

Executive Report:

The Case for Mobility



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Introduction



The ubiquitous nature of mobile devices can seemingly diminish their value, making them a commodity to be taken for granted. But their true power hasn't begun to be tapped — especially by hoteliers.

If seen as a gateway to operational efficiency, enhanced guest experiences and, most importantly, a better bottom line, mobility wouldn't be overlooked. **Which is exactly why it's time to view it through a different prism — or risk being left behind by your competitors who will.**

Empowering hotel staff with mobile devices, such as tablets and smartphones, means untethering them from the front desk and letting them work freely, providing exceptional service to guests wherever and whenever needed. Imagine the almost endless possibilities: Checking in VIP guests as they are chauffeured to the hotel, alerting housekeeping staff in real time to tidy up an early arriving guest room, uploading photos of a shower leak so maintenance can accurately assess the severity, and fix it fast!

Each task is impressive in its own right. But viewed collectively, they provide a glimpse of a tech-savvy hotelier who is tackling, arguably, the paramount challenge facing hospitality: the need to deliver individualization.



Mobility: An Avenue To Individualization & Improved Sales



Indeed, it's a universal dilemma confronting virtually every industry as documented by a recent Oracle study, *The Era I Enterprise: Ready for Anything*. According to the in-depth report, which surveyed 300, C-level executives across a spectrum of industries in North America, 84% said their organization has experienced a trend toward customers wanting a more individualized experience. But fewer than 20% gave their organization an "A" in its ability to offer highly individualized customer or employee experiences. The others acknowledged weaknesses such as an inability to: "turn on a dime" in response to change or opportunity, offer highly individualized products/services, and respond effectively to changing market conditions.

84%

said their organization has experienced a trend toward customers wanting a more individualized experience

Addressing such deficiencies may seem daunting, but for companies committed to the endeavor and investing in individualized guest experiences, a healthy return likely awaits: According to the *Era I* report, organizations estimate that if they were able to successfully offer customers and employees a highly individualized experience, **they would earn an additional 18 percent in annual revenue.**



Pairing Cloud & Mobility



How do you make your hotel capable of “turning on a dime”?



Integral to any solution is employing technology capable of continuously adapting to – and anticipating – guests’ ever-changing needs. In most cases, pairing cloud-based solutions with mobility is one of the best formulas for achieving individualization.

According to the *Era I* report, 81% of participants said they believe there is an important link between cloud-based IT solutions and their organizations ability to deliver individualized employee and customer experiences. Such a strong endorsement of cloud reflects its ability to address one of the top challenges facing IT: reducing cost and complexity. Many industry experts say today’s on-premise IT operating model is unsustainable, considering that 75 percent of expenses are typically drained by routine maintenance and integration efforts, leaving only 25 percent available for actual innovation initiatives. Linking mobility as a front-end solution to such a platform converts a hotel property into a borderless environment, enabling innovation to permeate everywhere.



IV.

How Mobility Redefines Service

In an era of individualization — when guests are seeking personalized experiences built on recognition and preferences — mobility solutions not only help streamline operations, but customizes them. They can be accessed from a tablet or smartphone, providing real-time sharing of relevant information to staff members throughout the property and even beyond it.

EXTENDING SERVICE BEYOND THE FRONT DESK:



One of mobility's most powerful attributes is its ability to leverage guests' profiles, preferences, stay history and consumption patterns. With such information accessible at their fingertips, staff can provide one-on-one attention to guests on their arrival and departure — from curbside, in lobbies or meeting rooms and even at airports. Service can be transformed in a multitude of ways: Groups attending an event can be checked in a special meeting area rather than endure snaking lines at the reception desk; and VIP customers can complete check-in en route to the hotel, allowing direct access to their rooms upon arrival. Mobility gives hoteliers flexibility, allowing them to reengineer the standard check-in process so they can be more efficient and offer guests a far more pleasant check-in experience.

IV.

