



Understanding the Modern Guest



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Introduction



Times have changed. The pandemic has shown us that work, home and leisure are no longer mutually exclusive. You can spend time with your family and get your work done. And if we can do everything from one place, we can do this from many places all over the world.

For a long time, the idea of the digital nomad was just a fantasy for most people. The technology to do it has been around for a long time, but thanks to changing attitudes and circumstances, it has become a reality for many.

Even for those less ready for a significant lifestyle change, the urge to travel is stronger than ever. Covid has created a lot of pent-up demand and accelerated consumer attitudes to seamless tech-enabled experiences.

So what does the modern guest want, and what are the best ways of serving them?

Understanding this is imperative to maximizing your success. This guide will help you do just that.





Exploring the guest journey

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Perhaps the easiest way to explore the needs of the modern guest is to put yourself in their shoes. Let's walk through the six steps of the guest journey, from pre-booking through to post-stay, to find out what's changed and how you might need to adapt.

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The key is to set realistic customer expectations and then not to just meet them, but to exceed them – preferably in unexpected and helpful ways.”

Richard Branson

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Discovery

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Discovery (or pre-booking) is a different experience for every potential customer. For some, it involves months of research and careful decision making; for others, it's as fast as seeing one advert and making a booking.

This phase of the guest journey is one that often doesn't get the attention it deserves. Your approach needs to be more sophisticated than simply throwing marketing dollars at the diminishing returns of advertising. By understanding changing guest habits, you can add nuance to your marketing strategy and capture as much revenue as possible.



The modern guest is...

