

# Pokémon Go adds to hospitality industry's business

Pokémon Go launched at the start of July, but businesses should not be obsessing about catching elusive cartoon figures, instead they should be focusing on how to 'catch' and keep customers by using this game to their advantage.



© Stefan Schwehofer via [Pxabay](#)

Pokémon Go is a free Android and IOS game by Nintendo based on the popular franchise of movies, series, trading cards and video games. Millennials grew up collecting and throwing Pokémon Tazos, watching young Ash try to catch all the pocket monsters on televisions. Fast-forward twenty years, add the latest augmented reality to smartphones and take the game on the go, hooking both the nostalgic older generations and young smartphone junkies.

Can this monster game craze boost your business? Coffee shops, restaurants, museums and any businesses located near PokéStops (that is where you can collect items for your backpack), PokéGyms (where you can battle for territory or train your monsters) or areas where rare Pokémon can be found, are seeing increased footfall.

“People sit outside and drop lures and we have people sitting for hours over weekends just drinking coffee and making an event of it,” says Edward Serfontein, manager of Twigs with Beans in Claremont, Cape Town – located in reach of three PokéStops.

Placing a ‘lure’ (for a full half hour of increased Pokémon appearances) means keeping players in your establishment for longer, attracting nearby players. Potential players mean potential new customers. If you know a rare Pokémon has been found in your establishment, tell the world, because customers tend to stick around to see if it appears.

## Local businesses catch on

Many businesses are already cashing in on the craze, such as Beerhouse in central Cape Town, where you can present a screenshot of your recently captured Pokémon at the bar and receive ‘Poke discounts’ on selected beers in return.

Protea Hotels Fire & Ice, in Melrose Arch, has a PokéStop at its milkshake bar where you can catch a Pokémon and get a free milkshake. “We have informed our staff that people on their phones might be coming to the milkshake bar. They will be offered a free milkshake and get a chance to enter a competition to win a couple of milkshake vouchers for the winner and friends. The coordinates are such that you do not have to walk all the way to the bar to be in distance of the stop, but it is worth the extra few steps for the real rewards,” says Cecile Boshoff, marketing manager for the hotel.

Nicholas Barenblatt, group marketing manager for Protea Hotels by Marriott and African Pride Hotels, says many of their guests in their hotels countrywide are taking advantage of the game, as a way of exploring the area they are staying in. “We are seeing many of our guests leaving on foot to explore the nearby area for PokéStops or PokéGyms. It is a great way to see the sights of a city that is new to you or perhaps find areas or attractions you may not have known about before.”

Marriott International has seen a spike in posts on social media from thousands of its hotels globally, featuring Pokémon in bedrooms, restaurants or poolsides. Senior director of global creative and content marketing at Marriott International, Matthew Glick, says, “The system has turned the tables from creating general content distributed to thousands of guests - to listening and leveraging a single moment that is relevant and shareable between thousands of guests.”

Like any digital craze, this one will fade too. Nevertheless, the lesson to learn is that businesses need to stay aware of any new trends, because the next global game could make you some serious money.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>