

# WORLD EXPERIENCE OF OPERATION OF INNOVATIVE HOTELS

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## Strokovych H. V. World Experience of Operation of Innovative Hotels

The article considers the current world experience of operation of innovative hotels, which are complex suppliers of intelligent technologies with full implementation of high-tech relevant products and services. The conducted analysis proves that innovative technologies are used that provide hotel customers with innovative products and services. As in the classic smart home model, these technologies can be used not only directly in the room environment, but can be available in other premises of the hotel, as well as be used remotely. Innovative technologies can be used in restaurants, bars, spas, and other areas of the hotel business. They can include various information technologies, up to full automation of business processes. Restaurant guests can place orders with the help of robot waiters, dishes and drinks can be prepared by robot chefs, and delivery can be carried out based on the use of innovative automation technologies and face recognition cameras that automatically add the cost of the services provided to the room fee. A review of various approaches to the operation of innovative hotels and the results of available empirical studies on the assessment of the new experience of customers who used the services of innovative hotels is provided. It is noted that in a highly competitive economy, ensuring excellent customer experience is the basis for a company's success. The importance of continuous measurement of customer experience quality, the need to transform marketing psychology, based on a shift in emphasis on building trusting relationships with customers, creating a compelling and remarkable customer experience, information about which will be disseminated and will contribute to the growth of competitiveness of innovative hotels, is emphasized. The author describes in detail the technologies based on data analytics, the main characteristics of an innovative smart hotel, the consideration of which will contribute to the growth of competitiveness of the hotel business in Ukraine in the strategic perspective.

**Keywords:** functioning, innovative hotel, intelligent technologies, quality, marketing psychology, world experience, customer loyalty.

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## Строкович Г. В. Світовий досвід функціонування інноваційних готелів

У статті розглянуто актуальний світовий досвід функціонування інноваційних готелів, які є комплексними постачальниками інтелектуальних технологій з повним впровадженням актуальних високотехнологічних продуктів та послуг. Проведений аналіз доводить, що використовуються інноваційні технології, які надають клієнтам готелю інноваційні продукти та послуги. Як і в класичній моделі розумного будинку, зазначені технології можуть бути використані не тільки безпосередньо в обстановці номера, але можуть бути доступні в інших приміщеннях готелю, а також дистанційно. Інноваційні технології можуть застосовуватися і в ресторанах, і в барах, і в СПА, і в інших сферах готельного бізнесу. Вони можуть містити різні інформаційні технології, аж до повної автоматизації бізнес-процесів. Гості ресторанів можуть розміщувати замовлення за допомогою роботів-офіціантів, страви та напої можуть готуватися роботами-кухарями, а доставка може здійснюватися на основі застосування інноваційних технологій автоматизації та камер розпізнавання осіб, які автоматично додають вартість наданих послуг у плату за номер. Проведено огляд різних підходів до роботи інноваційних готелів та результатів емпіричних досліджень щодо оцінки нового досвіду клієнтів, які користувалися послугами інноваційних готелів. Зазначається, що в умовах висококонкурентної економіки забезпечення чудової якості клієнтського досвіду є основою успіху компанії. Наголошується на важливості постійного виміру якості клієнтського досвіду, необхідності трансформації психології маркетингу на основі зміщення акценту щодо побудови довірчих відносин з клієнтами, створення переконливого та позитивного клієнтського досвіду, інформація про який поширюватиметься та сприятиме зростанню конкурентоспроможності інноваційних готелів. Автором докладно описано технології, що базуються на аналітиці даних, основні характеристики інноваційного розумного готелю, врахування яких сприятиме у стратегічній перспективі зростанню конкурентоспроможності готельного бізнесу в Україні.

**Ключові слова:** функціонування, інноваційний готель, інтелектуальні технології, якість, психологія маркетингу, світовий досвід, лояльність клієнтів.

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Innovative technologies are gradually penetrating almost all spheres of life, fundamentally changing it, including the hotel industry [3; 12; 23]. At the same time, as many researchers note, the types of innovative technologies and the pace of their implementation vary significantly in different hotels. Therefore, for the formation of a competitive economy in Ukraine in a strategic perspective, it seems advisable to study the current foreign experience of operating innovative hotels and its gradual spread throughout the country.

The most progressive hotels use technologies such as artificial intelligence, data-driven systems, and service robots [12; 14]. Also, hotels that are comprehensive providers of intelligent technologies with the full implementation of currently available high-tech products and services. Currently, YOTEL in Singapore and New York perform intelligent functions, which include a technowall with adjustable lighting, robots delivering amenities and room service. The world's first porter robot Yobot is also used [10]. In addition, a smart hotel is characterized by the presence of various modern technologies to provide customers with non-traditional and more technologically enriched experiences [8]. Such hotels demonstrate the growth of intelligent services that are realized as a result of the integration of the use of data, connected innovative technologies that allow them to anticipate customer needs and also adapt depending on any changes in the environment or emerging situations [14].

