

Commentary on Hotel Development Process

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DESCRIPTION

Technology in the form of computers, communication, personal devices, and laborsaving mechanical equipment had and will have a major effect on the way in which hotels are managed and operated. The speed with which information is accumulated, stored, manipulated, and transferred is such that today most travellers expect that the hotel rooms they rent will allow them to be as productive as they are in the office or at home.

Increasingly, with portable computing, Personal Data Assistants (PDAs), wireless communication, and virtually everything somehow connected to the internet, hotels must provide services and access that allow guests seamless transition from the business, travel, or home environment to that of the hotel.

The well documented change in the complexion of the national economy from one that emphasizes goods and, to a lesser extent, natural resources to one that emphasizes services has kindled new ideas about the way in which we manage the design and delivery of these services. Hotels, restaurants, and travel services are now seen as unique entities that dictate special kinds of managerial techniques and strategies.

The concept of market segmentation, or ever increasingly finely tuned market definitions, will dictate hotel structures and organizations, and management tactics designed to address those market segments have become even more important to the management of hospitality service businesses. With the increased power in the information and data manipulation realm, hotels have available to them ever expanding databases about guests and are creating new products to attract those markets.

Hotel development process

Changes in people's travel patterns have altered the way we manage our hotel properties. Deregulation of the airlines has driven a change in the way millions of people travel each year, given the hub and spoke design of airline services. Many hotel companies are now locating major hotel properties adjacent to hub air transport facilities, taking advantage of the fact that business travelers may not need to travel to a Central Business District (CBD) to accomplish their purpose in a given area.

Meetings and conferences can now be scheduled within a five minute limousine ride from the air terminal, and the business traveler can be headed for his or her next destination before the day is over without having to stay overnight in a CBD hotel.

Drawbacks on hotel process

Most of the foregoing issues and influences still operate (to a greater or lesser extent) on the organizational structures and strategies of the modern hotel. Since the last edition of this book, however, other phenomena of an economic, cultural, and social nature have come to the fore, complicating our view of hotel management. This furthers the argument that the hotel industry is a part of the greater economy and at the mercy of elements often completely out of its control.

Because new construction of hotels diminished greatly after 9/11 but firms still needed to grow, rebranding existing properties generated a lot of growth activity. Rebranding is a complicated process that must be accomplished within critical time frames to coincide with marketing, financial, and operational variables. Tom Dupar is a seasoned veteran at this fascinating and important activity and has participated in rebranding operations around the world. His essay on the intricacies of rebranding was a mainstay in the previous edition of this book. Today's economic circumstances are different, and Dupar's business has changed its focus to opening new major projects. His piece serves as a useful companion to that of John Dew, and the two should be read together, with an eye toward comparing Dew's smaller project focus and Dupar's large projects.

The legal and regulatory environments are increasingly important to all business managers, and hotel operators are no exception. Increasingly, operators must be aware of and alert to realms of risk that can engender lawsuits against them. Several articles and essays in this edition highlight these threats to hotels and their guests. It should be noted that present day security concerns also have significantly affected the ways in which hotels are operated. Awareness of the risk environment and the regulatory realm are factors that affect a hotel's ability to compete in the early part of the twenty first century. Essays and articles in the security section and the human resources section address this issue.

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