Chapter 3
Guest Retention Through Automation:
An Analysis of Emerging Trends in Hotels in Indian Sub-Continent

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ABSTRACT

The technology development in hospitality is continuing at a relentless pace which is challenging for the hospitality professional for both present and the future generations. The hotel front office is moving towards automation with less human interface. Reservations are mostly being made with help of booking engines and guest interaction with hotels are by apps and chatbots. Artificial intelligence (AI) also occupies a major role to facilitate and enhance guest experience. The trends now include use of augmented reality, predictive analysis, beacons, robotics, block chain technology, and biophilic designs in the hotel. The research is to study about how various hotel chains are adopting new technology and incorporating it in their establishment. The research is based upon data collected from hotel websites and other secondary sources to determine the acceptance of new trends by the hotel chains. The result suggests that though some international hotel chains have started accepting the new trends, the major Indian chains specially are lacking behind.

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INTRODUCTION

As the service sector is growing across the globe the customers are becoming more demanding, sophisticated and experienced. The hospitality stream provides service excellence by continuous innovation and quality at price with unique points of distinction. Hospitality is a place which allows people to be exceptional individuals and extend their own personality and style. (Hogan, 2008) Hospitality is a part of consortium of company known as tourism and travel which assist in providing goods and services to the traveller. Hospitality and tourism are among the biggest and fastest growing industries across the world (Walker, 2010). Hospitality industry comprises of lodging industry along with food and beverage departments which provide accommodation, food and beverages and other recreational activities to the customer. To succeed in hospitality operations, the focus of an organisation should be towards adopting change and innovation (Walker, 2010).

For sustainable growth of hospitality industry, the experts in the field have a view that there has to be continuous improvement of quality of hospitality services so as to adapt to the changing needs of the customer. The use of technology is also to attract the new generation which is tech friendly and is keen to travel than their previous generations.

Current Trends in Hospitality

The tourism industry trends influence the hotel industry also and globalization has made it as a force for international business. By the passing days, the competition amongst the hotels is becoming more aggressive and is also becoming difficult for the hotels to be sustainable. Considering it hotel, or the hotel chains which have the vision to understand the need of emerging trends and amend both their product and services accordingly will take the opportunity to be the market leader while those not adapting to change will only be as spectators.

The future of the hospitality industry lies on Internet of things (IoT) technology which will help the organisation to be competitive in the market. The IoT will assist individuals in interconnecting regular usage physical devices such as sensors and mobile devices which connect or communicate with each other either directly or indirectly through local communication network or through Internet. An application of IoT is been given in Figure 1.

It will enable service providers to increase the back of the house efficiency with all the departments like connecting it with housekeeping. It will also enable various cost saving policies and smart energy management techniques. Some of the hospitality service new trends being provided by chain properties are been mentioned and denoted in Figure 2.
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