A smart hotel uses innovative technologies that provide products and services, including the use of chatbots, facial or fingerprint recognition technologies to unlock room doors, robotic delivery of amenities, holograms for information, voice commands to control lighting, window shades, a robot concierge and many other items [8; 24]. In addition, as in the classic smart home model, these technologies can be used not only directly in the room setting, but can be available in other areas of the hotel, as well as remotely. Innovative technologies can also be used in restaurants and bars. They can include fully automated technologies. Restaurant guests can place orders with the help of robot waiters, meals and drinks can be prepared by robot chefs and delivery can be carried out based on the use of innovative automation technologies and facial recognition cameras that automatically add the cost of the services provided to the room fee [10].

Also in the fitness sector, hotel guests are provided with personalized services according to their health status, physical and psychological characteristics. Smart technologies such as a smart mirror are also available, which allow monitoring of the main human parameters [14]. One of the important goals of using innovative technologies is to achieve maximum efficiency through automation of services, which is due to

increased productivity, continuity of service personnel (robots) and savings in labor costs, which will create a competitive advantage that will reduce the financial costs of hotel guests [12; 26].

One of the promising areas of operation of innovative hotels is the use of a chatbot. It also works constantly and can communicate with guests from different countries, representatives of different cultures, at any time of the day [7]. In addition, there is a reduction in waiting time due to the simultaneous use of several communication channels. Funny situations that arise during the interaction between hotel guests and robots in a smart hotel are often described as advantages from the customer's point of view [25]. In addition, the essence of these situations can be used to form a knowledge base for improving robots.

Technologies based on data analytics also allow a smart hotel to offer a higher level of individualization of the offered goods, services or transaction environment [22]. Despite the information presented, most studies focus on usability, measuring usability, degree of perception or assessment of customer satisfaction from the use of modern technologies [12; 25]. In turn, in marketing psychology, the emphasis is shifted from building trusting relationships with customers to creating a compelling and superior customer experience [20; 26].

Customer experience is formed on the basis of a set of customer interactions with a product/service, a firm or part of its organization [11]. Thus, the customer experience in the hotel is formed from a set of impressions of guests of the innovative hotel, from the moment of searching for information about the hotel, booking a room, a list of all possible services that customers can potentially receive in the hotel, as well as outside it with the help of the hotel's service system.

In line with the relevance of focusing on customer experience, some researchers argue that having quality products and services is no longer enough to achieve success, so it is necessary to focus on the feasibility of measuring customer experience quality (CEXQ) in the hotel industry [1; 18] and identifying areas for improving its quality.

In a highly competitive economy, providing excellent customer experience is the basis for a company's success [6; 17] and its successful strategic outlook. Studies have proven that customers enjoy technology services, perceive them as more convenient, enjoyable, efficient, and the technology is easy enough to use [9; 14]. If guests of innovative hotels evaluate new product/service attributes positively, they expect better service quality due to the use of various technical options [7]. In addition, many researchers have confirmed a significant relationship between CEXQ and

emotions, as well as CEXQ and customer behavioral intentions [5; 17].

Let us consider the main characteristics of an innovative smart hotel. One of the characteristics is the service space, which is a virtual environment that does not require the physical presence of hotel guests and various service providers [21; 26]. Within a certain virtual environment, mobile check-in/check-out, all business processes related to the delivery of luggage, food, drinks or all aspects of hotel guest service are possible. Innovative technologies based on the collection and analysis of hotel guest data allow hotels to offer guests various customized solutions according to their preferences or individual wishes [22].

Innovative technologies are applied in many applications, with the aim of obtaining visible benefits in many aspects [14]. For example, some Marriott International hotels provide smart shower doors, where hotel guests can record their ideas in the shower and then send the image to their email [10]. These opportunities the implementation of innovative technologies ultimately form the innovative smart hotel, which is the concept of the hotel for of the future.

Smart organizational hotels allow integrating all hotels in the chain into a single automated space in order to simplify all business operations, which ultimately increases the value of the business [4]. Lai and Hung [19] conducted a study of a smart hotel and argued that a smart hotel can be built on the basis of four main elements, which are innovations in the hotel guest service model through the application of innovative information technology methods: improving operational efficiency, implementing and providing digital functions, and using intelligent systems. Wu and Cheng [25] defined the term “smart hotel” as “rather a practical business term referring to a new model of hotels operating with advanced technology.” This is the shortest, but very capacious definition.

