

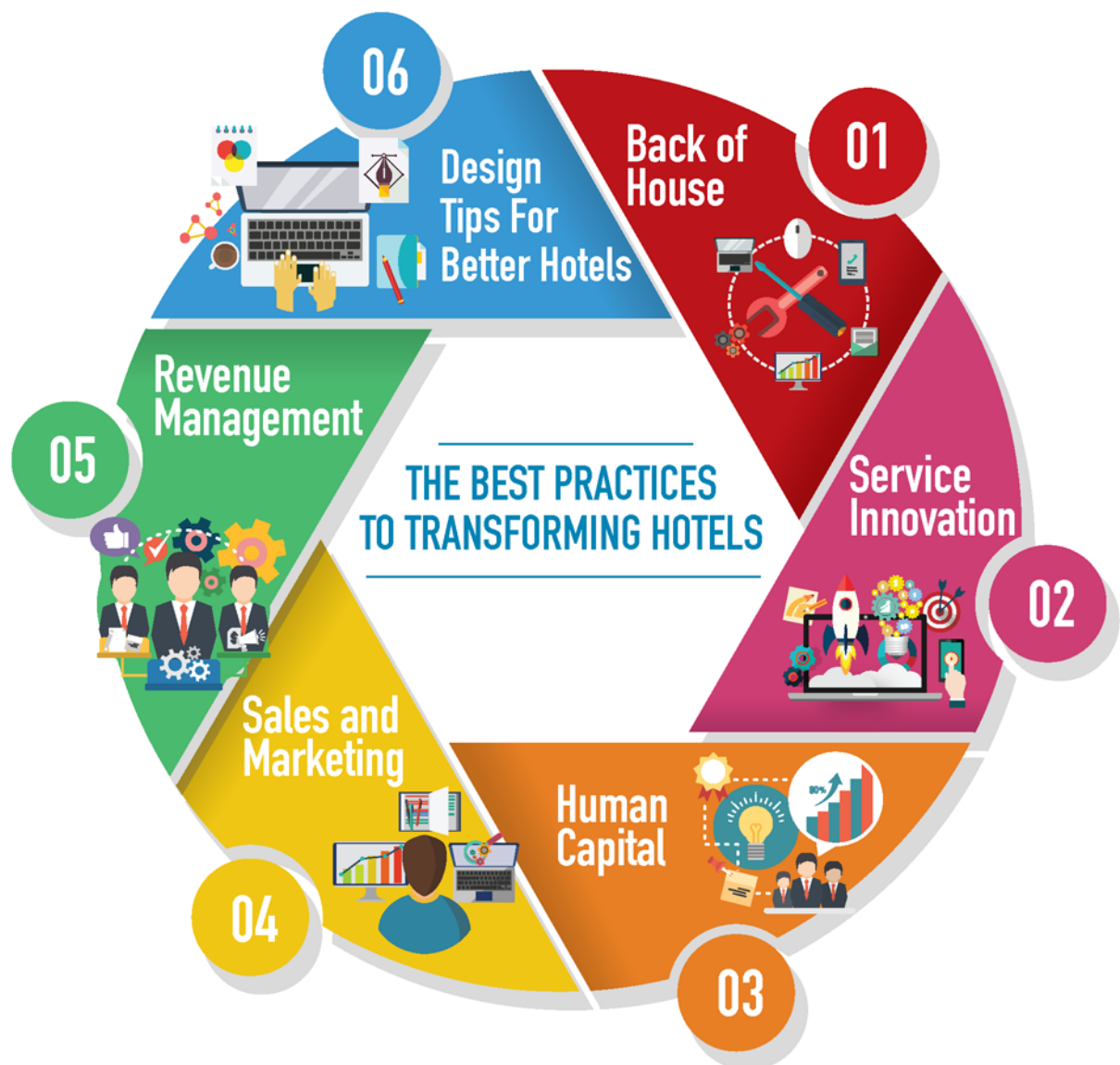
BEST PRACTICES GUIDE FOR HOTELS



ABOUT THE GUIDE

This guide is an initiative developed for the hotel industry in Singapore to share best practices adopted by businesses in Singapore and around the world that may benefit the industry.

