



# 10 Hotelier Trends to Help You Build Back Better in 2022

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# New trends are shaping the hospitality industry

The hospitality industry has endured a difficult few years recently.

But with restrictions easing around the world and consumer spending and optimism on the rise, the public is ready to start truly enjoying themselves again with all that the industry has to offer.

For hoteliers, now is the time to start planning and preparing to get the most from this consumer surge and start thriving.

**In this guide, we identify and explore 10 trends that are shaping the hospitality industry, with tips and advice to help you build back better in 2022.**

# An overview of the UK consumer market



**8%**

increase in national optimism as restrictions lift and economy improves<sup>1</sup>



**28%**

of consumers say they appreciate the simple pleasure of going out more than before lockdown<sup>1</sup>



**4%**

increase in non-essential spending (against the same period in 2019)<sup>1</sup>



**32%**

of consumers are looking to spend more on luxuries themselves<sup>1</sup>



**£2.9**

billion hospitality turnover in May 2021, up from £1.2 billion in May 2020<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bouncing Back, Barclays

<sup>2</sup> Coronavirus and its impact on UK hospitality, Office for National Statistics

# 10 trends that are shaping the hospitality industry



## TREND 1

# Advanced digitization offers greater opportunities

Digitization in hospitality is nothing new.

For years, hoteliers have used technology to improve and streamline their processes. From online bookings and hotel comparison websites to guest reviews and metasearches, technology has dramatically changed the way hoteliers do business. But with the arrival of the pandemic, this approach to technology has been refocused.

Take QR codes, for instance.

QR codes became ubiquitous features of hospitality, used for everything from venue check-ins to contactless menus, and their use has continued through to today.

Post-pandemic, the adoption of technology in hospitality is only increasing and becoming more advanced. Indeed, a 2020 survey found that almost half of executives in the global travel and hospitality industry pointed to new technology that better serves their customers as a top business priority for the future<sup>3</sup>.

But what does this look like?

Self-check-ins are one such example. Electronic keys, contactless payments and digital communications further streamline check-ins for guests and staff, reducing friction and saving time and costs, so you can spend more time focusing on your guests.



Hoteliers can take this further by re-examining and, where appropriate, consolidating their existing internal systems.

Many hotels employ a number of disparate hotel management systems to coordinate their processes, from room booking to spa management.

Consolidating these systems into one unified platform such as VisBook improves your operational efficiency, so you can enjoy smooth, seamless communication with an all-in-one, collaborative way of working.



**Advanced hotel technology is on the rise**



**Automate where possible to reduce guest friction**



**Look to digital platforms to streamline your internal processes**

**“49% of travel and hospitality companies prioritize using new technology to better serve their customers<sup>3</sup>.”**

3 Main business priorities of travel and hospitality, STATISTA



## TREND 2

# Spontaneity and staycations

The pandemic has dramatically transformed the way consumers approach their holidays.

COVID has not gone away, and with country-specific restrictions still unpredictable, more and more people are no longer planning their trips well ahead of time, instead opting for spontaneous trips booked at the last minute to reduce the risk of cancellations.

As a result, the hospitality industry is increasingly seeing shorter booking lead-in times. At the start of the pandemic in 2020, **69% of bookings were made within seven days—a rise of 46% from 2019<sup>4</sup>.**

Many of these spontaneous trips are local too, with guests happy to stay close to home and enjoy a luxury hotel experience nearby as a flexible, affordable treat.

Indeed, **41% of travelers surveyed either strongly or somewhat agreed to consider a domestic trip in 2020, as opposed to 21% for international trips.** This trend looks set to continue well into 2022, and it's one that presents a valuable opportunity for the hospitality industry.

As hoteliers, you need to optimize your direct booking channels to ensure you stand out in travel metasearches. Google is often your guests' first point of call when booking a hotel, so it's essential that you get it right.



“69% of bookings are made within seven days<sup>4</sup>.”

4 Shorter booking lead times are causing planning nightmares, GlobalData Tourism Intelligence Centre

Attract local guests by creating package bundles of a room, meal and spa experience. Intensify your marketing for these events around Valentine’s or Mother’s Day to tap into increased local interest.

It’s also worth completing your Google My Business listing in full and building out a dedicated service page on your website that targets local keywords. This will help you appear in local searches online, increasing your potential visibility as a result.