De Ruyter et al. [9, p. 186] defined automated service as “interactive, content-oriented, and web-based customer service that is driven by the customer and integrated with relevant organizational processes and customer support technologies to strengthen the relationship between the customer and the service provider.” According to Kabadayi et al., intelligent services are “personalized and proactive services that are enabled by integrated technology and intelligent use of data that can anticipate and meet customer needs at specific times and/or locations based on changing customer feedback and circumstances” [14, p. 330]. The emergence and development of innovative technologies has led to significant changes in customer expectations in hotels. Many studies have identified the ben-

efits of smart hotels: improved facilities, convenience, efficiency, and profitability [8; 25].

In turn, Maklan and Klaus [20] argue that customer experience is the cognitive and affective evaluation of all direct and indirect encounters with a firm by the customer, related to their purchasing behavior, that is, all types of interactions with the firm directly affect the further purchasing behavior of hotel guests. As well as, their evaluative judgments regarding innovative hotels, and the potential prospects for changing the capacity of the consumer market of such hotels.

Kim and Choi [16] conducted an empirical study in various service settings and confirmed that CEXQ is a critical factor in the formation of customer loyalty, which they measured through repeat visits and recommendations. They recommended that specialists pay additional attention to the creation of overall CEXQ, rather than focusing only on service quality.

Maklan and Klaus [20] conducted an empirical analysis using a survey of 800 hotel guests across four different service settings and confirmed that CEXQ is an important determinant of customer behavior. In particular, they found a significant positive impact of CEXQ on customer loyalty and word-of-mouth intentions. Khan et al. [15] conducted a survey of 326 hotel customers in India and found a strong impact of CEXQ on satisfaction, which in turn shapes behavioral outcomes including word-of-mouth intentions and loyalty.

Amadeus & InterContinental Hospitality Group [2] highlighted the importance of process improvement in technology-enabled hospitality and recommended conducting regular audits through real-time interactions with guests to identify gaps and resolve issues that arise. In this regard, it is suggested to encourage guest feedback during and after their stay to help identify any potential issues and resolve them effectively.

The *purpose* of the article is to consider the current global experience in the operation of innovative hotels, the consideration of which will contribute to the growth of the hotel business competitiveness in Ukraine in a strategic perspective.

Based on this, it is consistent with J. J. Kim & H. Han [13] that the staff in a smart hotel should be reactive even though they have traditionally been trained to be proactive in certain instances regarding hotel service. The article [13] studied the impact of the current technological revolutions on the hotel industry workforce and compiled a list of tasks that could be easily completed through the use of various technologies, which include check-in and check-out, restaurant reservations, and room service orders, and that the staff (humans) are there to monitor and ensure the level of service quality delivery. Therefore,

the implementation of innovative technologies should be carried out systematically, constantly monitoring and controlling the situation, assessing the prospects for its development, making the necessary adjustments based on the adoption of effective strategic and tactical management decisions, in order to maximize positive customer feedback.

In order to increase the objectivity of identifying the preferences of guests of innovative hotels, it seems advisable to conduct a preliminary clarification of the wishes of clients regarding future service. For this purpose, a questionnaire in Google form can be developed, in which the preliminary wishes and expectations of each guest of the innovative hotel will be clarified, service will be carried out taking into account the results of the survey and analysis of previously collected data, as well as taking into account the changes made. The entire service process will be based on the management of changes arising in all business processes.

In a unified questionnaire, attention should be paid to such basic things as: the need for transfer of hotel guests, methods of ordering food, dietary restrictions, preference for a certain type of cuisine or style of food, preferred time for cleaning the room, preferred entertainment, sports, SPA, etc. In addition, it is necessary to clarify which issues are preferable to resolve directly with hotel employees, and which with robots. This will allow to most fully take into account all the wishes of guests of innovative hotels and optimize the use of innovative technologies based on the best combination of interaction between hotel employees and innovative technologies, which will ultimately have a positive impact on the creation of corresponding competitive advantages of innovative hotels. Also, as a result, this will lead to the formation of a confirmed positive experience of clients of an innovative hotel.

It is also important to note the need for continuous monitoring of innovative technologies, their assessment from the point of view of the possibility and expediency of their use in innovative hotels. If a decision is made to implement them in the work of an innovative hotel, it is advisable to inform existing and potential clients of the innovative hotel about the new opportunities.

### CONCLUSIONS

The article presents a comprehensive review of the current experience of innovative hotels in the world, including detailed information on the very essence of the concept of an innovative hotel, the range of applied intelligent technologies, the consideration of which will contribute to the growth of competitiveness of the hotel business in Ukraine in the strategic perspective. The author has conducted a thorough

review of various approaches to the work of innovative hotels, which are complex suppliers of intelligent technologies with the full implementation of currently available high-tech products and services. The article focuses on the feasibility of measuring the quality of customer experience, on the transformation of marketing psychology, when the emphasis is mixed from building trusting relationships with customers to creating a convincing and excellent customer experience. Prospects for further research lie in the field of critical analysis and identification of opportunities for adapting innovative international experience to improve the hotel business in Ukraine. ■

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