

Hospitality

How-to Guide: Boost Your Hotel's Success
Via Wireless Tech and Voice Communications



Why You Need to Upgrade Your Hotel's Wi-Fi & Voice Communications

Introduction:

What's the first amenity that guests want when they step into their hotel room? Wi-Fi. It's the most desired amenity of business travelers. A staggering 94% of business travelers consider it a must, according to a recent Forrester report.

Underscoring that demand, 80% or more of all travelers tote their smartphones and tablets to hotels. (Americans love their Internet. Some 77% of Americans go online daily, according to [Pew Internet Research](#).)

Your hotel guests don't merely want access to Wi-Fi. They want reliable Wi-Fi that they can access easily. A whopping 89% of guests decide where to lodge based on free reliable Wi-Fi, according to the [2018 Lodging Technology Study](#). (Those guests may even use [Hotel WiFi Test](#) to find the hotel with the best Wi-Fi.)

So, if your hotel Wi-Fi is outdated and lagging, you'll most likely drive potential guests to your competitors.

However, Wi-Fi isn't just something that your guests are using. It's also an incredibly effective instrument for you, as a hotel owner, to create positive experiences for current guests and to draw in new clients who've heard about those outstanding hotel experiences.

If you haven't upgraded your hotel's wireless technologies in the past two years, know that your competition most likely has. To stay competitive, you'll need to take a good, long look at your hotel's wireless technologies, and make the necessary adjustments and upgrades.

In more than 18 years of wireless technology experience, we at EnGenius have seen owners of hotels, motels, and multi-dwelling units continually improve and finesse their guest services through wireless technologies to entice more guests to their establishments.

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Of today's innovative hoteliers who participated in a survey, 45% are making enhancements to their guest Wi-Fi in 2018. Additionally, "64% of U.S. hotel guests said it is 'very or extremely important' for hotels to continue investing in technology to enhance the guest experience," according to an [Oracle Hospitality-Phocuswright study](#).

Leading hoteliers are also focusing on more guest-facing applications of wireless technologies, such as:

- Tablets at the front desk (22%)
- Location-based technology (18%)
- Customer mobile app (18%)

You, too, can harness the power of wireless technologies to deepen your relationships with guests and provide customer service that reaps positive online reviews. After all, "47% of US travelers shared their hotel experience on a social network post-stay," according to a recent study.

How loyal are your guests? Everything depends on the customer experience. Your guests will rigorously analyze their lodging experience and spread their opinions about it via social media posts, on widely seen online review sites like Yelp, or by word-of-mouth.

Focus on winning a five-star rating and spreading word-of-mouth kudos from satisfied guests by elevating your guest services via wireless networking and voice communications. Read on to find out the great positive impact that wireless technologies can make to your hotel business. We're equipping you with the latest wireless stats and sharing what we've learned from almost two decades in the hospitality technology space.

How to Enhance Your Hotel's Guest Experience via Wi-Fi

What Wireless Networking Solutions Can Do for Your Guests

Take advantage of the latest wireless technology to help boost your guests' positive ratings of your establishment and develop a closer relationship with your hotel.

Here are six ways to employ wireless technologies in your hotel. The following tips are based on current hospitality technology data as well as EnGenius's decades-long expertise in the hospitality vertical market.

1. Provide a simple & seamless check-in process

Your guests have devoted time, energy, and expense to come to your hotel. Honor your guests by making their hotel experience stress-free from the moment they check in.

"A successful check-in is not only fast but also engaging for guests," states a [Hotel Management article](#). "Guests do not enjoy being in the dark about what is happening during check-in, and they will grow restless if they are standing in place while hotel employees type away on a computer for an extended period of time."

If you make guests wait in line at the check-in desk or make them wait for available staff to respond to them, you risk a bad review on social media right away. Your guests don't want the check-in process to be a hassle. Instead of bottlenecking the check-in counter, equip hospitality staff with Wi-Fi-enabled devices. Your hotel guests can check in from different places on your property and avoid getting caught in a long queue, especially during peak hours.

Also, during check-out, make accessing the hotel Wi-Fi simple for your guests. Studies show that guests prefer immediate access to Wi-Fi as soon they check in. In a survey conducted by Roomzzz, one-third of guests ask for the Wi-Fi password at check-in and 65% log into the Wi-Fi within seven minutes of check-in, according to a [USA Today article](#).



How to Enhance Your Hotel's Guest Experience via Wi-Fi (con't.)



