust** and **self-expression**.

Trust is vital in a world of shrinking disposable income—guests want reassurance that both the food and experience will meet their expectations. As mentioned earlier, this is one of the driving forces behind the rise of multi-restaurant operators, or “restaurant families.” They will continue to blur the lines between different dining formats—sandwich places launching fine dining concepts, and vice versa, premium restaurants introducing more casual “sister brands”, accessible to a wider audience. By operating large-scale venues and high volumes, they create unique, yet recognizable experiences that resonate with guests.

On the self-expression side, dining choices are increasingly tied to personal identity, as people “vote with their money,” supporting brands that align with their values and beliefs. As social divides grow, restaurants serve as platforms for self-expression, making the idea of “you are where you dine” more relevant than ever.

In 2025, clear messaging and bold branding around sustainability, social issues, and core values will be crucial. Restaurants will need an even more defined mission, reflected in every aspect of their offering—from design to menu—creating cohesive, value-driven experiences for guests.

4 BACK-TO-THE-ROOTS - AUTHENTICITY

The other side of the coin is **authenticity**—a rising force across both casual and premium dining. Exceptional service and bespoke concepts take centre stage and guests crave stripped-down and genuine experiences. High-quality food is no longer just a necessity but the focal point—fueling conversations and adding a human touch. Diners want to be part of a story, not just passive participants.

Smaller, more intimate concepts (such as restobars) are successful because they tap into nostalgia, both with design and menu choices that evoke warmth and familiarity. Traditional cooking techniques, like flame-grilling, are making a comeback, emphasising craftsmanship and authenticity. These artisanal preparation methods heighten the sensory experience—bringing guests closer to the raw essence of dining.

5 HOLISTIC WELLBEING – HOW HEALTH MEETS SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability and health consciousness are increasingly intertwined, driven by a holistic “Eat Good, Feel Good” mindset, whereas younger generations are in search of healthier and more balanced lifestyles.

Social media has also fueled awareness around overall well-being, from gut health to mental wellness, shifting consumer focus beyond just specific ingredients. Healthy eating is no longer about restrictive choices but balance, quality, and mindful consumption.

This shift extends to sustainability, where operational practices are evolving beyond the basics of waste management and plant-forward menus. The once-rigid era of strict veganism is fading, while alternative meats struggle to generate excitement, they are becoming standard offerings in QSR and fast-casual dining. Meanwhile, full-service restaurants are embracing plant-based cuisine in creative and unique ways, prioritizing fresh ingredients over processed substitutes.

6 TRANSPARENT DINING

As guests' demands of service to match the meal quality increase, local sourcing is becoming essential. The focus is shifting from quantity to quality, with ethically raised meat and fish enjoyed less frequently but valued more. Transparent sourcing and premium pricing emphasize the worth of these ingredients, strengthening ties with local producers.

At the same time, a rising preference for fresh, unprocessed foods and scepticism toward ultra-processed options is driving a return to scratch cooking. More and more brands are embracing transparent communication, such as Hilton, who, in collaboration with Klimato, introduced carbon-tracked menus, displaying the CO₂ emissions of each meal, whilst CO₂ emissions are just the surface of measuring sustainability KPIs, it is a footstep in the door for climate-conscious and climate-transparent communication.

7 CONTACTLESS EVERYTHING

In fast food and quick-service restaurants (QSR), "*contactless everything*" is becoming a top priority as guests increasingly prefer minimal human interaction and the fastest, most seamless ordering process. Contactless ordering and payment solutions, such as self-service kiosks and mobile apps, are becoming more popular because they minimize mistakes and make the experience effortless for customers. These solutions allow guests to place orders quickly and accurately, eliminating potential miscommunication while enhancing convenience. The demand for contactless systems reflects the growing need for efficiency, particularly in high-pressure environments like QSRs, where speed and precision are critical.

8 AI: KITCHEN TO TABLE

As AI continues to revolutionize various aspects of the restaurant industry, it offers groundbreaking opportunities to streamline operations and enhance guest experiences. Leveraging AI in payment and ordering systems is at the forefront of this transformation. AI-backed tools, such as pay-at-table solutions, provide hyper-personalized recommendations based on guest profiles or order history, offering valuable data to improve menus and marketing strategies. Additionally, AI-powered systems can adjust offers and operations dynamically during peak times, alleviating pressure on the kitchen without sacrificing speed or quality.

Beyond ordering, AI also optimizes kitchen operations with labor-reducing solutions and waste management tools like Winnow, which tracks food waste using AI technology. These innovations not only enhance convenience for customers but also drive sustainability and efficiency across the entire restaurant ecosystem.

9 THE DOMINANCE OF ASIAN FLAVOURS

Writing about the hospitality industry feels incomplete without delving into food trends—the flavours and the culinary shifts that define the dining experience. As diners seek more diverse and unique flavours, there's a growing interest in overlooked or underrepresented cuisines, such as North African flavours or innovative fusion concepts. Similar to how **Nikkei cuisine** (the blend of Japanese and Peruvian influences) gained popularity in recent years, we can expect more cross-cultural movements to continue shaping menus in 2025.

Key cuisines that can't be ignored are **Japanese and Korean**—both of which offer bold, distinctive flavours appealing to health-conscious diners and provide cost-effective ingredient options. These cuisines are addressing many of the industry's current challenges, offering a balance of taste, health benefits, and affordability.

Overall, the F&B world is evolving with an enhanced focus on sustainability at all levels while delivering unique experiences that amaze or, at times, return to the core simplicity of good food. If we could highlight a key takeaway for restaurants in 2025, it would be that they should avoid chasing fleeting trends. Instead, they should establish long-lasting strategies that integrate AI, sustainability, and experiential aspects to support value-driven dining.

HYB



The Wellness- Hospitality Axis: Prepare to Pivot

Wellness

Mia Mackman

Owner and Principal, MackmanES

It is no secret that wellness and lifestyle have made their way into and established their value through the upper-upscales and luxury hospitality segments. In some cases, this has trickled down into extended stay and economy lodging markets. The momentum and demand for wellness programs has fast-tracked new programs that not only serve market and growth, but also create distinction, enhance market positioning, and mitigate risk while optimizing the performance of the business, amid wide and evermoving change. Some of these may be obvious, and many of these may not be popular, but nonetheless, I felt they were worth sharing.

1 DOMESTIC TRAVEL AND GLOBAL TOURISM

We may see radical declines in travel and tourism sectors such as urban core, major metropolitan areas, and international travel abroad. As costs for lodging, destination activities, and food continue to increase, alongside social turbulence and extreme weather, these factors will inevitably impact and shift current travel preferences. **TIP:** Focus efforts on creating new local and regional engagement strategies. These are well worth the investment of money and time.

2 LOCAL GROUPS, EVENTS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

Take a new look at, and a fresh approach to integrations with local groups, seasonal events, and different organizations. Community building and social support is a fast and effective way to embark on new traditions and add local partnership value.

3 “EVERYONE NEEDS A GREENHOUSE”

I’ve been singing this song for a while, but it bears repeating. Grow it, if you can. There are tons of reasons investing in a greenhouse makes sense beyond the benefits for F & B programs, in-room amenities, and managing supply chain issues. An asset like this can deliver true and unexpected value. **TIP:** If you have underutilized square footage or interesting adjacent space, run an analysis to understand if this makes sense. Most times, it does.

4 CREATE VALUABLE NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Taking a new approach to form healthy long-term supplier partnerships can significantly reduce costs, alleviate partnership and product challenges, and add stability to guest expectations, operating costs and annual budgets. **TIP:** Partnerships formed at the ownership and executive levels, carryover. These aren’t subject to the nuances of rotating employee preferences and transient sales relationships.

5 HABITS, LEARNING, AND CREATIVITY

The wellness and lifestyle markets include a massive range of new opportunities. From a hospitality standpoint, the list of potential roads to new growth are tremendous. We typically consider fitness, food, rooms, sleep, and spa. Leaning in, consider, personal life programs such as interpersonal growth, new habits, learning, cooking, inspiration, art therapy, and creativity. **TIP:** Who is your guest and what do they need? What ways can you challenge them, inspire them, and impart lasting impact on them?

6 POP UP SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Adding fun activities such as show-and-tells, social meet up themes (seasonal or on brand), afternoon tea-time, mid-day stretching (not yoga), or other social opportunities for guests to meet and interact with each other. These activities are ideal for using small unused meeting and group spaces. **TIP:** Make these occasional, pop ups “come as you are”; easily available and free.

7 BALANCING TECHNOLOGY

While technology adds incredible value to our lives, balancing these ever more complex applications is vital. This is a big topic, so there is a lot to say about this. My tip is short, genuinely better balance the benefits of technology with the beautiful interactions that happen in-person. **TIP:** Balancing administrative and service efficiencies while intentionally improving personalized, social, guest care, can enhance the overall experience for everyone.

8 EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Carving out time for this can be challenging. But consider, once a month dedicating 1-2 hours for a program that deeply nurtures employee well-being. This doesn’t mean fitness, meditation, or yoga. This is something that will fuel their own lives, enhance their purpose, and elevate their thinking about their life, work, and Self. **TIP:** These groups should be small, tactical, and include a broad range of topics.

9 CRISIS CARE

How prepared is your property for a crisis? These are unpredictable and come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but they happen. How prepared is the staff, BOH functionality, and organization to manage this? Depending on the location of the property, crisis care is often an elephant in the room often missing from operational protocols. **TIP:** Risk management and Crisis Care are not the same. It’s essential to conduct an internal audit to assess the proper due diligence that may uniquely apply to every property. Needs and necessities are likely to vary a lot.

10 HEARTFELT HOSPITALITY

It’s long been said, “living from your heart, leads to the best outcomes.” The emerging challenges and changes that the world faces through 2025, make this an even more important time to live and lead from the heart. Compassion and sincerity go a long way when people, everyone, everywhere, needs more unity and care.

HYB



Top 10 Trends Shaping Asset Management in 2025

Asset Management

Alex Sogno

CEO, Global Asset Solutions

As the hotel sector moves into the mainstream as an asset class, many investors are entering it for the first time. It is important to offer advice tailored not to the sector, but to the hotel segment they are investing into.

1 MARKET SPECIALISATION

As the hotel sector moves into the mainstream as an asset class, many investors are entering it for the first time. It is important to offer advice tailored not to the sector, but to the hotel segment they are investing into.

Tip: Know your market, be that budget or luxury.

2 FULL VIEW / GLOBAL STRATEGY

Asset managers are traditionally viewed as limited to one asset, up and operating. We are seeing growing demand for strategic advice across an investor's full portfolio, which draws on our industry knowledge and experience to position hotels correctly.

Tip: Get to know the full portfolio to maximise value.

3 AI IMPLEMENTATION

Project management is an important element of our roles as asset manager and we see costing and budgeting as obvious choices to deploy AI, which has the capacity for more advanced calculation than a human can do quickly, stepping in to save time.

Tip: look for areas heavy with data to make the most of AI.

4 BRANDS DETACH FROM OPERATIONS

As brands grow larger, hotels often struggle to reach their full potential because they are just one property among hundreds or even thousands. Operational excellence tends to take a backseat, leaving it to the owners and asset managers to prioritise this goal.

Tip: Regularly assess your asset's performance and focus on improving operational efficiency to boost revenue.

5 LENDERS TURN TO ASSET MANAGERS

With the finance market continuing to feel pressure, although easing slightly, banks are looking for deeper levels of reassurance when dealing with hotels, and asset managers are being called on to deliver this.

Tip: Tell your owner about the role asset managers can play in financing.

6 F&B SHIFT

Hotels have been moving away from F&B, with competition from restaurants around the property drawing guests away. However, done well, good F&B can deliver not only an increased sense of place, but profits.

Tip: F&B doesn't have to be long term, pop ups can be very attractive to guests.

7 CREATE YOUR DESTINATION

With costs still very much a factor in operations, low seasons can help to drive revenue into a hotel and smooth the rough edges in operations. Creating a reason to visit, such as a food festival, helps to drive demand.

Tip: Get to know your local area and its gastronomic specialism.

8 MORE PLATFORMS

Private equity remains eager to participate in the hotel sector and, to achieve the returns it needs, it has been building platforms, particularly in luxury and resorts. For asset managers this means a more complex role, but a fascinating one.

Tip: Clients will require geographical, as well as asset knowledge.

9 EXPERIENCE CREEP AND QUALIFIED STAFF

'Experience' was the watchword of 2024 and this isn't likely to change in 2025. As more luxury hotels open, they will need to offer increasingly exceptional experiences to stand out from the pack. Staff are essential to ensure exceptional guest experiences, operational efficiency and high service standards; retaining them through competitive benefits, growth opportunities, and a positive work environment is equally crucial for long-term success.

Tip: Guests appreciate experiences which connect them to the local region and invest in robust recruitment, training and retention programmes.

10 ALL INCLUSIVE

The all-inclusive market has traditionally been the domain of the value-conscious traveller, but recently we have seen the luxury segment start to adopt the model. As this expands in 2025, asset managers will have to learn more about this burgeoning offering.

Tip: All-inclusive at the luxury end of the market includes not only the stay, but transfers and experiences.

HY8



Why guest retention is the #1 priority for hoteliers in 2025?

Loyalty

Max Starkov

Hospitality & travel technologist and digital strategist



To begin with, revenge travel is over. STR and Tourism Economics final 2025 forecast reflects a downgrade in growth rates because of concerns over rising costs of living. It's simple math: higher cost of living means less disposable income which means less travel.

Add to the above the rising costs of new customer acquisition and guest retention clearly emerges as your property's priority for 2025.

Today it is 15-20 times more expensive to acquire a new customer than retain past customers. Unlike potential guests, past guests already know your property, your product and location, all you need to convince them is that your property's value proposition hasn't changed.

Guest Retention is the final fifth phase of the Digital Customer Journey, which also includes the Dreaming, Planning, Booking and Experiencing Phases. Because of ignoring this important engagement step, only 10%-15% of guests at independent hotels on any given night are repeat guests vs nearly 60% at the major hotel chains.

In 2025, success in bringing repeat business will likely make or break any property. How do you increase your repeat business?

By implementing CRM technology and Guest Appreciation Program. Naturally, in addition to providing impeccable service, above and beyond customer expectations.

Only a meaningful CRM technology application – as part of your hotel tech stack – can ensure deep engagement with your past guests. CRM tech provides automated post-stay communications, guest satisfaction surveys, guest retention marketing automation and drip marketing campaigns, guest recognition program management and loyalty marketing.

These fully automated CRM initiatives keep “*the conversation going*” with your past guests, keeps them engaged and steer them in the right direction: to book your hotel when they visit your destination again.

Why people like buying known things or from known brands? Because of the known value proposition, whether this is Apple products or a hotel. Not many repeat visitors to any destination would like to experiment with a new hotel. If your property has done a good job with your guests, if you keep them engaged after they have left, then they will come back.

Very few hoteliers have strategies to target repeat business. For many years, by implementing CRM and Guest Appreciation/Loyalty Program, at my company Next Guest, now merged with Cendyn, we have tripled and quadrupled repeat business at our hotel clients. Unfortunately, if you ask today independent hoteliers “*On average, what % of your guests are repeat guests*”, 90% would not know the correct answer. No wonder less than 10% of independents have CRM technology and program in place.

What is stopping an independent hotel to increase its repeat guests? Let's say from 10% to 20%,30% or more? Main reasons are the lack of CRM technology and Guest Recognition Program plus lack of appreciation how precious repeat guests are.

■

HYB



Top 10 Reasons to Replace Your POS System in 2025

Point of Sale Technology

Rohith Kori

Senior Vice President, Product Strategy, F&B, at Agilysys

The hospitality industry is experiencing a fundamental change in how guests interact with restaurants and hotels. Traditionally, Point of Sale (POS) meant a fixed terminal with an employee taking orders from guests across a counter. Today's reality is radically different, with guests expecting to order and pay however they prefer, whether through their phones, at self-service kiosks, via apps, or through traditional staff interactions. As consumer expectations evolve, traditional POS systems are struggling to keep pace. Below are the top 10 reasons to consider replacing your POS system in 2025, along with actionable insights to help hospitality leaders prepare for the future.

1 OMNICHANNEL ORDERING REVOLUTION

With 87% of hotels in the U.S. reporting staffing shortages and a 76% increase in UK hospitality vacancies in 2024, providing consistent service across all channels is crucial. Modern guests expect seamless experiences whether they're ordering poolside through their phone or enjoying traditional table service. This flexibility is particularly vital in luxury resorts, where a family might have varied preferences: parents desiring an attentive waiter to discuss wine pairings while their teenagers prefer contactless tech-native ordering. By unifying all channels, you ensure every guest enjoys service on their terms - "Any place, anywhere, on any terms." **Tip:** Look for POS systems that maintain consistent service quality across all channels while giving guests choice in how they interact.

2 UNIFIED OPERATIONS PLATFORM

When your kitchen is overwhelmed with orders from multiple sources, guest experience suffers. Modern POS systems bring order to chaos by intelligently managing all channels through a single platform. When your kitchen approaches capacity, the system proactively manages guest expectations by adjusting wait times. This ensures every guest receives accurate timing and enjoys their meal exactly as intended. **Tip:** Choose a system that helps your kitchen deliver consistency regardless of how guests place their orders.

3 SINGLE SOURCE OF CONFIGURATION

When updating menus, prices, or promotions, changes should happen once and deploy everywhere. Modern systems eliminate the complexity of managing multiple platforms by providing a single point of control. With a browser-based solution, these configurations can be performed from anywhere, giving you the flexibility to manage your operation remotely. Whether you're adding a daily special or updating your entire menu, every guest-facing service point stays automatically synchronized, whilst also allowing you to maintain an element of local differentiation. **Tip:** Select a system that simplifies operations through centralized management of all customer touchpoints.

4 ULTIMATE TERMINAL FLEXIBILITY

Today's hospitality environments demand flexible service solutions that adapt to different settings and staff preferences. Your servers might prefer tablets for poolside service while your counter staff need fixed terminals - modern POS solutions should support both. This flexibility extends to your choice of devices, from consumer-grade tablets for lighter service points

to commercial-grade terminals for high-volume areas, or a combination of both within the same environment. You can mix and match based on your specific needs while ensuring your staff delivers the same seamless guest experience across all touchpoints. Whether taking orders tableside or managing transactions at a counter, every interaction maintains consistent quality and reliability. **Tip:** Select a system that lets you choose the right device for each service scenario while ensuring consistent guest and staff experience across all points of service.

5 ULTIMATE MOBILITY

From poolside service to beachfront dining, your staff need to serve guests wherever they are. Modern POS solutions should enable seamless service across your entire property, with mobile ordering and payment capabilities that maintain full functionality no matter where your guests choose to dine. This mobility must be reliable regardless of WiFi infrastructure limitations - your POS system should be able to process orders and payments even in areas with poor connectivity or during network outages. This ensures every guest receives attentive service whether they're in your main restaurant, relaxing in a cabana, or enjoying service in remote areas of your property where WiFi coverage might be spotty. **Tip:** Look for systems that enable your staff to provide full-service experiences anywhere on your property.

6 HIGHLY SCALABLE ARCHITECTURE

Whether you operate a boutique resort or a global hotel chain, your POS system needs to scale with your business. The solution should be equally effective managing a single venue or hundreds of properties, while offering the flexibility to deploy in ways that best suit your local operation's needs. This scalability ensures consistent service quality as your business grows. **Tip:** Choose a system that can grow with your business while maintaining performance and reliability.

7 CENTRALIZED ENTERPRISE CONFIGURATION

Global brands need to balance corporate consistency with local market needs. Your POS should allow central control of core menus and pricing while giving properties freedom to add local specialties and adjustments. This flexibility ensures guests enjoy consistent brand experiences while appreciating local flavours. **Tip:** Look for systems that balance brand standards with the flexibility to meet unique local market requirements.

8 OPEN APIS

Your POS should work seamlessly with all your hospitality systems to create a complete guest experience. Modern solutions offer robust integration capabilities that let you build unique service experiences while maintaining operational simplicity. This approach ensures you can customize your guest experience without creating backend complexity. **Tip:** Evaluate systems based on their ability to integrate smoothly with your existing guest service platforms.

9 GLOBAL COVERAGE

Different regions innovate in different ways, from facial recognition payments to mobile wallet dominance used in differing markets. Your POS system should support local preferences and global standards and cross pollinate innovation from different regions of the world to ensure you can cater to a global travel audience. With international travel expected to increase by 9.7% in 2025, reaching 85.2 million international arrivals, it's crucial to have these systems in place to welcome guests from anywhere while maintaining operational efficiency. **Tip:** *Select a system that can adapt to both local and global guest preferences.*

10 PLATFORM OF THE FUTURE

The hospitality industry evolves rapidly, and your POS should evolve with it. Choose a solution that continuously incorporates new technologies and service capabilities. This future-ready approach ensures you can quickly adapt to changing guest expectations and industry trends. **Tip:** *Partner with providers who demonstrate consistent innovation in guest service capabilities. As the hospitality industry undergoes rapid digital transformation driven by evolving guest expectations and ongoing staff shortages, a future-ready POS system is critical to success. These insights will help hospitality leaders select POS systems that not only address current operational challenges but also position their properties for success in an increasingly digital landscape. By choosing a solution that embraces both technological innovation and operational flexibility, organizations can deliver exceptional guest experiences while optimizing their workforce efficiency.*

■

HY8



Top 10 Procurement Strategies Every Hospitality Leader Should Know in 2025

Procurement

Johannes Vocke

Chief Financial Officer at FutureLog

FUTURELOG 

The hospitality procurement sector is undergoing a remarkable transformation, accelerated by technological advancements, heightened sustainability demands, and the pressing imperative for operational efficiency. In 2025, procurement leaders must not only adapt but also innovate to maintain a competitive edge. In this dynamic environment, ten pivotal procurement trends warrant the close attention of hospitality professionals, alongside strategic recommendations for their effective implementation.

