

How the hospitality sector can stay two steps ahead of its challenges

Covid-19 has had a detrimental effect on the hospitality industry with [Globe Newswire reporting](#) that the tourism sector has been the hardest hit by the pandemic, while CNBC research claims that it will be at least two years before the global travel will resume to the levels we experienced prior to the outbreak.

But if there is one thing that the hospitality industry is good at, it's dealing with difficult situations and unexpected challenges.



Long before Covid-19 hit, the industry already had a number of variables to consider, from reliance on external service providers to difficult patrons. Hospitality has always been a dynamic and fast-paced environment that needs to stay at least two steps ahead of its daily challenges.

And now, as the sector rebuilds and establishes what the new normal will look like for tourism, operational excellence is even more important in providing exceptional service. Ensuring everything runs smoothly in the background – from maintenance to housekeeping, bookings, stock taking and ordering – all adds to providing quality service and enhancing a guest's satisfaction in the foreground.

Fortunately, there is a whole range of cutting-edge technology and software available to assist hotels to cut costs through effective and streamlined maintenance management software that allows multiple people from different departments to submit checklists and report issues quickly and effectively.

Among these new technologies is printing and print management, which when properly implemented, can dramatically cut costs as well.

Case study: Print management in action

Kyocera Document Solutions South Africa has suggested that the hospitality sector starts with the low hanging fruit.

Recently, Kyocera helped a prominent South African hotel chain, operating in southern and eastern Africa across 60 locations, to reduce its overall print costs by 45%.

Challenge

The challenge in this particular hotel group was a print environment that had been allowed to run amok with variable costs per page and inconsistent performance across a mix-and-match patchwork of machines; **resulting in:**

- Lack of standardisation and consistency
- Runaway costs
- Rising printing costs
- Inconsistent service and support
- Unreliable printing infrastructure
- Inconsistent service and support levels

The hotel chain wished to drive down its printing costs without compromising on print quality and customer experience and realised that document management was key to delivering a great guest experience. They wanted to standardise printing infrastructure, as well as impose discipline on printing costs, support and quality of its scanning, copying and records management.

The company was called in to help the group to streamline its operations without impacting on the quality of their offering.

Solution

Kyocera proposed a comprehensive managed solution that would offer uniform per-page pricing across a single fleet of devices. They worked together to deploy a solution that would offer higher availability, better performance and reliability, and dramatically lower costs for print and document management.

The company also worked with the group to replace its old hardware over a staggered timeframe, recycling old hardware and disposing of hardware and toner in an environmentally friendly manner.

The solution, rolled out over several months, combined a stable hardware platform with enhanced capabilities, including an integrated follow-me printing solution for the group's corporate offices. It balanced the flexibility of a decentralised A4 desktop printing solution catering for the needs of hotels of different sizes across the region with the benefits of standardised technology and printing costs.

As a result, the group achieved:

- Lower costs – An overall print costs reduction by 45%
- Higher uptime – The solution delivers 99.9% availability
- Reduced volumes – The group reduced overall print volumes by more than 30%
- End-user satisfaction – Employee surveys indicated that more than 99% of users were happy with the printing service
- Faster service – Service and maintenance is more efficient and cost-effective across the standardised fleet of devices
- Sustainability

Sustainable solutions

Sustainability and environmental consideration is increasingly important in hospitality. As an industry that survives or thrives on its reputation, a hotel or brand can enhance its image by boasting environmentally friendly credentials.

Kyocera, for example, holds up its end of the environmentally friendly deal by manufacturing products that are built to last and are as eco-friendly to the office environment, as they are to the global environment.

From using no styrofoam packing materials, eco-friendly design and technology, through recycling programmes, the ECOSYS printers and MFPs minimise unwanted sound, reduce part replacement frequency, save energy and help reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Cutting costs

A spokesperson for the hotel chain said: "Kyocera supported us by providing hardworking devices and optimal solutions to increase document security and productivity.

"Reducing company costs was a big driver in the decision and the reduction of environmental impact was a welcomed bonus in the solution. We benefit from print-cost allocations, secure printing, scan management, quota and credit management, device monitoring, as well as report generation and cost allocation reporting."

Staying ahead

Most organisations are not willing to bring on more employees now, so the quickest way to optimise the business is to maximise on technology, and whilst the industry had adopted digitalisation prior to the pandemic, much technological breakthrough and benefits can still be achieved.

Operations in the hospitality industry deal with multiple suppliers, all with costs attached to their services. Amalgamating services into a single provider that can be easily managed and held accountable, which helps cap costs and easily assigns ownership. Consolidation is a win for the industry, especially during this difficult time of recovery.

The answer is to find a vendor that can incorporate tools for business process management or Enterprise Content Management, to allow for information management and automation of document-driven business processes. Not only does this allow for quick and informed business decisions, but also opens a broad spectrum of capabilities including e-signatures, workflow, capture, electronic forms, records management and security and case management.

These solutions help drive efficiency, provide transparency and ensure compliance within the business.

Companies in the industry represent the culture and hospitality of the community they operate in. This local experience is what people look forward to when travelling or adventuring out to new places. Everyone wants to see the industry's full recovery and there is no doubt that technology would make the process smooth, safe and manageable.

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