How can the travel industry meet the needs of tomorrow's hotel guests?

Did you know that the number of international travellers is expected to almost double by 2036 to a staggering 8.2 billion air travellers? Are you, as a travel industry player, equipped to meet the needs of each of these travellers?

If you're not so sure, don't worry! Amadeus has partnered with Foresight Factory, Cornell University and the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) to identify the emerging trends that the sector must respond to today to meet the needs of the consumer of the future.

1. The rise of tech-augmented hospitality

Humans and tech will continue to collaborate in years to come.

Although technology will not replace human interactions, it will provide unprecedented support, which in turn will allow service providers to focus on building relationships with their travellers.

Be warned, however: Although the right technology, deployed in the right context, can deliver real competitive advantage; knowing when not to automate a solution is just as important.

2. Achieving cult status at scale

Personal attention and personality is no longer a characteristic of boutique brands only. Today, data anticipates the best way (whether through perks, attributes, or experiences) to make guests feel valued.

The ability to "know" the guest is key to meeting and exceeding their needs. Next-gen CRM systems provide a kaleidoscopic view of the guest, incorporating inter-industry and contextual information.

3. The beginning of the end for room types

Room types as we know them are forever a thing of the past.

Hotel guests will soon have unprecedented customisation at their fingertips, with the ability to shop based on the elements they value the most. This means properties will start unbundling more to showcase the unique inventory and experiences they offer.

To prevent the volume of new choices from being overwhelming, systems must advance, leveraging predictive analytics and AI learning to curate smart suggestions during the booking process. This requires tying booking to consumer motivations for travel.

How can the travel industry best respond to these important trends?

Educate your teams on both the digital and human side of the guest interaction. It's important to be able to switch between delivery formats (tech or human) as needed.

Apply technology, but only where it supports and complements the experience rather than to look hip, modern, or trendy. If a tech integration makes it more challenging, time-consuming, or difficult for your guest to experience your services, then it is not a fit.

Practice process improvement by regularly examining survey data, reviews, call records, issue reporting, and anecdotal evidence can help identify gaps in staff education, available information, and the technology interface. Move beyond a passive use of social content, engaging with guests in real time to address issues.

To read more about the hospitality industry of tomorrow, check out Drivers of Change in Hospitality.

Source: Amadeus Africa