1 SUSTAINABILITY AND ETHICAL SOURCING: A BUSINESS IMPERATIVE

Importance: Sustainability is not merely a trend; it is a fundamental component of modern procurement strategies. Hospitality operations must integrate environmental initiatives, champion corporate social responsibility, and partner with eco-friendly suppliers. **Implementation Strategy:** Conduct comprehensive evaluations of suppliers based on sustainability metrics. Prioritise partners who offer transparency in environmental practices and adhere to ethical labour standards. Formulate a robust 'green purchasing policy' that emphasises sustainable products and energy-efficient solutions.

2 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: AUTOMATING THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Importance: Outdated procurement practices fail to meet today's demanding standards. Embracing digital technology streamlines processes, reduces costs, and strengthens supply chain frameworks. **Implementation Strategy:** Adopt cloud-based procurement solutions to optimise order processing, enhance supplier communication, and effectively monitor expenditure. These systems also improve compliance by ensuring procurement aligns with company policies and industry regulations while increasing operational efficiency through automated approval workflows and inventory management.

3 BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE: ENHANCING DECISION-MAKING

Importance: Business intelligence plays a pivotal role in procurement decision-making, particularly in demand forecasting and supplier selection. **Implementation Strategy:** Employ business intelligence tools to track pricing trends and refine negotiation tactics. Utilise data analytics to expedite supplier evaluations, refine demand forecasting and bolster supply, minimising resource allocations for individual assessments.

4 SUPPLIER DIVERSITY: CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Importance: A diverse supplier base fosters innovation, enhances customer engagement, and strengthens corporate social responsibility. **Implementation Strategy:** Initiate programmes to broaden supplier diversity, including collaborations with minority-owned, women-owned, and local businesses. Develop a vendor scorecard to measure their contribution to company diversity goals.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT: STRENGTHENING SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE

Importance: The global landscape, marked by pandemics and political upheavals, highlights the necessity for robust risk management. **Implementation Strategy:** Utilise digital risk assessment tools to identify potential supply chain vulnerabilities. Mitigate risks by diversifying supply sources and developing contingency plans to counteract disruptions.

6 COLLABORATIVE SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS: ADOPTING PARTNERSHIP MODELS

Importance: Long-term partnerships with suppliers enhance cost efficiency, quality control, and product innovation. **Implementation Strategy:** Transition from transactional models to strategic partnerships. Establish regular touchpoints with key suppliers to set objectives, explore cost-saving strategies, and co-innovate new solutions.

7 CLOUD-BASED P2P SYSTEMS: MOVING BEYOND LEGACY SOLUTIONS

Importance: Many hospitality firms still rely on outdated, non-scalable, on-premise procurement systems, necessitating modernisation. **Implementation Strategy:** Shift to a cloud-based Procure-to-Pay (P2P) system to benefit from real-time updates, remote accessibility, and enhanced security. Conduct a thorough review of technology infrastructure to optimise integrations and eliminate data redundancies, ensuring efficient procurement functionalities.

8 TAIL SPEND MANAGEMENT: IDENTIFYING HIDDEN EXPENDITURE

Importance: Left unchecked, uncontrolled and erratic spending—known as tail spend—can significantly inflate costs. **Implementation Strategy:** Implement automated spend analysis solutions to identify and categorise tail spend, ensuring greater visibility and control over procurement activities. Procure from preferred suppliers to capitalise on bulk discounts and curb unnecessary expenditure, while also establishing clear purchasing guidelines to prevent maverick spending.

9 PROCUREMENT AS A SERVICE (PAAS): COST-EFFECTIVE OUTSOURCING

Importance: Outsourcing specific procurement functions can reduce costs and enhance negotiation capabilities without increasing headcount. **Implementation Strategy:** Identify procurement functions suitable for outsourcing. Partner with procurement service providers to manage sourcing, supplier interactions, and contract administration efficiently.

10 DIGITAL INVOICES: ACCELERATING PROCESSING WITH OCR TECHNOLOGY

Importance: With governments pushing for electronic invoicing, the objective is to cut costs, minimise errors, and enhance financial operations. **Implementation Strategy:** Implement digital systems that facilitate invoice processing using Optical Character Recognition (OCR).

Ensure seamless integration with procurement platforms to prevent data re-entry and follow e-invoicing requirements.

A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO MODERN PROCUREMENT

For procurement professionals in the hospitality industry, these trends are pivotal in driving organisational success. By focusing on sustainability, digital innovation, business intelligence, and supply chain risk management, hospitality companies can significantly reduce costs, enhance performance, and build a resilient procurement strategy fit for 2025 and beyond. Those forward-thinking businesses that embrace these trends today are strategically positioning themselves to thrive in an ever-evolving landscape.





PROCURE-TO-PAY SOLUTIONS FOR THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Designed by hoteliers for hoteliers, our comprehensive suite of market-leading solutions brings transparency, efficiency and simplicity to the entire procure-to-pay process.

ORDERING • INVENTORY MANAGEMENT • RECIPE MANAGEMENT
CAPEX MANAGEMENT • CONTRACT MANAGEMENT • BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE
INVOICING • BUDGETING & EXPENSE MANAGEMENT



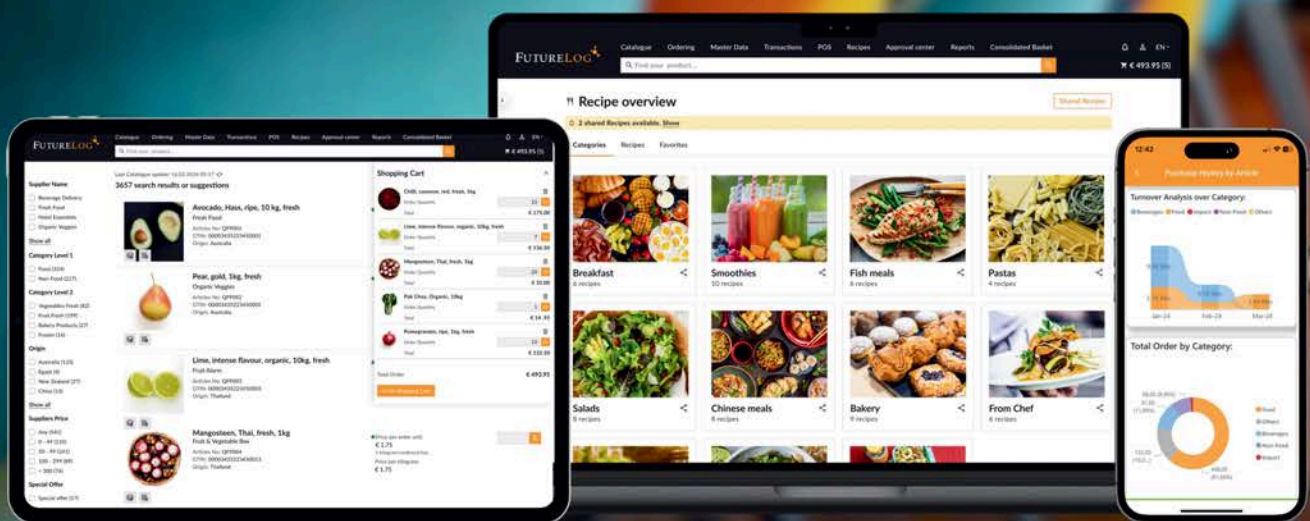
Easy POS & ERP Integrations



Time-Saving Automation



Streamlined Onboarding



GET IN TOUCH TO ARRANGE A COMMITMENT-FREE DEMO
sales@futurelog.com www.futurelog.com

HYB



Top 10 Reputation Management Trends Impacting the Hotel Industry in 2025

Reputation Management

Tobias Roelen-Blasberg

Co-Founder, MARA Solutions GmbH

The hotel industry faces a significant shift in 2025 with technology and evolving consumer behavior. As guests seek personalized and immersive stays, hoteliers need to adapt. The top 10 emerging trends, including AI-driven guest communication and focus on recent reviews, will reshape reputation management in hotels.

1 EFFICIENCY IS KING SAVE TIME FOR YOUR GUESTS

The hospitality industry is shifting towards efficiency, allowing for more guest interactions. Using AI for managing guest reviews streamlines repetitive tasks without compromising service quality. The right tools can enhance both efficiency and guest communication quality. **Tip:** *Utilize technology to expedite repetitive tasks. Select a system that boosts both efficiency and communication quality.*

2 AI REPLIES

The trend of AI replies began in 2023, but by 2025, AI drafts are expected to completely replace templates, making guest communication more personal and engaging. Instead of relying on stale, one-size-fits-all responses, AI technology will generate personalized replies that reflect the unique concerns and compliments of each guest. **Tip:** *If you're still using templates, it's time to embrace AI replies. These tools can help you craft more personal and effective responses to guest reviews.*

3 AI PERSONALITY

By 2025, AI tools are anticipated to transform from simple ChatGPT plugins to AI agents reflecting your brand voice. These AI assistants will understand your hotel's uniqueness, allowing them to respond accurately and personally to specific cases. This shift to AI Personality boosts the authenticity of responses and guest satisfaction. **Tip:** *Choose a reputation management system with AI adaptable to your brand voice to ensure efficient, personalized responses that align with your branding.*

4 AUTOMATION

Think about the time your hotel spends weekly responding to simple 5-star Google reviews. By 2025, reputation management software will automate responses to such reviews, saving considerable time. Automation allows you to focus more on personalizing responses to detailed reviews. **Tip:** *Analyze your weekly review volume to decide which reviews can be automated, semi-automated, or need manual attention. This strategic approach can greatly boost your efficiency.*

5 MORE WEIGHT ON REVIEW RECENCY

Past reviews on platforms like Google and [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com) are losing relevance. Review platforms are now prioritizing recent reviews that reflect current guest satisfaction. For instance, [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com) updated its score system in 2025, favoring newer reviews. **Tip:** *Stay informed about changes to review score systems on platforms like [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com). This will help you strategize your approach to reputation management.*

6 AI REVIEW SUMMARIES

Word clouds and simple sentiment analysis are becoming outdated. The future lies in AI-based solutions that accurately capture guest feedback without the need for complex data analysis. New AI solutions offer accessible formats like Pro and Con lists or written summaries, replacing individual reviews. **Tip:** *Utilize AI-powered review summaries for precise insights into guest sentiment to understand your strengths and improve guest satisfaction.*

7 FOCUS ON MOST IMPORTANT CHANNELS

In 2025, the OTA landscape will consolidate with major players like [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com) in the lead. Hence, an outstanding online reputation on one or two key platforms will be more beneficial than listings on multiple smaller platforms. **Tip:** *Concentrate your online reputation efforts on the most influential platforms to drive more business and improve brand visibility.*

8 SURVEYS WILL CONTINUE TO LOSE IMPORTANCE

AI summaries make it easier to glean insights from guest reviews, reducing the need for lengthy surveys. Furthermore, long surveys may discourage guests from leaving public reviews, which are crucial for attracting direct bookings. **Tip:** *Encourage guests to leave public feedback instead of relying on extensive surveys. These reviews can act as valuable improvement pointers, trust signals for prospective guests, and boost your hotel's online reputation.*

9 OPPORTUNITY TO DRIVE DIRECT BOOKINGS

Reviews significantly impact hotel rankings and visibility. A strong online reputation on platforms like Google increases your hotel's visibility. Combined with attractive pricing and a user-friendly, mobile-optimized website, it can drive direct bookings. **Tip:** *Understand your guest booking journey. Assess the ease of finding your hotel and the simplicity of booking. The simpler, the more likely guests will book.*

10 AI SEARCH WILL NOT DISRUPT BOOKING JOURNEY (2025)

Even with upcoming AI search engines like Perplexity and ChatGPT Search, AI still relies on trust signals, namely reviews. Guests will continue to rely on reviews for comparison during booking. Regardless of how booking patterns evolve, reviews will stay critical to hotel success. **Tip:** *Maintain a focus on your review strategy in your digital plan. Despite advancing tech, guest reviews will remain pivotal in influencing perceptions and decisions. Embracing these trends and strategies will help hoteliers stay competitive. Using AI, prioritizing review management, and focusing on the guest experience can maintain a strong online reputation and increase direct bookings. In the digital age, reputation is key, and staying abreast of these reputation management trends is vital for success in hospitality.*

HYB



What Lies Ahead: Hotel Tech in 2025 and beyond

Technology Mega Trends

Ira Vouk

Hospitality Technology and Revenue Management consultant

Ira Vouk

Hospitality technology consultant
/ Published Author / Speaker /
Educator / Founder

As we gaze into the crystal ball of the hotel industry, several key trends emerge that are poised to shape the next 5-10 years.

Here are a few highlights to keep on your radar:

1 CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF INNOVATION

Many hotels still keep their PMS on a dusty old server in a closet somewhere, but it's time to move to the cloud, folks. Cloud technology enables continuous updates and innovation, making it the bedrock of modern hotel management. Cloud is becoming the new norm, and this is the technology that will allow hotels to stay ahead of the curve instead of playing catch-up with each new technological advancement.

2 STANDARDIZATION AND SEAMLESS INTEGRATION

The biggest roadblock for tech vendors is the hospitality ecosystem's complexity, resulting in a tangled web of integration dependencies. Thankfully, cloud tech and AI are paving the way for better integrations and data standardization, reducing complexity and boosting efficiency. This will enable quicker data sharing between tools and even among different departments within hospitality organizations. Seamless data exchange between systems is vital. More and more hospitality tech companies are enabling API connections, creating a harmonious tech ecosystem. Intelligent middleware will also play a critical role in this game.

3 DATA MINING: THE GOLD RUSH

Data is piling up like snow in a blizzard, and many hotel companies are sitting on a goldmine without a map to the treasure. Effective data mining and analysis will help uncover valuable insights, leading to improved decision-making and operational efficiency. This is where AI also shines, turning mountains of raw data into golden nuggets of actionable intelligence. As a result, the next big growth market will be in data analysis. The early birds will not only get the worm but probably a hefty bonus, too.

4 USER-CENTRICITY: THE USER IS KING

Legacy tech focused on getting the job done but often forgot about the user. Modern B2C apps have set the bar high, making ease-of-use not just a luxury but a necessity. After all, who wants to talk to 10 different people, endure a boring demo just to install a piece of software, and then slog through a week of training to use it? Thankfully, B2B apps are starting to catch up. Modern hotel tech applications are designed with the user in mind, making tasks not only doable but also easy and enjoyable. This shift is crucial as demands on staff continue to grow. The spotlight is now on creating intuitive, user-friendly interfaces that streamline operations and enhance the user experience.

5 PLATFORMIFICATION: THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

Comprehensive solutions with app marketplaces are the future. This approach simplifies the tech landscape, allowing for easy integration and customization. Imagine a one-stop shop for all your tech needs, offering a range of tools with free trials and one-click easy installation. Once a handful of top PMS vendors reach a critical mass of market share and their APIs reach a decent level of reliability and consistency, we will stop seeing new entrants into the PMS market. All new startups will focus on complementary applications to the PMS core product, rather than competing in the PMS world.

6 AI/ML: THE BRAINY SIDEKICKS

To me, the most exciting trend of hospitech evolution is the rise of Artificial Intelligence. These technologies are not just buzzwords; they're becoming integral parts of how we live our lives and operate our businesses. AI-driven systems analyze vast amounts of data, identify patterns, and generate insights that were previously unimaginable. From chatbots that provide instant customer service to AI-driven tools that optimize energy use, these advancements are transforming the hospitality landscape as we speak. And the best part is that they keep learning and improving, making our operations smarter and more efficient over time. The collaboration between humans and AI (cobotics) boosts efficiency, accuracy, and decision-making. The future is bright, and it's filled with smart machines ready to make our lives easier and our guests' experiences unforgettable. In the dynamic relationship between hoteliers and tech providers, vendors are the engines, driving us forward toward a future of innovation and efficiency. So as we continue our journey to the renaissance of hospitality, it's important for hotel tech providers to rise to the occasion. Those trusty legacy methods and technology that once made us feel like rockstars are now about as useful as a floppy disk in a cloud storage world. It's time to modernize. No more excuses. The hospitality industry needs better tools to tackle the ongoing challenges we face. Let's fire up the innovation engines and get ready for a tech transformation that will make even the most stubborn hoteliers say, "*Where has this been all my life?*" The year 2025 and beyond marks the dawn of a new era where antiquated software solutions face extinction and hoteliers start appreciating modern technology.

If you haven't yet read Ira's new book *Hotel Tech 101* – take a look as it maps out the terrain of hospitality technology, paints a picture of the possibilities, and inspires each industry stakeholder to be open-minded and embrace the future.

HYB



Merchandising Trends to Watch in 2025: Elevating the Guest Experience

AI-driven Merchandising

Jason G. Bryant

Vice President, Nor1 GTM - Oracle Hospitality

ORACLE
Hospitality

As the hospitality industry focuses on maximizing revenue and personalizing guest experiences, AI and data security are becoming indispensable tools. For years, online retailers have successfully used AI-driven merchandising, and now hotels can follow suit to provide tailored offers beyond the guest room. With the application of AI and machine learning, hoteliers can engage guests coherently throughout the reservation life cycle, improve operations, and boost revenue, marking a shift from generic offers to personalized experiences.

1 AI-DRIVEN PERSONALIZATION

Predictive AI and generative AI are the intelligent building blocks of personalization, each providing a critical component for any successful merchandising strategy. The application of AI, particularly predictive AI, helps unlock personalization by identifying patterns in data and using those to make predictions on what to offer a specific guest, the optimal price, and at the right time. This may include the recommendation of room upgrade offers for individual guests, providing a tailored experience. **Tip:** *Explore AI solutions that are embedded within your current functional solutions that offer both operational efficiency and a comprehensive set of capabilities for powerful personalization.*

2 SECURE CLOUD HOSPITALITY PLATFORMS TO HELP MAINTAIN GUEST TRUST

To manage guest data responsibly, consider secure cloud-based platforms for merchandising. Investing in robust security architecture is essential to prevent data breaches, comply with governance standards, and maintain guest trust. This not only safeguards sensitive information but also fosters a culture of reliability that guests appreciate and expect. **Tip:** *Cloud platforms offer the security and scalability hoteliers need to align with its merchandising strategy's growth.*

3 OMNICHANNEL GUEST ENGAGEMENT ONLINE AND IN-PERSON

Guests appreciate options when booking, using various channels like online travel platforms, hotel websites, and phone reservations. This preference extends to merchandising, as guests engage with offers across their travel journey. Every touchpoint, from booking to check-in, is an opportunity to implement a successful merchandising strategy. **Tip:** *Ensure your digital marketing partners support your merchandising initiatives across all channels.*

4 COHERENT GUEST COMMUNICATIONS

Providing merchandising opportunities across their travel journey isn't enough – hotels need to understand the guest's interactions with those opportunities, including the offers they didn't take. Repeating the same offer, even after the guest has already accepted the offer, creates a disjointed experience that degrades conversion. Coherency, or knowing the guest's interactions from booking to check-in, is key to a successful merchandising strategy. **Tip:** *Coherent, targeted communication across all touchpoints shows guests that your strategy is both personalized and intelligent.*

5 REAL-TIME MERCHANDISING

Real-time capabilities are a fundamental feature that drives value for merchandising success. The ability to analyze various signals and data sets, including current rates and availability, allows for instant, relevant offers. Dynamic market conditions require adaptable strategies, unlike static offers and pricing that remain unchanged. **Tip:** *Adopt technologies that automate the presentation of real-time merchandising offers directly to front-line staff.*

6 EMPOWER CUSTOMIZATION

Give your guests what they want! While offering specialized or premium rooms is essential and always sells, so do value-added services like lounge access or top-floor rooms. Maximize your property's already available facilities and offerings, ensuring no money is left on the table. What makes your property unique can also generate revenue. Allow guests to select from several offers to curate their perfect stay. **Tip:** *Make sure your merchandising strategy includes the capability to monitor and analyze guest choices, which can help identify the preferred guest products and services.*

7 SOLVE FOR THE PARADOX OF CHOICE (OR 'SIMPLIFY CHOICES FOR BETTER CONVERSION')

Contrary to popular belief, more merchandising options don't lead to more sales. Too many choices reduce conversion and can overwhelm guests, causing anxiety, dissatisfaction, and ultimately inaction, as guests are too overwhelmed to make a selection. A curated selection of personalized options improves conversion rates and revenue. **Tip:** *Tailor merchandising choices to align with your guest-centric philosophy and revenue goals.*

8 STREAMLINE STAFF OPERATIONS

Effective merchandising requires data and computation, which can be challenging for staff during guest interactions. Embed merchandising capabilities into the critical business platforms so that staff does not have to toggle between applications while engaging guests. Less effort for staff will garner more revenue for you. **Tip:** *Adopt a platform that embeds merchandising recommendations within apps, enabling your employees to contribute to your merchandising strategy.*

9 AUTOMATION, FROM DEMAND GENERATION TO FULFILLMENT

With the technology available to hoteliers today, there is no excuse to continuing to use manual processes. Leverage predictive AI and integrations to help automate merchandising offers across all your digital channels, ensuring reservations and guest profiles can be updated in real-time. **Tip:** *Utilize property management systems, hotel apps, and on-site kiosks that can deliver targeted merchandising offers during guest interactions.*

10 DON'T FORGET THE HUMAN TOUCH!

While AI is transformative and exciting, the hospitality industry thrives on human connections. Technology works best when it is selectively deployed to assist staff, because at the end of the day, it is direct interactions that ensure a property stands out, leaving a lasting impression and unique guest experiences. **Tip:** *Always include human reviews for AI-generated content to maintain a personal touch.*



HY8



7 Ways AI is Transforming Personalization in 2025

The AI Revolution

Sergio Serra

CTO at Guestcentric Systems

The personal touch has long been at the heart of what defines hospitality. However, delivering personalization at scale is now critical to not only differentiate from the competition, but also meet the demands of today's discerning guests. Hotels that don't adapt risk falling behind, and therefore increasingly need to leverage AI to understand guest preferences, anticipate needs, and tailor every interaction.

