

HOTELS UPGRADE THEIR EQUIPMENT



Technological development affects all industries and the tourism industry is definitely not an exception. There is for example the Hotel of Tomorrow (HOT) project in which US-based group of experts makes predictions of the future of hotels. They speak about personal robotic butlers, voice-activated smart rooms or biometric monitors that adjust lighting, temperature, and humidity based on customers health needs and personal preferences. All these things might sound a bit too fantastic. The reality now however shows that the technological equipment of a hotel is important for its visitors. In the past, hotel visitors enjoyed amenities they did not have at home, but nowadays hotels often offer older equipment than a traveler uses at their own place. That is why hotels upgrade their technological equipment to match their visitors' needs. Hotels need to offer high-definition flat-screen TVs, iPod docking stations and a wider selection of programming, preferably available on demand. As Henry Harteveltdt, a vice president and travel analyst of Forrester Research said: "All of this goes back to recognizing that customers want more control." Some hotels have already started with the upgrades. For example, Marriott International planned to offer large high-definition LCD televisions in all guest rooms in the United States and Canada at three of its brands: Marriott, JW Marriott and Renaissance. Hilton installs flat-screen TVs in all its North American guest rooms and W Hotels wants to equip all its rooms with iPod docking stations. Not only hotels see the upgrades as important. Singapore Airlines is introducing a free entertainment system featuring 1,004 on-demand music and video options. They also offer the passengers the possibility to use office applications and save their work on a portable flash drive. The US airlines in general do not invest much into such amenities although there are some exceptions like e.g. Delta Air Lines.

Date: 2007-07-31

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