

A REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH PROJECT FUTUREHOTEL

FUTUREHOTEL – SMART HOTEL ROOM

DESIGN OF A COGNITIVE HOTEL ENVIRONMENT



Mr. Gerhardt, do you see any potential for the hotel industry in the analysis of behaviour-based data?

»There is still much discussion surrounding BYOD (Bring Your Own Device). 95% of 14- to 49-year-olds are smartphone users, and bring their device with them to the hotel. We logically concluded that the personalisation of hotel accommodation is becoming an irreversible trend. Hotel operators' interest in directly evaluating behaviour-based data during the guest's stay is increasing rapidly. This means that offers can always be made to the guest if they are desired by the guest. Once the guest sees added value for themselves, they are willing to disclose personal information. The data that can be evaluated during the guest's stay via smartphone usage are the key for being able to personalise their accommodation. It also comes down to analysing behaviour-based data and offering a wide range of offers to the guest. This trend is already quite advanced in the field of E-commerce, although it is quite complicated for the hotel industry during the guest's stay because of the frequently fragmented technology and the abundance of data accrued in a very short amount of time. Yet that is precisely why personalisation through the analysis of behaviour-based data holds so much potential for hotel operators.«



How can the hotel industry use compiled data appropriately?

»Theoretically, hotels are sitting on a giant data set. This stems from a range of digitalisation tools that are already available or will soon be on the market. Start-ups in particular have extraordinary ideas that often cover a small sub-area. This creates new island solutions. It is thus about interlinking all technology together on one software platform, regardless of the manufacturer. To this end, the various data must be cleaned and compiled. Only then can correlations be made that result in a real added value. These added values may concern offers, convenience and safety for the guest, profitability for the operator, or energy efficiency of the building. The offering of services via message to the guest's smartphone on the basis of known preferences is only the most obvious form of this.«

Figure 44:
Frank Gerhardt,
CEO of VINN GmbH

What should hotel operators consider when implementing a smart hotel room?

»The network design or infrastructure as an information highway that must be prioritised and regulated should be the top priority. Network specialists who are familiar with the hotel-specific idiosyncrasies for all of the technology should be involved early on. All of the hotel operator's preferred technology providers should have open interfaces for their solutions and provide them free of charge as standard APIs as needed. The hotel operator can integrate this technology step-by-step and within the limits of their budget, and connect it to the software platform. With regard to the contracts, the hotel operator should also ensure that operation is ensured in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. All data accrued in the hotel must be usable for the hotel operator's own ends.«

INTERVIEW WITH FRANK GERHARDT, CEO OF VINN GMBH

What is your company doing to keep abreast of technological innovations for hotel customers?

»As partners of the FutureHotel joint research project, we are aware of the requirements and technology of the future. In the group we are working with hotel operators to develop innovative concepts and solutions. We are currently working on our own VINN FutureLab in Krefeld, Germany. The showroom is being planned, developed, and constructed like a real hotel project, with assistance from building information modelling (BIM) among other things. The lab will also be useful as a (cost) simulation for entire hotel projects in order to determine the usage of innovative products compared to conventional products, such as the orbital shower versus a conventional shower, or air conditioning controls via notification of the guest's presence with a wearable versus conventional air conditioning controls. The lab will be open for technology from all third parties who would like to connect to our software platform.«