

Hotel Trends Study Finds Decline In Newspaper Delivery & Increase In In-Room Internet

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Monday, 05 January 2015
Last Updated Monday, 05 January 2015

The annual study published by the American Hotel & Lodging Association has offered some gleaming insights into the evolving trends of the hotel industry. The study, which has been published every year since 1988, points out to the changing needs of the average customer. Here is an excerpt from the report:

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HD TVs Are The Norm : High definition TVs are no longer a novelty or a differentiator. For the study, nearly 84% of the respondents stated that HD televisions are now provided by their hotels. Further, close to 96% of the respondents pointed out that the TVs provided were flat-screen.

Free Internet Access : As more and more customers demand internet access in their room, hotels now have these amenities as part of the package. Since 2012, the number of hotels offering free in-room internet access has grown from 77% to 89%.

Recycling Program : Hotels have been slowly doing away with the older towel/linen policy and reuse and recycling has become completely mainstream. While 93% of the respondents stated that their hotels had a linen/towel reuse policy, the number of hotels adopting recycling programs has risen to 64% this year.

Complementary Breakfast : Complementary breakfasts are no longer the privy of high-end hotels. In 2014, nearly 82% of the hotels surveyed had complementary breakfasts as part of their package. In terms of menu choices, close to 74% of the respondents believe the choices offered are healthy.

No More Newspapers : Customers no longer demand door delivery of newspapers. As internet usage has increased, the consumption of newspapers has reduced among customers and as a result, this is no longer seen as a necessity among hotel customers.

Besides these, hotels are also moving away from amenities like mini-bars, jacuzzi and in-room DVD players while investing in upcoming technologies like electric car charging stations. 11% of the surveyed hotels have these ports today in comparison to just 5% in 2012. In a way, the changing trends of the hotel industry is only reflective of the changing trends and needs of the society in general.

A happy by-product of this is also the growing emphasis on charity-giving. The survey found that 84% of the participating hotels contributed to charities in some form or the other. For instance, the annual world community day organized by WorldHotels, one of the leading hotel management companies sees participating hotels contribute to a variety of causes including providing food supplies to elderly citizens, supporting refugees in countries like Syria, donation to Sam's club and supporting homeless women in different parts of the world.

According to Amanda Hite, the President and COO of STR, the industry data provider which contributed to the survey, the study is a reflection of the continued push for innovation that has made the hotel industry stay ahead of the curve thus ensuring that hotel guests continue to enjoy an excellent experience. With the world stepping into the new year, it will be interesting to see how things evolve through this new year.