

LONDON'S RECYCLABLE HOTEL



The British budget hotel operator Travelodge introduced a new product – recyclable hotel. The project was developed by Verbus Systems, a joint business venture between consulting engineers, Buro Happold and constructor, George & Harding. It is essentially a Lego-like construction. The modules from which the hotel is built are made in China and transported where the customer wants them. These shipping container reminding modules are already equipped with bathrooms. As they arrive to the construction spot, they are put together and at the end the windows are fitted and furnishings and decorations added.

There are two types of the modules. One is used for double rooms and it measures 5m x 3m. The other type measures 3.5m x 6m and is used for family rooms. Such a prefabricated hotel can be easily dismantled and moved to another destination. When a module is no longer needed it can be dismantled and the owner can extract the valuable commodities it is made from. Companies can use it to cover demand for accommodation during various sport events or e.g. festivals. According to the director of property and development Paul Harvey, such a temporary building would be different from a permanent hotel but it could be built in as little as 12 weeks and removed quickly at the end of the event when the need is gone.

Travelodge plans to become the biggest operator in London by the 2012 Olympics with over 7,000 rooms in the capital and they plan to use the new technology to achieve this. According to the company, to build a hotel with this technology takes 25 per cent less time and it is 10 per cent cheaper. The technology will also allow the company to offer cheaper prices. The Chinese modules could be also used for student accommodation or urban housing.

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