


Welcome!
Revenue Optimization For
Today's Front Desk Salesperson
 - With Doug Kennedy


 THE BEACHES OF
FORT MYERS
AND SANIBEL
 FORTMYERS-SANIBEL.COM

Sponsored by: Lee County Convention & Visitors Bureau

The New Role Of Front Desk/Reception
Colleagues - Circa 2015!


- Historically, the front desk position has always had a key role in the success of a hotel.






The New Role Of Front Desk/Reception
Colleagues - Circa 2015!


- Today, it is more important than ever before.
- Do you agree?
- Why or why not?






The New Role Of Front Desk/Reception
Colleagues - Circa 2015!

- Working with your group, brainstorm a list of why you think the front desk is even more important today than ever before.





The New Role Of Front Desk/Reception
Colleagues - Circa 2015!

Proliferation of online guest reviews.

- As a result, the front desk staff is now part of hotel marketing and Public Relations!








The New Role Of Front Desk/Reception
Colleagues - Circa 2015!

"Vanilla-ization" of the hotel product.


- As a result, one of the only major remaining points of differentiation is the people!





The New Role Of Front Desk/Reception Colleagues - Circa 2015!

- Major shift in how hotels sell rooms.
- The emergence of online distribution channels.

Because Of The New Role Of Front Desk/Reception Colleagues...

... You have a bigger opportunity to contribute to the financial success of your hotel than ever before.






Important New Task of Front Desk / Reception Colleagues For 2015 and Beyond:

“Channel Converting” Guests To Booking Direct!




What Is A “Distribution Channel?”

- A method or process of selling rooms.



What Is A “Distribution Channel?”

- What are the major distribution channels for your hotels?





The Costs of “Customer Acquisition”

- How much does it cost hotels to sell a room through these channels?

The Costs of "Customer Acquisition"

- How much do you think that your hotel paid in the last year?



"Channel Converting" Guests To Booking Direct!

- What can our teams do about it?
- Brainstorm with your group everything you can think of that can be done at the front desk to convert prospects and guests to booking directly next time.



"Channel Converting" Guests To Booking Direct!

- Obtain and/or verify the guest's email at registration.





Obtain And/Or Verify The Guest's Email At Registration

- How can we best ask for this?
- "Example..."
- Make sure this information gets entered.



"Channel Converting" Guests To Booking Direct!



- At registration, identify those who booked through third parties and invite them to book directly next time.



At Registration, Invite Them To Book Directly Next Time

Best ways of explaining this:



- Avoid bashing the OTA.
- Instead point out benefits of booking directly.



At Registration, Invite Them To Book Directly Next Time

Best ways of explaining this:

- "We are pleased to see you found us on Expedia!
- "We invite you to book directly when you return and wanted to let you know about our special (rate/program)..."


"Channel Converting" Guests To Booking Direct!

- At departure, offer to secure return reservations. (Especially for business travelers, locals, and repeat guests.)




At Departure, Invite Them To Book Their Next Stay Right Now!

- "Since I have all of your information right here, may I go ahead and reserve your next stay right now?"

"Channel Converting" Guests To Booking Direct!

Convincing callers who are shopping online to book right now!




Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!


- What happens if we let them hang up and go back to the OTA website?




Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!

Activity: Call other hotels.

- Have dates in mind.
- Use realistic call stories!
- Take notes and report back on what happened.



Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!

- Offer call backs if necessary (instead of rushing through.)




Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!

- How often do callers ask for "on-site" reservations assistance?
- Why is that?




Why Do Callers Still Call?

- Most have been online prior to calling; some are online while they are on the phone.




Why Do Callers Still Call?

- Many are **confused** by conflicting information such as online guest reviews and social media postings.



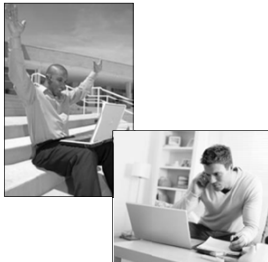
Why Do Callers Still Call?

- Others are **overwhelmed** by the number of choices they have seen at your website and numerous others.



Why Do Callers Still Call?

- Some still call just to make sure they rate they see online is in fact the lowest.
- Or just to verify that the rate is in fact the final price.



Why Do Callers Still Call?

- And now the newest trend: many who are searching on a mobile device then click to call versus booking on the PDA or smartphone.



Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!

Ask The Right QUESTions:

- "Inventory search" questions. (Arrival/departure, number in party, bedding...)



Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!

Ask The Right QUESTions:

- Determine familiarity.
- Determine reason for travel. (?)



Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!