Changing their booking habits

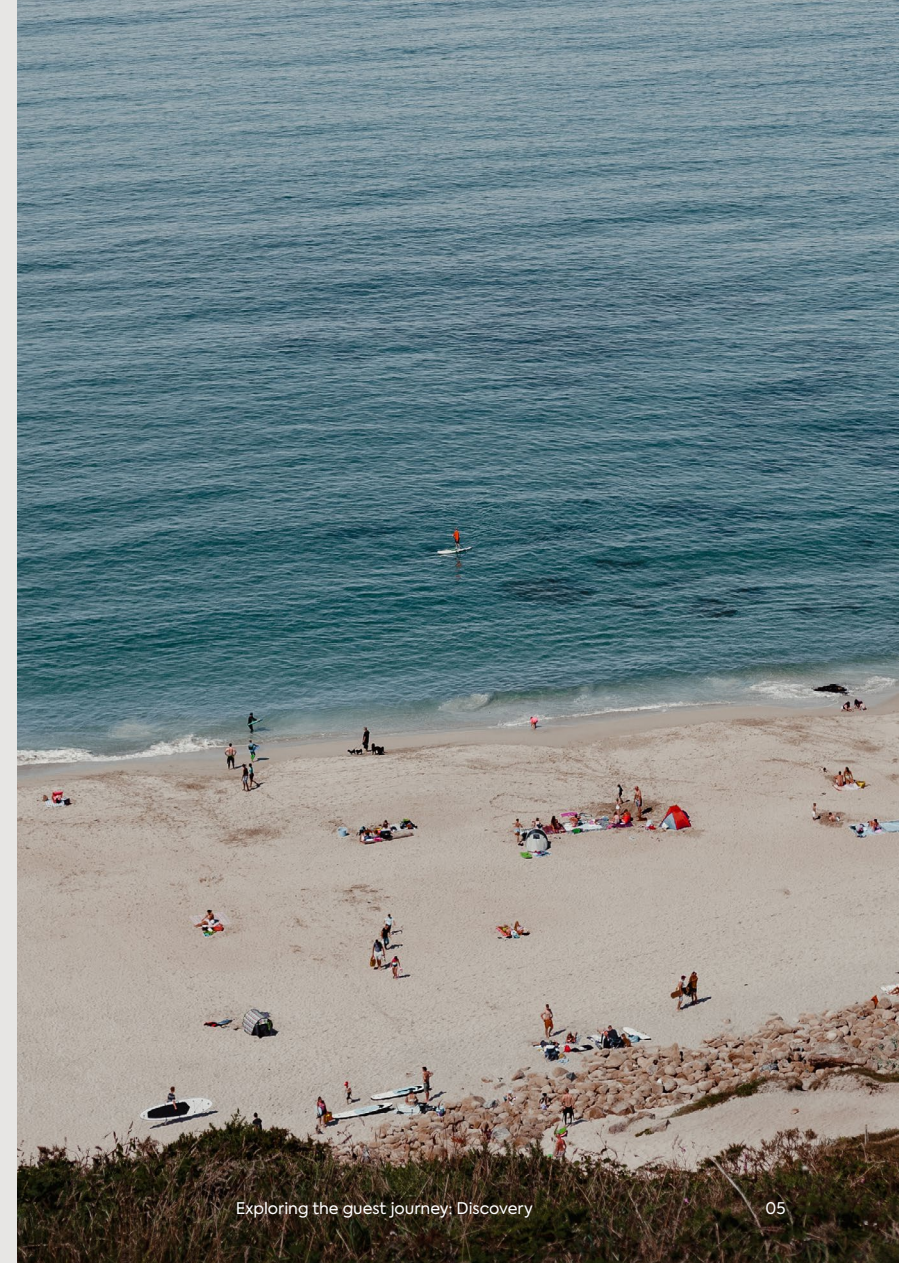


After effectively the longest off-season in history, domestic travel searches are on the rise and booking windows are getting shorter. Because of the uncertainty over constantly changing travel regulations, guests are looking to make the most of holidays when they take them, which means longer stays. Offering an extra night for free could be a particularly successful way of luring guests to your property instead of your competitors'.

Staycations continue to be popular, if not preferred, and the appetite for isolated destinations has grown hugely. Niche markets are now major markets: nascent pre-Covid trends for yoga, surfing and wellness escapes have now been super-charged and will represent a much bigger slice of the pie. The trend for camping, glamping and stays in mobile homes will continue, and when it comes to travel, 56% of people are craving more rural, [off-the-beaten-track](#) experiences.

Recent research from Expedia Group offers clues on how travel companies can best connect with travelers right now as well as giving us some insight into the future of travel marketing:

“Regardless of traveler sentiment or willingness to travel right now, dreaming of travel hasn’t stopped, and we know the pent-up demand will convert when the time is right,” said Hari Nair, SVP of Expedia Group Media Solutions. “In the meantime, engagement and awareness advertising are incredibly important and will pay dividends in the long term. Offer reassuring messaging; convey specifics about health, hygiene and flexibility; use engaging imagery and targeted messaging; inspire travelers to explore locally; remember that travelers want to rejuvenate and refresh and, finally, maintain optimism!”





The modern guest is...

More eco-conscious



[Research](#) clearly shows global travelers want to travel more sustainably in the future and we expect to see a more eco-conscious mindset in 2021 and beyond, as Covid has heightened people's awareness about their impact on the environment and local communities. Sustainable travel options will become commonplace, and travelers will consequently visit alternative destinations in a bid to avoid traveling during peak season and overcrowding. Destinations will need to adapt new, smart crowd management measures to appease travelers visiting their country.

There are also strong signals for travel operators to be more transparent about how travelers' money is being used to rebuild a community, paving the way for more regenerative tourism. Two-thirds of respondents to a [survey](#) indicated that they want their travel choices to also support the destination's recovery efforts, and more than half want to see how their money is going back into the local community. If you're not already engaging with local businesses and groups, it's time to start.



The modern guest is...

Searching for great value

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The financial legacy of the pandemic will inevitably see people demand more bang for their buck. [Research](#) by booking.com spanning 20,000 travelers across 28 countries and territories shows over the course of the next few years, 62% of travelers will be more price conscious when it comes to searching and planning a trip, and 55% are more likely to hunt down promotions and savings.

But they also want travel booking platforms to increase their transparency about cancellation policies, refund processes and trip insurance options. Refundable accommodation remains an expectation (at least for leisure travel) as is the flexibility to change dates without being charged.



The industry will need to respond inventively to offer deeper value, better choice, and increased flexibility and transparency, as well as more thoughtful experiences for tomorrow's travelers as they scrutinize spend in 2021 and beyond. More than ever, you must walk the fine line between guaranteeing occupancy and tempting guests with good prices.





The modern guest is...

Combining business with leisure



Business travelers have rapidly shifted their attitudes about when, where and why they need to travel. Trips are increasingly last minute. Cleaning procedures are being closely eyeballed. Contact-free solutions are not just preferred but are being demanded.

But there is a broader shift in corporate culture that has changed the landscape – remote and flexible work policies are giving employees more options. Enter the ‘workcation’. When the pandemic ends, the choice between working out of the office and working remotely are likely to coexist. Tools like [TripActions](#) are helping travel managers at companies adapt to the rapidly shifting tides and the increased emotion of business travel today.