**Guests are increasingly booking with shorter lead-in times**



**Local staycations are on the rise**



**Optimize your online presence to target these growing markets**

### TREND 3

## Understand your guests, deliver for your guests

The use of customer data is not a new concept for hospitality.

Gathered from a range of sources, this data is used to help hoteliers make informed decisions about future planning and improve existing services.

But with travelers' tastes and preferences transforming so dramatically over the past two years, its use has only grown more important. Consequently, for those hoteliers looking to increase revenue post-pandemic, guest data is key. Now is the time to take a deep dive into your data to better understand your guests and their unique needs.

Identifying guest booking habits, popular packages and peak booking times are basic examples. But other information such as demographics, average spend per guest, hotel-provided activities (spa, restaurant, golf and so on) and room preferences.

All this data can help you deliver unique, personalized experiences tailored to your guests, increasing revenue spend through targeted experiences.





For modern hoteliers looking to extract the most value from their data, a customer relationship management (CRM) platform is essential.

A CRM connects your guest touchpoints together, combining all your various data into one place so you can track, monitor and analyze their interactions with your hotel.

As an all-in-one hotel property management system, VisBook collates and stores all your guest data in a single place. Plus, as it integrates with dedicated partners, it can offer greater, more advanced CRM features according to the unique needs of your hotel.

The added benefit of a CRM is that hotels can maintain compliance with any relevant data regulations. The introduction of GDPR laws in 2018 means hotels need to abide by strict standards of compliance – a CRM makes this simple and stress-free.



**Guest data is growing more important – and more advanced**



**Advanced data delivers personalized guest experiences**



**Invest in a reliable CRM like VisBook to connect and coordinate your guest data**

#### TREND 4

## Customer reviews soar in value

Enabled by online metasearches and spurred on by the pandemic, guests are increasingly becoming their own travel agents.

Empowered by the plethora of comparison sites, direct booking channels and online travel marketplaces, more and more travelers are now researching, planning and arranging their own holidays, tailored to their own personal preferences.

A recent report found that direct bookings in April 2021 were 78% higher than in 2019<sup>5</sup>.

Naturally, optimizing your presence on these direct booking channels is all but mandatory. But it's easy to forget that, as the role of booking channels increases, so too does the competition. Faced with this increased opposition, it is customer reviews that help set apart the good hotels from the great.

Now is the time to actively increase your customer reviews online, and the best way to do this is to just ask. Start by inviting your guests to leave a review online when they check out – **a friendly face and a memorable interaction can be enough on its own to encourage a positive review when they return home.**



“78% increase in direct bookings in 2022<sup>5</sup>.”

5 Hotel direct bookings & ADR grow ahead of summer demand, *The Hotelier Pulse Report*

But for best results, send a follow-up email a week after their visit. Their trip is still fresh in their mind at this time, and they'll be settled enough to take the time to leave a positive review.

Your CRM is essential for this. VisBook lets you easily communicate with guests via email and text message, coordinating and launching communications with ease.

Further encourage positive customer reviews with added incentives – future discounts, prizes and other special offers can significantly increase the likelihood that your guests will leave a review.



**Positive reviews help your hotel stand out against online competition**



**Optimize your presence on direct booking channels**



**Stand out online and cultivate positive customer reviews**

## TREND 5

# Tap into the new normal of remote working

The rise of working from home has resulted in increased demand for temporary office locations. Many businesses are ditching dedicated office spaces in favour of shared workspaces, and even more employees are looking for low-cost spaces to work as a break from their usual home setup.

Coupled with this are increasingly distributed workforces, resulting in more conferences and away days and associated hotel bookings. As a result, attendees will likely have to spend time working from their hotel by necessity. Hotels offer the perfect venue for remote working, and spell opportunity for the hospitality industry.

With a variety of amenities such as free wi-fi, hot drinks and ample plug sockets on offer, hotels can offer businesses and their employees a remote working experience that expands and diversifies their customer base.

Offer tiered package deals that cater to remote workers in your area – **VisBook's seamless integration of conference and room bookings make this easy, coordinating different functions in one single place.** It's worth noting that your existing guest data might not offer leads for these kinds of packages.