Below are the key ways that AI is reshaping personalization in 2025:

1 YOUR WEBSITE: NOW IT'S YOUR AI GATEWAY

For years, we've optimized websites for Google, ensuring that the search giant's algorithms could easily find and rank them. But now, a new era is here: your website must be ready for the rise of AI Crawlers. AI isn't just a buzzword - it's changing how travelers discover and connect with hotels. OpenAI alone uses three distinct crawlers, each with a unique purpose, and they don't play by the old rules. For example, as of today, AI crawlers do not support JavaScript, which means they cannot interpret client-side-rendered content. New options are available to enhance your robots.txt file, and even traditional search is evolving, with users increasingly relying on longer, more detailed queries. **Tip:** *It's time to rethink your website functions. Do a tech review for AI suitability. Your website is no longer just a digital storefront - it's your hotel's first connection with the AI powered world.*

2 SOCIAL MEDIA: FROM INSPIRATION TO TRANSACTION

The internet has become the primary source for travel recommendations, with social media—especially short video platforms—emerging as key marketing channels for hotels. But now, these marketing channels are quickly becoming distribution channels, merging marketing and revenue management disciplines. Are your teams ready? **Tip:** *To stay competitive and avoid losing ground to OTAs, adapt your marketing budgets to prioritize this area. Acting quickly is essential, leveraging social media as an extension of the hotel's website to strengthen their online presence and attract direct bookings. The new guest journey will become more and more social, and AI can help facilitate advanced segmentation of audiences, automation, and trigger-based marketing*

3 MESSAGING AGENTS ON CALL

Generative AI agents are set to be a major trend in 2025. In the past, we've seen innovations like Meta enabling bus ticket sales through WhatsApp. Now, AI agents are revolutionizing the hotel industry, offering seamless guest communication via messaging platforms without burdening daily operations—and even enabling direct room sales through these channels. These technologies have the potential to become a powerful new source of direct bookings, reshaping how hotels connect with their guests and drive revenue. **Tip:** *2025 might be the time to start exploring how AI agents can help you bring direct reservations.*

4 UNFORGETTABLE STAYS START WITH TECH NOW

AI solutions designed specifically for travel aren't the only tools that matter. Generic productivity tools and other technologies can help hotels save time and reduce costs—resources that can then be redirected toward creating unforgettable and personalized guest experiences. Technology will empower hotel teams to collaborate more effectively, enabling them to deliver the ultimate guest experience. **Tip:** *Building a tech-savvy team is crucial to harness the power of AI for exceptional service while maintaining a personal, human touch.*

5 AI SPREADING TO DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE ECOSYSTEM

Every day, new AI tools and agents emerge to assist travelers in planning their next adventure. From intelligent trip planners and personalized recommendations to tools for finding the best deals, these innovations are reshaping how people prepare for travel. Such tools will keep increasing the dynamics of the market. Hotels must rise to the challenge by leveraging predictive AI to deliver the perfect offer at the right price for each potential guest. As the world becomes increasingly automated, hotels must adapt and embrace automation as well. **Tip:** *Keep an eye on tools guests are using to find your hotel, and build a strategy to respond to this demand.*

6 MOBILE AS ENABLER FOR HYPER-PERSONALIZATION

Hyper-personalization has been a hot topic in the industry for years, and mobile devices might hold the key to unlocking its full potential. The steady rise in mobile reservations highlights the importance of these devices for travelers, especially Gen Z. As a result, mobile devices are becoming increasingly pivotal in shaping the industry's future. From providing tailored and mobile-optimized online experiences before the guest arrives, to leveraging smartphones during their stay for communication, room access, payments, and even location-based (i.e. where the guest is at the hotel) and AI-powered personalized interactions, mobile is set to redefine the guest experience that begins online. **Tip:** *Ensure your website and booking system is optimized for mobile and take advantage of mobile communication during stay*

7 ATTRIBUTE-BASED SELLING: THE KEY FOR EXTRA REVENUE

Attribute-Based Selling (ABS) enables hotels to increase revenue by allowing guests to pay for specific room features, such as close to the kids pool, away from the elevator, or premium amenities. Research from HEDNA shows that ABS can boost revenue by 10-20% and increase repeat bookings by 10-15%. Additionally, over 60% of guests are more likely to book extras when given personalized choices. In a time where the ADR is sometimes at the limit, this can be the solution to bring more revenue to the hotels.

Tip: *Once more, technology and especially AI can improve the personalization level of attributes to be shown to each specific guest.* Looking to the future of hospitality and for independent hotels specifically, leveraging AI to efficiently enhance and tailor the guest experience from the very first interaction will be the key to strengthen direct relationships and drive sustainable growth. Furthermore, by automating the complexities of delivering tailored online experiences, hotels can also enable their teams to provide even more personalized services during each guest's stay—a win for both guests and hotels alike.



HY8



Top 10 Ways Business Intelligence is Transforming Hotel Revenue Management in 2025

Business Intelligence

Bill Daviau

VP of Strategic Accounts & Partnerships, Lighthouse

 lighthouse

Business intelligence is evolving from static reporting to custom commercial insights. For revenue managers, this means transforming how we analyze, visualize, and act on data. Here are the key trends reshaping our field:

1 AUTOMATED INTELLIGENCE ALERTS

BI platforms evolve from passive dashboards to proactive alert systems, automatically flagging rate opportunities, demand shifts, and market changes that require attention. **Tip:** *Track how much time your team spends digging through numbers to find the insights vs actual decision making. Use those insights to assess which tool fits your team best.*

2 EARLY DEMAND SIGNALS DRIVE PRICING

Early demand signals - from flight searches and hotel shopping patterns to event registrations - enable pricing decisions months before traditional pickup patterns emerge. **Tip:** *Create a demand calendar combining traditional metrics with forward-looking indicators like flight searches and event registration data.*

3 TOTAL REVENUE STRATEGY TAKES CENTER STAGE

Revenue optimization expands beyond rooms to analyze the complete guest spend across F&B, meetings, and ancillary services, enabling truly holistic pricing strategies. **Tip:** *Make an inventory of all your revenue streams and identify where the data is tracked. Include insights in periodic reporting to eventually shift the organization to TRevPAR per channel and segment*

4 INSIGHTS GET DEMOCRATIZED

BI is no longer just for RM's. Commercial teams access role-specific insights from a unified data source, ensuring aligned strategy across revenue, sales, and marketing. **Tip:** *Create a shared dashboard of key metrics that matter to each commercial department to use during weekly yield meetings.*

5 DYNAMIC COMPETITIVE POSITION ANALYSIS

BI systems combine traditional competitor rates with short-term rental data to provide complete market pricing visibility. **Tip:** *Expand your market analysis to track both direct competitors and alternative accommodations.*

6 PERSONALIZED REVENUE OPTIMIZATION

BI tools analyze historical guest spend patterns to segment customers by total value, enabling more sophisticated pricing strategies. **Tip:** *Build guest value segments based on total spending patterns across all revenue centers.*

7 EVENT IMPACT ANALYTICS

BI platforms quantify event impact by correlating historical performance with event calendars and booking patterns. **Tip:** *Create an event scoring system that predicts revenue impact based on historical patterns.*

8 INTELLIGENT DISTRIBUTION CONTROL

Advanced analytics track true channel costs and guest value to optimize distribution mix automatically. **Tip:** *Create channel profitability dashboards that include acquisition costs and total guest revenue.*

9 PREDICTIVE CANCELLATION MANAGEMENT

AI-powered BI tools identify patterns in cancellations, lead times, and length-of-stay to predict future booking **Tip:** *Monitor pattern accuracy by comparing predictions with actual results.*

10 AUTOMATED PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS

AI transforms complex data sets into clear, actionable reports highlighting key revenue opportunities and risks. **Tip:** *Define clear KPIs for measuring the success of automated recommendations.* The future of revenue management lies in turning data into decisions. Success in 2025 will depend on how well we leverage these business intelligence capabilities to drive commercial performance.

HY8



Visioning 2025: The Top Trends Transforming The Employee Journey

Elevating HR

Custódio Barreiros
Founder & CEO, EIP MGT

EIP MGT

Hospitality thrives on human connections. While guest experiences are at the heart of business strategies, the industry is now recognising that exceptional guest journeys are only possible when equal attention is paid to the employee journey. As we approach 2025, the focus on empowering and supporting hospitality professionals is set to transform the industry. This article explores the trends and innovations redefining the employee experience and shaping hospitality's future.

1 EMPLOYEES AS THE FIRST GUESTS

The idea of treating employees as the first guests is reshaping hospitality's culture. A study by **Deloitte's Global Human Capital Trends Report 2024** found that 68% of hospitality organisations believe employee well-being directly correlates with better customer satisfaction. This philosophy emphasises personalised support, professional development, and recognition for employees as foundational elements of success. As **the CEO of Marriott International**, stated, *"Happy associates lead to happy guests. Our investments in employee development and well-being are not only moral imperatives but also business imperatives."* In 2025, this approach will redefine operations. Employees will receive the same level of care as guests, creating a culture where engagement and performance thrive.

2 SMART WORKPLACES AND EMPLOYEE-CENTRIC TECHNOLOGY

Technology is revolutionising the employee experience in hospitality. AI and automation, once primarily guest-facing, are being adopted to improve employee workflows. For instance, **Accor** has implemented AI-driven workforce management systems that optimise scheduling and reduce workplace friction, allowing employees to focus on service delivery. Virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR) are transforming training by providing immersive simulations for mastering complex tasks and enhancing cultural understanding. According to **PwC's 2024 Emerging Tech Report**, 54% of global hospitality businesses plan to adopt VR/AR for employee engagement by 2025. These innovations not only boost efficiency but also enhance job satisfaction, making technology a cornerstone of the employee journey.

3 MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Mental health support has become a priority for the hospitality industry. Programs like **Hilton's Thrive at Hilton**, which offers mental health resources and counseling, are setting a standard for care. Many organisations are also introducing mental health first aid training, empowering leaders to support team members effectively. Additionally, emotional intelligence (EI) is emerging as a key leadership skill. Leaders with high EI foster trust and inclusivity, creating environments where employees feel valued. According to **Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration**, hotels with EI-focused leadership see a 32% higher employee retention rate and improved service scores.

4 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI)

Diversity and inclusion are essential components of the employee journey in 2025. **IHG Hotels & Resorts**, for example, has pledged to achieve gender balance across its leadership by 2025, supported by mentorship programs for underrepresented groups. Global teams also bring unique perspectives that resonate with diverse guest profiles. As travel resumes globally, employees who reflect the diversity of their guests will be key to delivering personalised service. DEI is no longer a peripheral initiative but a vital part of corporate culture.

5 SUSTAINABILITY AND PURPOSE-DRIVEN WORKPLACES

The workforce of 2025, dominated by Millennials and Gen S, demands purpose-driven work environments. Employees increasingly want to align with companies that prioritise sustainability and social responsibility. For example, **Hyatt's World of Care platform** engages employees in initiatives focused on community impact and environmental goals. Organisations embedding sustainability into their operations create a sense of shared purpose, leading to higher employee engagement and better guest experiences. Employees who see their work contributing to a greater cause are more motivated and committed.

6 GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON EMPLOYEE INVESTMENT

Around the world, hospitality organisations are tailoring employee-centric strategies to regional needs. In **Asia-Pacific**, high turnover rates are being addressed through data analytics that predict employee needs and reduce attrition. In **Europe**, work-life balance initiatives, such as four-day workweeks, are gaining traction. In **North America**, competitive benefits and robust career development programs are the norm to attract and retain top talent. Despite regional differences, the universal focus on the employee journey is clear. As **Simon Vincent, President EMEA at Hilton**, remarked, *"Our employees are our greatest asset. Their satisfaction drives everything we do, from innovation to guest loyalty."*

THE ROAD AHEAD

The hospitality industry of 2025 will thrive on the strength of its people. Organisations that invest in the employee journey—through technology, mental health support, diversity, and purpose-driven initiatives—will lead the way in a competitive market. At its core, hospitality is about people. While technologies and trends will evolve, the human element remains irreplaceable. By dedicating the same care to employees as to guests, the industry ensures not only its success but also its heart and soul. As we step into 2025, let us remember: humans make hospitality, and their journey shapes the future of the industry.

HY8



Top 10 Trends Driving Hospitality Into an Agent-First World

Agent-First World

Florian Montag

Vice President of Business Development at Apaleo



The rise of AI agents, or AI-powered tools capable of autonomous decision-making and ecosystem orchestration, is ushering in a brand new era in hospitality and property management tech. It is already redefining the way hotel, serviced apartment and the alternative residential sectors operate. This shift will only accelerate, demanding a revamp of traditional systems and paving the way for agile, agent-driven platforms that automatically keep pace with the long march of technology. Here are the top 10 trends in 2025 accelerating hospitality tech towards an AI-agent-first world.

1 GOODBYE APPS, AND HELLO AI AGENTS

Forget apps, AI agents are the future. They will evolve to become intelligent, mission-driven and problem-solving assistants that interact directly with databases to streamline operations and enhance guest experiences. **Tip:** *Adopt platforms that support an agent-first architecture to stay ahead of the curve.*

2 BREAKING FREE FROM THE ALL-IN-ONE TRAP

Traditional property management systems (PMS) will struggle to keep up with the fast-paced innovation cycles of an agent-driven ecosystem. Platforms built for agility will lead the charge. **Tip:** *Choose open, modular platforms to avoid vendor lock-in and take advantage of the latest innovation.*

3 SPEED OF INNOVATION IS THE NEW CURRENCY

AI agents require much shorter development cycles compared to full-fledged product development. We will see more rapid deployment of new tools and features without the need to rebuild core applications. **Tip:** *Prioritize platforms that can quickly adopt continuous innovation.*

4 NO MORE APP TOGGLING: AGENTS DO THE HEAVY LIFTING

Switching between multiple apps was yesterday's problem. In fact, apps will be replaced by autonomous and highly specialized AI agents capable of completing specific tasks within a property ecosystem, such as a bookings optimizer agent that can allocate rooms to the most profitable distribution channel in real time, an upselling agent that knows exactly when to offer extras during the guest journey, and a housekeeping agent that adjusts staff schedule based on guests' arrival times. The agents will also learn and adapt to their environment. **Tip:** *Implement solutions that eliminate app overwhelm and tailor intuitive workflows for staff and guests that suit your unique needs.*

5 SPECIALIZED AGENTS IS THE FUTURE OF EFFICIENCY

From managing bookings to upselling, there will be more specialized agents optimizing specific functions, driving better results than generalized apps. **Tip:** *Use platforms that support agent ecosystems to hone-in and target specific operational challenges.*

6 DATA FLOWS WITHOUT BARRIERS

AI agents can interact directly with databases, bypassing the need for clunky interfaces and enabling effortless data exchange across systems. **Tip:** *Invest in platforms that facilitate direct data interactions for faster, smoother operations.*

7 A MARKETPLACE FOR EVERY NEED

Agent marketplaces are quickly emerging as hubs for hoteliers to find and deploy tailored solutions. This flexibility is redefining scalability and efficiency for all types of hospitality businesses. **Tip:** *Explore agent marketplaces to customize your tech stack for optimal performance.*

8 COST EFFICIENCY MEETS SCALABILITY

The agent-first model removes the need for bloated, one-size-fits-all applications, offering cost-effective solutions that grow with you. With AI agents, hospitality businesses of all sizes can afford to offer hyper-personalization at scale, understanding guest preferences and tailoring recommendations like never before. **Tip:** *Transition to agent-driven systems to cut costs while enabling future growth.*

9 AI AGENTS FOR MIXED-USED PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The line between the worlds of hospitality and real estate is becoming increasingly blurry. Today, hybrid operations blend short-term stays, long-term rentals, and other alternative residential models such as co-living, into cohesive offerings. AI agents running on flexible platforms enable operators, landlords and asset managers to adapt and flex their portfolios in line with market shifts, boost diversity, and unlock potentially lucrative new revenue streams—all without costly tech overhauls. **Tip:** *Embrace a flexible platform as your core where you can easily plug-in different AI agents that complete diverse and specific tasks across different property types in your portfolio.*

10 REDEFINING VALUE PROPOSITION IN HOSPITALITY TECH

Hospitality businesses will increasingly expect AI features at no extra charge and this will squeeze profit margins for any subscription-based traditional PMS, making it harder for them to innovate and grow. The ability for AI agents to perform highly specific tasks will also redefine the value proposition in hospitality tech and impact how products are built. It will no longer be about paying for a software or an app, but paying for a specific business outcome. **Tip:** *Choose an open platform system that can be quickly tailored to deliver specific business outcomes.*

CONCLUSION

The move to an agent-first world is inevitable and 2025 will be a tipping point for hospitality tech. Traditional all-in-one systems will struggle to keep pace, while agent-driven platforms will lead the way with their flexibility, scalability, and innovation. The future belongs to those who embrace change now, don't get left behind.

HYB



2025's Top 10 Actionable Trends Shaping Boutique Hospitality

Boutique Hotels

Frances Kiradjian
Founder/CEO of BLLA

BLLA

Boutique hotels are known for pushing boundaries, setting trends, and creating memorable experiences that larger brands struggle to replicate. In 2025, this spirit of innovation is driving major shifts in guest experience, technology, and operations. BLLA's (Boutique & Luxury Lodging Association) board members, some of the most respected voices in the industry, weigh in on what's next.

1 AI-POWERED, HUMAN-LED HOSPITALITY

Hotels are embracing AI-driven concierge services that make bookings and guest requests faster and more seamless. *“By the end of 2025, many boutique hotels will have a fairly seamless way to offer personalized concierge services to guests who can book events, dinners, and other experiences frictionlessly,”* says Atit Jariwala, CEO of Bridgeton. *“With AI agents, we can do things way more efficiently than before.”* The challenge will be balancing efficiency with the human connection that boutique hospitality is known for.

2 WELLNESS AS A PERSONALIZED JOURNEY

Wellness in hotels is evolving far beyond traditional spa treatments and meditation rooms. *“Boutique hotels need to think about wellness as a fully integrated experience rather than an amenity,”* says Daniel Langer, CEO of EQUITE. *“Personalized, deeply engaging well-being experiences tailored to each guest's needs will become the norm.”* The one-size-fits-all approach to wellness is outdated; guests now expect customized programs that align with their unique health goals.

3 TRAINING WILL MAKE OR BREAK A HOTEL

Luxury hospitality is suffering from inconsistent service, even at top-tier properties. *“I'm flabbergasted by how many disappointing experiences I've had—even in hotels charging \$1,000 or \$2,000 per night,”* says Langer. *“Training is often neglected. I constantly hear excuses like ‘we can't do this because of...’ or ‘you don't understand...’ Those unwilling to evolve will be irrelevant soon.”* The takeaway? Investing in employee education and development will determine a hotel's longevity.

4 FRESHLY RENOVATED & NEW BUILDS HOLD THE POWER

Hotels that have recently completed renovations—or are newly built—are in a strong position. *“Most existing hotels, including boutique and luxury hotels, have been starved of capex coming out of the pandemic,”* says Ben Leahy, Partner at Cedar Capital Partners. *“With new development extremely challenged due to persistently high rates, the limited group of newly refreshed hotels will be the prettiest girls at the party—and it will be a long party.”* The pricing power of these properties will be substantial.

5 THE MEMBERSHIP MODEL GAINS TRACTION

Membership-driven hospitality is moving beyond social clubs and into boutique hotels. *“It's a form of wellness—social interaction and belonging to a group of like-minded people,”* says Andrew Miele, Chief Development Officer of Proper Hospitality. *“We're seeing this trend gain traction on the boutique side of the business, especially when combined with”*

“highly designed spaces and strong community programming.” From exclusive dining clubs to private hotel memberships, this model is reshaping guest loyalty.

6 TRUE HYPER-PERSONALIZATION (NOT JUST LIP SERVICE)

Boutique hotels have always championed individualized service, but the bar is rising. *“Hyper-personalization is the key to boutique hospitality,”* says Maya Mallick, Hotelier & Creative Director at The Culver Hotel. *“This means going beyond a welcome drink—hotels should anticipate guests' needs and preferences before check-in.”* Mallick points to the fine dining model, where staff remember guest preferences across visits, creating an effortless and meaningful seamless experience.

7 HYPER-LOCAL, HYPER-SEASONAL F&B / BALANCED MENU OFFERINGS & QUALITY SOURCING OF INGREDIENTS

Food and beverage offerings are shifting toward ultra-local sourcing, seasonal menus, and more thoughtful ingredient quality decisions. *“We're seeing a push for hyper-local, hyper-seasonal offerings in boutique hotel restaurants,”* says Mitch Prenskey, Founding Partner & Chief Culinary Officer at COJHO F&B Development. *“On the beverage side, it's about thoughtful approaches to low-ABV cocktails that emphasize craftsmanship over alcohol content.”* Guests demand authenticity, and boutique hotels respond with menus celebrating regional flavors and sustainable sourcing. *“In 2025, travelers will seek more balanced menu offerings and crave quality sourcing of real ingredients,”* added Sam Bakhshandehpour, CEO of José Andrés Group (JAG) and José Andrés Media (JAM). *“With the rising trend of GLP-1 and similar initiatives, we've already seen decreased calorie consumption and guests seeking more options like fruits, vegetables, and fish. In addition to wellness through food, recovery, and self-care will become more routine for travelers. Expect to see dedicated spaces for yoga and meditation and recovery treatments like cold plunges, cryotherapy, red light sauna, and compression therapy.”*

8 WELLNESS TOURISM IS A BILLION-DOLLAR MARKET—AND GROWING

The wellness tourism industry is expected to hit \$1 trillion this year. *“Spending money on personal wellness is now seen as an investment in well-being rather than just indulging in a hotel service offering,”* says Alexandra Waltersple, President & CEO of Sensai. *“Guests don't just want to stay somewhere—they want transformative travel experiences that improve their physical, mental, and emotional health.”* Hotels that ignore this demand will be left behind.