On average, guests using digital keys rate a hotel seven points higher than keycard guests with **84%** of guests likely to use digital keys again

2. Enable mobile keys to your hotel guests

Consider swapping out your hotel's old-school keys for mobile "keys" instead. As simple as an app on a mobile device, these "keys" can deter thieves and provide a greater sense of security for your hotel guests.

Giving mobile keys also helps support the idea that your hotel is cutting-edge in regards to technology. On average, guests using digital key rate a hotel seven points higher than keycard guests with 84% of guests likely to use digital key again," states Brian Shedd, OpenKey's VP of sales and marketing, in a [Hotel Management article](#).

Using the latest available technology signifies to your customers that your hotel stays up to date with the best ways to serve customers and puts guests' needs high on its list of priorities.

3. Establish well-connected hotel conference rooms

Not all your guests are at your hotel for pleasure. Many, in fact, are on your property for business purposes or using your facilities to conduct meetings.

In the United States alone, businesses spent a staggering \$424 billion to send travelers on 514.4 million domestic business trips, according to a [Global Business Travel Association article](#).

Business travelers have more demanding Wi-Fi needs than people on vacation. So, your hotel Wi-Fi needs to handle all the high demands of business computing. Your hotel Wi-Fi must enable your guests' laptops, tablets, and other devices to tackle large volumes of email, conduct online research, play videos seamlessly, and transfer high-resolution business collaterals and multimedia files.

Today's businesses also rely on videoconferencing for crucial meetings. Your guests should be able to trust your hotel's Wi-Fi (and thereby you) to deliver videoconferences without glitches or lags. A lack of confidence in the reliability of your hotel Wi-Fi translates to a lack of confidence in your hotel.

4. Enable personalized in-room entertainment for your guests

Once guests enter their suites or rooms, they want to experience the best that your wireless technologies can offer.

Guests want to:

- Stream content from mobile devices to the TV
- Access favorite apps like Netflix, Hulu, Pandora & Crackle
- Enjoy online gaming
- Have personalized video & audio streaming

Part of vacationing is spending time in one's hotel room and just relaxing. That's why a full 75% of guests use in-room entertainment, according to a recent study. However, struggling with buffering, dropped, or lagging Wi-Fi is anything *but* relaxing. Make sure, therefore, that your hotel Wi-Fi can handle the streaming demands of your customers' devices.

"About 53% of hoteliers plan to make some change with smart TVs and/or technologies that enable guests to stream content, placing the technology as the top guest-facing priority," according to a recent study.

5. Satisfy your guests' room preferences

When guests stay at a hotel, they expect a certain degree of attentiveness and also indulging. Guests want their needs met expeditiously, their meals to be at a higher degree of culinary skill than at home, and their rooms to be best-suited to their preferences for comfort.

Guests have expressed an interest in using technology devices to adjust their room environment to meet their personal preferences, according to a recent study. Wi-Fi can help hoteliers provide easy personalization of:

- Temperature
- Shades
- Lighting
- Blinds

What one guest may consider too warm may be too chilly for another. Or one guest may like the blinds a little higher than the previous guest had them. To make the hotel experience a little higher end, employ wireless technologies for personalization.

6. Offer digital menus in your hotel dining room

Another indicator that your hotel has made your guests' experience a top priority is to extend your wireless capabilities beyond the front desk and their suites to reach guests in the hotel dining room.

For example, offer your guests digital menus instead of printed ones (which can get faded and disgusting with overuse and time). Hotel guests can choose for themselves from a digital menu. Doing so can eliminate incorrect orders, cater to their specific needs (such as for gluten-free or vegan meals), and enable easy updating of new dishes or eliminating old ones.

"Digital menus ensure speed in delivering the right information at the right time and at the right place," states a [NextRestaurant article](#).

"Additionally, they help the customer feel as if they were at home. Business videos, food pictures, recipes, and food ingredients are just some of the things that can attract the attention of your guests."

To find out where to get started in upgrading and updating your hotel Wi-Fi, check out the Products page at the end of this guide. At EnGenius, we've years of experience in making the best Wi-Fi technology solutions for this space.

Despite all the aforementioned benefits of upgrading a hotel's wireless technologies, some hoteliers may find themselves resisting the idea of giving their networks an overhaul or upgrade.

Let's take a look at three common obstacles to a technology upgrade and some possible solutions.

Three Big Challenges to Upgrading Your Hotel's Wireless Technologies

In Wi-Fi's nascent stage, hotel owners really just wanted to be able to say that they had "free Wi-Fi" to draw in more customers.