Instead, create a dedicated service page on your website outlining your remote working package and contact local businesses and freelancer communities to let them know. Consider **first-time discounts, special offers and exclusive deals to incentivize prospective guests and attract new custom.**



**The rise of home working makes hotels an attractive choice for a remote workforce**



**Offer package deals that appeal to both businesses and employees**



**Connect directly with businesses to drum up new customers**



## TREND 6

# Self-care as a travel experience

There has been a renewed focus on self-care following the pandemic<sup>6</sup>. After years of lockdowns, restrictions and remote working, the strain on the public's mental health has increased. As a result, **more and more people are looking to prioritize their wellbeing in 2022.**

For the hospitality industry, **this growing wellness market is a valuable opportunity.** Guests are more willing to indulge in expensive, luxurious one-off experiences, and hotels offer a getaway where guests can unwind, relax and spend some time practicing some much-needed self-care.

Create bespoke luxury packages spanning three-course meals, spa days, premium hotel suites and other experiences to tap into this trend. A tiered system with a scale of different experiences will ensure you appeal to guests with a wide scale of budgets.

**VisBook makes it easy to create custom packages for your guests,** letting you choose from rooms, restaurant bookings, spa experiences and more to include in one inclusive package. Staff can quickly and easily design bespoke packages with custom pricing to suit a range of guests, saving you time and effort as a result.

Position your hotel as a self-care destination by highlighting these packages in your marketing. **Share videos outlining the package on your social channels and contact previous guests to let them know about your new wellness offerings.**



**Self-care is a growing priority for consumers**



**Offer dedicated luxury wellness packages that tap into this growing trend**



**Position your hotel as a self-care destination**

**“A \$1.5 trillion global wellness market<sup>7</sup>.”**

<sup>6</sup> The sadness of lockdown, *The Guardian*

<sup>7</sup> Feeling good: The future of the wellness market, *McKinsey & Company*

## TREND 7

# Get the competitive edge with sustainability and social responsibility

Once a sidelined topic, climate change has become a hot button issue in the past few years, one that has altered and shaped consumer preferences dramatically. As a result, eco-conscious individuals actively seek out those businesses that embrace and adopt environmental policies, and the hospitality industry is no exception.

Sustainability is now a major selling point for hotels, with **73% of guests more likely to choose accommodation with sustainability policies over those without<sup>8</sup>**.

Besides its global importance, this increased focus on social responsibility gives hoteliers the opportunity to stand out against their competition and increase revenue as a result. A myriad of ways you can achieve this. Reducing your reliance on single-use materials and using planet-friendly alternatives is a good place to start.

Swapping single-use shampoo and handwash bottles for refillable alternatives or using fully recyclable or biodegradable products in your restaurant are simple switches that can significantly improve your eco credentials.





“73% of guests more likely to choose a hotel with sustainability policies<sup>8</sup>.”

8 Sustainable Tourism Static, Avantis

It's also worth swapping your lightbulbs for energy efficient alternatives too. As well as reducing your hotel's environmental impact, these can also significantly reduce overheads.

If you have been approved by a green hotel certification body, display their logo prominently on your website and marketing. **These show prospective guests that you prioritize environmentalism as a business, and act as trust signals to eco-aware visitors.**

For some hotels, it's also worth considering going paperless where possible in favour of digital management systems. VisBook, for instance, lets you coordinate all your hotel processes in a single place, from bookings and check-ins to aftercare and beyond.



**Highlight your sustainability policies to attract eco-conscious guests**



**Look for planet-friendly alternatives to your hotel amenities**



**Display eco certification across your online and offline marketing**

## TREND 8

# Proactive guest experience trumps reactive guest service

Many of the trends highlighted above are indicative of a wider trend – the growing importance of guest experience management (GEM). **Guest experience management refers to a proactive, always-on approach to guest satisfaction – an anticipation of your guests' needs during their stay.** This is in contrast to guest service, which is often reactive, and only provided upon request from the guest.

For hoteliers, this means a forward-looking and hyper-focused approach to their guests, one that plans and anticipates for their needs and where the staff reach out to their guests first, not the other way round.

Personalization plays a significant role in this. Remembering your guests' names, their preferred drink, their typical breakfast time – these are just a few touchpoints which can transform your guest service into a memorable guest experience.

Truly unforgettable GEM spans the entire breadth of a guest's stay, with hoteliers planning and pre-empting the unique needs of their guests from start to finish. Of course, this requires slick processes and seamless management systems to ensure staff have a clear overview of their guests during their stay.