What is the most important QUESTION to ask callers circa 2015?

- "As I'm checking those dates, are there any questions I can answer for you such as about our location or amenities?"



Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!

- Understanding that most callers have viewed images online, what is our role these days?



Use Visually and Emotionally Descriptive Language To "Narrate The Pictures"

- Activity: Write up a description of the following:
 - A benefit of your location.
 - A benefit of an amenity or service.



Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!

Recommend suggest endorse.



- Why is this important?
- How does it assist us in closing more sales?



Recommend, Suggest or Endorse

You can recommend:



- The hotel features.
- The rooms / rates.

Recommend, Suggest or Endorse

Activity: Write up an example of a recommendation, suggestion or endorsement of:


- Your hotel's features.
- Your rooms and/or rates.

Convincing Callers Who Are Shopping Online To Book Right Now!

Close the sale!

- Closing the sale benefits everyone!




How Does Closing The Sale Benefit **Everyone**?

For the guest:

- Locks in the rate.
- Ensures availability.

For the hotel:


- Reduces OTA commissions.
- Increases call conversions.



How To Close The Sale

Initial Close:

- "May I secure that for you?"
- "Which of those can I secure for you?"



How To Close The Sale

Second Close:

- Create urgency: "Availability is limited" or "The rate could change."
- Remove barriers "You can always call back to cancel..."



The Initial Inquiry

Even if it is an "order-taking" call scenario, or a call after booking online, be sure to capture key information and enter into the arrival "comments."



Key Details To Enter Into "Comments"

- Special requests (and why requested.)
- Indicate that guest was notified of a policy or procedure.
- Arrival time.
- Special occasions.
- Special needs (allergies, medical.)



The New Role Of Front Desk/Reception Colleagues - Circa 2015!

- What other opportunities do we have at the front desk to help optimize profits?
- Activity: Work with your team and brainstorm a list.



Other Profit Optimization Techniques

- Capture more walk-ins.





Capturing Walk-Ins

- What happens now when cars pull up under your porte cochere?





Capturing Walk-Ins

- Welcome guests first, before initiating transactions.




Capturing Walk-Ins

- Offer a "choice of doors" vs. just one rate option.





Capturing Walk-Ins

- Mention specific room placements that might present an advantage.
"I have an excellent corner room in quiet location for you..."



Capturing Walk-Ins



- Offer to show the room.



Capturing Walk-Ins


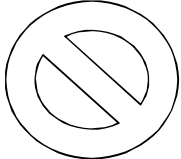
Avoid making what's left sound like the "leftover dinner."

- "All we have left is..." vs.
- "Fortunately, what we still have open this evening is..."





Capturing Walk-in Guests Who Mention Competitors By Name:

- Avoid negative statements about competitive properties; instead focus on what's unique about your property.



Other Profit Optimization Techniques

- Upselling at registration.



Upselling At Registration



- What happens if we do not upsell guests to higher-rated accommodations at registration?



Upselling At Registration

What are the opportunities to upsell at registration?



- Guests who have booked through an OTA.



Upselling At Registration

What are the opportunities to upsell at registration?



- Special bedding requirements?



Upselling At Registration



What are the opportunities to upsell at registration?

- Special occasions?



Upselling At Registration

- Reassure the guest their original room is a good option.
"Mr. Perez, right now we have you all set in our traditional room, which I'm sure you'll find comfortable..."



Upselling At Registration

- Ask if they are aware of upgrades.
“Are you familiar with our (special room type)?” or
“Did you notice our (special room types) online?”



Upselling At Registration

- Present the availability of specialty room upgrades as a unique opportunity.
“We’ve had our (special room type) open up tonight...”



Upselling At Registration

- Convey the value with endorsements and recommendations.
“This efficiency suite is especially popular with families because...”



Upselling At Registration

- Use an “incremental” rate quoting technique.
“For only \$X more...”



Upselling At Registration

- Use digital photo frames at the front desk to suggest that guests ask about upgrades.
“Upgraded room categories available this evening starting at just \$X additional...”




Upselling At Registration

- Activity: Role play an example of using these techniques.





Other Profit Optimization Techniques

- Properly handle "after hours" leads for groups and functions.





Properly Handle "After-Hours" Leads For Groups and Functions

- Be aware that "The call-in lead is the hottest one you'll ever get!"





Properly Handle "After-Hours" Leads For Groups and Functions

- Create a positive first impression of your hotel's "storefront window" and to properly field an inquiry.





Properly Handle "After-Hours" Leads For Groups and Functions

- Understand that you are part of the hotel sales team!




