

# Developing next-gen hospitality solutions

To solve a communication problem - not between guests and staff, but with computer systems - hotel software developers had to build customised interface systems which were costly and had limited functionality. A group of hoteliers and hospitality consultants decided to create a system of standards that worked together and had new functionality that would be adopted by the industry - 'next-generation solutions'.



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[Hospitality Technology Next Generation](#) (HTNG), a global not-for-profit trade association was created to cultivate, through collaboration and partnership among hospitality professionals and technology providers, the development of next-generation solutions. Their objective is to promote interoperability of the many technology systems used in the hotel industry, such as property management systems, point-of-sale systems, telephone systems, building automation systems, guest room entertainment systems such as video-on-demand, mobile, cloud software, security, access control systems and many others.

## Acting on the data

Eben Marais, managing director at Ankerdata, a hospitality solutions business provider, says that hotels have renewed their focus on technology to improve the guest experience and hotel operations. He thinks that one of today's biggest hospitality tech industry challenges is that of delivering open and performant data integration – a robust framework that is able to move data in any format through any number of destinations.

“In this day and age, the hotel industry needs to start focusing and acting on the data that has been collected by hotels because if they are going through the process of collecting data, then they should be using it in every beneficial way they can.”

Big data is all over the place but what happens when all your data cannot be easily merged? When this is the case you will always be serving your IT systems so it would make sense to connect your entire hotel infrastructure, combining all your data from all applications reliably, quickly and centrally, and in doing so enable yourself to immediately use and distribute all customer- and business related information anywhere within the hotel, and in real time – these frameworks and solutions are available in the marketplace.

## Laying the tech foundation for the future

Marais adds, "With the hotel industry becoming more and more technological all guest movements are being recorded by various systems like Point-of-Sale, Spa management and CRM. This data belongs to the establishment and should be easily accessible to the hotel operator to utilise and provide a more personalised guest experience and to attract the guests to book directly with the hotel in the future."

The benefits are numerous, says Ian Lumsden, director at Ankerdata. "Having this infrastructure lays the foundation for analytical recommendation engines that provide your guests with precise, exclusive offers in real time." He adds that you can also retrieve direct business from OTA's and reduce immediate operating costs.

Emerging technologies and trends present opportunities to those who are paying attention and anticipate the prospects they might create. Together with like-minded people, organisations like HTNG, hoteliers and hospitality professionals the possibilities are endless - the products, systems and solutions are out there begging to be installed and implemented.

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