VisBook is such a system – a single platform in which staff can oversee and plan for all their guests' bookings during their stay. Restaurant, spa, check-in, extra activities and more can all be managed in one place, reducing friction and ensuring staff can anticipate what their guests might need and when throughout their time at the hotel to provide a better guest experience.

Guest experience management gives your hotel an edge in 2022. **Now is the time to shift focus and start adopting a proactive approach to your guest satisfaction.**



**Proactive guest experience is the priority for hoteliers in 2022**



**Plan and anticipate your guests' needs throughout their stay**



**Lean on a hotel management platform to improve guest experience**



## TREND 9

# Reduced admin for a seamless staff-guest experience

Perhaps the least enjoyable and most time-consuming task associated with the hospitality industry is admin. The same is true for any job – tedious but necessary admin can quickly eat into valuable time and resources that could be used elsewhere.

Indeed, a 2019 survey found that the average time spent on admin was 5.49 hours a week, with more than a quarter of respondents spending almost a whole day per week on these tasks<sup>9</sup>.

Thankfully, there is a solution. The introduction of a single platform that absorbs any offline processes and integrates disparate systems into one can dramatically reduce the amount of admin time for hotel staff.

**VisBook offers significant capabilities for this.** As an all-in-one hotel property management system, it provides everything from room and restaurant bookings to spa management, reports and more. As a result, bookings, check-ins and other admin tasks can all be managed in one place in VisBook, creating seamless processes that streamline the day-to-day management of your hotel.

But the benefits of this go beyond reducing time and lightening staff workloads. With the improved efficiency and cross-team communication enabled by a fully integrated platform, your employees can focus on what truly matters – providing your guests with a positive, memorable experience.



**Daily admin tasks are a significant drain on time**



**Reduce daily admin with a single, unified digital platform**



**Free up time to focus on delivering a positive guest experience**

**“1/4 of hotels spend up to a day per week on admin<sup>9</sup>.”**

9 Hospitality Trends Report, *The Access Group*

## TREND 10

# Embrace video as a marketing tool

The popularity of video has soared during the pandemic. With the world in lockdown and people largely confined to their homes, 96% of consumers increased their video consumption in 2020<sup>10</sup>.

But this popularity extends beyond music, news or entertainment content. **9 out of 10 viewers want to see more videos from brands and businesses – and that includes hotels.**

Branded videos provide hoteliers with an engaging method of attracting prospective guests. Just as people follow celebrities and influencers to vicariously experience the glamorous day-to-day of their lives, so too will they follow hotels for the same.

With this in mind, use your video content to showcase the unique and attractive aspects of your hotel. Offer behind-the-scenes peeks at your kitchen staff preparing sumptuous meals, explore your spa, pool and sauna, or simply show off your premium hotel rooms in exquisite detail.

This kind of content works perfectly on social media, particularly on visual-focused platforms such as Instagram or TikTok.

**Think video content is hard to do? Think again.**

While it might help, you don't necessarily need professional experience to create enticing social-ready video. Your smartphone and a basic knowledge of video techniques is enough to help you create a short, striking and engaging video that captures prospective guests.

“90% want to see more branded videos<sup>10</sup>.”

10 135 Video marketing statistics you can't ignore, *InVideo*



**Video content is on the rise**



**Showcase your hotel with short, engaging videos**



**Share your video on visual social platforms like Instagram or TikTok**

# A brighter future for hospitality

Things are changing in the hospitality industry. Success won't arrive overnight, but as the trends above show, the industry is on the up. Consumer confidence is increasing, people are ready to start spending again and the hoteliers look set to see an uptick in guests.

By keeping an eye on the horizon and staying ahead of these trends, hoteliers can start building back better in 2022.



# About VisBook

VisBook is an all-in-one hotel property management system that helps you go the extra mile for your guests.

With over 1,100 customers from across 11 countries, we have a proud history of supporting hospitality brands with daily operation management since 1995.

**Our ethos is: less admin, more fun.**

VisBook brings ease and flexibility to your hotel management, so you can focus on providing a memorable guest experience while we handle the administration.

- Booking & check-in
- Point of sale (POS)
- Restaurant management
- Conferences
- Customer relationship management (CRM)
- Spa management
- Housekeeping & janitorial
- Multiproperty
- Reports & financial ratios

Enjoy seamless  
hotel management,  
99.993% uptime  
and happy, satisfied  
guests with VisBook.

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