It’s no surprise that [most people](#) are keen to keep working remotely in some shape or form and [research](#) by Gartner found that 82 percent of companies plan to allow employees to work remotely at least some of the time. Prioritize showcasing home office facilities and Wi-Fi speed to attract this new wave of digital nomads. Likewise, the world of corporate travel will see increasing demand for privacy, cleanliness and longer stays among those traveling for business, requiring alternative accommodations to seriously up their ‘work-friendly’ game.

The modern guest is...

Prepared to spend more on events



Although most guests are increasingly looking for better value accommodation, the desire for remarkable in-person experiences remains strong. In fact, because we've been starved of live events, many people are actually prepared to spend a lot more than usual on tickets.

Despite the live events outlook being far from certain, a recent survey of 3,000 people by experience-booking platform Easol found that 85% thought they would shell out 25% more on experiences in 2021 and 2022 compared with 2019. One of the recent big tech success stories is online events platform Hopin, although the firm is still anticipating a hybrid future post-Covid, which marries technology with big in-person events.

The takeaway for hoteliers? Keep a keen eye on nearby events and factor these into your rate strategy. If you have the capability, hosting events (live music sessions, stand-up comedy) could also be a profitable revenue stream.



Tech tip



Revenue managers

With budgets tighter and the need to squeeze every cent, best-in-class revenue management is essential so that your hotel can offer the right price at the right time. There are a number of excellent revenue managers that use smart algorithms to automate prices – notable solutions are:

- + [Atomize](#)
- + [Duetto](#)
- + [IDeaS](#)
- + [Pace](#)



Booking



What is the future of your distribution strategy with the modern guest? What will your new marketing strategy be? Where will the best return on ad spend come from?

In short, focus on guests most likely to convert – bottom of the funnel marketing areas will deliver the best bang for your buck. Subscription and membership strategies are also useful here. But that said, metasearch also just got a big shake up...

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The modern guest is...

More conscious about booking direct



One of the more positive trends to come out of the pandemic is that many people are now more conscious of helping local business and/or cutting out the middleman to book direct. Why is this so important? A 2020 Kalibri Labs study found direct bookings to be 12.5% more profitable than OTA bookings.

For a long time, it felt like OTAs were winning the booking war, but some are fighting back. A D-EDGE study found steady direct booking growth in Europe and Asia-Pacific, with a 10% increase between 2017 and 2020. Direct bookings in Asia jumped to 45% between June and September 2020 as countries opened again, overtaking Booking.com for the first time in years. In part, this is aided by solutions like Sojern, who specialize in getting guests to land on your website and book direct.

The story is not so positive when it comes to mobile bookings – and given that guests are increasingly using their phones to book, this is becoming more and more important. OTAs see 40-50% of their bookings come from mobiles, compared to between just 5-10% for direct bookings. That means there's a large opportunity to grow your direct bookings with a mobile-ready website and a mobile-first strategy.





The modern guest is...

More likely to use Google search



Depending on your demographic and territory, online bookings are anything between 50–80% of all bookings. And the vast majority of those who book online will use Google at some point in their user journey – the search engine has a remarkable [92% worldwide market share](#).

Here's where it gets interesting: Google has made a major change to the way it manages booking links and is adding an organic list that enables you to [get visibility for free](#). Obviously, this is good news as it should mean more direct bookings, and it's good news for guests as it makes for a smooth user experience.

According to some [estimates](#), this equates to Google giving away about 10% of the traffic to natural listings. To get to the top you must make sure the best rate out there is the direct one, keep the best availability for direct bookings, not accept OTA virtual cards (they will just undercut your direct rate), and make sure your 'My Business' listing is [up to date](#) and richly populated with reviews and photos.

The modern guest is...

More likely to cancel



We know, this is not what you wanted to hear. Covid has emboldened the habit of travelers booking several options as backups and canceling all but one at the last minute. On the one hand it's understandable, given the constantly changing restrictions imposed by governments, but even so it's a nightmare.

Your cancellation policy will receive more scrutiny from guests than ever before. Offer a fully refundable policy and you're at greater risk of being left with rooms to sell at short notice; too strict a policy, and you could deter guests from booking at all.

Whatever you decide, there are a few techniques that help to [minimize your cancellations](#). Direct bookings have a much lower cancellation rate than OTAs, so it could be worth investing in more marketing and advertising directing guests to your website – and remember to make sure you're fully mobile optimized. Upselling and cross-selling is also your ally; the more guests are invested in their trip with you (financially and psychologically), the less likely they are to cancel.





