

DIRECTIONS AND GLOBAL TRENDS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY. WHAT ARE THE TRENDS INFLUENCING THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY?

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Abstract

The hospitality industry faces various issues and challenges that can impact its progress. In the last years, changes have been identified in the preferences of clients, who put more emphasis on sustainable and innovative practices. The future of the hospitality industry is created by the trend that emphasizes sustainability, personalized experiences, the integration of advanced IoT and AI technology, health and well-being through the integration of nutrition in menus and, finally, augmented reality. The current paper analyzes the impact that current trends have on customer experiences. The hospitality industry faces various challenges that can impact its progress. In recent years, shifts in customer preferences have been identified, with an increasing emphasis on sustainable and innovative practices. The future of the hospitality industry is shaped by trends focusing on sustainability, personalized experiences, and the integration of advanced technologies such as IoT and AI. Additionally, health and wellness are being prioritized through the incorporation of nutrition in menus, alongside the use of augmented reality.

Keywords: hospitality industry, tourism, trends, challenges, sustainability.

JEL Classification: Z30.

Introduction

It is already well known that the hospitality industry is influenced by numerous factors, both at micro and macro levels. Companies in the sector are constantly having to adapt to the changes that have occurred in recent years, especially in the post-pandemic period

The tourism and hospitality industry faces year after year different problems and challenges that can have both negative and positive impacts, both at the micro and macro level.

Over the last few years, changes in customer preferences have been identified, with customers placing increased emphasis on sustainable practices.

With the passing years the world is moving towards an increasingly digitalized society, and the hospitality industry is not left behind, it stands out as a hybrid industry, which combines and balances technological innovations in operations with the need to connect customers with human resources.

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Because trends in the hospitality industry are changing with the times, it is one of the most dynamic industries, with a rapid evolution both in the short, medium and long term.

Anticipating customer needs is one of the most important objectives for companies in the hospitality industry.

For companies in the hospitality industry, it is very important to be aware of and anticipate customer needs to be able to adapt to them. Analyzing data can help to identify and implement appropriate strategies geared towards customer needs.

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According to the articles published by EHL Hospitality Business School (École hôtelière de Lausanne), 10 important trends of the hospitality industry for 2025 have been identified, among the main trends identified by them are the increasing weight of artificial intelligence in hotel activities, but also the redefinition of the relationship between hoteliers and their employees.

Robert Rauch (R. A. Rauch & Associates), also talks in his articles about ten trends in the hospitality industry, including the role of women in the top management of large hotels.

SIS Institute talks about five global trends of the hospitality industry, about the importance of companies in the field adapting to the needs of each individual client. It identifies as the main trends, sustainable practices and collaborations between operators in this industry and influencers for promoting the brand.

Restoration of work teams

In the post-pandemic period, one of the biggest challenges for hoteliers is to rebuild work teams. Due to the critical period during the pandemic, when many hotels were closed or had significant staff reductions. A large part of the employees laid off in 2020 found work in more stable fields and wanted to return to tourism. This led to new opportunities for new employees in the industry, they had the chance to negotiate their salaries and working conditions. It is predicted (Insights, EHL Insights, 2025) that the shortage of staff within the large hotel groups will improve considerably by the end of 2025.

To reduce and combat employee losses, many hoteliers offer much better remuneration packages, including, in addition to better salaries, free hotel accommodation and professional training courses.

Sustainability

Sustainability represents one of the current concerns in all economic fields, the hospitality industry has in recent years put a lot of emphasis on "the conscious use of resources in such a way that the resources are not exhausted or

damaged". For example, Marriott International has the sustainability and social impact platform Serve 360: Doing Good in Every Direction . "Serve Our World, guides Marriott's arrangement to have a positive and sustainable impact wherever they operate" .

JW Marriott Washington, DC is an example, in 2021 it received the inaugural Global Energy Management Leadership award, a very important distinction in the field of energy management and conservation, the award was received for the reduction of over 725 metric tons of carbon emissions, the equivalent the amount of carbon that would be removed from the air of 1532 acres of forest .

According to Denise Naguib, global vice president of sustainability and supplier diversity for Marriott International, Marriott aims to source locally 50% of the products used by the end of 2025, but also responsibly source 95% of the 10 most important categories of such as animal protein and seafood . In conclusion, Marriott International focuses on local supply, to support local communities, on preserving the natural climate and reducing carbon emissions.

Sustainability in 2025 represents a basic expectation from clients for everything that means ecological and sustainable initiatives in the hospitality industry, from the reduction of carbon emissions, of waste and sip to the supply of local and ecological products.

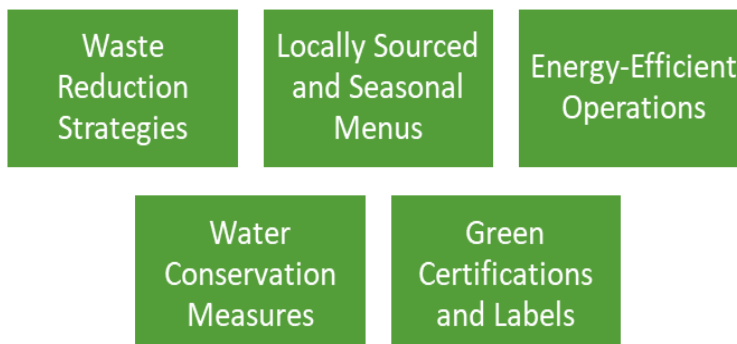
Table 1

Sustainability Statistics	2022	2025
Hotels with sustainability certifications	30%	50%
Percentage of travelers preferring sustainable brands	70%	83%
Reduction in plastic use by major hotel chains	50%	70%

Source: <https://aura-group.com/the-latest-trends-in-the-hospitality-industry/>

According to the study presented in table 1, the percentage of guests who prefer sustainable travel and brands increased in 2025, with an increase of 13% compared to 2022. As for the hotels that obtained sustainable certifications, their number increased in 2025 by 20% compared to the year 2022.