Properly Handle "After-Hours" Leads For Groups and Functions

- Express interest in hosting the group or function.
- Offer to answer any basic questions.
- Offer the alternative of voicemail or to take a message.



Other Profit Optimization Techniques

- Maintain "rate fences."



Maintain Rate "Fences"

Avoid Giving Discounts To
Guests Who Renegotiate
During Check-in.



What Are Examples Of Rate Fences?

- Accommodation type.
- Inclusive package.
- Group rates.
- Local/negotiated rates.



Maintain Rate "Fences"

— Understand most are just
asking to make sure they
have the best available rate.



Maintain Rate "Fences"

— Gently remind them of the
rate "fence" they agreed to.



Revenue Optimization for Today's Front Desk Salesperson

- Channel conversion of guests to booking directly next time.
- Securing return reservations.
- Converting more inquiry calls.
- Capturing walk-ins.
- Upselling at registration.
- Handling leads for groups/functions.
- Maintaining rate fences.
- Providing extraordinary excellent service!




Why Focus on Creating **Extraordinary** Excellence **DAILY**?




Why Focus on Creating **Extraordinary** Excellence **DAILY**?

Today, the hospitality and guest service levels you provide are part of marketing and public relations.



Why Focus on Creating **Extraordinary** Excellence **DAILY**?

Whereas in the past we all learned that "An unhappy guest will tell 9 – 10 others"...



Why Focus on Creating **Extraordinary** Excellence **DAILY**?

Today's guests can be our best **advocates** and **apostles** OR our worst nightmares!



As a Result of These Emerging Trends....




The guest services staff is now part of the **marketing** team.




Why Focus on Creating **Extraordinary** Excellence **DAILY**?

Today's guests can be our biggest advocates too!

But first a question:
"So, You Really Like Working With People?"



Principle One:



Hospitality is more than a communications technique.



Delivering hospitality requires good communications skills, but it is much more than that.



Hospitality means caring about as well as caring for others

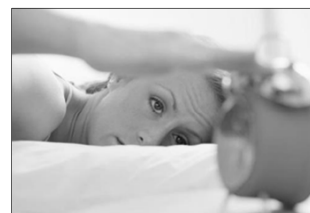


Re-Humanize The Guest: Is it "just" a business or leisure trip?
What are the reasons why guests visit our hotels?



Bringing Out The Best In Others
Brings Out The Best In Ourselves

Principle Two:
Bringing Out The Best In Others
Brings Out The Best In Ourselves



Most customers and guests don't start their day ready to complain and make problems.



Bringing Out The Best In Others
Brings Out The Best In Ourselves




But the challenges they encounter along the way can bring out the worst in them.



Bringing Out The Best In Others
Brings Out The Best In Ourselves



We have two choices:

Be reactive and treat them exactly like they treat us, or...



Bringing Out The Best In Others
Brings Out The Best In Ourselves




... do everything we can to turn the tide on the negativity they're experiencing at that moment.




Isn't it More Fun to
Speak with Nice Customers
and Guests All Day?





Bring Out The Best In Others

5% N.V.N.P.  5% V.N.P.

90% Could Go
Either Way!




Bring Out The Best In Others

5% N.V.N.P.  5% V.N.P.

90% Could Go
Either Way!


Bring Out The Best In Others

5% N.V.N.'s





5% V.N.P


Which Do You Remember Most
At The End Of The Day?




Principle Three: Build Your Power Of Release




Build Your Power of Release




When you encounter
"difficult guests,"
most of the time it's
just a nice person
going through a rough
spot.



Build Your Power of Release




Yet it's important
to acknowledge
that some people
have cranky and
mean personalities.





Build Your Power of Release

The problem is we just
don't know which is which.



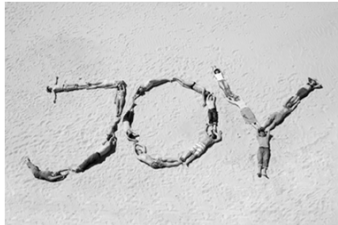
Build Your Power of Release

- Remember that no one can make you angry or upset. Your reactions are your choice.
- Choose your reaction to negativity.



Principle Four:

*The Road To Extraordinary
Excellence Is A Joy Ride!*



The Road to Extraordinary
Excellence is a Joy Ride!



Be **grateful** everyday.
For your co-workers,
colleagues and
guests; even the
most difficult ones.

The Road to Extraordinary
Excellence is a Joy Ride!

Always give just a
little more hospitality
than what was required
or expected to everyone
you encounter...



The Road to Extraordinary
Excellence is a Joy Ride!

...and you will always
find you have an
abundant supply for
yourself!

