Role of Information Technology in Hotel Industry

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the role of information technology in hotel industry. At the present age Information technology helps in the growth and development of every industry and hotel industry is not an exception. The hotel industry is the major contributor to the economy of the country. The guests are god in the hotel industry so it is very important to satisfy them. In this modern era due to global competition each and every hotel wants to give unique and quality services as well as unforgettable experience to the guests. Nowadays the more use of technology allows more competition for hotels. The study also revealed various reasons for using information technology in hotel industry. Information technology helps hotel industry in various ways like it maintains the accuracy, reduce the labor costs, increasing efficiency, smooth functioning, increasing sales, maintains the quality of services and also helps in guest's satisfaction. The study concludes that information technology is very beneficial for the smooth functioning of the hotel industry.

Keywords :- Information technology, Hotel industry, Guests, Hotels, Competition.

I. INTRODUCTION

The information technology has made a tremendous growth in the hotel industry. Hotels are investing more in the technology to face the competition in the global market. Now the guests can easily select the hotels by checking websites. About 93% of the guests select the hotels with the help of reviews updated on the websites and it becomes the word of mouth. Guests can easily book their hotel rooms from their home itself. From guests prospective the services offered by the hotels are almost same all the time so the hotels want to attract them by their unique technology. From pre arrival to post departure information technology helps the hotels to win the loyalty of the customers. During the pre arrival stage guests want to collect the information about the hotel where they wants to stay so they visits various websites of the hotels and based on reviews, facilities, services, location, accessibility, interior and decoration of the hotels as shown on the websites they selects the hotels and book them online . Then comes the arrival stage when they come at hotel. Now the guest don't want to wait for check in so now the hotels have the latest technology like express check-in facility and even form their smart phones they can easily check-in. Hotels also offers electronic kiosks to the guests so they can easily check-in and select rooms for themselves as per their choice. Those days are gone when the guests lose their keycard and being locked out of room. Now with the help of smart phones apps guests can easily enter to their rooms without any keys. Starwood hotels provide this keyless facility to their guests through its SPG (Starwood preferred guest) App. After entering to the room there are very facilities provided by the guests with the help of information technology like light sensors when the enters to the room automatically light will turn on and when leaves the room

277

they will automatically turn off , this is a great initiate taken by hotels to conserve energy. Guests can easily access their smart phones on the high definition televisions in their rooms. Now the guests can control the windows, LED Lights, Air conditioner from their smart phones itself. Hotels offer free wifi facility to all the guests in their rooms and public areas of the hotels. The hotels also provide the tablets to their guests so they can browse the menus and order their meals and book restaurants, bars, pubs etc. Hotels also provide electronic lockers with codes to the guests so they can lock their important belongingness like cash, jewelry, important documents in safe custody. Many hotels like Best Western and Marriott introduced the virtual reality technology to their guests which is a artificial environment that is made with programming and displayed to the guests such that the guests suspends conviction and acknowledges it as real and they can enjoy destinations in their room itself and even they can travel to various locations. Various hotels are also using robots to provide various services like room dining services to the guests as the robots serve food and beverages to the guests in their rooms. Chatbots is a computer enabled program which helps the guests to communicate with the hotel staff online and provide quick answers to their queries as it saves the time and increase the efficiency of the hotel. At the time of check out the guests can check out their room with their smart phones apps. Gone are the days where guests have to stand on line and wait for their check-in and check out. Now information technology transforms the hotel industry and enables the guests to do self check-in and check-out. Hotels generate more revenue with the help of information technology and there is a great need that hotels adopt the latest technologies for smooth functioning of their business.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

LJUBICA PILEPIC, 2002 revealed that the hotel management effectively utilizes the information technology in order to improve the decision making and satisfies the guests. The use of technology brings significant changes in hotels and management system can be easily managed with the help of information technology. Information technology helps to provide quality products and services to the guests which maximize the profits of the hotel.

Rob law and Giri Jogaratnam, 2005 Concludes that it is essential for hoteliers to adopt information technology in order to improve service quality. Hotel employees help to achieve this goal by gaining the knowledge of improvements in information technology. Hotels need to be in close contact with the IT industry. This is necessary to keep updated about the latest developments in information technology.

Anil Bilgihan, Fevzi Okumus, Khaldoon "Khal" Nusair and David Joon-Wuk Kwun, 2011 in their study concludes that IT skills and IT proficiency facilitate hotel industry to achieve competitive advantage. However, it is very important to note that it is not only the use of IT that provides the competitive advantage to a hotel industry, but preferably , how IT applications are evolved, execute, coordinated with other parts and methods help hotel industry to achieve competitive advantage.