Tech tip



Direct booking tools

Direct bookings not only mean more revenue, they're also closely linked to increased guest engagement. One third of guests who book through the Mews Booking Engine go on to check in online, a much higher amount than the 14% average for OTAs and traditional channels. Make sure you have a booking engine that converts and personalizes guest messages to improve engagement. Some of your options are:

- + [Mews Guest Journey](#)
- + [Triptease](#)
- + [Siteminder](#)
- + [Sojern](#)

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Pre-arrival

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Your guest's booking is now secured, so you can just relax until their arrival, right? Wrong. In the digital age, the user journey is always ongoing, full of scattered travel micro moments. Guests expect good communication throughout, as well as assurances about safety and the ability to easily book upgrades and add-ons should they feel the need.



The modern guest is...

Expecting a seamless digital journey



The reality is that hospitality is still playing catch-up when it comes to a fully seamless travel experience. Too often everything runs smoothly and digitally until the guest arrives and things become jarringly analog. This must and will change.

To start with, properties need better websites, better landing pages and better content. Think about your favorite websites: they look great and they're super easy to navigate. We're savvier than ever when it comes to technology and the internet, and the bare minimum expectation of the modern guest is that your site looks and feels like it belongs with the biggest brands around.

When it comes to functionality, travelers expect to be able to access all the information they need, whenever they want it. Create a digital knowledge center for your property so that almost any question can be answered without your customer having to pick up a phone or send an email.

It's not just Millennials and Gen Z digital natives who expect this seamlessness. Older generations are becoming more familiar with digital technology and processes, accelerated by the necessity of use over the past year and a half. If you don't have automated [booking confirmation emails](#) and [online check-in](#) set up, for instance, your digital journey is too disjointed.



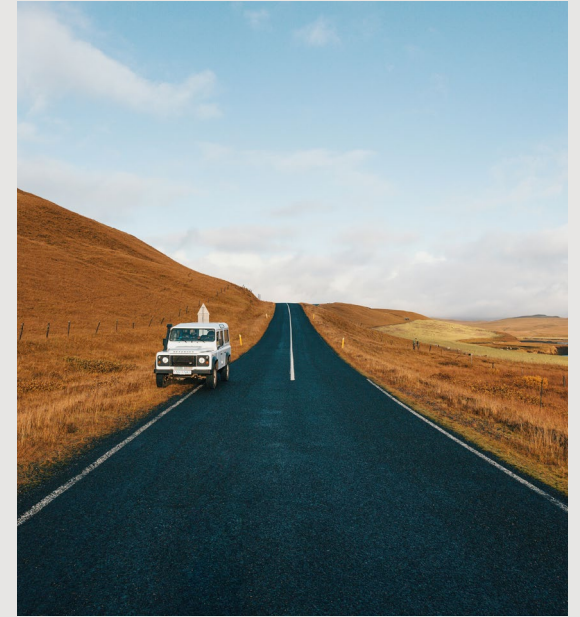
The modern guest is...

More safety-conscious



You've doubtless already experienced changes in habits surrounding safety and hygiene in the wake of the pandemic. It's difficult to say whether any of these changes will stick around for the medium or long term, but even if they don't, you need to adapt to short-term fears about health.

Transport is one area that has been affected, with almost half of respondents in a recent [survey](#) claiming that they'll opt to avoid public transport. This means a shift in how people will travel to and around their vacation destinations, with more people choosing to rent or drive their own car.



Just as we have become accustomed to traveling without liquids in our carry-on luggage and removing shoes to go through airport security, two-thirds will accept traveling to destinations that have health spot checks on arrival, and 62% will accept wearing a mask in public. Quarantine measures remain less popular, with far fewer travelers (27%) willing to accept these in order to travel to a particular destination.

How can you help to ease the anxiety of travel? Airport lounge passes? Transfer solutions? Or even just providing local hygiene and Covid information like where to get tests. Clear communication will be essential and messaging platforms will come to the fore here to help you connect with guests and ease concerns.

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Making a booking sticky with pre-purchased experiences should be music to your ears – not least because it will reduce the likelihood of cancellations.



The modern guest is...

Willing to book extras in advance



Guests are researching their actual stay more and want to lock in experiences in advance. Making a booking sticky with pre-purchased experiences should be music to your ears – not least because it will reduce the likelihood of cancellations. Therefore, nailing your pre-arrival email should be a high priority, and upselling technology should be one of the first integrations on everyone's list.