9 AI WILL RESHAPE OPERATIONS AND MARKETING

AI is set to redefine hospitality operations, from guest communications to marketing strategies. *“More hotels will start customizing and building their own AI solutions,”* says Frances Kiradjian, Founder & CEO of BLLA. *“We'll also see education initiatives—podcasts, videos—helping hoteliers learn how to interact with AI efficiently.”*

Questions still remain: Will AI replace many of the apps currently used in hospitality? Will it eliminate the need for software engineers? And most importantly, how can boutique hotels humanize AI-driven interactions?

10 INDEPENDENT HOTELS WILL CONTINUE TO WIN OVER CHAINS

Guests are prioritizing individuality over predictability. *“The boutique hotel movement will continue to gain traction as customers seek unique experiences that chains simply cannot offer,”* says Jariwala. *“Why waste a visit at a chain when you can develop a lifelong memory somewhere unique and fun—and showcase it on social media?”* In 2025, boutique hotels will solidify their position as the preferred choice for travelers looking for originality, story, and soul.

FINAL THOUGHT

The boutique hospitality industry has always been ahead of the game, and 2025 is no exception. From AI-driven personalization to deeply immersive wellness, the next wave of boutique hospitality is about enhancing what independent hotels do best—offering exceptional, one-of-a-kind experiences while gaining faithful, loyal, and repeat customers.



HYB



Top 10 Trends Shaping Digital Marketing in 2025

Digital Marketing

Chris Egan

Chief Product Officer at Cendyn

Cendyn[∞]

Digital marketing continues to evolve rapidly, driven by the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. Changes in consumer behavior and a focus on personalization and the data driving it will impact digital marketers more profoundly in 2025. Partnering with experts who can help hoteliers navigate this evolution will ensure a smooth transition and, in turn, enhance the customer experience. Here are 10 digital marketing trends we believe will have the most significant impact on our industry.

1 AI-POWERED CONTENT CREATION AND AUTOMATION WILL ESCALATE.

Artificial intelligence and machine learning have already transformed digital marketing, and in 2025, AI will be more deeply ingrained in it. Watch for AI's continued dominance in hyper-personalization, predictive analytics, content creation, and chatbots and virtual assistants.

2 MOBILE-FRIENDLY CONTENT IS STILL A MUST.

A total of 5.52 billion people worldwide were using the internet at the start of October 2024, equivalent to 67.5 percent of the world's total population. In addition, over 60 percent of website traffic comes from mobile devices, while 92.3 percent of internet users access the internet using a mobile phone. With those facts in mind and the onslaught of AI, ensuring your website is mobile-friendly, remains fresh, and provides a seamless experience across all platforms will be even more imperative than in the past.

3 SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT IS ESSENTIAL.

Globally, social media users are growing at a rate of 5.2 percent per year, with the average user visiting or using 6.8 different social media platforms every month. GWJ reports that the average global user spends 2 hours and 19 minutes on social media each day. Leveraging social media to share a property's key features will encourage engagement and provide guests with a sense of familiarity with its surroundings and unique brand offerings.

4 UNIQUE AND IMPACTFUL STORYTELLING WILL INCREASE.

Conveying a story and what makes your hotel unique through well-written web and ad content will help highlight your property while connecting with your audiences. Today's digital marketing will embrace short-form and live streaming for real-time engagement. Leveraging short-form platforms like Instagram Reels, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts will boost reach, and hoteliers who include direct booking links will see a more significant impact on KPIs.

5 EXPECTATIONS FOR A SEAMLESS, PERSONALIZED BOOKING JOURNEY WILL CONTINUE TO RISE.

Consumers expect personalized experiences across all digital channels. Website and mobile functionality will take a front seat in driving engagement in 2025. Personalization will advance beyond basic customization and enable brands to deliver hyper-personalized content and recommendations.

Making it easy for guests to book directly by providing an intuitive, user-centric booking interface, with visible "Book" call-to-actions and a sleek design will help increase direct bookings.

6 REVIEWS STILL RULE THE DAY.

Enticing satisfied guests to leave positive reviews on platforms like Tripadvisor, Google, and Yelp builds trust and credibility. According to a study conducted by BrightLocal, up to 98 percent of consumers read reviews before making a purchase. Moreover, customers tend to trust companies with a higher volume of reviews, with an average consumer reading around 10 reviews before forming an opinion of trust.

7 DATA WILL INFORM THE GROWTH OF PERSONALIZED CONTENT AND INCENTIVE-BASED DIRECT BOOKINGS.

Tailoring marketing messages and offerings based on guest preferences and past interactions to create a more personalized experience will remain at the top of marketing teams' minds. Leveraging CRM data integrated with a digital marketing platform will be essential to elevate advertising efforts and optimize campaigns.

8 GOOGLE PMAX FOR TRAVEL GOALS CAMPAIGNS WILL HELP HOTELIERS BOOST VISIBILITY AND OPTIMIZE DIGITAL MARKETING EFFORTS.

Smart digital marketers know that capitalizing on Google's machine learning and artificial intelligence to increase visibility and reach a qualified audience on all Google platforms will result in better conversion rates. This type of campaign allows teams to rapidly gain media coverage and increase visibility on all Google platforms.

9 LEVERAGING HYPER-LOCALIZED MARKETING WILL CONTINUE TO HELP DRIVE BOOKINGS.

Staying informed about local events, festivals, and attractions and leveraging them in digital marketing efforts will boost engagement, particularly when planning for group business. Local activities help boost social media and video marketing content and give online shoppers insights into regional activities.

10 CONSUMERS WILL CONTINUE TO DEMAND LESS REPETITIVE CREATIVE CONTENT.

To avoid advertising fatigue and ensure year-round engagement, balance creative content. 66 percent of consumers want fewer marketing messages, while 27 percent feel bombarded by marketing messages. What makes them want to open a brand's marketing messages? 62 percent say "relevancy" is the number one factor in opening an email, while 67 percent of respondents noted that personalization is important. Find the right balance between reach and frequency to maximize advertising effectiveness.

Cendyn[∞]TM

Let's deep dive....
into your guest profiles
with **Cendyn CRM**



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US AT

 info@cendyn.com

 www.cendyn.com

HY8



Emerging dynamics in hospitality in 2025: A future around digital identity

Digital Identity

Pedro Torres

CEO and Co-Founder, Youverse



Hospitality has always been about creating unforgettable experiences, where every detail matters—from the warmth of a welcome to the comfort of a room. Today, those details increasingly include digital touchpoints that connect guests seamlessly to the services and spaces they enjoy.

The industry is undergoing a profound digital transformation, with digital identity solutions at its core. These innovations are not only redefining how guest data is managed but are also unlocking new possibilities in personalization and enhancing the overall guest journey. In this article, I'll explore the key trends driving change across three critical areas: managing guest identities, personalizing experiences, and transforming interactions. Let's dive in.

MANAGING GUEST IDENTITIES

1 UNLOCK EFFORTLESS CHECK-IN WITH BIOMETRICS.

Waiting at the front desk is a hassle no guest wants to endure. Manual check-in is time-consuming and frustrating for both guests and staff. A seamless check-in process, ideally completed on guests' terms via their phones, is now expected. The challenge is to simplify this process while ensuring robust security. **Actionable tip:** Invest in systems compliant with GDPR and ISO/IEC 27001 standards for secure biometric data processing.

2 GIVE GUESTS CONTROL OVER THEIR DATA.

Guests are increasingly conscious about their personal data and prefer privacy-first solutions. Traditional methods of data management are being replaced by decentralized systems, ensuring better security and minimizing risks of breaches. **Actionable tip:** Implement decentralized identity solutions to align with privacy-conscious travelers.

3 IMPROVE COMPLIANCE AND FRAUD DETECTION PROCESSES.

Many hotels rely on outdated methods for verifying guest identities and maintaining records, which are often error-prone and time-consuming. AI-powered identity verification can automate compliance tasks while detecting fraud in real time. **Actionable tip:** Adopt AI-powered identity verification systems for efficiency and fraud detection.

4 GET READY FOR DIGITAL WALLETS.

Digital identity wallets, compliant with eIDAS 2.0 standards, are set to become essential across the EU. These systems enable secure, seamless cross-border identity verification, building trust with international guests. **Actionable tip:** Prepare systems for eIDAS 2.0-compliant digital identity wallets to ensure smooth operations across regions.

PERSONALIZING GUEST EXPERIENCES

5 CATER TO GUESTS' UNIQUE PREFERENCES.

Digital identity solutions enable hyper-personalized services, such as customized dining options or pre-set room temperatures. These tailored experiences foster loyalty by making each guest feel valued. **Actionable tip:** Use AI solutions integrated with your Customer Relationship Management (CRM) or Property Management System (PMS) to anticipate guest preferences.

6 REWARD WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH.

Linking loyalty programs to digital identities can make rewards more meaningful and personalized, driving deeper guest engagement and encouraging repeat visits. **Actionable tip:** Collaborate with travel ecosystems to offer cross-platform loyalty rewards.

7 ADAPT TO THE DIGITAL NOMAD REVOLUTION.

Digital nomads—early adopters of digital identity solutions—demand flexible, portable systems for seamless transitions between locations and services. They represent the future of a connected, borderless world. **Actionable tip:** Equip systems to recognize and support digital identities globally, enhancing flexibility for this key demographic.

TRANSFORMING GUEST INTERACTIONS

8 CREATE CONSISTENCY ACROSS TOUCHPOINTS.

Inconsistent experiences across apps, kiosks, and websites can be a dealbreaker. Unified identity solutions create a seamless and consistent experience, enhancing personalization and convenience. **Actionable tip:** Implement platforms that integrate with existing systems across all channels for a unified guest experience.

9 MEET MODERN GUEST EXPECTATIONS.

Contactless systems powered by digital identities are increasingly popular for check-ins, payments, and amenity access. Biometric systems simplify these operations while enhancing hygiene and efficiency. **Actionable tip:** Integrate facial authentication systems to streamline processes and improve guest convenience.

10 INTEGRATE WITH TRAVEL ECOSYSTEMS.

Digital identity solutions extend beyond individual hotels to the broader travel ecosystem. Linking digital identities with airlines, car rental services, and attractions creates a seamless end-to-end guest journey. **Actionable tip:** Partner with travel ecosystem stakeholders to provide unified experiences from booking to departure.

LOOKING AHEAD

The opportunities are immense, but so are the responsibilities. As we harness the power of digital identity, let's ensure that trust, privacy, and personalization remain at the heart of every innovation. After all, hospitality has always been about making people feel valued, and in the digital age, that starts with recognizing who they are.

HYB



10 Tips for Unlocking the Full Potential of Direct Bookings

Direct Bookings

Christin Haensel
Director at h2c GmbH

h2c[®]

Direct bookings remain a vital revenue stream for hotels, yet growth in this area remains challenging. While online-direct booking channels have stabilized post-pandemic, their share has increased compared to pre-COVID levels—now accounting for 21% of total hotel chain bookings globally via hotel chains' Internet Booking Engines (IBEs).

Despite this progress, h2c's latest *Global Direct Booking Acceleration Study* highlights key strategic and technological gaps that hotels must address to maximize their direct booking potential. Drawing insights from 88 hotel chains (small, mid-sized and large, no mega chains) worldwide, this article presents actionable strategies to boost direct bookings, reduce reliance on OTAs, and strengthen guest relationships.

1 LOYALTY AND MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS WORK

Loyalty programs are powerful drivers of direct bookings, yet they contribute less than one-third of total revenue for most hotel chains—except for large U.S. brands. The most common perks include exclusive member rates and special benefits. **Tip:** *Showcase these advantages prominently to increase enrollments and drive more direct bookings.*

2 MOBILE OPTIMIZATION ISN'T OPTIONAL ANYMORE

Mobile bookings now account for 42% of IBE revenue, up from 36% in 2019. While desktop remains the primary channel, its share is gradually declining, highlighting the growing importance of mobile-friendly booking experiences. **Tip:** *Optimize mobile websites, test mobile-specific booking flows, and ensure fast loading times.*

3 PERSONALIZED OFFERS ARE KEY TO CONVERSION

Personalization is a growing priority, yet only 9% of hotels currently use AI-powered personalization in their IBEs. This is expected to grow significantly, with 51% of chains planning to implement these features. **Tip:** *Leverage guest profiles from CRM data to recommend offers based on past stays or preferences.*

4 SIMPLIFY THE BOOKING PROCESS

Overcomplicated booking flows can frustrate users, leading to cart abandonment. According to the study, 78% of hotel chains cited rate display issues as a challenge. Simplifying the flow with straightforward navigation, transparent pricing and reducing unnecessary steps can enhance the user experience and improve conversion rates. **Tip:** *Use heatmaps or guest feedback to identify friction points and make the booking journey more intuitive.*

5 HIGHLIGHT THE VALUE OF BOOKING DIRECT

Guests often default to OTAs for convenience, but clearly showcasing the benefits of direct booking can shift this behavior. Promoting direct booking doesn't require a large marketing or technology budget—just strategic messaging. Highlight perks like better cancellation policies and exclusive offers. **Tip:** *Use your website and IBE to consistently communicate these advantages.*

6 INVEST IN SEAMLESS SYSTEM INTEGRATION

Fragmented systems limit personalization and efficiency. The study found that only 38% of IBEs are fully integrated with central guest profiles, highlighting room for improvement. Connecting systems like PMS, CRM, and IBEs enhances data flow and guest experiences. **Tip:** *Audit your tech stack to identify gaps and integrate key systems for smoother operations.*

7 UPSELL BEYOND THE BOOKING STAGE

Upselling shouldn't stop at booking confirmation. The study revealed that only 25% of IBEs offer item sales, yet 74% of hotel chains are considering implementation. Providing personalized upsell options throughout the guest journey can significantly boost ancillary revenue. **Tip:** *Leverage post-booking emails and apps to promote add-ons and upgrades that align with guest preferences.*

8 TEST, ADAPT, REPEAT

Continuous optimization is key, yet 29% of hotel chains cite limited resources as a major challenge in improving online-direct sales. However, small-scale testing—such as A/B testing booking flows or promotional strategies—can drive meaningful improvements without straining budgets. **Tip:** *Prioritize small, iterative changes over major overhauls for sustained progress.*

9 LEVERAGE AI FOR SMARTER BOOKINGS

AI-powered chatbots remain underutilized, with only 27% of hotel chains using them, while 44% have no plans for implementation. Voice-activated services see even lower adoption—just 2% currently use them, and 84% have no plans to introduce them. These numbers highlight missed opportunities to automate guest communication and improve efficiency. **Tip:** *Start with chatbots to handle basic inquiries, then explore voice services to meet evolving guest expectations.*

10 AUTOMATE FOR EFFICIENCY

Many automation opportunities remain untapped—43% of hotel chains have no plans to dedicate a team to identifying automatable tasks. Yet, on average, chains identified 6.6 manual tasks suitable for automation in the past year. **Tip:** *Create a cross-departmental team to pinpoint automation opportunities and prioritize high-impact areas.*

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Direct booking growth requires more than just technology; it demands a strategic mindset, continuous optimization, and a focus on the guest. By implementing these tips, hotels can enhance their direct booking strategies, reduce dependency on OTAs, and ultimately build stronger guest relationships. For more insights and detailed findings, read our full *Global Direct Booking Acceleration Study* available on our website.



HYB



10 Hospitality Trends Transforming the Digital Guest Journey

Digital Guest Journey

Bryan Michalis

VP of Marketing, Canary Technologies

Guests have high expectations of their hotel stays. Seamless, self-service, hassle-free experiences have become a must-have — and the savviest hotels meet these demands with technology. Providing exceptional services to your guests in person remains the bedrock of hospitality, but a stellar digital guest experience is now a cornerstone of the modern hotel stay.

A hotel guest's digital experience significantly impacts their perception of your property and brand. Every virtual guest interaction represents an opportunity to exceed a traveler's expectations—and here are the key trends that help you do so.

1 AN ANSWER FOR EVERY CALL

Hotels miss up to 40% of phone calls—meaning a lot of potential reservations are left on the table. By adopting AI-enabled voice technology, hotels increase the call volume they can handle without adding to staff workload. **Tip:** *Look for an AI-powered voice assistant that can handle questions on behalf of your front desk, reservations and concierge departments for maximum impact.*

2 TRAVEL PLANNING POWERED BY AI

As travelers become more comfortable using AI, hotel searches, itineraries and trip planning will become easier and more conversational. **Tip:** *Help guests get the answers they need about your hotel and their trip with an AI-powered, conversational chatbot.*

3 AUTOMATED GUEST MESSAGING

Your front desk staff likely spends much of their time answering guest questions. Because so many inquiries are similar, AI communication tools can automate a majority of responses—freeing up time for your staff while still providing an exceptional guest experience. **Tip:** *Invest in a guest messaging service that uses AI to provide instant, accurate responses when guests contact your hotel.*

4 SEAMLESS & SECURE DIGITAL PAYMENTS

Data security is a significant concern for hotels and guests, especially with regard to sensitive information, like credit card details. Offering seamless and secure digital payment options puts travelers' minds at ease and also eliminates outdated paper processes to increase compliance for your property. **Tip:** *Stop taking payment details over the phone or via paper-based forms and instead send digital payment links and authorization forms (that are PCI-1 compliant).*

5 PERSONALIZED, MOBILE-BASED ADD-ONS

Room upgrades, add-ons and other upsells are traditionally offered exclusively at the time of check-in, but only having one chance to sell add-ons means you're likely leaving money on the table. With tech-enabled upselling, guests can purchase relevant offers from their mobile devices at any time. **Tip:** *Use a dynamic upselling platform that automates add-on offers at strategic points throughout the guest journey.*

6 SELF-SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

Modern guests prefer modern solutions, which include self-service technology like kiosks. Not only does this give travelers more agency, but it also alleviates long lines and bottlenecks at the hotel's front desk. **Tip:** *Provide options for guests to arrive and leave on their terms, including mobile check-in and checkout as well as self-serve lobby kiosks or tablets.*

7 INFORMATIONAL QR CODES

QR codes give guests a quick and easy way to access property information. Well-placed QR codes give guests the information they need right on their phones. **Tip:** *Consider taking your paper resources, such as in-room compendiums, into the digital sphere and making them available via a QR code.*

8 MOBILE ACCESS KEYS

It's estimated that switching to mobile keycards at a 250-room hotel would remove 73,000 plastic keycards from circulation. Go green and increase convenience by giving guests the option to unlock their rooms from their phones. **Tip:** *Encourage the uptake of mobile access keys by offering guests meal vouchers or other special perks in exchange for using them.*

9 DIGITAL TIPPING

Research shows that over 70% of hotel guests want to tip staff but don't have cash on hand. Digital tipping offers guests a more convenient way to reward staff, putting more money in your team's pocket and incentivizing exceptional service. **Tip:** *Find a digital tipping solution that's designed for the hospitality industry and integrates seamlessly with your guest experience tech stack.*

10 ONLINE FEEDBACK

Good online reviews are one of the most valuable things a happy guest can provide, but capturing their feedback can be difficult once they walk out the door. Prompting guests to leave a review as they checkout keeps the request timely so you can get their positive review right away. **Tip:** *Consider software that prompts guests to leave third-party reviews if they're happy with the service they received.* From AI-powered planning to mobile check-ins and digital payments, the right digital tools don't just streamline operations—they create better guest experiences. When hotels blend great service with smart tech, they make every stay feel effortless and memorable —and keep guests coming back.

HYB



Data management trends to transform your hotel in 2025

Big Data

Karen Stephens

Chief Marketing Officer, Revinate



REVINATE

Here's a fantasy. What if data management was a towering giant with long, reaching arms — wrapping around all of your data? What would be in the clutches of those big arms? In other words, what will data management include in the year 2025?

Here's a fantasy. What if data management was a towering giant with long, reaching arms — wrapping around all of your data? What would be in the clutches of those big arms? In other words, what will data management include in the year 2025? In years past, data management has been black and white — a narrow focus on what qualifies under a data management practice. It usually boiled down to the simple collection and storing of data, not the actual management part. And that kind of black-and-white thinking won't serve hoteliers in 2025. With more channels of information feeding into a healthy data management practice, it will be crucial to understand the trends that you can action to keep your hotel a responsible and effective steward of your guest data and drive the most revenue possible. It's time for hoteliers to be that giant with those big arms and take control of data management with these trends:

1 TREND #1: ENDING THE SILO GAME

Chasing data that's stuck in silos isn't the result of effective data management — quite the opposite. Data silos contribute to increased operational costs, decreased staff productivity, and a diminished guest experience. In 2025, hoteliers will end the constant battle with inconsistent data across departments and leave the “big data” problems behind. **Tip:** Find a solution that can “centralize” your guest data and eliminate the silos. Inconsistency means you can't get a holistic view of your operations or guest preferences. Technology, like a Customer Data Platform, provides that much-needed consistency by bringing guest data out of silos across multiple touchpoints and channels in real-time.