Jointly developed by the Hotel Innovation Committee that is led by Singapore Hotel Association (SHA), and Singapore Tourism Board (STB), the guide aims to present a list of ready solutions that have been adopted and proven useful in solving common challenges faced by hotels and hospitality-related businesses today. The best practices have been broadly categorised into six areas below,



The guide also provides details of vendors offering services for solutions where available, and examples of adopters of the practices. These were put together based on referrals and internet reference, and serves purely as a reference for readers. They do not constitute an endorsement of any form from either STB or SHA.

01

Back of House

With a tighter workforce handling laborious work in back of house areas, hotels need to innovate to stay productive. New technologies can make operations more efficient.



1 AUTOMATE HOUSEKEEPING TASKS

Use RFID tags for better accountability

Attaching Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags to in-house linen or uniforms mean that the inventory will be automatically accounted for. The tags, which are read by radio waves, can be inserted into the seams of linen or staff uniforms. After they are placed in a bin reader, or processed by handheld scanner, their numbers and details will be logged on a central system. This saves time needed for manual counting and reporting. RFID tags have also been used to tag inventory items in rooms to aid housekeeping staff.

Adopters: Park Hotel Alexandra, Oasia Hotel Novena, JW Marriot South Beach Singapore
Solutions: RFID Laundry Tagging, RFID Inventory Management and Tracking System
Providers: A*Star, SIMTech



2 REDUCE COSTS WITH SMART FEATURES

Manage room facilities from a single dashboard

Iris Integrated Room Control Technology gives hotels an overview and control of all room facilities, from lights to locks and the air-con. The two-way system alerts staff to possible concerns that guests may have. For instance, it indicates when a light is faulty, reducing the need for routine checks by technicians and housekeeping staff. On the flip side, the system can be used to enhance guest experience, by cooling a room to a desired temperature before check-in. The technology can be integrated with a hotel's current property management system. It also works well with motion sensors in rooms, so the housekeeping team knows when it is time to clean them.

Adopter: Bayview Hotel
Solutions: Iris Integrated Room Control Technology with in-room facilities and new Saflok Online Lockset, Iris Integrated Room Control Technology with new HotSOS Housekeeping, Iris Integrated Room Control Technology with existing Property Management System
Provider: Eureka Technologies



3 SOFTWARE AS A SERVICE: OUTSOURCE IT NETWORK TO THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS

Setting up an IT system involves high upfront costs. Adopting Software as a Service (SaaS) allows hotels to tap on the infrastructure of third-party providers, leaving the system's installation, maintenance and troubleshooting in experienced hands. Users will save on the cost of initial hardware and forming an in-house IT team.

Adopters: Marriott International, Park Hotel Group
Providers: OperaCloud, KnowCross, Stayplease, iRis



4 MONITOR HOTEL-WIDE ENERGY CONSUMPTION

A building management system allows a hotel to centrally control heating, ventilation and air-conditioning. This makes it easier to monitor energy consumption and result in cost savings: Users have reported operational savings of up to 10 percent of total energy costs. Besides being environmentally friendly, hotels have also managed to address guest concerns surrounding temperature at a faster rate.

Adopters: Hilton Worldwide, Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts, Marriott International, Westin Hotels & Resorts
Providers: Schneider Electric, HDL automation, Siemens, Zennio, Jetlun, Anacle, BBP, Evercomm, Green Concepts



02

Service Innovation

In recent years, service standards have changed drastically. Guests expect quicker response times and information at their fingertips. Hotels must rise up to the challenge, and look to improve by acquiring new technologies.



1 RAISE THE BAR OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

Handle guest requests more efficiently

Being responsive is the hallmark of good service, which starts before guests check-in. Having a hotel application can allow hotels to retrieve guests preferences once their booking has been placed. For instance, the Hilton Honours mobile application allows guests to choose their preferred room and make other common requests, prior to their stay. They can also use it to book an Uber ride.

Alternatively, an e-concierge application comes in handy during a stay. The application records, categorises and conveys requests to the right staff members for a quick follow-up. This enhances productivity and guest satisfaction.