Dr. Ashita Sharma, 2015 in their research stated that staff in 3 star hotels in Delhi are still unwilling to use the information technology efficiently due to lack of knowledge and training but they know that it is most important part in the functioning of the hotel industry. He revealed that many of the hotels appreciate the use of technology

as it results better services to the guests and therefore maximize yield in front office.

Brigitta Carter, 2017 in their blog concluded that while there is most likely that technology has a tremendous part to play in molding the hotels for the future, there are few things that can never totally supplant: the human touch. Actually while human connections are ending up less and less normal, when they do happen they are more valuable than any time in recent memory. Hotels must make sure to even now give a positive human connection.

NP Chandra Shekhar, 2008 in his article revealed that computer experts turned out with incredible arrangements particularly to hotel industry making life simpler for front end staffs who need to take care of visitors many a times manually. Staff of the hotel can not replaced be replaced by the information technology. Today software's and computers can easily solve complicated problems. In yield management and food and beverage management hotels are using various software's and information technology tools.

Manal Bennaciri, 2012 in his study conclude that people want to know the preferences and data of their products and services from their customers who are using internet particularly from acclaimed sites like Trip advisor.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the role of information technology in hotel industry.
2. To know the latest trends of Information technology in hotel industry.

III. Research Methodology

The present study is exploratory in nature and purely based on the secondary data which includes various websites, research papers, media reports, books, articles etc.

Findings:-

Latest trends of Information Technology in Hotel industry:-

Online reviews- Almost 93 % of the guests select hotels based on the reviews posted on the sites of the hotels and on the various websites like Make my trip, goibibo.com, trivago.com, booking.com etc. Online reviews indicated the loyal hotel reputation and customers have more trust on online reviews than any other social networks. 90% of the customers don't want to book those hotels which indicate the dirty and bad services on online reviews of hotel. Positive online reviews have a great impact on the hotel reputation and play an important role for increasing the sales of the hotel. Persons not only share their reviews but also exchange opinions and recommendations about the hotels. Customers pay their full attention on each and every dimensions when they are viewing the reviews, recommendations, opinions of other customers.

Virtual Reality- Virtual reality is a computer based technology used by hotel which includes 3D images, sound, videos, and artificial environment that transports the guests to the real world. Virtual reality delivers the real experience to the guests. Hotels can attract the attention of their customers by giving 360˚ digital display of their rooms and other services offered to the guests. Now it is possible to view the hotels from your homes through the virtual technology used by the hotels.

Chatbots- Chatbots is software used by hotel to save time and improve the efficiency of the hotels. With the help of chatbots guests can easily communicate with the hotel staff and it is also very helpful for providing quick answers of guest's

queries. It provides the personal experience to the guests and digitally communicates with the guests. Chatbots are used by the guests for room service order, ordering services and amenities at rooms, informing housekeeping for cleaning of room, order restaurants tables etc. It provides 24×7 hours assistance to the guests.

Robots- Robots were first introduced in Henn-na hotel, Nagasaki, Japan (2015) in the world with an all staff robots. When you entered in the hotel the dinosaur robot welcomes you and then tall robot helps you to find the room. Hotel introduced the concierge robot which provides information about the food, events, amenities, services of the hotel and the hotel room services also provided by the hotels. There are various fish and dinosaur robots in the lobby that are doing their duties. But the hotel deployed humans as security staff so any unwanted incidents can not takes place in the hotel.

Mobile Technology- From selecting the room till departure from the hotel our smart phones helps us a lot. With help of many apps we can easily select the hotels. Now we can easily do check in and check out from our mobiles and it also enables the keyless entry to the guestroom. Mobile takes place for controlling lights, LCD, etc. With the help of your mobile phones you can easily connect with the staff of the hotel for room service order, for concierge services, check-in and check-out, communicate with the housekeeping staff for service amenities and cleaning of rooms etc.

Cloud computing- It is a software that allows to invest for only what they use in terms of economic benefits. The hotels which adopt cloud computing don't need to invest for the costly hardware as they can make their own IT Infrastructure. It helps to generate more revenue, increases the sales, increase flexibility, reduce training in the hotel. It is a type of application that the worker can log into a web based service and no need to install software for each computer.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there is a great role of information technology in hotel industry to save time, cost, increase efficiency, customer satisfaction, improve service quality, reduce labor costs and enhancing customer experience . Information technology transforms the hotel industry as hotels nowadays adopting latest information technology to face the competition in the global market. With the advancement of the information technologies, hotels need to become more aware about these latest trends. Many hotels introduced many new technologies like virtual reality, cloud computing, robots, Mobile technology chatbots to give personal touch to the customers but still there are various hotels that are required to adopt such technologies to face the competition and customer satisfaction.

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