How Mobility Redefines Service

(continued)

OPTIMIZING HOUSEKEEPING:



Equipped with mobile devices featuring an intuitive user interface and easily recognizable icons, hotel staff can tackle housekeeping and room management tasks with heightened efficiency. When fully integrated with cloud-service applications, mobile devices can recommend the next room to be cleaned based on prioritized information in the property management system. They effectively serve as two-way communication; ensuring staff has the latest guest updates and enabling employees to notify management about room or guest status changes and completed housekeeping assignments. Housekeeping staff do not have to knock on doors to see if a room can be cleaned. They will see online when a guest has checked-out and can easily update the room status as they progress through the daily task list. Housekeeping task lists can also be updated in real-time based on housekeeping needs and staff availability, greatly improving operating efficiency.



ENHANCING MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS:

With their mobile devices, staff can document new maintenance tasks in real time, promptly alerting the front desk of issues and expediting resolution. To better illustrate problems or repairs that require attention, staff can also use their mobile devices to take photos and submit them with an accompanying work order.

V.

Resonating With Millennial Guests & Staff



By providing such prompt and courteous attention — and tailoring service to their preferences — hoteliers stand to resonate with an emerging audience that will determine their future: millennials.

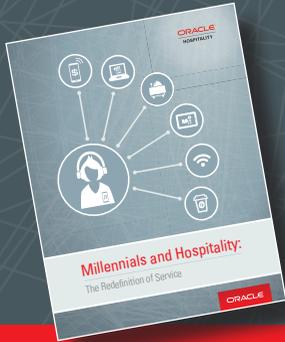
The much-hyped demographic group no longer epitomizes temperamental, petulant teens; its constituents are now influential, tech-savvy consumers, and they are standing in hotel lobbies around the world. Comprising individuals born between 1981 and the late 1990s, millennials boast a population of 83 million in the U.S., outnumbering baby boomers and Gen Xers. Collectively, they wield enormous spending clout — an estimated \$200 billion annually. A hefty share of that pie is earmarked for hospitality: Millennials are expected to spend an average of \$3,900 on travel this year (**American Millennials, Deciphering the Enigma Generation*). **They are also projected to account for 50 percent of the workforce by 2020, which underscores why gaining their allegiance will be critical.**

Millennials want “zero friction” in transactional proceedings, which means no waiting in lines, no hassles and faster service, according to Steve Brown, senior industry advisor for Intel Sales and Marketing Group. It’s the type of service mobility is perfectly suited to deliver. What hoteliers must recognize is that mobile technology has led to a seismic upheaval, giving consumers instant access to almost anything. Hoteliers need to accommodate guests’ use of mobile technology — and better yet, deploy their own devices to enrich guest experiences. For example, empowering staff with mobile devices and real-time data, Brown said, means they are “more informed in the moment to deliver the personal service that is required.”

V.

Resonating With Millennial Guests & Staff

(continued)



To better understand millennials and their technology expectations in the hospitality setting, Oracle Hospitality commissioned *Millennials and Hospitality: The Redefinition of Service*, which surveyed more than 9,000 millennials worldwide, including a subset that had worked in the industry within the past five years.

52%

said they want to use their mobile devices to take advantage of loyalty programs offered by restaurants, bars and coffee shops

They want to be acknowledged with personalized rewards. For hoteliers, such mobile-driven programs represent an opportunity to collect invaluable data about guest behavior and deliver targeted promotions. Keep in mind that enabling hotel employees to conduct such important tasks empowers them, too.

Millennials want to make meaningful contributions, and mobile technology provides them the means to that end — to really engage with guests and provide service that makes a difference. According to the study, however, hoteliers have failed to capitalize on this front: More than one third (36%) of millennials who had worked in the industry said their employers' use of technology was lacking. What's worse, only 15% said their employers sought their feedback for better using technology to improve operations and service.

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VI.

Conclusion

By no means is mobility, and technology, in general, the singular answer to all of hoteliers' challenges. For all their reliance on mobile technology, today's guests still desire and value exemplary human service. Indeed, it's paramount for hoteliers to remember that it's not about replacing service with technology; it's about enhancing service to create the memorable moments guests covet.

To that end, mobility is essential because it's the ideal platform to create relevant, timely, individualized experiences — ranging from providing customized perks to guests to delivering invaluable information to staff when they need it most. Providing such experiences consistently and at scale will increasingly become a prerequisite for success, and that's yet another promise mobility can fulfill.



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