One of the best things you can do is create strong local roots by partnering with local providers. In booking.com's [Future of Travel Report 2020](#), 55% of people surveyed said they want to see how their money is going back into the local community. 67% wanted their travel choices to support the destination's post-Covid recovery efforts. Cross-selling add-ons like a tour around a nearby vineyard or a session with a local artist will fulfil the guest's need to contribute to the community.



Tech tip



Upselling integrations

Do we really need to convince you of the value of upselling? Thought not. There are a number of experts who have nailed the technique, and you'd do well to pick one of these solutions to boost your revenue and make guests more sticky:

- + [Oakly](#)
- + [UpsellGuru](#)
- + [GuestJoy](#)



Check-in



You don't get a second chance to make a first impression. It's a cliché, but it's true. How you welcome your guests is so important, and expectations are evolving about what exactly that welcome is. Long story short, if you're still stuck behind a reception desk beckoning guests to you, it's time for a change.

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The modern guest is...

Flexible and tech-savvy



Arrival needs to be more seamless and that means there will be more self-service than ever, which starts with mobile check-in. It's something you need to offer, and any modern PMS should have this built in for you.

The contact-free solution par excellence is an automated kiosk. They're the best way of ensuring that a guest can go almost immediately to the safety of their room as there's no need to stand in line to fill out forms.

Studies have shown that two thirds of customers would opt for self-service, rather than conventional interactions with retail outlets. This is not surprising as consumers view technology as a time-saver. Moreover, many kiosks have a number of different language settings, so international visitors will have an easier time when checking-in. A simple process like this will increase your guest satisfaction.

Flexible check-in times are now the norm and that means properties must be managing occupancy and room turnover smartly and in real time. A cloud system with real-time data updates is the only way to achieve this. With automation, it's not something you should need to worry about – a PMS should easily facilitate flexible check-ins and, as we already covered, there are some great upselling apps that can help you monetize the option.





The modern guest is...

Not okay with queueing



Standing in line at reception wasn't cool before the pandemic. Now, it's even further down the list of things travelers are happy to do. Hygiene and social distancing remain at the forefront of minds and guests need to trust that you have processes in place.

One of the major advantages of a [self-service kiosk](#) is that they prevent long queues from forming at the reception desk. Regardless of how many employees happen to be on duty, kiosks make it simple to fulfil the requirements of several guests simultaneously. Customers value hassle-free processes for checking in and checking out, particularly if they're pushed for time.

There are even opportunities to generate revenue, as guests can use kiosks to view additional services and upgrades in their own time. This appeals to people who don't like to be sold things face-to-face. Kiosks can offer different upgraded amenities that customers can add to their bill straightaway, making them a source of revenue that doesn't require extra labor expenses.

Ultimately, the speed of each check-in help keeps queues to a minimum. Knowing your average check-in and check-out time will tell you how efficient your staff and your property management system is. Anything more than five minutes

and there is definite room for improvement. With a modern hospitality system, there's no need for staff to be printing and manually stapling receipts together – not only is it messy but it will slow down check-in or check-out, and your guest will carry around a piece of paper that they'll never look at again.





The modern guest is...

Deserving of a personable experience



Travelers have come to expect not only a more connected experience but a more personable one too, from marketing to in-person interactions. Although to some it may seem counter intuitive, smart automation and self-service is the key to unlocking this potential.

The prevailing fear, particularly at the luxury end of the market, has long been that 'self-service' meant 'no service' and the loss of any form of personal touch or guest interaction. Fake news. It's important to understand that automated and mobile check-ins do not denigrate the personalized experience of a stay. In reality, it gives staff the freedom to have more meaningful and personal conversations with guests.

With a smart kiosk, guests can check in using their name or confirmation number, scanning identity documents if needed. As well as offering more convenience to guests, this

enables a more personalized approach. Self-service kiosks can gather a raft of useful data, such as previous purchases, room preferences and special requirements. Because these kiosks can be linked to your PMS, your team can access this data quickly to deliver a more personalized experience.

In addition, this stored information can be used to populate bespoke promotional emails, including tempting offers that fit the tastes of different customers. Better still, any customer requests that have been made previously can be catered for, thus surpassing their expectations and making their stay memorable.



The modern guest is...

Not bothered about traditional lobbies



The COVID-19 pandemic put a temporary pause on the [trend for more communal spaces](#), but as vaccines are rolled out and optimism returns to travel and hospitality, there's no reason to think that the desire for more modern, multi-purpose lobby areas won't continue.

Rethinking your reception is just one part of the modernization of your property, but it's an important part – after all, it's where you get to make the first impression. If you're serious about changing your lobby design and your welcome area, you have to have a [smart hospitality operations platform](#)

that runs on tablets and phones, with apps and integrations that allow you to scan passports, take payments and more. Every property should be able to operate and manage their business on the go.