Hotel application

Adopters: App developers including Tagit, Taiger

Providers: Hilton Worldwide, NEXT Hotels

E-concierge

Adopters: Hilton Worldwide, Starwood Hotels, InterContinental Hotel Group

Providers: Butlerpad, application developers including Tagit and Taiger



2 ENABLE SPEEDY CHECK-IN

A self check-in kiosk streamlines operations at the front desk. It allows guests to scan identification documents, confirm booking details and select the number of room keys. The kiosk will then issue a receipt, which guests should present to front desk staff when collecting key cards. This speeds up the check-in process.

Adopters: Janna System, ATI Technologies, Ionesoft
Providers: First World Hotel (Resorts World Genting), Village Katong, The Pod, 5footway.Inn

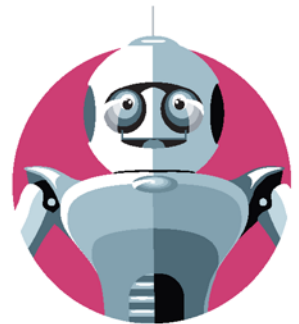


3 REVOLUTIONISE ROOM SERVICE

Let robots take over delivery

Robot can be programmed to independently deliver guests amenities to rooms, and it has the ability to “communicate” with elevators and “call” guests when it arrives. Robotics application can provide guests with a unique service experience, the hotel can redeploy manpower to other areas.

Adopters: M Social Singapore, Grand Park City Hall, Park Avenue Rochester
Providers: Savioke, Techmetics, Hope Technik, Tag Industrial, Hutcab Services



03

Human Capital

The hotel industry is experiencing a slower growth in workforce. This means there is stiffer competition for the same talent pool. Human resources (HR) practices should evolve to attract, nurture and retain workers.



1 HIRE THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Find contract labour

Real-time job matching platforms – and their respective mobile applications – help to ease the labour crunch. Not all users want a full-time job. Many are looking for part-time or ad-hoc roles. Hotels can list and fill vacancies, including contract positions which offer flexibility to both employer and employee.

Adopters: 4fingers (FoodBev), Deliveroo (FoodBev), Mothercare (Retail), Uber (Tech), Fortino (FoodBev), Long Chim (FoodBev), Paradise Group (FoodBev)
Providers: Freeboh, Matchimi, FastJobs, Gumtree

Attract millennials with progressive strategies

Scrap the classic job description. A recruitment video is more likely to leave an impression on millennials. With the help of motion graphics, they can tour a hotel, hear from its employees and be privy to requirements at work.

Companies should also put applicants through a round of video interviews before meeting them. Hence, a touch of technology may put younger jobseekers at ease. Plus, the strategy improves cost-per-hire, and reduces the time taken to identify candidates by almost half.

Launching a drip email campaign is another revolutionary practice. Thanks to regular emails, recipients will have a related career in the back of their minds. They are kept in the talent pool until a suitable opportunity arises, saving recruitment time and costs.

Adopters: Video and engaging media: INK Hotel Amsterdam, Hard Rock Hotel Sioux City, PWC Singapore (Audit), Ogilvy (Advertising), Deloitte (Audit), Dropbox (Tech), Zendesk (Tech)
Drip email campaigns: Uber (Tech), IBM (Tech), Glassdoor (Tech), Eaton Power (Utilities), CH2M (Construction)
Providers: Drip email campaigns: Smashfly CRM, Monster Talent CRM



2 EQUIP THEM WITH SKILLS

Let staff learn at their own pace

Having a self-training mobile application or e-learning platform gives one 24/7 access to training. Staff can complete modules at their own time and pace, with achievement milestones.



The systems also lighten the workload of HR practitioners, freeing up time for other tasks. They remove the need to coordinate schedules and manually track staff participation and progress. Millennium & Copthorne International Limited, which adopted the initiative, saw time savings of 79% in the administrative process.

Adopters: Ngee Ann Polytechnic (Education), AIA (Insurance), JW Marriott, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, Grand Hyatt, Hilton Hotels & Resorts
Providers: Gnowbe, Qooco

3 KEEP EMPLOYEES HAPPY

Offer flexible benefits

Surveys have shown that benefits are a key consideration for jobseekers. A flexible benefits scheme will meet diverse needs. Employees have their pick of benefits including travel and leisure options, in an amount that they are entitled to.