The main sustainable initiatives for the year 2025 in the hospitality industry are:



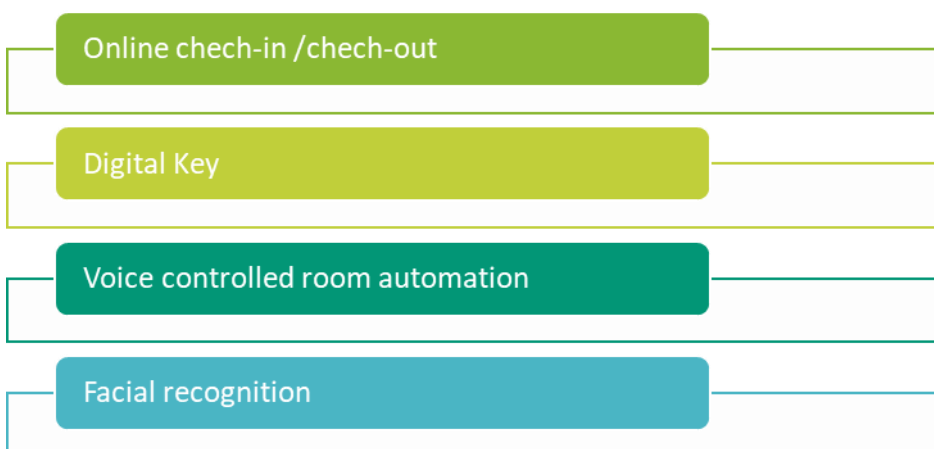
Source: <https://sish.edu.sg/top-5-global-trends-in-hospitality-in-2024/#>

In conclusion, hotel groups adopt as many sustainable strategies as possible, with as little negative impact on the environment as possible.

Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence is a concrete fact that is more and more common in modern society, in the hospitality industry it represents a current trend that is gaining momentum more and more. AI in the hospitality industry is not intended to replace human resources, but to come to their aid and help them offer better services.

Contactless services simplify the guest experience, first and foremost by reducing waiting time. Among the facilities can be listed (Insights, EHL Insights, 2025):



Citizen M, is the hotel brand that pioneered the implementation of contactless services in 2018, with a successful UX application.

Tabel 2

	2022	2025
Hotels using AI-driven concierge services	20%	60%
Expected increase in guest satisfaction through personalisation	10%	35%
Annual growth in hospitality tech spending	5 Billions euro	9 Billions euro

Source: <https://aura-group.com/the-latest-trends-in-the-hospitality-industry/>

Following the results shown in Table 2, we can see a significant increase in spending in the hotel industry for technological products and services in the last three years.

Robotic systems are now widely used to improve the efficiency of the operations in back-offices, such as housekeeping or food and beverages departments in hotels. These systems are widely used in Henn-na hotels in Japan, where a boost in efficiency was easily observed after the implementation of such systems, because the human staff could handle better more critical aspects of customer service. .

Augmented realities has emerged as an important concept in hospitality management and, according to EHL in the Virtual Housekeeping course, allow an interactive and complete learning environment (Insights, EHL Insights, 2025). The global augmented reality market is projected to grow steadily in the next years as millennials are more likely than previous generations to use digital technologies. Some of the most effective uses in hospitality industry of augmented reality is interactive hotel rooms, as in Augmented Reality Florence Travel Guide – Italy.

Personalized experiences for guests, as in recent years clients want to have unique and different experiences in their travels. More than 56% of consumers say they will become repeat buyers after a personalized experience. The current generations, especially the millennials, want to practice sustainable tourism and combine it with personalized experiences, they want to identify with the local culture, from the hotel environment to the culinary elements and the activities practiced in free time. More than other groups, millennials want an experience that makes them identify with the place they are visiting. .

Women in the hospitality industry

Women in the last century have continued their quest for gender equality and made much achievements in leadership positions all around the globe in recent decades. In the hotel industry, too, they advanced into leadership and managerial roles with very good financial results for their companies.

Women in the hospitality industry – “in the year 2024, 58% of the human resource in the hospitality industry is represented by women, and 34% of them occupy management positions “.

Conclusion

The hospitality industry is a highly dynamic sector, continually evolving in response to shifts in both its microenvironment and macroenvironment. Experts in the field have pinpointed key trends and directions that are shaping the future of the industry. On top of the trends, we find sustainable and ecological development, the use of artificial intelligence and augmented reality is increasingly used in hotels all over the world.

For the year 2025, the trend is very clear, artificial intelligence becomes an integral part of operational systems within hotels.

It is important to underline the fact that the big hotel brands will diversify the range and more, they will offer less traditional experiences. For example, Hilton acquired "Graduate Hotels", to attract Generation Z and Millennials.

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