2 TREND #2: PLANNING FOR REVENUE BEYOND THE ROOM

“Heads in beds” — a phrase we hope disappears in 2025. Getting “heads in beds” or concentrating on room revenue alone is an archaic approach to drive hotel profitability. Sure, you can use your guest data to get heads in beds, but what's great about a thriving data management practice is that you can use that data to support other revenue streams. **Tip:** Enter ancillary revenue. Hoteliers need to go beyond the room and leverage their technology to upsell guests at the spa, the restaurant, the golf course, or any other amenity. Constant shifts in the economy and fluctuations in demand make it difficult to power profits on occupancy, alone.

3 TREND #3: A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

In 2025, guests will expect hoteliers to stop mistaking their identity. What we mean is that repeat guests want their favorite hotel brand to say “Welcome back” instead of “Welcome to.” In other words, guests want to be recognized for who they are. Your data management efforts should proudly produce profiles with the right data, so that you can use past stay information to greet loyal guests at the right time.

Tip: To prevent case of mistaken identity of your guests, seek out an identity resolution tool. This tool merges and de-duplicates guest profiles so that you can feel confident in recognizing repeat guests, and recognizing the right guest with the right data.

4 TREND #4: USING DATA TO DITCH POINT-LESS LOYALTY

Traditionally, guest loyalty has been point-based, with travelers competing for maximum loyalty points and the highest program tier, only to be served with a generic reward that every other member gets. Not anymore, because points are pointless. **Tip:** Points don't drive guest loyalty; personalization drives guest loyalty. That split decision of when a guest chooses to book direct with your hotel again or hop to an OTA is determined by whether or not you made them feel special. Focus on personalization this year.

5 TREND #5: AUTOMATION — 7 DAYS A WEEK

Whether it's AI or another technology, hoteliers who automate data management are ahead of the curve in terms of marketing and fostering guest connections. Hoteliers will gain momentum with automated AI insights on their guest data to use for campaigns or to understand their guest profiles with accuracy. **Tip:** Consider expanding your tech stack to include technology that can automate tasks involving guest data to free up staff from sifting through profile information manually.

6 TREND #6: NOI IS KING

NOI—Net Operating Income—is a hotelier's best friend. That three-letter acronym determines overall hotel profitability, and this year, it's tapping the minds of hoteliers to diversify their revenue opportunities and leverage their most lucrative guest segments. **Tip:** Your data management practice heavily influences a hoteliers' NOI. If your hotel can leverage your guest data to focus on direct bookings, you'll shift marketing spend and market share away from OTAs — allowing for more opportunities for personalization to encourage direct bookings that will increase NOI.

7 TREND #7: THE POWER OF THE VOICE CHANNEL

Your voice channel is like a running data faucet—guest data is flowing all day long, and your reservations team is left to absorb it all. Hoteliers who awaken to the fact that in 2025, the voice channel can be their most profitable channel, will ensure not only the reservation is made, but also that the guest data is collected, managed, and actioned. **Tip:** Throw your agents a lifeline as they manage the flow of guest data from the voice channel. With some travelers and age demographics preferring to book over the phone than others, a proactive lead management software will ensure agents keep track of that information for future marketing efforts to drive revenue and realize the power of this channel.

8 TREND #8: MANAGING DATA FOR THE INSTANT BRAND STORY

*“[Guests] want the quick Instagramification of — What is this hotel? Should I stay there?” Aaron Miller, VP of CRM and Digital at Highate, highlights the harsh truth that we humans just don’t have the attention span we used to. In fact, the average attention span has dropped from around 2.5 minutes to approximately 45 seconds since 2004. **Tip:** *If you already know your guests’ preferences and expectations of an ideal stay because you’ve been managing their data in a tool like a CDP, a bit of personalization could make a 45-second difference — preventing guests from dropping out of the booking engine, trashing your email, or hanging up on your reservations agent.**

9 TREND #9: ENFORCING DATA SECURITY

Businesses anticipate malware and ransomware (76%) and accidental data loss (63%) to be the top security risks over the next six months. Hotel data security risks can take many forms, from bad actors accessing guest data by way of cyber attacks to risks stemming from internal sources. Have data you know is sitting in a data silo? Staff trying to resolve duplicate guest profiles manually to find the true identity of each guest? That’s what we call data mismanagement. **Tip:** *Adopting technology that supports guests’ privacy concerns, abides by new privacy laws, and protects your hotel’s data integrity will be a lifeline in 2025. The solution to eliminating security risks is “centralized” data. Technology like a Customer Data Platform (CDP) is the perfect weapon for battling the dangers of data-related security risks and privacy breaches.*

THERE’S MORE TO DATA MANAGEMENT IN 2025

The trends listed above are evidence that data management goes beyond storing and collecting your guest data, and in fact impacts business decisions, booking behavior, and hotel profitability. And data management may seem like a giant, but you can be the giant that tackles these trends head-on to ensure the integrity of your data practices and drive revenue in 2025.





HOSPITALITY'S LEADING DIRECT BOOKING PLATFORM



Get Revinate. Get superpowers.



REVINATE
GUESTS



REVINATE
MARKETING



RESERVATION
SALES



GUEST
FEEDBACK



REVINATE
IVY

REVINATE.COM

HYB



Top 10 Social Media Strategies for Hotels in 2025

Social Platforms

DJ Vallauri

Founder, President & CEO - Lodging Interactive

Social media continues to be a powerful tool for hotels to engage guests, boost brand awareness, and drive direct bookings. To stay competitive, hotel marketers must adapt to the latest trends and best practices. Here are the top 10 actionable strategies to elevate your hotel's social media presence in 2025.

1 DEFINE CLEAR GOALS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Setting measurable and achievable goals is the foundation of a successful social media strategy. Whether it's increasing brand awareness, driving direct bookings, or boosting engagement, clarity is key. **Tip:** *Develop a campaign brief outlining objectives, target audiences, and desired outcomes to ensure alignment with your hotel's marketing plan, strategies, and goal objectives.*

2 LEVERAGE USER-GENERATED CONTENT (UGC) FOR AUTHENTICITY

Guests trust peer reviews and real-life experiences over polished marketing materials. Encouraging guests to share their experiences fosters authenticity and builds trust. **Tip:** *Create Instagram-worthy spaces within your property and introduce monthly photo contests with enticing rewards.*

3 COLLABORATE WITH INFLUENCERS WISELY

Not all influencers bring value. Partnering with influencers who align with your target audience and brand values can significantly impact your social media reach and credibility. **Tip:** *Use influencer marketing platforms to vet influencers based on engagement quality, audience demographics, and content style.*

4 UTILIZE VIDEO CONTENT FOR ENGAGEMENT

Video content drives higher engagement and conversions than static images. Hotels can leverage behind-the-scenes footage, guest testimonials, and property tours to captivate audiences. **Tip:** *Utilize short-form video content for platforms like Instagram Reels and TikTok to boost visibility.*

5 MONITOR SOCIAL MEDIA METRICS FOR ROI

Understanding the effectiveness of social media efforts requires tracking key performance indicators such as reach, engagement, and conversion rates. **Tip:** *Collaborate with your revenue management team to set up unique booking links for tracking direct revenue from social media campaigns.*

6 ENGAGE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE IN REAL-TIME

Active engagement helps build relationships and loyalty. Responding to comments, messages, and reviews promptly shows that your hotel values guest feedback. **Tip:** *Assign a social media manager to monitor platforms and respond to guest interactions as soon as possible or within 24 hours.*

7 OPTIMIZE PAID SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

Organic reach is declining, making paid social media campaigns an essential component of a successful strategy. Hotels should invest in targeted ads to reach the right audience at the right time. **Tip:** *Leverage lookalike audiences and retargeting campaigns to maximize ad spend efficiency.*

8 PERSONALIZE GUEST EXPERIENCES THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Personalization enhances guest satisfaction and fosters loyalty. Utilize data from social media interactions to tailor offers and communication. **Tip:** *Encourage guests to share preferences through social media surveys and customize their experience based on their responses.*

9 STAY PREPARED WITH A CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Negative feedback can escalate quickly on social media. Having a crisis response plan in place ensures that issues are handled professionally and efficiently. **Tip:** *Designate a crisis communications team and provide clear guidance for responses to crisis management scenarios to maintain consistency.*

10 FOCUS ON STORYTELLING RATHER THAN SELLING

People connect with stories, not sales pitches. Sharing guest experiences, local culture, and behind-the-scenes content can create an emotional connection with your audience. **Tip:** *Encourage staff to share their personal experiences and interactions with guests to humanize your brand.* By adopting these leading social media strategies, hotels can actively engage their audience, boost brand reputation, and ultimately increase direct bookings. Keeping up with these trends helps your property stay relevant and competitive in the constantly changing digital landscape.

HY8



Top 10 CRS Technology Trends Revolutionising Hospitality in 2025

Central Reservation Platforms

Binu Mathews
CEO at IDS Next

idsnext

The hospitality industry is undergoing a major technological revolution. As a vital part of that transformation, Central Reservation Systems (CRS) technology is evolving to meet the increasingly complex guest demands. Here are the top trends set to redefine CRS technology in 2025, along with actionable tips for hoteliers to capitalise on them.

1 CENTRAL DISTRIBUTION HUB

In 2025, CRS will accelerate their trajectory towards becoming true central distribution hubs, unlocking maximum market reach and greater visibility. The omnichannel approach of connecting to diverse channels like Global Distribution Systems (GDS), online travel agencies (OTAs), hotels' own websites and booking engines, will further expand into emerging channels like chatbots. **Tip:** *Utilise a CRS with a robust channel manager that integrates into a wide array of distribution channels.*

2 ENHANCED CHANNEL MANAGEMENT

As central reservation systems become hubs for hotel distribution, hoteliers will increasingly rely on them for effective channel management. Real-time availability updates facilitate accurate inventory and dynamic pricing, enabling flexible rate adjustments based on market factors while attribute-based pricing helps differentiate room rates based on diverse guest preferences, maximising revenue potential. **Tip:** *Leverage advanced channel management tools within modern CRS platforms to fine-tune rate parity.*

3 AI-POWERED PERSONALISATION

Integrated AI algorithms in CRS will analyse a wide array of data like booking history, previous stays, and preferences, offering tailored recommendations for room types and amenities. It facilitates a highly personalised service that transcends the booking process and includes customised pricing, upselling opportunities, and tailored promotions. **Tip:** *Leverage AI to anticipate guest needs in advance and proactively deliver communications.*

4 VOICE SEARCH INTEGRATION

With voice assistants like Siri and Alexa revolutionising how travellers search and book, CRS platforms will accommodate the shift via integrated voice search capabilities. This allows consumers to seamlessly book rooms, check availability, and modify reservations while also increasing accessibility to visually or mobility-impaired guests. **Tip:** *Optimise the hotel website for voice search by using natural language and making it mobile-friendly and fast-loading.*

5 BOOKING FOR DIVERSE REVENUE CENTRES

Modern central reservation systems will facilitate the bookings for various revenue centres within a hotel, such as restaurants and spas. This offers several benefits including centralised management of reservations, seamless customer experience, increased revenue opportunities, and data-driven insights for improved service offerings and targeted marketing. **Tip:** *Leverage the CRS to create exciting packages that bundle room stays with activities from other revenue centres.*

6 REVENUE MANAGEMENT VIA PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS

Predictive analytics leveraging machine learning algorithms will analyse the massive volume of industry data, enabling hoteliers to optimise room rates in real time based on demand, competitor pricing, and historical booking patterns. Demand forecasting can predict future occupancy levels and adjust inventory accordingly while helping hotels identify profitability trends to maximise revenue opportunities. **Tip:** *Leverage predictive analytics by investing in data collection systems and a data-driven CRS while regularly analysing data to make informed decisions.*

7 INTEGRATION WITH CRM SYSTEMS

By combining CRS data (booking history, guest preferences) with CRM data (guest demographics, loyalty programme memberships), hoteliers will gain deeper insights into individual guest preferences. This data-driven approach enables personalised marketing campaigns, targeted offers, and tailored loyalty programmes while allowing seamless communication across all touchpoints. **Tip:** *Utilise data to identify frequent guests who prefer specific room types or amenities and offer personalised upgrades or exclusive discounts.*

8 INTEGRATION WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an integral part of the modern travel planning process; integrating social platforms with the CRS will improve visibility and provide valuable insights into emerging trends and preferences. This also enables social media-driven campaigns like contests, giveaways, and influencer marketing activities, boosting brand awareness and direct bookings. **Tip:** *Encourage guests to share their experience on social media with relevant hashtags, incentivising user-generated content with exclusive discounts.*

9 SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS

As sustainability becomes increasingly vital for travellers and hoteliers alike, expect to see a growing emphasis on sustainability features within CRS platforms (i.e., smart sensors to measure the environmental impact of hotel operations). "Greenwashing" awareness will drive demand for transparent and verifiable sustainability data within the CRS, ensuring that eco-friendly claims are backed by credible certifications. **Tip:** *Utilise the CRS to promote sustainable travel options like carbon-neutral travel packages.*

10 ENHANCED CYBER SECURITY MEASURES

Amidst the ongoing threat of data breaches and cyberattacks in hospitality, we will see an intensified focus on robust cybersecurity measures within central reservation systems. Expect the implementation of advanced encryption techniques, multi-factor authentication protocols, and biometric security measures like fingerprint or facial recognition with AI-powered threat detection and response systems also gaining traction. **Tip:** *Conduct regular security audits to identify potential vulnerabilities within your CRS and associated systems.* These actionable insights will empower hospitality businesses to stay on top of 2025's emerging CRS technology trends, maintaining a competitive edge in a dynamic, fast-moving industry.

HYB



Top 10 Wellness Tech Trends Transforming Hospitality in 2025

Wellness Technology Trends

Sal Capizzi

SVP, Spa & Wellness, Agilysys

The hospitality industry is witnessing a transformation in how guests approach wellness during their travels. Traditional spa and fitness services are evolving into wellness journeys, driven by technological innovation and changing guest expectations.

Today's travellers seek personalized wellness experiences that integrate with every aspect of their stay. With wellness tourism now worth \$651 billion annually and projected to grow at 16.6% per year through 2027, hotels and resorts must embrace these technological advances to meet growing demands. This growth is driven by shifting travel priorities - recent research shows that more than half of American travellers are now prioritizing holidays designed to enhance their lifespan and wellbeing. To help industry leaders navigate this evolution, here are the top 10 wellness technology trends reshaping hospitality in 2025.

1 MOBILE WELLNESS JOURNEY MANAGEMENT

The modern traveller expects their wellness journey to be literally at their fingertips. With some hotel guests now preferring mobile-first experiences, integrated wellness apps have become essential. These platforms enable guests to effortlessly book spa treatments, reserve fitness classes, and create personalized wellness itineraries. The key differentiator is real-time availability management, allowing guests to join waitlists and receive instant notifications when preferred time slots become available. **Tip:** *Prioritize solutions that offer seamless integration between wellness bookings and other hotel services, ensuring a cohesive guest experience from pre-arrival through departure.*

2 AI-POWERED WELLNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Artificial Intelligence is revolutionizing how properties understand and cater to guest wellness preferences. Smart systems analyze guest history, preferences, and booking patterns to provide personalized treatment recommendations and optimize scheduling. The system's automated follow-up capabilities maintain guest engagement throughout their wellness journey. With over 54% of travellers embracing "AI-itinerary" tools for trip planning, this technology enables dynamic pricing strategies that maximize revenue while ensuring optimal resource utilization. **Tip:** *Select AI solutions that respect guest privacy while delivering personalized recommendations.*

3 CONTACTLESS SPA EXPERIENCE

The demand for seamless, touch-free experiences continues to grow. Digital intake forms and health questionnaires not only streamline operations but also allow therapists to better prepare for each guest's unique needs. Mobile check-in and out and contactless payment solutions reduce friction points while maintaining the personal connection essential to wellness services. **Tip:** *Implement contactless solutions that enhance rather than replace the human element of spa services.*

4 SMART ROOM WELLNESS INTEGRATION

The guest room is becoming an extension of the spa and fitness center. Advanced in-room wellness technology, from interactive fitness mirrors to sleep optimization systems, allows guests to maintain their wellness routines on their terms. Automated environmental controls adjust lighting,

temperature, and air quality to support optimal well-being throughout the stay. **Tip:** *Select room wellness technologies that integrate seamlessly with your property's existing systems while providing measurable benefits to guests.*

5 RESOURCE OPTIMIZATION PLATFORM

Efficient resource management is crucial for maintaining service quality and profitability. Modern platforms use predictive analytics to align staff scheduling with anticipated demand, manage inventory levels, and optimize treatment room utilization. This data-driven approach ensures properties can meet guest expectations while maintaining operational efficiency. **Tip:** *Choose platforms that provide real-time insights while being intuitive for staff to use.*

6 MULTI-PROPERTY WELLNESS PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

For hospitality groups, centralized wellness program administration is essential for maintaining consistency while allowing for local customization. Cross-property booking capabilities and unified guest profiles enable seamless experiences across locations, while centralized management ensures brand standards are maintained. **Tip:** *Focus on solutions that balance corporate oversight with property-level flexibility.*

7 DIGITAL WELLNESS MARKETPLACE

Online marketplaces are expanding the reach of wellness services beyond the spa walls. These platforms enable guests to book services, purchase wellness products, and access virtual consultations before, during, and after their stay. This creates new revenue streams while extending the guest relationship beyond the property. **Tip:** *Develop a digital marketplace strategy that complements rather than competes with on-property services.*

8 GUEST WELLNESS DATA ANALYTICS

Understanding guest preferences and behaviors is crucial for service optimization. Advanced analytics platforms track treatment preferences, wellness journey metrics, and booking patterns to inform service development and marketing strategies. This data-driven approach ensures properties can anticipate and meet evolving guest needs. **Tip:** *Implement analytics solutions that provide actionable insights while maintaining guest privacy.*

9 STAFF EMPOWERMENT TOOLS

Mobile access to guest preferences and digital treatment protocols enables staff to provide more personalized service while maintaining efficiency. Real-time schedule management tools help staff adapt to changes while ensuring consistent service delivery. **Tip:** *Select tools that enhance staff capabilities while being intuitive and easy to learn.*

10 INTEGRATION CAPABILITIES

Seamless integration with hotel PMS, third-party wellness providers, and loyalty programs is essential for creating a unified guest experience. In fact, recent Agilysys research amongst travellers, found that loyalty programmes were a top driver behind hotel rebooking for 73% of guests. Modern wellness platforms offer robust APIs and proven integration capabilities with industry leaders like Technogym, ensuring properties can create comprehensive wellness ecosystems. As wellness continues to be a key differentiator in hospitality, properties must embrace technology solutions that enhance both guest experiences and operational efficiency. These trends represent opportunities for properties to create distinctive wellness offerings while optimizing their resources. By selecting solutions that balance innovation with practical implementation, hospitality leaders can position their properties for success in the growing wellness tourism market.

■

HY8



Top 10 Media Content and Distribution Trends for In-Room TV's and Hotel Communal Areas in 2025

Digital Entertainment

Rachelle Peterson
Founder, LOQIA Group



The in-room entertainment market is poised for significant transformation in the coming years. Whilst top-tier casting solutions are high on every hotelier's wish list, will they truly revolutionise, move the needle and meet everyone's expectations? Will the trend of cord-cutting seen in residential homes continue in the hospitality industry, or will it take time and stabilise? And what about in-room movies, are they becoming obsolete with the advancement of Netflix, Amazon, Max and Disney+?

Read on to discover the top 10 trends that will shape the in-room and communal area TV landscape in 2025.

1 CHOICE

Who is today's traveller? With a diverse mix of generational travellers, from Boomers to Gen Z to the emerging Gen Alpha, each group has distinct preferences that need to be catered for. Offering a variety of options is essential to keep all guests happy. Don't rush to cut the cord just yet, many guests still prefer watching TV channels especially in the morning when time is limited, or as background noise. Keep the traditional movie and VOD systems updated regularly, as they offer the latest selections and remain a fan favourite. However don't be afraid to introduce the latest technologies, just ensure that there's enough choice to appeal to the widest demographic.

Tip: Your guest profile will tell you everything you need to know, learn how to read and interpret it.

2 SPORTS IS THE GLUE... BUT EXPECT IT TO BE MESSY

Sports has become must have content for streaming players, it is the glue to any content bundle. It is the immediate and unpredictable nature of live competition that fuels audiences as well as guest and fan engagement. However sports rights are very tricky to navigate, they are very messy and rarely offer a one size fits all solution, which makes catering to all (international) guests an expensive exercise. Watch as some sports streamers are leveraging documentary style productions, integrated sports betting as well as ticketing and e-commerce capabilities to keep fans watching and engaged with their favourite teams even when away from home.

Tip: Get some independent advice on sports rights, don't try and navigate this one solo there is a real risk for over spending and under delivering here.

3 HEALTH AND WELLNESS CONTENT

With increasing awareness of the importance of health and wellness, many travellers prioritise maintaining their routines, even while away from home. Providing relatable content, such as guided meditation, yoga sessions, and fitness routines on the in-room TVs, helps guests relax and de-stress during their stay. Offering a wide range of wellness options allows hotels to cater to diverse guest preferences. Besides hydration stations and pillow menus to promote sleep, why not provide apps that are easily accessible on the in-room smart TV that offer sleep stories, nature sounds, or white noise to promote rest? These additions create more personalised and enjoyable experiences for guests and can significantly enhance their stay.

Tip: By incorporating health and wellness ideas, hotels can create a holistic and nurturing environment that appeals to every health conscious traveller or weary parent.

4 EVENT STREAMING

Event streaming is becoming more popular for both communal areas such as the hotel bar, gym, as well as the guest rooms. The social aspect of communal event streaming especially for sports is widely known, particularly around big sporting events such as the World Cup, the Olympics or the Super Bowl. But since COVID, guests are looking for more control over their in-room experience as well. Event streaming including sports, concerts and theatre performances, in the comfort of the room with or without room service, appeals to many.