Meritus Hotels & Resorts, which runs two hotels in Singapore, worked with a consultancy firm to develop and launch a flexible benefits scheme. The industry-competitive package, which is in line with the company's goals and objectives, enhanced its position as a preferred employer. In addition, employees are now reimbursed via e-claims, improving the efficiency of HR operations.

Adopters: Meritus Hotels & Resorts (Mandarin Orchard Singapore, Marina Mandarin Singapore)
Providers: (More details to come)

Restructure part-time work hours

Shift work may put a strain on family time. Hotels can promote work-life balance by allowing part-time employees to take a compressed work week.



This means that instead of working every day, part-timers can choose to clock the same hours in less. For example, they may work for ten hours a day over three days, instead of six hours a day in a typical five-day week. This ensures continuity in operations. More importantly, being flexible helps companies attract and retain employees.

Adopters: Marina Bay Sands, KK Women's and Children's Hospital (Healthcare)
Providers: (More details to come)
Providers: (More details to come)

04

Sales and Marketing

To stand out from the competition, a hotel must maintain or expand its market share. This usually results in more revenue. A proactive sales and marketing strategy keeps brands productive and profitable.



1 REACH OUT TO POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS

Keep up with brand mentions and news

Media monitoring is important as brands can gather insights, get a feel of public sentiment and receive valuable feedback. However, it is also a tedious process, given the vast amount of content across print, broadcast and online channels. The good news is that this task can be outsourced to media intelligence solutions, which can help organizations to stay on top of brand mentions and news that affects the industry. Information is available at the click of a button, and marketing staff will have an overview of media mentions across countries at their fingertips

Adopters: JW Marriott Hotel Singapore South Beach, InterContinental Hotels & Resorts
Providers: Cision, Isentia, Media:track



2 POSITION YOURSELF AS A DESTINATION OF CHOICE

Expand social media presence

Engage an agency to create content, launch campaigns and interact online with finesse. An agency can also develop an overall social media strategy, to woo followers and convert them into business for the hotel.

Adopters: AccorHotels, Hyatt Singapore, Park Hotel Group, Millennium Hotels & Resorts, Shangri-La Singapore, Ritz-Carlton Singapore, Marina Bay Sands, Mandarin Oriental
Providers: Grey Digital, GoodStuph, Iris, DigitasLBI Singapore, Ascentis



Go digital with advertisements

Instead of printing promotional materials, put them on digital signages, tablets or iPads. These platforms can be simultaneously updated or removed via a central system, with no printing expense. More advertisements, such as those to upsell in-room items, can be created at little extra cost. Hotels have found that going digital also saves time, as there new materials can be pre-loaded and scheduled to go live,



eliminating the need to change it manually. In addition, digital adopters will gain analytics on guest preferences, which can contribute to higher revenue in the long run.

Adopters: Far East Hospitality, Hotel Jen, M Social Singapore, Furama Riverfront Singapore
Providers: Ascenstar, Cynosure, Vizansign, SkyMedia

3 BUILD A COMMUNITY OF GUESTS

Start a loyalty programme

With the rise of the Internet, travellers research extensively before deciding on where to stay. This is why all hotels – not just established chains – stand to benefit from a loyalty programme. The initiative has proved to encourage return guests, boost room nights and increase total spending per guest. In return, members receive discounts, reward points, gift certificates and special privileges like lounge access.

Adopters: AccorHotels, Marriott International, Pan Pacific Hotels
Providers: Edenred, DigitasLBI Singapore, Zenith, Lux Singapore

Manage online reviews

Most travellers write about a stay on online platforms, instead of contacting a hotel directly. While feedback is largely constructive, unfounded criticism damages a hotel's reputation. Online reputation management tools are here to help. They collate guest reviews across multiple platforms, sorting them into categories such as housekeeping. Staff can access these reviews on a single screen. Some tools come with a mobile application, which alerts users when urgent service recovery is required.