[The Opera Hotel](#), a four-star property in Zurich, Switzerland, has converted their lobby area into a more open, welcoming space. Michael Böhler, the General Manager, describes how he couldn't have done it without an agile, cloud-based PMS:





“We got rid of the reception desk because we wanted to have a smoother arrival for our guests. We needed a system for our team members that’s simple and easy to use, so they really can look at the guests instead of doing administration.

Since we implemented Mews, we can get rid of the reception – we don’t need it anymore. We are quite flexible – we can do anything, anywhere. Now we’re walking around with our heads up and our tablets in our hand and we give our guests a personal experience instead of a demonstrational one.

Mews was our biggest help actually, to be able to build this lobby, because if we still had the old technologies we used to have, we wouldn’t be able to be as mobile, as agile – we would be sitting behind a screen.”

The modern guest is...

Down with digital door locks



If you're an individual property or part of a small group, guests don't want to download your app. Fact. Even the biggest chains are met with resistance. In the [2019 State of Texting Report by Zipwhip](#), they found that 61% of consumers would not install a new app on their smartphone.

Although there's resistance to app downloading, there's a definite appetite for a more modern door lock solution. No one wants to carry keys around with them unnecessarily. Our industry needs to start thinking about the solution to guest access in the same way that airlines think about boarding passes: every customer should be able to use a solution that works best for them. That could be an Apple Wallet pass, a simple email download, a code sent via text...

Until costs come down, budgets will remain a legitimate blocker for many properties on this front. It can cost as much as €500 per door to replace existing locks with mobile-enabled locks, and for most hotels and hostels there are higher priorities when it comes to investment.



Change is inevitable; it's just a question of when. The renaissance of QR codes during the pandemic may have helped turn the cultural tide on this front. We're all now accustomed to looking at restaurant and bar menus on our phones and one of the major hurdles to acceptance of QR code door keys was the lack of a critical mass.



Tech tip



Door lock solutions

This is one of the integrations that has the biggest cost investment, so do your due diligence when choosing the right solution for you. There are a few viable options so think about what best makes sense as part of the guest journey you want to offer.

- + [Goki](#)
- + [4SUITES](#)
- + [ASSA ABLOY](#)
- + [Operto](#)

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Stay



The essence of a guest's stay is the same as it ever was: they want to feel comfortable, safe, revitalized, and special. However, the ways in which you can elicit these feelings has changed over the years, and a more modern outlook is required to ensure guests have a memorable time at your property.





The modern guest is...

A fan of messaging apps



We've already spoken about how tech-savvy today's guests are, and one thing they're used to is live chat and messaging apps. Of course, you'll still get guests who enjoy the stroll down to reception to ask one of your team a question, but easy communication is essential, and the best way to do this is via an easy-to-use messaging tool that's responded to promptly by someone at your property.

For younger guests, the landline phone on the bedside table of their hotel room is now the only landline they'll ever use, an anachronistic throwback to their parents' generation. Times have changed.

The [Mews virtual concierge](#) lets guests send direct messages to your team via a web app from their own phone, meaning there's no need for them to walk to reception or use a different phone. It's a great way to schedule services like food deliveries (which can be left safely outside the guest's door) while also maintaining safe but personalized interactions. Or combine all messaging apps (SMS, Facebook Messenger, Email, WhatsApp and many more) into a single inbox, and respond in real-time to guest enquiries with [guest messaging specialists](#).

The modern guest is...

Hungry



'Room-service-as-a-service' should be on every hotelier's lips. Before the pandemic, there was speculation whether food delivery apps would eliminate the need for room service altogether. Lockdowns have since pushed the trend for personalized and on-demand home dining to become the norm, and business and leisure travelers will be no different.

Deliveroo, UberEats and DoorDash have all been winners during the pandemic. When you factor in the typically high prices and limited menu offerings attached to in-room dining, it's hardly surprising that modern guests are looking elsewhere to fill their bellies. You now have a multitude of

new competitors to contend with who already specialize in food orders. In fact, back in 2019, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts announced a deal with DoorDash to provide free food delivery services to 3,700 properties across their 20 brands.

Luxury resorts in remote locations may be more immune than city-based properties as there is less choice for eating out, but as more and more high-end restaurants enter the delivery market, this will also change. Either you have to upgrade your in-house service to stand a chance, and/or get into bed with the delivery apps and local restaurants themselves.





