

# Hospitality show to spotlight trends driving customer-centric innovation

The pandemic caused major changes in consumer behaviour - and while some changes are proving not to be so permanent, specific trends are driving customer-centric innovation within the retail, hotel and hospitality industries that seem here to stay. Some of these trends include digital guest experience and conscious consumption, which will be put under the spotlight at this year's Hotel and Hospitality Show, hosted by dmg events at the Sandton Convention Centre between 19 and 21 May 2022.



Source: Supplied

The show will be focusing on *Redefining hospitality - Recovering for Future Growth*, allowing attendees to gain further insight and guidance on global consumer trends driving future recovery and growth of the hospitality industry.

Evan Schiff, portfolio director of Food, Hospitality and Trade at dmg events says: "With margins tightening across the hospitality market, hotel and restaurant operators should rethink all aspects of their operations in order to identify areas of innovation and improvement that align with the latest global consumer trends so that they can make the necessary changes to drive greater operational efficiency and return on investment."

## Digital guest experiences

Although the hospitality industry has been trying for many years to incorporate technology to enhance the customer experience, the pandemic served as a catalyst to accelerate digital transformation and customisation.

"When it comes to digital experiences, guests now expect only the very best," says Schiff. "From frictionless, touchless F&B orders to electronic key room access, technology is beginning to play a starring role across the full timeline of a customer's experience."

Shaun Wheeler, general manager at Radisson Blu Hotel in Sandton says that digitalisation has enabled the Group to address increasing demand from hotel guests for 24/7 access to staff services and information.

"New technology including the Radisson Hotels App, Oaky and online-check in and check-out features/or capabilities offer guests a personalised, interactive and convenient experience, as it simplifies the customer journey from initial booking to any other special requests they may have."

Saul Mervis of The Grillhouse restaurant adds that many restaurateurs were able to use the forced downtime during lockdown to get to grips with the very core of their businesses.

"As a result, antiquated systems of administration have been re-evaluated, and better technology implemented that promotes a more personalised customer experience."

## **Conscious consumption**

As with technology, the concept of sustainability may not be new, but has regained substantial momentum since the start of the pandemic, with consumers today placing increased focus on creating a better, healthier world, and seeking to understand if a brand aligns with their personal values.

Research from Mastercard reveals that 58% of adults are more mindful of their impact on the environment, while three in five also expect companies to behave in a more sustainable and eco-friendly way.

"The pandemic has given our industry time to reflect and research," says Schiff. "It has been reported that today and tomorrow's travelers are among the most powerful and influential customer ever. No matter the scale of your operation, making sustainability a key aspect of your brand management throughout your value chain is imperative."

Wheeler adds that more and more hotels are committed to decreasing their impact on the environment, by minimising their environmental footprint in terms of carbon emissions, energy use, water consumption, as well as sustainable consumption and resource management.

"The Radisson Hotel Group is no different, having committed to net-zero by 2050 and to decarbonizing our business by setting ambitious emission reduction targets, in line with the SBTi Net-Zero Standard," he says.

The hotel has installed Aerator water-saving taps, eco-smart hand showers, LED lighting, and key card light activation systems to save on water and energy consumption.

Industry professionals looking for further insight and guidance on global consumer trends driving future recovery and growth of the hospitality industry are invited to attend The Hotel & Hospitality Show. Registration is currently open; for exhibitor and visitor information or to register, please visit:

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>