Tip: Having this feature can be a unique selling point for hotels, attracting guests who value the convenience and variety of live entertainment options.

5 MULTI-LANGUAGE CONTENT & SUPPORT

Yes, these are really two separate areas, but they pertain to the same guests, so they are combined for this reason. Offering content in multiple languages to cater to international guests based on your guest profile will not only enhance their experience it plays a vital role in creating an inclusive environment. By catering to guests' language preferences, hotels can offer a more personalised experience. This level of customisation shows that the hotel values and respects its guests' cultural and linguistic diversity. The power of this should not be underestimated.

Tip: Check your guest profile a minimum of once per year to ensure you cater to the top 10 countries your guests hail from.

6 AI PERSONALISED RECOMMENDATIONS

Using AI to provide personalised content recommendations based on guests' preferences and viewing history is a great way to customise the guest journey. Ensure the data collected is accurate, relevant, and comprehensive. This includes guest preferences, viewing history, booking information, and feedback. The more precise and relevant the data, the better the AI can tailor recommendations to each guest's unique preferences as the AI adapts and improves over time. Additionally offer a diverse range of content and services to cater to different preferences, ensuring that recommendations remain engaging and varied.

Tip: Always prioritise guest privacy and secure data handling by clearly communicating how guests data is used and ensure compliance with privacy regulations.

7 VOICE-ACTIVATED CONTROLS

Implementing voice-activated controls for easier navigation and content selection can significantly enhance the guest experience in hotel rooms. It provides convenience, personalisation, and efficiency, but above all accessibility, particularly for guests with disabilities or those who may have difficulty using traditional controls.

One often overlooked benefit is hygiene; maintaining a clean and healthy environment is especially beneficial for the remote control as a high touch surface, it is one of the dirtiest objects in a hotel room.

Tip: Provide a list of common voice commands in the room guide or on the TV screen to help guests understand what they can control.

8 THE SKINNY TV BUNDLE

Live sports and news are the main ingredients for every skinny TV bundle, as on average 90% of content watched comes from just 10 TV channels. The skinny TV bundle is a streamlined and cost-effective package of television channels that focuses on providing a select few channels rather than the extensive lineups offered by traditional cable or satellite packages. These bundles typically include popular channels and exclude less-watched ones, saving the savvy hotelier money whilst still catering to the majority of guests.

Tip: ensure that you check your guest profile to cater your skinny bundle to the majority of guests.

9 CASTING & MOBILE INTEGRATION

Incorporating guests' personal content into their hotel experience is becoming more standardised. The ability for guests to stream content from their personal devices via QR code directly to the in-room TV has significant benefits to a large proportion of guests. However, the casting concept of bringing the feeling of home with you via your own content is somewhat misleading. We generally do not cast at home, therefore a great proportion of your guests will either have come unprepared, do not know, or do want to use the casting facility. Ensure that casting is not the only entertainment on offer.

Tip: Ensure that all new technology is tested thoroughly by non-technical personnel. Make it fool proof, your guests will thank you.

10 DON'T DITCH LINEAR TV JUST YET

Linear TV still has a huge part to play in guest in-room entertainment. Recent studies show linear TV viewing accounts for anywhere from 40% to 78% of all in-room viewing, depending on the property, star rating, country and availability of casting facilities. Either way linear TVs enduring appeal in hospitality should not be underestimated.

Tip: Quality over quantity, you do not require more than 25 high quality TV channels in total on your Hotel TV system.



HY8



Content Strategy for Hotels in 2025: It's Time to Embrace AI

Content Marketing

Daniel Craig

Founder & Chief Strategist, Reknown

REKNOWN

Content marketing has long been the “anti-marketing” tool for astute marketers. In a world where ads are ignored, phone calls go unanswered, and emails go straight to the spam folder, sharing helpful content allows brands to engage target audiences without overtly promoting products.

Content marketing has long been the “*anti-marketing*” tool for astute marketers. In a world where ads are ignored, phone calls go unanswered, and emails go straight to the spam folder, sharing helpful content allows brands to engage target audiences without overtly promoting products. For hotels, this means creating content that inspires travelers to explore your destination and plan trips. When optimized for search engines, such content can enhance your hotel’s visibility in search results and drive qualified traffic to your website. However, artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming how content is created, discovered, and consumed online. As we head into 2025, AI presents new opportunities for hoteliers who rely on content marketing to drive traffic and bookings.

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF DIGITAL MARKETING

AI is reshaping the digital marketing environment in significant ways. Here are three trends hospitality markers should watch:

- **Organic website traffic is declining.** AI Overviews are pushing organic links even further down Google search results, leading to fewer clicks to websites. According to SparkToro, nearly 60% of Google searches in 2024 resulted in zero clicks—a trend that is expected to accelerate in 2025.¹
- **Travel planners are using AI chatbots.** A survey by Oliver Wyman found that 41% of leisure travelers have recently used generative AI tools for travel inspiration or itinerary planning, with 82% likely to use them again.² Soon, AI agents will move beyond inspiration to booking and managing entire trips.
- **Social media algorithms are shifting.** Platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok are major gatekeepers to travel content, and the rules of engagement are changing. AI-powered algorithms now prioritize content based on user interests rather than follower networks, fundamentally altering how audiences discover and engage with content.

HOW CAN HOTELS LEVERAGE AI IN CONTENT MARKETING?

As AI-driven tools play an increasingly prominent role in how travelers discover destinations and plan their journeys, hotels that fail to adapt risk losing visibility, engagement, and direct bookings. However, early adopters of AI-optimized content strategies can gain a competitive edge. Here are six strategies to guide your content efforts in 2025:

1 OPTIMIZE CONTENT FOR AI PLATFORMS

AI optimization (AIO) is the next evolution of SEO. While the inner workings of generative AI tools like ChatGPT and Gemini remain opaque, they appear to prioritize high-quality, credible content from trustworthy sources. To increase your chances of being featured in responses, focus on creating content that meets these standards.

2 PRIORITIZE AUTHENTICITY

Synthetic content and “*AI slop*”—generic, low-quality AI-generated content—are flooding the internet. Stand out by producing authentic, human-created content infused with local expertise and storytelling. Highlight the unique aspects of your property and destination with insider tips and compelling narratives that AI tools struggle to replicate.

3 ANSWER TRAVELERS’ QUESTIONS

Structure your content around the prompt-response model used by AI chatbots. Use common traveler queries as headings and provide clear, concise answers that improve upon the information already available. Update FAQ pages, web pages, and blog posts with answers to questions about your property, destination, and local attractions.

4 USE A CONVERSATIONAL TONE

AI chatbots rely on natural language, not keyword density. Write content that is conversational yet professional, focusing on helping travelers plan unique and memorable trips. For greater credibility, separate branded promotional content from materials designed to assist and inform travelers.

5 USE AI TO ENHANCE CONTENT

According to a global survey by h2c, 31% of hotel chains already use AI for content creation, and 27% plan to do so soon.³ Use AI tools as an assistant, not a replacement, to support brainstorming, research, outlining, and refining drafts. This approach not only saves time but also enhances the quality and effectiveness of your content.

6 ALIGN CONTENT WITH GUEST PREFERENCES

AI powers tools for data aggregation, customer segmentation, and sentiment analysis. Use these insights to craft personalized content that resonates with guests at critical touchpoints throughout the customer journey. On social media, align posts with guest interests to engage both followers and non-followers effectively.

ADAPTING TO THE EVOLVING AI LANDSCAPE

The rapid pace of AI innovation means hotel marketers must remain agile, experimenting with new strategies, evaluating results, and making data-driven adjustments. By integrating AI into your content strategy, your hotel will be well-positioned to seize emerging opportunities as AI tools become more integral to travel planning and booking. Even if AI’s long-term impact on travel turns out to be overhyped, these efforts will still boost your SEO performance. High-quality, helpful content will always be in demand—because, at its core, content marketing is about building trust and delivering value.

1. SparkToro. *2024 Zero-Click Search Study*. July 2024.

2. OliverWyman. *Why Generative AI Is a Game-Changer for Leisure Travel*. March 2024.

3. h2c. *2024 Direct Booking Acceleration Study*. 2024.

HYB



Top 10 ways to maximise F&B revenue with mobile ordering

Mobile-First

Kate Fuller

Senior Marketing Manager, IRIS Software Systems



The days of manual F&B order taking are long gone – as is the notion that mobile ordering is just for room service. Guests and hoteliers are adopting a digital approach to order taking (across their property) at a rapid rate, and it shows no signs of abating.

As average daily rates (ADRs) peak, operators will look to expand their revenue capabilities beyond the guestroom and adopt a strategic approach to achieve just that. It's what guests are expecting and it's what operators are deploying to free up staff time and become more efficient. From diversification and upselling to marketing and guest personalisation, these emerging trends will play a major role in boosting mobile orders and picking up the room rate shortfall. Below are the top 10 trends that will maximise F&B revenue, along with actionable steps for hoteliers to implement:

1 REACH 100% GUESTS WITH QR CODE ORDERING

Mobile ordering enables guests to view menus, order, and pay from the comfort of their own device, anywhere, any time. With guests self-serving, hotels can capture more orders, reduce errors and minimise manual processes. A more efficient way to place orders, particularly in locations that are not always manned. **Tip:** Deploy mobile ordering through QR codes and web links (no download required).

2 DIVERSIFY AND EXPAND ACROSS PROPERTY

There'll be a shift toward non-room profitability as hotels look for ways to maximise the value of their entire property. By diversifying and expanding mobile ordering beyond rooms, operators can provide additional convenience, reach more guests and in turn grow their F&B guest spend without adding operational complexity. **Tip:** Offer mobile ordering across your property in coffee shops, pool decks, lobbies, bistros and meeting spaces.

3 SEAMLESS INTEGRATIONS

With a real-time integration to your POS, hoteliers can remove touchpoints and send orders direct to the kitchen POS. Operators can improve delivery times, drive accuracy and ease pressure on the team, especially when staffing levels are tight. **Tip:** Ensure your integration is direct and not a database match so you can sync your menus and limit duplications.

4 OFFER A PERSONALISED EXPERIENCE

Offer a more personalised and flexible approach by enabling guests to customise their experience (filter menus by allergy or intolerance, pay separately or as part of a group, and view new items) whilst not overburdening kitchen or front-of-house staff. **Tip:** Provide options for personalised orders with dietary and ingredient preferences.

5 MARKET YOUR MOBILE

Visibility and knowledge of your mobile ordering platform is integral to its adoption and success. The more visible and accessible your QR codes are, the more likely guests will use it. **Tip:** Place QR codes in high-traffic areas like the lobby and elevators and add them to room service menus, TV screens, and poolside loungers. Highlight the benefits at guest check-in to encourage usage.

6 TEMPT WITH VISUALS AND DYNAMIC CONTENT

A picture paints a thousand words and nowhere is this truer than in F&B. Including high-quality photos and mouthwatering descriptions of menu items will work wonders to tempt guests and drive higher sales. **Tip:** Upload photos of every dish and include detailed descriptions, ingredients and calorie content to entice and inform guests.

7 ENCOURAGE UPSELLS & ADD-ONS

Complementary items on digital menus, such as side dishes, drinks, or Chef pairings, can both enhance the guest's dining experience and significantly increase the average check size. **Tip:** Suggest sides, drinks, or desserts during the order process.

8 PROMOTE SEASONAL ITEMS AND PACKAGES

Showcase popular items, seasonal offerings and special menus to boost sales and enrich your guest's stay. Easy to upload and edit on a digital menu, these limited-time offers will tantalise your guest's tastebuds and generate more orders. **Tip:** Highlighting "Chef's specials" or "Guest favourites" can guide guests' choices and boost check size.

9 INCLUDE MULTI-LINGUAL SUPPORT TO WIDEN ACCESSIBILITY

Guests love being able to view content in their own language so enable overseas guests to switch to their native language and read your menus with ease. Let miscommunication and misunderstanding be a thing of the past and widen your appeal. **Tip:** Ensure your menu is available in multiple languages.

10 APPEAL TO GEN Z GUESTS

By modernising and digitising the F&B ordering process across the hotel, operators will boost their appeal amongst Gen Z travellers. With over 80% of millennials and Gen Z travelling in 2024, these modern guests are now demanding how we adapt. A such, the digital experience has to match the physical experience - these travellers have grown up in a digital age so expect everything in the palm of their hand, wherever they may be. **Tip:** Provide guests with a convenient, digital ordering experience akin to DoorDash, Uber Eats etc. These actionable steps will empower hoteliers to align with today's travellers expectations and stay competitive in an evolving industry.

HYB



7 Actionable Revenue Management Trends for 2025

RM Trends

Klaus Kohlmayr

Chief Evangelist and Development Officer, IDEaS

IDEaS™
A SAS COMPANY

We've been big proponents of breaking down silos and building alignment among commercial teams, and really that thinking should be expanded to include marketing. By tapping into the sophisticated granular demand forecasting capabilities of advanced revenue management systems, hoteliers stand to benefit from better timed and tailored marketing campaigns and promotional efforts that ultimately drive better business.

1 BUILDING BETTER ALIGNMENT BETWEEN RM, SALES, AND MARKETING

We've been big proponents of breaking down silos and building alignment among commercial teams, and really that thinking should be expanded to include marketing. By tapping into the sophisticated granular demand forecasting capabilities of advanced revenue management systems, hoteliers stand to benefit from better timed and tailored marketing campaigns and promotional efforts that ultimately drive better business. This will undoubtedly require a shift in how these teams go about their business as usual, but the potential benefits are tremendous. Now's the time to take a step back from siloed functions and start aligning on shared big-picture goals. **Tip:** Consider the communication channels between revenue leaders and marketing teams, as well as the tools and systems that can facilitate greater collaboration.

2 KEEPING THE BOTTOM LINE IN FOCUS WITH GROUP BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Strong group business and events performance has been a boon for many hoteliers of late, and there's likely more hay to be made. Those who keep a close tab on group business servicing costs and the impact of group opportunities on transient guest room revenues are equipped to make better decisions for overall profitability. **Tip:** Consider if sales and revenue leaders have an efficient way to gauge impact of displaced business when weighing opportunities.

3 STAYING NIMBLE THROUGH UNCERTAINTY

A mixed bag of market conditions paired with several tense geopolitical situations across the globe adds a degree of worrying uncertainty to 2025, and it is critical revenue teams can pivot their strategies quickly if needed. **Tip:** Evaluate how your property may fare and adapt to ideal, average, and worst-case budgeting scenarios. Ask if your teams are well-equipped with plans and tools to quickly adapt as needed.

4 GETTING MORE OUT OF YOUR EVENT SPACES

With limited prospects of room revenue growth for many hotels, revenue leaders will be looking to open up new avenues of growth—and M&E is an area where many properties can find a lift. We expect more hoteliers to put a sharp eye on how effectively their available space is being used, how it is being merchandized, and the overall revenue impact of event-driven room bookings. **Tip:** If you haven't, work to establish and align on KPI metrics for M&E performance to establish a baseline and identify areas of opportunity.

5 CATERING TO EXPERIENCE-DRIVEN LEISURE TRAVELERS

Millennial and Gen Z travellers represent a growing share of the leisure travel market, and it's clear many are seeking out more authentic ways to experience the world around them. This represents an opportunity for hotels and outdoor accommodations providers to revisit their strategies for attracting new business—and the technologies needed to cater to this guest segment's personalized preferences. **Tip:** Think local when developing experience packages and partnerships. There may be opportunities to develop memorable, authentic and sustainable experiences that check many of the boxes for younger travelers.

6 EXPANSION AND MATURATION OF REVENUE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The global hospitality industry is making huge strides in the adoption of revenue management technologies and practices—and we don't see that slowing down in 2025. More hoteliers understand the value of sophisticated revenue management strategies, and it's now easier than ever for them to find the tools that enable them in a package that's a good fit for their properties' needs. **Tip:** Consider the technology needs of your property and when you've last evaluated them, as recent new solutions, technology integrations, and more may have changed the calculus on what's viable for your organization.

7 PUTTING A LASER FOCUS ON RESORT PROFITABILITY

Less favorable financial terms due to inflation-fighting elevated interest rates are still on the table for 2025, and resort properties will certainly scrutinize the profitability of their offerings. With improved data connectivity between technology systems, hoteliers can uncover opportunities to improve margins and ultimately adapt their strategies to prioritize attracting their most profitable business. **Tip:** A holistic view of guest spending and servicing costs is the ideal, so it's time to ask where gaps in this information may be, and how technology can help paint a more complete picture of your guests.

HYB



Top 10 Booking Engine Features Shaping Revenue and Conversion in 2025

Booking Technology

Ethan Wiseman

Sr. Director, Product Management – Head of Distribution, Sabre Hospitality

Sabre.

As we step into 2025, digital transformation continues to drive innovation across the hospitality industry, offering countless opportunities to increase engagement and boost revenue. One tool that stands out as essential in this evolution is the booking engine. No longer just a reservation system, today's booking engines are dynamic retailing platforms designed to maximize revenue potential and elevate the guest experience.

The most advanced booking engines are transforming how hotels connect with travelers by harnessing hyper-personalization, seamless integrations, and innovative features. These features drive higher conversions, enhance guest loyalty, and unlock additional revenue streams through smarter and more engaging [solutions](#). In this article, we'll explore the top 10 game-changing booking engine features set to define the year. From AI-powered predictive offers and retail add-ons to flexible payment solutions, these trends align with evolving guest expectations, empowering hoteliers to boost bookings and capitalize on new [revenue opportunities](#).

1 CONSUMER-GRADE SHOPPING INTERFACE

Today's travelers expect a consumer-grade shopping experience that is fast, intuitive, and frictionless. By keeping everything on your website, you can ensure a seamless, end-to-end shopping experience with real-time availability, dynamic pricing and personalized offers – all within your branded environment. **Tip:** *Keep your booking engine natively hosted on your hotel's website to prevent confusion and abandonment caused by third-party redirects. A seamless experience keeps guests engaged and improves conversion rates.*

2 SELL INTEGRATED OFFERS

Guests expect simplicity and flexibility when booking. By integrating ancillary offers with room reservations, hotels can become a one-stop destination where travelers can purchase everything they need for their trip in a single booking flow. **Tip:** *Bundle room reservations with ancillaries like spa treatments, dining, and local experiences. This not only simplifies booking but also increases TRRevPAR through personalized upsells.*

3 AI-POWERED RECOMMENDATIONS

[71 percent of guests](#) desire a [tailored experience](#) and are more prone to making higher value purchases when personalization is factored. As AI becomes more advanced and widely adopted, leveraging machine learning and predictive analytics in your booking engine can deliver [highly personalized content](#) and offers. **Tip:** *Use AI to deliver tailored offers based on guest preferences. Personalized recommendations drive higher-value bookings and increase conversion rates for room upgrades and add-ons.*

4 SIMPLE-TO-USE BOOKING ENGINE

The setup and management of a [booking engine](#) should be user-friendly for hotel staff. A modular booking engine with visually appealing displays enhances engagement and conversions. Features like drag-and-drop tools, customizable booking flows, and branded email templates can help hoteliers make updates with ease. **Tip:** *Choose a booking engine with no coding required and an intuitive interface. This ensures*

your team can quickly adapt to market changes and optimize offers.

5 BOOKING ENHANCEMENTS WITH INTEGRATED PARTNERS

Guests appreciate the convenience of making all their trip-related purchases in one seamless flow. Hotels should choose a booking engine that can integrate easily with partner services to enhance the booking flow, encourage upselling, and drive [incremental revenue](#). **Tip:** *Integrate partnering services like travel insurance, flexible payment options, and other complementary services to add value and encourage upsells to their trip bookings.*

6 LOYALTY INTEGRATION

Loyalty programs are essential for driving direct bookings and fostering repeat business. Booking engines should be integrated with your CRM to offer exclusive rates and benefits to loyalty program members. Attracting and retaining loyal guests reduces reliance on OTAs and increases lifetime value per customer. **Tip:** *Display exclusive member rates before login to entice guests to join your loyalty program. A seamless CRM connection enhances guest retention and boosts direct bookings.*

7 FLEXIBLE PAYMENT METHODS

[Seven in 10 travelers](#) prioritize flexible booking arrangements. Offering alternative payment options, such as multi-currency support, digital wallets, and Buy Now, Pay Later features, can expand accessibility to a global audience, including those who prefer non-traditional payment methods or need financial flexibility. **Tip:** *Offer multiple payment options to increase guest choice and reduce abandonment.*

8 AUTOMATED BOOKING ENGINE VIA GENERATIVE AI

[One in two guests](#) expects a business to be available 24/7 to meet their needs. Hotels can embed generative AI into their booking engine to provide real-time support. With an AI-powered bot, the booking engine can assist guests with instant confirmations, dynamic rate management, personalized room configurations, and curated on- and off-property recommendations. For example, a guest may ask the AI bot for property information and receive immediate responses instead of navigating multiple web pages. **Tip:** *Use AI-powered chatbots to assist with inquiries and provide recommendations. Real-time support enhances the booking experience and reduces drop-offs.*

9 SECURE AND SCALABLE

In an era of increasing cyber threats, maintaining guest trust and data security is crucial. Choosing a booking engine that provides enterprise-grade security and platform stability is essential. Reliable, secure systems build guest confidence, providing a seamless booking experience while protecting revenue streams from costly breaches or system outages. **Tip:** *Prioritize a booking engine with enterprise-grade security and scalability. Reliable performance during peak periods protects revenue and builds guest trust.*

10 OTA PRICE COMPARISON

Today's tech-savvy travelers have access to numerous options to shop around for the best prices. Offering price transparency instills trust and eliminates the need for guests to leave your platform, encouraging direct bookings and ensuring that revenue remains in-house. **Tip:** *Implement an OTA price comparison widget to reassure guests they're getting the best rate by booking direct, reducing abandonment rate.*



HYB



Top 10 Strategies for Mastering Financial Automation in Hospitality by 2025

Finance Automation

Kinza Raheel

International Marketing & Communications Manager, Fairmas GmbH



The hospitality industry is expected to reach new heights by 2027. Experts predict that the industry will reach \$5 billion, especially backed by groundbreaking advancements in technology. The following top 10 financial strategies to enhance automation may help garner the best results for 2025:

1 FOCUSING ON COST-CONTROLLING

Although revenues are growing in the industry, costs are consistently increasing. For a successful strategy, focusing on cost-controlling is imperative. Hotels have in recent years mainly focused on a top-line approach, where getting more revenue is important. However, with increasing costs, cost controlling becomes a key difference to attain better bottom-line results. Cost control in inventory management, F&B, labor cost control, utilities, waste reduction and revenue management are important. Although the focus on increasing revenues is still important, the way forward is to also focus on cost controlling.