You can keep costs down by reducing hours of service and menu size, and transitioning to a more app-driven, automated model for in-house dining services, thus eliminating some labor and supply costs. Even luxury properties, bastions of brand standards and perceived quality, have made the plunge. The Four Seasons Seattle have partnered with a local food tour operator to offer Pike Place Market favorites boxes. The Ritz-Carlton Bal Harbour, Miami, switched to no-contact delivery and pickup as well as single-use packaging and products. Some brands are even reinventing themselves as food delivery services themselves. Upmarket countryside retreat [The Newt](#) is now shipping wholesome local farm produce to customers directly.

What of the breakfast buffet? So loved by many travelers, the logistics of it need to shift in order to fit with the need for higher hygiene standards. From this point on, there will always be that drive to reduce touchpoints. For example, there may be pre-portioned options to reduce the use of items such as spoons, tongs and ladles. Menus can be adjusted to feature more grab-and-go items that reduce congestion and we'll see more use of sustainable, single-use items to reduce the repeated use of silverware and china.



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Lockdowns have pushed the trend for personalized and on-demand home dining to become the norm, and business and leisure travelers will be no different.

The modern guest is...

Seeking new experiences

+ The goal for most hoteliers the world over is to offer the best guest experience possible. This extends to leisure activities and tours, and outdoor activities in particular are in. So what are guests pining for right now? In a word: anything. Having been locked in by travel and event restrictions for well over a year, there's a huge appetite for new experiences.

There are two sides of the coin here: more than ever, guests are now looking for 'locals only' exploration, things that feel unique and markedly different to their day-to-day lives. The other side of the coin is the joy at being able to get back out into nature and the open air, whether that's mountain hikes or sandy beaches.

Since the start of the pandemic, the use of simple pleasure-related endorsements on booking.com has risen, with notable increases included hiking (94%), clean air (50%),

nature (44%) and relaxation (33%). Meanwhile, [research](#) shows that over 69% of travelers will look to appreciate more simple experiences such as spending time outdoors or with the family while on vacation. Over half will seek out more rural, off-the-beaten-track experiences to immerse themselves into the outdoors.

Whether or not you can offer some of these experiences largely depends on your location, which of course you can't just change. But you can fill your guest emails with feature suggestions for local activities. And you can make sure that your receptionists are fully informed of all the unique experiences that they can upsell. An exceptional receptionist should start receiving commission for providing unique experiences and memories and for tailoring the experience to the guest. After all, that's the business that we are in: creating memories.





Tech tip



Guest comms

Giving your guests a simple and immediate means to contact you from wherever they are (on or off property) is a marker of great service. Rather than having your team keep an eye on loads of different channels (SMS, WhatsApp, Messenger et al.), these tools will help to keep messaging in a single, easy-to-track platform.

- + [Mews Virtual Concierge](#)
- + [Bookboost](#)
- + [Easyway](#)



6

Check-out and post-stay

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Check-out is often considered the most important part of the guest journey, because it's often what's remembered most. Post-covid, that means an Uber-esque experience where you can just walk out with minimal interaction at reception. It also means flexible check-out times.

The modern guest is...

Still flexible



Remember all that time ago when we were talking about the importance of a flexible check-in? Well, the same goes for check-out. One thing that hasn't changed is that many guests will still be in a hurry to leave your property – not because they had a terrible experience, but because time keeping isn't always our strongest suit. For these guests in particular, online check-out is indispensable.

Online check-out adoption is still slower than online check-in, perhaps because hoteliers are reluctant to let guests leave without that final human-to-human impression. But the fact is that not all guests require this, particularly younger generation digital natives. For these travelers, being able to skip the front desk queue and head straight into a taxi is much more of a valuable, remarkable experience than waiting in line for someone to ask: 'Did you enjoy your stay?'





The modern guest is...

Used to instant digital payments



The combination of the desire for convenience and the need for fewer touch points means no more POS machines for every transaction. Guests love the Uber-style service of being able to walk away without having to tap in a card pin code or rummage for cash, and there's no reason you can't offer exactly that when guests check out or make any additional payment during their stay.

All it requires is a smart hospitality cloud that offers automated payments and has first class security when it comes to storing and processing card details. The added bonus? This added security means a lower risk of card fraud and therefore fewer chargebacks.





The modern guest is...

Expecting to hear from you again



When a guest checks out, that doesn't need to be the end of your relationship. When you've provided them with remarkable hospitality, you've earned the right to contact them afterwards, and they won't find it intrusive. An automated post-stay email can be a powerful tool for engagement, particularly when it comes to leaving reviews. A little encouragement goes a long way, too. You could run competitions like a prize draw for a free night's stay for all verified reviews.