Adopters: InterContinental Hotels Group, Carlson Rezidor, Fairmont Raffles Hotels International, Millennium Hotels & Resorts
Providers: Reevo, ReviewPro, Revinate, JamiQ



05

Revenue Management

An increasingly competitive landscape affects top- and bottom-line growth. Against this backdrop, hotels have to be prudent about labour costs, inventory and room rates to maximise profits.



1 BE ON TOP OF PRICING AND INVENTORY

Set competitive room rates

A revenue management system (RMS) helps a hotel to price itself reasonably for better business. It pulls together data from in-house teams and the market, such as pick-up and cancellation patterns before providing recommendations on room rates. RMS is linked to channel managers to eliminate human error, enabling faster decision making and reaction to market changes.



Even when one is off-site, the web-based system can weigh pricing against inventory. Hotel chains have successfully adopted RMS, with a cluster approach. This results in an attractive remuneration package and greater cost savings.

Adopters: Park Hotel Group, Hilton Worldwide, Ritz Carlton, Fairmont Raffles Hotels International, Millennium Hotels & Resorts

Providers: Revenue Management: lDeaS, Duetto, Easy RMS, iRates

Broadcast inventory across channels

When done manually, the tabulation of hotel bookings is error prone. This becomes even more difficult when rooms are reserved on third-party sites. Hence, many hotels are using channel management software to prevent human error, reduce administrative workload and improve response time. The system downloads booking details and places them on a hotel's property management system. Allowing staff to quickly follow up on any special requests.

Adopters: Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts, Fragrance Hotels, Millennium Hotels & Resorts

Providers: SiteMinder, RateGain, RateTiger



2 MEET MANPOWER NEEDS

Get a sense of demand

During peak periods, hotels may not have enough staff to run operations smoothly. Demand forecasting gives a good prediction of when they may need more manpower. This can be complemented with a diversified manpower strategy involving permanent, temporary and contract labour. In knowing periods of high occupancy, hotels should schedule sufficient manpower beforehand.

Adopters: Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts, InterContinental Hotels Group, Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts

Providers: Unifocus, Health&Company

06

Design Tips For Better Hotels

How a building looks affects the way it runs. Smart design keeps operations smooth, safe and cost effective. These structural and aesthetic tips can help hoteliers meet the needs of employees and guests.





- 1 Be flexible with facilities, such as function or meeting areas. Use motorised drop-down partitions to reconfigure a space for any event.
- 2 Adopt a centralised kitchen to maximise the use of space, equipment and labour.
- 3 Leave some room for the maintenance and replacement of equipment. This includes bulky chillers, transformers and generator sets.
- 4 Set up a gondola system, which can bring rooftop equipment down to be replaced.
- 5 Integrate a green roof or low emissivity glass facade into a hotel's design. They act as a barrier against heat and reduce energy consumption.
- 6 Have an energy recovery system that converts non-recyclable waste into heat, electricity or gas. In this way, the waste from laundry services can be used to generate hot water.
- 7 Buy equipment that is energy efficient. For example, multiple compressor chillers with variable speed drives can estimate and manage electricity usage. This saves energy and costs.
- 8 Consider alternatives for air-conditioning. Use less electricity by installing a chilled beam in guest rooms, or a passive air displacement system in the lounge or small meeting rooms.
- 9 Treasure every drop of water. Collect rainwater and recycle greywater – which typically stays as waste – and put it to secondary use.
- 10 Install renewable energy systems such as photovoltaics (PV) panels on the roof, or PV tiles on floors. These convert light into usable electricity.
- 11 Practise constant monitoring, or an Automated Continuous Commissioning of a hotel's systems. This ensures that operations are functioning at an optimum level.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This publication is purely intended to provide general information on best practices which may be applicable to the hotel industry in Singapore. All information in this publication is deemed to be correct at the time of publication.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the data in this publication, the Hotel Innovation Committee and STB are not responsible for the contents of this guide, and do not warrant that using the solutions and providers mentioned in this guide guarantees results. Readers of this guide should exercise discretion when drawing any conclusions or inferences, before taking any action based on the information shared.

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