

Food & Beverage News

INDIA'S FIRST NEWSPAPER FOR THE F&B INDUSTRY

A SAFFRON MEDIA PUBLICATION www.fnbnews.com, MUMBAI VOL 6, ISSUE 23, PAGES -28

Changing tech trends in Indian hospitality industry

RONNIE SARKAR

TECHNOLOGY in general and hospitality technology in particular have tremendous potential to help hotels and restaurants in many ways. Apart from the advantage of being the crucial enabler that ensures higher degree of operational automation, few big advantages that hospitality industry can achieve through adopting technology include enhanced guest experience to serve their guests better, increased revenue and improved operational efficiencies leading to increased cost savings for themselves.

Several IT and IT-enabled services (ITeS) solutions are key factors for a hotel and restaurant to improve level of performance. With 'guest service' being the nerve centre of the hospitality sector, many hotels and restaurants across size and location are now fast embracing hospitality technology solutions to ensure that their guests are receiving the best possible service from them.

Today in India, hospitality establishments in the organised sector are staying ahead in terms of adopting several technology solutions for their business. We can certainly say that almost 100% of them do their best to make sure that they have the right solution for niche needs. Technology adoption in the organised sector could be from a humble cash register to the technologically most advanced integrated Hotel ERP (enterprise resource planning) or an all-in-one property management system. Then, hotels and restaurants have the option to choose from a wide range of mobility applications that are designed to help them interact with their millennial guests.

Key trends

Trends in India pertaining to technology adoption among hotels are quite encouraging. Large- and



medium-sized hotels are now going for all-in-one integrated Hotel ERP which takes care of end-to-end hotel property management along with distribution, business intelligence, revenue management and online reputa-

tion management. The concept of buying several softwares from multiple vendors seems to be outdated as it lacks the much-needed seamless integration across all the departments of a hotel. Another important point to be mentioned here is that adoption of an integrated Hotel ERP which runs on a single

database reduces the cost of ownership. The same is the case with restaurants. Like hotels, restaurants (fine dining outlets) have taken the cognisance of information technology and are using powerful restaurant management system to seamlessly automate operations. In both cases,

hotels and restaurants have managed to optimise their use of manpower through technology adoption. This has also helped them to save costs and serve their guests efficiently. Such restaurant management systems assist users to plug in revenue leakage.

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Integrated Hotel ERP is key aspect of entire operations

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Rise of mobility apps as guest experience enhancement solutions

As mentioned earlier, quality guest service is the key to success for the hospitality business, hotels and restaurants in India are leaving no stone unturned to make sure that everything is in place when it comes to offering world-class service to their guests. Be it for offering guests a seamless check-in

experience or a fantastic dining environment, mobility apps embedded in smart phones and tabs are most sought after trends.

Check-in apps have gained momentum in recent days as hotels are now able to offer their guests a faster check-in facility even while when the guest is on the way to the hotel. Through this, hotels make sure that their tiring guests do not have to spend more time at the front desk furnishing

the details in the registration form. Such apps are in demand as hotels are now in a position to help their guests to avoid the time-consuming front desk formalities before checking into their rooms.

Apart from check-in apps, smart e-menu apps have also impressed both hotels and restaurants. E-menu apps efficiently help users to offer their guests best dining experience. Through such app, a staff can take order from the diners and can send the KOT (kitchen order ticket) to the kitchen while not moving away from the table side. Thus, the steward does not have to waste time running around on the floor and can spend more time attending to the guests. These apps also allow the restaurants to upsell and cross sell suggesting effective combinations.

The Indian hospitality industry

is also riding high on several other high-end mobility solutions that are set to bring in waves of change. While some of them let guests control the light, TV and air conditioner from a tab or any other handheld mobility device, some of them allow the guest to order food and beverage to the room by just selecting few options on the mobility device. And on top of that, the robust and integrated Hotel ERP is the most important aspect of the entire operations as it plays a major role in coordinating all the efforts that are done by such apps and solutions.

The reason behind such positive trends

Reasons could be many, but the foremost reason could be attributed to the rise of second generation hoteliers. In recent days, several young hoteliers have taken the

mantle of business from their parents and being tech-savvy, they clearly understand the importance of information technology in hotel business. Being at the helm of the affairs, they are taking every possible step to ensure that their hotel business leverages hospitality technology to the maximum extent. Other trends indicate that a sizeable number of hotel management graduates are keen on setting up their own business, mainly in fine dining segment. So, it is quite natural that such new-age hoteliers with their vast knowledge on hospitality technology solutions would definitely advocate for a hospitality business that runs entirely on a smart technology platform.

(The author is senior vice-president, sales & operations, IDS Next Business Solutions Pvt. Ltd)

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