Smart data collection via your PMS means you can retarget customers with well curated offers. Loyalty is everything today and you should have a strategy that focuses on retention. Companies like SACO saw 70% occupancy during the pandemic by doubling down on trying to retain these customers as opposed to trying to attain new ones. Subscription and membership strategies will also help to boost loyalty.



Tech tip



Reputation and loyalty management

Sometimes setting up a single automated post-departure email is enough, and you should be able to easily do that through your hospitality cloud. If you're after a more sophisticated set-up, there are guest reputation integrations that will help you gather more reviews and use your data to enhance the guest experience for next time.

- + [GuestRevu](#)
- + [TrustYou](#)
- + [Guest Suite](#)



Conclusion



Everyone is different. It can feel difficult to draw conclusions about what guests want because attitudes are always changing, some slowly, some quickly. That's why data is so important in identifying trends, and that's what should be at the heart of your decision making.

If you make any changes to your processes based on this guide, be sure to track the results and always look to improve them. Have we convinced you to refresh your pre-arrival emails? That's great. But keep tracking your open and click through rates and see what's popular. Then rejig the email again to increase its performance even further.

More than anything else, the modern guest just wants a memorable experience. This hasn't changed. What has changed is how you deliver it. It's clear that the automation of manual tasks is what drives success for the modern guest: firstly, because they're comfortable embracing technology,

but also because they know that the value of remarkable hospitality doesn't lie in outdated processes like taking card payments or queueing up just to have a conversation-by-numbers about breakfast times and Wi-Fi codes. It's about convenience and seamless service.

Take a moment to think about your property. Are you ready to welcome the modern guest? The answer to this question may well hold the key to your success.

A modern PMS for a modern guest



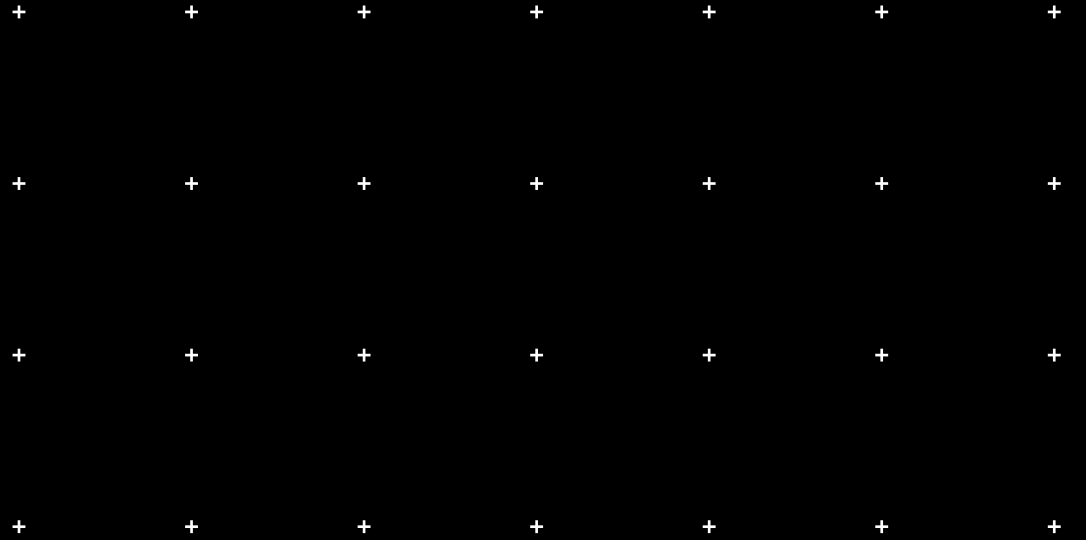
Did all this talk of online check-ins and automated payments make you feel jealous? Mews is the leading hospitality cloud that's expertly designed to cater for the modern guest.

Mews has been transforming hospitality since 2012. What began in a single hotel in Prague now powers thousands of properties around the world, as we pursue our mission to develop transformational solutions for brands and create remarkable experiences for guests.

From global hospitality brands to independent properties, hospitality professionals join Mews because they recognize the power of innovation. They understand that properties like yours can benefit from hospitality tech that drives efficiency, maximizes revenue, and improves guest happiness.

If you'd like to know more, head to mews.com/en/demo and fill in the short form. One of our sales specialists will get back to you and arrange a time to show you around Mews Hospitality Cloud in more detail.





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