2 PRECISE CASH FLOW PLANNING

Another highly important aspect of financial stability is precise cash flow planning for hotels. The hospitality industry often experiences fluctuations in demand. Therefore, it is crucial to be fully aware of cash inflow and outflow and correctly implement cash flow planning strategies. Focus on operational stability, debt management, investment opportunities, profitability insights, and crisis preparedness with precise cash flow planning strategies to navigate through any unforeseen financial challenges.

3 FOCUS ON SEAMLESS INTEGRATION AND AN API DATA FLOW FOR DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

With large amounts of information available at a hotel's disposal, data is still confined in data silos. The absence of necessary interfaces creates the inability to process data automatically resulting in increased manual calculations. It costs valuable time, creates a loss of quality, and increases data entry errors. Focusing on seamless integration for data-driven decisions boosts automation & efficiency.

4 CREATE A ROLLING FORECAST & OPPORTUNISTIC WHAT IF PLANNING FOR CRISIS PREPAREDNESS

Analyzing up to date data by creating a Rolling Forecast helps with better decision-making. Instead of a reaction approach, this encourages a proactive and future-focused approach, allowing hotels to accurately anticipate challenges and opportunities. As the hospitality industry is volatile, opportunistic What if planning is also essential. Creating a Rolling Forecast paired with opportunistic What if planning can help hotels with crisis preparedness and proactive identification of potential opportunities.

INCREASE ACCOUNTABILITY BY WORKFORCE EMPOWERMENT AND ENABLING STAFF AT ALL LEVELS TO GAIN CONFIDENCE AND TECHNOLOGICAL PROFICIENCY

With an increasingly competitive hospitality environment it is important that all the staff gain confidence and learn technological proficiency for workforce empowerment. This will also allow the workforce to be more accountable and take responsibility for financial results in their area, leading to better financial results throughout the company.

6 EFFICIENTLY PLAN PAYROLLS & ENHANCE LABOR MANAGEMENT

Optimized payroll planning and managing labor more effectively is also important. AI tools could be used to identify workforce demand patterns in order to effectively plan payrolls and enhance labor management. This will avoid overstaffing and help with proactive decision-making. Monitoring wages and overtime will also help in cost cutting and shift the focus to better suited labor management for proactive financial decision-making.

7 DIVERSIFY REVENUE STREAMS

To have a competitive edge in the hospitality industry, especially in fluctuating market conditions, and be successful financially, it is imperative to diversify revenue streams. Traditional revenue streams are no longer enough. Hotels need to think one step beyond that and reduce reliance on room revenue alone. Thinking outside the box and incorporating innovative ideas to increase and diversify revenue streams is the way forward. Attracting a broader audience is key for increased profitability.

8 ANOMALY DETECTION USING AI

AI can be extremely useful for anomaly detection in data. AI can help identify unusual patterns and deviations in the numbers before inaccurate decisions are made. If AI is not used to flag anomalies, datasets are more prone to manual errors. Flagging anomalies using AI not only prevents possible errors in the datasets but also allows for more accurate and reliable budgeting, forecasting and financial reporting. This leads to more precise decision-making.

9 CREATE PROCESSES THAT ENABLE MAPPING DATA THROUGH AI

Creating processes that enable mapping data through AI will help to automatically identify, match and integrate data from a variety of sources into a unified format, avoiding any discrepancies in the data. This method of data alignment with the use of AI mapping is a foolproof way avoiding manual errors, saving time & money, and providing reliable data for accurate budgeting, forecasting and financial reporting.

10 IMPLEMENT AI BASED FINANCIAL PLANNING WITH PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS TO ENHANCE FINANCIAL PROCESSES

AI-based predictive analytics can help hotels forecast trends more accurately, optimize budgets, and make more informed data-driven decisions. It not only increases the accuracy of data but also helps with proactive risk mitigation, and personalized property-specific performance metrics, enhancing financial processes.



HYB



10 Reasons Why Upgrading Your PMS is a Must in 2025

PMS

Ryan King

Senior Vice President for the Americas, Shiji Group

Shiji

The hospitality industry isn't slowing down, and outdated PMS solutions are dragging hotels behind. Clunky, slow, and vulnerable to cyber threats, legacy systems can no longer keep up. If your property still relies on an aging PMS, here's why 2025 is the year to upgrade—ranked from most to least urgent.

1 CYBERSECURITY THREATS ARE REAL AND COSTLY

Hackers love hotels. Guest data—credit card numbers, passport details, and personal preferences—fetches a high price on the dark web. A 2024 cyberattack on a major hotel chain exposed millions of records, leading to lawsuits and reputational damage. Modern PMS providers deploy AI-driven security, encrypted databases, and 24/7 threat monitoring to keep data safe. Stick with a legacy system, and you're one breach away from disaster.

2 GDPR AND DATA LAWS ARE TIGHTENING

Hotels handling international guests face a maze of regulations—GDPR in Europe, CCPA in California, and data localization laws in countries like China and Brazil. A PMS that doesn't automatically manage data retention and compliance settings puts your hotel at risk of hefty fines. New systems come with built-in compliance tools that handle this for you.

3 THE CLOUD IS ESSENTIAL, NOT OPTIONAL

If your PMS crashes because a local server failed, you're losing bookings and frustrating guests. Cloud-based PMS solutions eliminate this risk, offering automatic backups, real-time updates, and access from anywhere—whether it's the front desk, a tablet in housekeeping, or your phone at the airport. Say goodbye to downtime and maintenance nightmares.

4 GUESTS EXPECT DIGITAL CONVENIENCE

No one wants to wait in a check-in line. Guests now expect mobile check-ins, digital room keys, and instant service requests from their phones. A modern PMS enables these features, ensuring your property meets the expectations set by major chains and innovative independents.

5 A PMS SHOULD CONNECT, NOT ISOLATE

A PMS that doesn't talk to your revenue management system, CRM, or payment gateway creates bottlenecks. The best solutions offer seamless API integrations, allowing systems to work together—updating room availability in real-time, syncing guest preferences, and streamlining operations without endless manual data entry.

6 AUTOMATION SAVES TIME AND MONEY

Still assigning rooms manually? Still reconciling invoices by hand? A modern PMS automates these tasks with AI-driven workflows, reducing human error and freeing up staff for guest interactions. Imagine a system that automatically assigns housekeeping tasks based on check-out times—no more scrambling at the last minute.

7 YOUR PMS SHOULD FIT YOUR HOTEL, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND

Many legacy PMS solutions force hotels into rigid workflows. If your system makes it harder—not easier—to personalize services, you're using the wrong one. A modern PMS adapts to your brand's way of doing business, not the other way around.

8 DATA SHOULD DRIVE DECISIONS, NOT CONFUSE THEM

Old PMS systems either lack analytics or bury hotels in spreadsheets. A modern system delivers clear, real-time insights—revenue trends, guest booking patterns, and occupancy forecasts—on an easy-to-read dashboard. No more guesswork or clunky reports.

9 THE DEATH OF STANDALONE CHANNEL MANAGERS

Managing OTA listings used to require separate channel management software. Not anymore. The latest PMS solutions integrate this function, ensuring rates and availability sync automatically across all platforms—reducing overbookings and saving costs on third-party software.

10 LEGACY SYSTEMS ARE FALLING BEHIND

Technology moves fast. A PMS designed in the 2010s can't compete with AI-driven pricing engines, voice-command functionality, or smart room integrations. Instead of patching an outdated system, investing in a future-proof PMS ensures your hotel remains competitive for years to come.

THE BOTTOM LINE

This isn't just an upgrade—it's survival. Hotels that delay modernization will struggle with inefficiencies, compliance risks, and dissatisfied guests. The right PMS upgrade in 2025 will mean fewer headaches, happier guests, and a stronger bottom line. Don't wait until your system fails—future-proof your hotel now.



HY8



Six USALI Changes Hotel Finance Executives Need to be Aware of in 2025

Financial Reporting Standards

Robert Mandelbaum

Director of Research Information Services at CBRE Hotels

CBRE

The Global Finance Committee (GFC), a committee of diverse industry professionals sponsored by the Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals and the American Hotel and Lodging Association is responsible for the production of the Uniform System of Accounts for the Lodging Industry (USALI). The revised 12th edition USALI is scheduled to be effective in 2026. USALI is the global standard for financial reporting in the lodging industry and will feature important changes to financial reporting practices.

There are six important changes that hotel finance executives should be aware in advance of the January 1, 2026 effective date for the new guidance. **Tip:** *While most hotels will not formally report operating performance based on the 12th edition USALI until 2026, some properties are beginning to track the new revenue and expense categories in 2025. This will allow for equitable year-over-year changes in their 2026 operating statements.* [Changes Enacted to Increase Transparency](#).

1 GUEST LOYALTY PROGRAM COSTS

Over the past few years, guest loyalty programs have contributed an increasing number of guests for hotels. However, this increase in contribution has come with a rise in the costs paid by owners to support these programs. To enable owners, operators, and the brands to effectively measure the value of their loyalty programs, the 12th edition of USALI presents multiple new discrete loyalty program related expense categories. **Tip:** *Additional expense accounts may be required to separate costs associated with serving loyalty program guests versus all other guests.*

2 EXECUTIVE LOUNGE COSTS

A hotel's executive lounge can be a significant source of revenue, as well as a considerable cost. To enable owners, operators, and the brands to effectively measure the value of their executive lounges, the 12th edition of USALI presents the new Schedule 1-1 in the Rooms Department to capture Executive Lounge related costs. These costs are then allocated to two expense categories within the Rooms Department. Additional guidance is also provided for the handling of Executive Lounge revenue. **Tip:** *Be prepared to separate labor and other costs within the F&B department that are related to the Executive Lounge.*

3 FULL TIME EQUIVALENT SCHEDULE

Labor is the largest expense for hotels. Historically, USALI has reported the salaries, wages, and employee benefits paid to employees, however, hotels have not been required to report any data related to the number of employees or hours worked. The 12th edition of USALI requires a new Schedule 15 to present the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees working in each department. This enables owners and operators to calculate labor efficiency ratios such as FTEs per occupied room, or FTEs per cover. **Tip:** *Make sure your payroll system or service provider records and presents the hours worked by employees, and the departments the employees are associated with.*

4 BRAND AND OPERATOR COST SCHEDULE

The extent of services provided by hotel brands and management companies has expanded over the years. The costs charged to owners by the brands and management companies are reported in multiple expense categories located throughout the summary operating statement. To provide a single place where all brand and operator related costs can be viewed, the 12th edition of USALI requires a new Schedule 16 to capture all these expenses. **Tip:** *Work with your brand and operator to gain a thorough understanding of all expenses being billed to the hotel.* [Changes Enacted to Account for Contemporary Practice](#)

5 ALL INCLUSIVE HOTELS

Consumer acceptance of all-inclusive (AI) hotels has flourished in the past ten years. Given the growth of this segment, AI owners, operators, and brands have sought guidance from USALI that will enable these unique operations to better account for their revenues and expenses and enable benchmarking across this segment. The 12th edition of USALI presents a new Section (Part II) dedicated to revenue and expense reporting for AI hotels, and special attention was paid to the unique sources of revenue earned by AI properties: package revenue, non-package revenue, and miscellaneous income. **Tip:** *Be sure your accounting systems can distinguish between revenue included in the package, and additional revenue sources such as food and beverage upsells, weddings, golf, and spa services.*

6 ENERGY, WATER, AND WASTE

The emergence of environmental and sustainability standards set by governments around the world has necessitated enhanced reporting of what were previously titled Utility Expenses within hotels. In addition, consumers are now demanding an understanding of the environmental impact of hotels before they make their purchase decisions. Matching current nomenclature, the 12th edition of USALI has renamed the former Schedule 9 – Utility Department to Energy, Water, and Waste. Within this department, expenditures are reported for historical utilities such as electricity, water, and gas, along with new items like composted waste and renewable energy. **Tip:** *Work with your utility providers and waste management company to ensure they are providing the required consumption data needed to enable the required environmental and sustainability reporting.*

To purchase a copy of the 12th edition of USALI, please visit usali.hftp.org.

HY8



Top 10 Tech Trends Transforming Hospitality in 2025

AI Shaping the Customer Journey

Markus Feller
CEO of Like Magic

LIKE MAGIC

AI is no longer just a digital concierge that answers basic guest inquiries. Today, AI is capable of acting as a fully-autonomous, artificial travel agent that shapes the entire travel experience, from tailoring booking preferences and suggesting personalised itineraries, to managing real-time updates and gathering feedback through post-stay surveys.

1 AI BECOMES A JOURNEY ARCHITECT

AI is no longer just a digital concierge that answers basic guest inquiries. Today, AI is capable of acting as a fully-autonomous, artificial travel agent that shapes the entire travel experience, from tailoring booking preferences and suggesting personalised itineraries, to managing real-time updates and gathering feedback through post-stay surveys. **Tip:** *Adopt AI solutions that optimise every stage of the guest journey for seamless service.*

2 AUTOMATED SYSTEMS IN LOW-CARBON HOSPITALITY

Sustainability is becoming more aligned with the bottom line, thanks to rising energy costs and increasingly eco-conscious guests. Smart home technology, AI-powered predictive energy use and maintenance, and renewable energy amenities, like EV chargers, are fast becoming the standard. **Tip:** *Integrate and automate sustainability within your operational system to maximise financial returns over a longer period of time.*

3 ONE DASHBOARD TO RULE THEM ALL

It's time to say goodbye to scattered tools and disjointed workflows. Consolidating multiple systems for operations, such as booking platforms, marketing tools, unified messaging, housekeeping, and task management into one unified platform makes managing operations simpler and faster. **Tip:** *Streamline operations by centralising your tech stack into a single, user-friendly system with a highly intuitive interface that's easy for new staff to learn.*

4 THE RISE OF THE DIY GUEST

Tech-savvy guests want greater control, whether it's choosing their room, customising amenities, or checking in on their terms. Self-service tech is fast becoming the new concierge. **Tip:** *Use tech that enables guests to easily personalise their stay without complicating the process.*

5 WHATSAPP FOR MORE PERSONALISED GUEST COMMUNICATION

Guests increasingly appreciate authentic and real-time communication, making WhatsApp a preferred channel for many over traditional emails. Hotels are taking the opportunity to improve the guest experience with quicker and more personalised interactions, which in turn boost upsells and efficiency. **Tip:** *Integrate WhatsApp into your unified communications dashboard and leverage AI chatbots to support and automate staff responses. This approach reduces the workload for the front desk and concierge staff while improving efficiency and ensuring timely communication with guests.*

6 RISE OF THE 'GUEST JOURNEY MANAGER'

More and more hotels are creating an altogether new role to oversee the entire guest journey, from first click to post-checkout follow-up, ensuring every touchpoint drives revenue and loyalty. **Tip:** *Appoint a dedicated team member to own and optimise the guest experience across all stages. Use KPIs such as guest lifetime value and revenue per guest.*

7 BETTER TOOLS, HAPPIER STAFF, STRONGER BRANDS

When employees have access to the tools needed to succeed, they're more motivated – and that positivity extends to better guest experiences. Great tech doesn't just boost operational efficiency and staff morale, it also boosts your brand as an employer. **Tip:** *Invest in user-friendly tools that automate repetitive work and give employees more time to create the best guest experience possible.*

8 HYPER-LEAN TEAMS WITH BIG IMPACT

Staffing shortages are here to stay for the foreseeable future, but they don't have to mean sacrificing on service quality. With the right tech in place, ultra-lean teams can do more with less without burning out employees. **Tip:** *Implement systems that automate mundane tasks so staff can focus on high-value interactions.*

9 THE ALL-DIGITAL GUEST EXPERIENCE AS THE NEW NORMAL

From app-free check-ins to digital keys, guests expect their hotel stay to feel as smooth as a mobile app. Ensure it's only a few clicks to get what guests want! **Tip:** *Transition to mobile-friendly, web-based systems that remove as many frictions as possible in the guest journey.*

10 AUTOMATE THE GRIND TO FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS

Task automation is liberating hotel staff from mundane administrative work, enabling them to spend more time on creating memorable guest experiences. **Tip:** *Choose task automation tools that can streamline up to 80% of staff's repetitive daily tasks so employees can prioritize guest-facing interactions.* The future of hospitality is digital, but continues to be deeply personal. By embracing these tactical approaches, hoteliers can use technology to simultaneously enable operational efficiency with unforgettable guest experiences.

HY8



Top 5 Event Trends Hotels Must Know for 2025

Event Management

Nicola Allen

Director, Hospitality Cloud Marketing, Europe, Cvent

cvent

The meetings and events industry is at the crossroads of change and opportunity in 2025. New trends are shaping how events come to life, including unusual venues and AI-driven personalisation. For hotels, these changes mean new ways to win market share and make a lasting impression. Cvent reveals the five key trends hotels must know to meet the evolving needs of event planners and attract more MICE business.

1 UNIQUE VENUES ARE IN HIGH DEMAND

Event planners are prioritising unique and memorable spaces to create wow moments. Almost 50% of planners in North America and 45% in Europe now prefer distinctive venues – up from just two years ago. They want spaces that tell a story and add to the attendee experience. Hotels can embrace this trend by showcasing their flexible layouts, unique amenities and tailored experiences (both on and offsite). Going beyond the ballroom, hotels should showcase how spaces from penthouse suites, to rooftops, bars and terraces can be transformed into intimate breakout rooms or cosy networking zones. Even lobbies can be doubled as exhibition spaces during major events. **Tip:** *To reach planners seeking distinctive venues, list your hotel on venue sourcing platforms, and showcase unique spaces within your property with compelling visuals. Demonstrate how spaces can be transformed with interactive 3D floor plans and virtual site tours.*

2 DRIVE ACCESSIBILITY WITH TECHNOLOGY

Accessibility is now a key factor in creating inclusive events. The World Health Organisation says 1.3 billion people, or 16% of the world's population, live with significant disabilities. Failing to make events inclusive means excluding a substantial portion of the audience. In 2025, accessibility means more than ramps and elevators. Modern events need technology that serves everyone. Hotels are using tech to remove barriers. Features like virtual captioning, accessible booking tools, and assistive listening devices help create an inclusive environment. Delegates also expect quiet rooms, allergy-friendly catering, and sensory-friendly spaces. **Tip:** *Partner with an event tech provider and local accessibility specialists for live captioning, ASL services, and more. Use event registration forms to capture guests' needs and create a detailed accessibility map showing routes, quiet zones, and support services.*

3 ADOPT SMARTER TOOLS FOR DATA PRIVACY

With stringent global regulations like GDPR and CCPA, data security is a critical factor in venue selection. Event professionals assess properties not only for their amenities but also for their ability to protect sensitive information throughout the event lifecycle. Hotels are strengthening security measures, automating compliance, and training staff to handle data properly. Transparency around privacy practices is key to building trust with planners and guests. **Tip:** *Share your privacy practices with planners and guests. Include a data protection notice in bookings and have contact points for privacy queries.*

4 AI ADOPTION

Artificial Intelligence is transforming the events industry. Venues are using AI-driven tools to personalise guest interactions, automate responses and optimise event logistics. From chatbots handling enquiries to smart pricing based on demand forecasting, the technology is improving customer service and operational efficiency. AI is also changing how venues manage RFPs. Properties can now generate custom proposals and prioritise high-value leads to speed up negotiations and get more bookings. **Tip:** *Invest in AI tools that enhance the guest experience and streamline operations. Focus on solutions that automate repetitive tasks and extract insights from your data about slow periods, rate adjustments, and upselling to better manage room blocks and meeting spaces.*

5 PERSONALISATION AT SCALE

Attendees now expect customised experiences. Over half (57%) of them want event summaries tailored to their participation, just like the hyper-personalised digital experiences they get in other areas of their lives. Hotels can help by offering bespoke setups, personalised dining recommendations, and local experiences. AI can help by analysing attendee preferences and providing real-time recommendations. **Tip:** *Help planners personalise events by offering unique setups and local recommendations for dining, activities, and entertainment. Partner with CVBs to build custom activity packages based on attendee interests. The events and hospitality landscape in 2025 is set for transformation driven by AI powered technology, hyper-personalised experiences and a continued focus on inclusivity and data privacy. Hotels that embrace advancements in AI to drive efficiency, improve service levels and RFP response times and deliver personalisation will reap the benefits.*

HY8



Top 5 Booking Trends Transforming Hospitality in 2025

Booking Trends

Zen Valli

Chief Revenue Officer at RMS Cloud



The way travellers book their stays is changing. More than ever, guests are looking for convenience, flexibility, and value—while hoteliers are exploring new ways to maximize revenue and boost guest loyalty. At the heart of this shift is the book direct movement, where both travellers and hoteliers benefit by side-stepping third-party booking platforms.

Booking direct means guests can avoid extra fees and unlock exclusive perks, while hotels can reduce OTA commissions and gain direct access to valuable guest data. But beyond just cost savings, the evolution of payment options, security expectations, and booking behaviors is reshaping the wider hospitality industry. From flexible payment options to seamless booking experiences and enhanced cybersecurity, hotels that take control of their payment strategy will be best positioned to meet the needs of today's guests. Here's how hoteliers can embrace changing booking trends and bolster their payment strategy to create a frictionless, guest-friendly booking experience that drives both loyalty and revenue.

1. THE BOOK DIRECT MOVEMENT

Travellers and hoteliers alike are really benefiting from the book direct movement by side stepping OTAs and booking directly through a hotel's website, guests can avoid additional booking fees making trips more budget friendly, while hotels reap the benefits by minimising platform and listing costs. Increasing the number of direct bookings also puts booking data directly in the hands of hoteliers presenting opportunities to leverage information to create more personalised stays that guests won't forget. **Tip:** *Ensure that your guest-facing website is equipped for direct bookings. A simple to use booking portal, accurate availability information and a strong guest communication strategy create a frictionless experience while added perks such as free breakfast or F&B discounts for booking directly can not only incentivise guests but encourage additional spend.*

2. PAYMENT FLEXIBILITY

As guests become more budget savvy, flexible payment options like 'book now, pay later' or the ability to pay in installments can offer the flexibility and control they need to manage their budget, as well as making travel more financially accessible. Globally, a quarter of companies surveyed said that 'book now, pay later' customers book more frequently¹ and often spend more, offering a golden opportunity for hoteliers to grow customer loyalty through repeat bookings, while boosting profitability through upsells. **Tip:** *The availability of flexible, 'book now, pay later' payment options can directly influence purchase decisions. Hotels offering staggered payments give guests more control over their budget while also making it more affordable to take advantage of add-ons like room upgrades or extra nights to enhance their experience.*

3. THE GIFT OF CHOICE

Just as guests are prioritising flexible payments, they also expect to be able to choose from a wide range of payment methods. 32% of travellers say they have abandoned a booking because they haven't been able to pay with their preferred method² demonstrating how a range of payment options for guests is just as important as star ratings, facilities and reviews when booking. **Tip:** *A seamless booking experience starts with the ability for guests to pay the way they want to. Hoteliers should ensure digital wallets, direct bank transfers or even international payment options through WeChat or Pix are offered to secure those all important bookings.*

4. APPEALING TO THE CYBER-SAVVY TRAVELLER

The days of the package holiday are numbered, with booking becoming more fragmented as travellers - particularly digitally savvy younger generations - choose to separately book the individual components of their trip. Hoteliers must adapt to these evolving booking behaviours, offering flexible cancellation terms, pay at the property options and even perks for last minute bookings. **Tip:** *The ability for hoteliers to be flexible and adapt to changing booking trends is crucial. Utilising functionality within your PMS will allow you to look ahead and plan for last minute shifts in room availability.*

5. BOLSTERING YOUR PAYMENT SECURITY

More travellers than ever are booking their hotel stays through smart devices. While mobile-payments offer more convenience and flexibility, guests are growing increasingly wary of the cyber security risks of our instant payment economy. Hoteliers should consider offering flexible and trusted payment options like Apple Pay and ensure they're using accredited and compliant property management systems to give guests peace of mind. **Tip:** *Hoteliers should check the security credentials of their technology partners - PMS providers that have been independently audited according to Service Organisation Control (SOC) protocols have to demonstrate the highest levels of data security, leaving you safe in the knowledge that your guest's most important details are safe and secure.*¹

¹ Phocuswright Global Travel Market Report 2024

² Adven Hospitality Report

HY8



Top 10 Trends in Property Management Technology for 2025

PMS

Ruth Whitehead

Chief Operating Officer (COO) of eviivo

eviivo

Property management systems (PMS) are evolving at an unprecedented pace, driven both by technological advancements and changing guest expectations. It's now more important than ever for hospitality businesses to adopt solutions that best align with these shifts. Here are the top 10 trends redefining property management technology in 2025.

1 AI-POWERED AUTOMATION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming property management, automating everything from guest communications to operational workflows. AI is only going to get better at completing repetitive tasks, optimizing pricing, and providing actionable insights that enable property managers to focus more on guest engagement. **Tip:** *Invest in a PMS with AI solutions that can learn and adapt to your business needs.*

2 ALL-IN-ONE PLATFORM

Property managers increasingly prefer unified systems that combine booking management, channel distribution, payment processing, and analytics in one platform. This reduces costs, eliminates manual processes, and ensures a seamless experience for operators and guests alike. **Tip:** *Go for quality (deep) over quantity (wide) when it comes to integrations, this allows you to synchronize operations across the best third party channels like OTAs in real-time, and easily connect with new solutions.*

3 MOBILE-FIRST MANAGEMENT

With remote work and on-the-go property management fast becoming the new norm, top-notch mobile apps are critical for handling bookings, payments, and housekeeping tasks anytime, anywhere. **Tip:** *Look for a PMS that has a fully functioning mobile app with multi-property capabilities, designed to do more than simply mirror the desktop version.*

4 SMARTER RATES WITH DYNAMIC PRICING

Dynamic pricing tools now use AI to analyze market demand and track competitor rates, ensuring optimal pricing strategies. **Tip:** *Integrate dynamic pricing solutions into your PMS to maximize revenue, but still keep humans in the loop for critical decision-making.*

5 SEAMLESS CHANNEL CONNECTIVITY

Deep API integrations with OTAs like Airbnb, Booking.com, and Expedia ensure real-time synchronization of rates, availability, and policies where it matters most. Advanced systems also manage fees, photos, and guest messages for consistency across platforms. **Tip:** *Choose a PMS with superior channel management tools to avoid overbookings and maximize exposure.*

6 SCALABILITY FOR GROWTH

Cloud-based, scalable property management systems enable businesses to grow effortlessly, allowing managers to add properties, users, and other features easily and without significant setup costs. **Tip:** *Opt for a multi-property platform with bulk management tools, multi-user access, and centralized dashboards.*

7 ENHANCED REPORTING AND INSIGHTS

Custom reporting tools are empowering managers to unlock accurate and actionable insights from their historical data. Advanced filters, real-time updates, and visualization tools make decision-making easier and faster. **Tip:** *Use reporting tools that provide granular insights across varied KPIs, but can also generate compliance reports, financial summaries, and marketing insights with minimal effort.*

8 INTEGRATED GUEST COMMUNICATION

Unified inboxes now consolidate guest messages from OTAs, direct bookings, and AI tools into one platform, enabling faster response times and better communication. **Tip:** *Streamline guest communication by adopting a platform that integrates AI tools and OTA messaging.*

9 CONTACTLESS GUEST JOURNEYS

Guests now expect seamless, tech-driven experiences from check-in to check-out, especially contactless solutions that minimize wait times. **Tip:** *Implement PMS-integrated tools for contactless check-ins, guest messaging, and payment automation.*

10 HYBRID OPERATIONS

Hospitality businesses are diversifying their portfolios, offering a mix of property types from hotels, vacation rentals, serviced apartments, and more quirky offers like glamping or treehouses. Managing hybrid portfolios requires agile systems that can handle various business models. **Tip:** *Use a platform that supports flexible business models, enabling multi-property capabilities and bulk management tools to manage different property types as your portfolio grows.* The future of property management is exciting and full of opportunity. By getting ahead of the trends, property managers can offer exceptional guest experiences while future-proofing their operations.



HYB



Top 10 trends in corporate housing and business travel in 2025

Corporate Housing & Business Travel

Carrie Hartman
President of 3Sixty



The corporate travel and housing landscape is transforming in 2025, shaped by changing employee expectations, advancements in technology, and a heightened focus on duty of care. As businesses navigate a shifting global economy and the ongoing demand for flexible work, they must rethink their mobility strategies. Below are the top 10 trends in corporate housing and business travel for 2025, along with insights to help companies stay ahead.

1 AI-POWERED PERSONALIZATION IN TRAVEL AND HOUSING

Advanced AI is making corporate travel and housing more tailored than ever before. Platforms like 3Sixty's Home Match technology use machine learning to match travelers with accommodations that fit their specific needs, preferences, and corporate policies. This significantly reduces booking time while optimizing spend. **Tip:** Leverage AI-powered booking tools to streamline the selection process and ensure employees enjoy a seamless, ultra-personalised experience.

2 "BLEISURE" AND WORK-FROM-ANYWHERE IS HERE TO STAY

More employees are combining business travel with leisure, and digital nomadism isn't going anywhere – even with return-to-office mandates. This shift means corporate housing providers should continue to offer longer stays, home-like amenities, and more flexible cancellation policies. **Tip:** Only use vetted, corporate housing platforms with extended-stay options that support remote work amenities but also come with home-like comforts, such as integrated kitchen and laundry facilities.

3 COST-OPTIMIZED HOUSING THROUGH SMART BIDDING

With travel budgets under pressure, companies are increasingly turning to bid-based platforms that allow multiple housing providers to compete for bookings. This effectively means they fight for your business, all within a platform that guarantees the high level of quality and compliance required in corporate housing. **Tip:** Use corporate travel platforms with built-in bid features to reduce costs while still offering employees flexibility with a wide range of vetted options.

4 DUTY OF CARE BECOMES EVEN MORE NON-NEGOTIABLE

With geopolitical instability, health risks, and natural disasters all having rocked the world in recent years, companies must make duty of care in corporate travel and relocation their number-one priority. Technology-driven solutions now provide real-time safety insights, tracking, and compliance checks not just for the housing itself, but the neighborhood and city they're in. **Tip:** Utilize platforms with integrated safety vetting tools to ensure employee well-being while they're on the move.

5 SUSTAINABLE ACCOMMODATIONS PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN REDUCING EMISSIONS

Companies are under pressure to reduce emissions from business travel and housing options. More accommodations are implementing energy-efficient practices, carbon offset

programs, and eco-friendly amenities. **Tip:** Partner with corporate housing providers that prioritize green certifications and track carbon footprints for business travel reporting.

6 BUYERS WANT FULL ACCESS TO CONTENT AS COST PRESSURES CONTINUE

With cost pressures mounting, corporate travel buyers are demanding greater transparency in pricing and full access to accommodation content. Many companies are opting for full RFPs (Requests for Proposals) to ensure they secure the best value while maintaining quality and compliance. **Tip:** Choose travel platforms that provide complete visibility into inventory, pricing, and service offerings, allowing for better decision-making and cost control.

7 COMPLIANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT IN HOUSING SELECTION

With increasing regulations on financial transparency and travel risk management, businesses are implementing stricter compliance measures for corporate housing. Platforms now offer real-time risk monitoring for business health and automated compliance checks. **Tip:** Choose travel platforms with built-in regulatory compliance features to mitigate legal and financial risks, like bankruptcy, in housing selection.

8 FLEXIBLE HOUSING SOLUTIONS, CO-LIVING, AND EXTENDED STAYS FOR CORPORATE RELOCATION

As businesses downsize office spaces and maintain remote and flexible working models, they need similarly flexible corporate housing solutions. Temporary furnished accommodations, co-living spaces, and extended-stay options are becoming more popular by the day. **Tip:** Opt for housing providers that offer seamless transitions and wide-ranging options for relocating employees, including short-term rentals, co-living communities, and flexible extended-stay housing.

9 DIGITAL-FIRST EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCES

Technology-enhanced stays, which include features such as mobile check-ins, virtual concierges, keyless access, and augmented reality property tours, are revolutionising corporate housing. These technological triumphs improve the employee experience while reducing costs for providers. **Tip:** Invest in digital travel tools that provide employees with mobile access to accommodations, customer support, and in-stay amenities.

10 DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING IN BUSINESS TRAVEL

Companies are leveraging real-time analytics to optimize travel programs. Platforms like 3Sixty integrate powerful data analytics to track spending, traveler preferences, and supplier performance. **Tip:** Use travel analytics dashboards to monitor booking trends, compliance, and employee satisfaction, helping to refine corporate travel strategies. As employee expectations in business travel evolve rapidly, businesses must stay agile by leveraging vetted corporate housing platforms that prioritize duty of care, cost efficiency and sustainability. By doing so, they can build travel programs that not only keep employees safe and satisfied but also deliver lasting value.

HYB



In 2025, Travelers Want Hassle-Free Trips : How Generative AI Can Help

Generative AI

Emily Weiss

Global Travel Industry Sector Lead, Accenture

accenture

Consider the last time you set out to plan your next holiday. Did you find it easy to make a quick decision on where to go, which airline and hotel to choose, which experiences to pick or restaurants to dine at? Chances are you didn't. And you're not alone.

The travel planning process is fragmented and can be very time-consuming, with travelers juggling multiple apps, ads and websites to piece together their itineraries. A [recent Accenture study](#) titled "*The Travel Industry's New Trip*" highlights that almost 7 in 10 (68%) travelers visit up to 10 different websites to plan their trips.

That's a lot of time and effort and could result in lost revenue. Two thirds (66%) of respondents told Accenture they are dissatisfied with current planning options and 61% find navigation on applications and sites complex. More than half (56%) say that the lack of options for customization or filtering content adds to the time required to make a decision and, in some cases, leads them walking away completely.

As consumers turn their attention to the upcoming holiday season, gifting travel is top of mind for six in 10 consumers who are considering buying experiences such as a vacation package or weekend getaway, according to Accenture's Annual Holiday Shopping Survey. However, complex booking systems and concern over making the right decision is putting people off and could lead to travel companies missing out on a festive boost to their top line.

ENTER GENERATIVE AI

This is where gen AI can help. Gen AI presents a \$28 billion opportunity to transform the travel industry and can help address many of these pain points directly.

In fact, another Accenture study "*The Empowered Consumer*," reveals that over half of consumers are open to using conversational AI solutions. Just look at the pilot program Marriott's Renaissance hotels is running with the introduction of RENAI, that acts as a local insider who can advise on all the best restaurants, secret spots, and can't miss attractions. Guests no longer have to wait until check-in to meet RENAI — they can connect before they even leave the home. It's a great way to create an enhanced experience that starts at the point of planning

Booking, can be the most complicated stage of a journey. It is also an area that stands to benefit significantly from gen AI. When operating through a single interface like a superapp, which combines and groups different services into one application, gen AI can help provide a more simplified, centralized view of options such as payment, offers, rewards, and itineraries.

It means that instead of juggling multiple tabs, travelers can interact with a single platform that understands their preferences and history. With gen AI, travel planning is not only simplified but can play a key role in creating an exciting prelude to actual journey, making the entire process as enjoyable as the trip itself.

Here are five ways gen AI can make a difference and enhance the travel experience:

1 PERSONALIZATION

Gen AI can offer a more personalized and integrated booking experience, suggesting tailored options based on individual preferences in the moment. By analyzing individual preferences and travel histories, gen AI can help generate tailored itineraries that cater to the specific desires of each traveler, that could be boutique hotels that are close to five-star restaurants, or family-friendly options that would appeal to teenagers.

For instance, [KAYAK](#) launched a suite of AI products using gen AI to make travel planning faster, easier and more intuitive. The [Ask KAYAK](#) is a tool used to personalize travelers' search experiences. Instead of using traditional filters, travelers can simply type in preferences like their favorite airline, departure time, or budget, and receive tailored options. For example, a query like "*Airline X, nonstop, morning departure, under \$500*" provides relevant results, streamlining the entire process.

2 SIMPLIFIED BOOKING

The booking process can be streamlined by gen AI, for example, generating real-time information and advice to help make the decision-making process easier. Saudia Airlines is a good example. It launched Travel Companion, an AI-powered virtual assistant designed to enhance customer experiences. This platform, a key component of Saudia's broader strategy to innovate travel experience, simplifies the booking process and other travel services such as flight planning and destination exploration.

3 GEN AI CAN ALSO HELP IN IMPROVED DECISION MAKING

More than half (56%) of travelers say that a lack of filtering options hinders decision-making. Gen AI can help reduce ease the "*decision making workload*", by providing smarter, context-aware filters to improve the user experience.

4 STREAMLINED OPERATIONS

Globally, just under three-quarters (73%) of travel leaders are focused on adopting gen AI for cost savings and drive greater productivity. Through gen AI, they can automate mundane tasks, allowing companies to focus on improving customer service and operational efficiency by freeing up people to areas of the business where personal touch and interaction is key e.g. customer service.

5 TRAVEL 'SUPERAPP'

Almost all (97%) travelers express a desire for a travel superapp that consolidates all aspects of travel planning and management. Gen AI can be pivotal in developing such platforms, offering a seamless, all-in-one solution.

THE TIME TO EMBRACE GEN AI IS NOW

The potential of gen AI in the travel industry is immense. By embracing this technology, travel companies can offer seamless, personalized, and convenient experiences that meet the modern traveler's expectations. As we look to the future, the travel industry has the opportunity to redefine customer experiences, boost sales, earn loyalty and unlock new value for organizations.

The travel industry stands at a crossroads. Early-mover advantage is crucial for travel companies to truly reap the benefits of this exciting new technology.



HYB



Top 10 Trends Shaping In-Room Guest Communication in 2025

In-Room Guest Communication

Dilara Develi
Junior Marketing Manager



As we step into 2025, the landscape of in-room guest communication is evolving as rapidly as ever, driven by technological innovations like AI and shifting guest expectations. Hotels are redefining how they connect with their guests, putting more effort into creating a more personalized, engaging, and sustainable guest experience. Here are 10 trends we believe will play a major role in shaping the future of in-room guest communication.

1 GAMIFICATION OF GUEST EXPERIENCE

Hotels will experiment with gamification via guest engagement tools, encouraging guests to engage with services by offering rewards for completing activities like eco-friendly challenges or visiting on-site amenities.

Tip: Create interactive campaigns that reward guests for participation, fostering engagement and loyalty.

2 INTEGRATING GUESTS INTO DIGITAL PROCESSES

Guest behavior will play a more active role in hotel operations, with personalization and interaction reaching new levels through technology. They'll have more power to tailor their stay, creating a personalized "pick-and-choose" guest experience.

Tip: Use interactive and accessible in-room communication tools with configuration features that allow guests to customize their stay.

3 CHATBOTS AS A DIGITAL CONCIERGE

AI is already revolutionizing hotel operations, and its role in guest communication will only grow. Chatbots will serve as digital concierges, providing instant answers to hotel-specific questions while aligning with the hotel's preferred tone.

Tip: Analyze guest interactions comprehensively to identify common questions and build a database to streamline chatbot integration into your digital tools.

4 GUEST ENGAGEMENT BEYOND BYOD

Without the guest participating, guest engagement is a one-way road. As BYOD solutions continue to see low usage rates during stays, hotels will turn to additional in-room technology to close the gap of reach.

Tip: Invest in in-room technology that complements existing tools, focusing on solutions that drive engagement and interaction.

5 THE RISE OF AI-POWERED PERSONALIZATION

By 2025, personalization will be powered by the perfect marriage of AI and first-party data. Hotels will increasingly rely on advanced analytics to anticipate guest preferences—whether it's adjusting the room temperature before arrival, suggesting curated dining experiences, or crafting bespoke itineraries. This trend will redefine the guest journey, creating hyper-personalized experiences from the initial booking to post-stay communication.

Tip: Embrace AI-powered tools and data-driven CRMs to unlock guest insights, enabling predictive personalization that elevates satisfaction and loyalty.

6 SOCIAL MEDIA AND INFLUENCERS AS THE DOMINANT MARKETING CHANNEL

As Gen Z and Millennials become the top traveler demographics, a strong social media presence will increasingly become the new industry standard. These younger guests rely on influencer content to make decisions, making it essential for hotels to weave influencer-driven touchpoints into the guest journey moving forward.

Tip: Collaborate with influencers to create exclusive content tailored to your location and integrate it seamlessly into your in-room tech or integrate a social board on your tablet to motivate guests to share their experiences.

7 SKIPPING ROOM CLEANING BECOMES THE STANDARD

Sustainability being a trend for many years, is not news, but skipping daily room cleaning specifically is evolving from an optional perk to an industry norm. Guests increasingly see reduced housekeeping as a way to align with their eco-conscious values while also appreciating the privacy and convenience it offers. For hotels, this shift not only reduces water, energy, and labor costs but also provides an opportunity to reframe the guest experience around sustainability.

Tip: Use in-room communication tools to educate guests on the environmental impact of their choice and introduce incentives, like dining credits, to encourage participation.

8 DESIGN-CENTRIC GUEST COMMUNICATION

Design is already key in hospitality, but its role in guest communication is growing. Hotels are embracing cohesive Corporate Identity (CI) to leave lasting impressions, with boutique properties leading the way in stylish, design-driven approaches.

Tip: Partner with a tool that supports implementing your unique CI with a content team and use AI-driven features like animated splash screens and branded layouts to maintain creative consistency and elevate guest experiences.

9 SAYING GOODBYE TO HOTEL PHONES

As guests grow accustomed to app-based communication and in-room tablets, traditional room phones are becoming obsolete. This shift aligns with the demand for seamless and modern experiences, where tablets and personal devices offer an all-in-one solution for service requests, dining orders, and local information.

Tip: Replace traditional room phones with in-room tablets or app-based solutions that streamline communication and enhance guest convenience.

AI-POWERED MULTILINGUAL TRANSLATIONS

AI is breaking down language barriers by enabling seamless multilingual communication. From in-room tablets to digital concierge systems, guests will be able to interact in their native language in real-time, ensuring clarity and comfort during their stay.

Tip: *Implement AI-powered translation tools across guest-facing touchpoints to cater to an increasingly international clientele.*