Now, leading hotels understand that setting up strong, uninterrupted wireless communication requires a certain level of expertise. They desire a thorough and well-planned network, reliable and well-tested products, and technical support to keep all the wireless communication flowing with little interruption.

"The majority of IT execs plan to spend more on technology in 2018, with 61% expecting to increase investment," according to the Lodging Technology Study.

However, in this mission to provide strong wireless communications, hotels can face some challenges.



1

Working with budgets that are too tight

Unfortunately, not all hotels have the luxury of generous budgets. Many hoteliers have tight, insufficient budgets for their IT needs, and because of that fact, they are highly pressured to keep the hotel's legacy infrastructure.

Hoteliers end up adopting the attitude of "it ain't broke, don't fix it." In the desire to save money, those hoteliers keep their legacy systems and weak Wi-Fi. However, this short-term benefit of saving money today causes long-term loss of guests (and therefore revenue) in the future.

A possible solution to tackle this obstacle is to research what your hotel truly needs (and put the "wants" on a different list) then work closely with a systems integrator to see how you can get the most out of your existing budget.

2

Struggling to justify ROI

In addition to the challenge of budget constraints, those hoteliers also are unable to justify ROI for the latest wireless tech advancements.

For example, they may want to begin incorporating digital menus into their hotel dining areas. However, after weighing in the costs of paying for a technological upgrade, they may flounder in projecting the positive financial benefit of it. Because not all ROI is easily mapped out (e.g., customer satisfaction), hoteliers may find buy-in from investors difficult for technological upgrades.

“About a quarter of hotels say resistance to change is a top challenge and that goes up to 40% for hotels that consider themselves lagging compared to competitors in technology,” states the study.

One possible solution is to do some competitive research and see what your nearest competitors are doing in terms of technological upgrades. In doing so, you may be able to forecast how much business you will lose if you don’t make an upgrade.

You can also look for non-financial ways to determine ROI. For example, get feedback from your hotel guests via online surveys or reviews, and calculate the positive impact of those happy customer experiences.

3

Lacking the necessary level of technological expertise

The demands of a challenging environment mean that no hotelier can do the groundwork of setting up a wireless network on its own. (Examples of challenging environments are those with interference, different technologies, varied configurations, etc.)

A big misconception that hoteliers believe is that Wi-Fi is a plug and play technology: Just place access points around your property and turn them on. Done!

Hoteliers and/or novice installers don’t consider how these devices will be configured, the best placement of each one, whether the devices are manageable, etc. Therefore, consider the crucial importance of finding the right installer or system integrator to help your hotel in its wireless technological upgrade.

Once you overcome these obstacles and start planning on adding more Wi-Fi capabilities, you may realize that you will be committing a lot of your network bandwidth to enable them.

One way of freeing some of that much-needed Wi-Fi bandwidth is to employ a wireless telecommunication system for your hotel.

As a leader in premises mobility communications, we at EnGenius understand the huge impact that business phone systems can make in the hospitality space and how they can alleviate bandwidth pressure for your hotel.

Let’s take a quick look at the benefits of cordless handsets in such a complex environment in terms of decreasing network bandwidth and increasing positive guest experiences.

Product List:

EnGenius Solutions

Managed Wall-Plate Access Points

Wall-Plate APs are an all-in-one communication “hub” for in-room wired and wireless connectivity that’s flexible and reliable. Deploy in hotel guest rooms and multi-tenant dwellings; operate alone or centrally manage with no license fees.

As points for connecting smart TVs, phones, and PoE pass-throughs, wall-plate access points are thin and discrete, so they can be hidden behind hotel furniture or unobtrusively on walls.



Flexible, Scalable Network Switches

The Neutron Series is highly flexible, scaling to meet the needs of boutique hotels and larger chains alike.

It lets administrators quickly deploy, provision, manage, and update an unlimited number of APs and switches throughout the property or remotely across multiple properties, all from one location via ezMaster network management software.



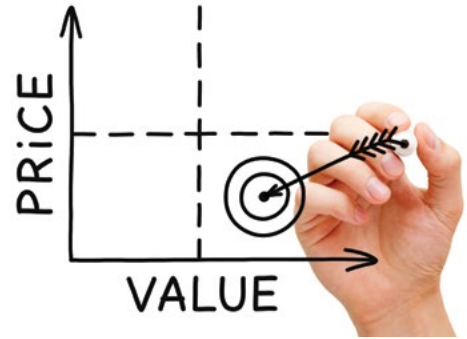
High-Capacity Network Products That Last Long Into the Future

EnGenius’ products employ peak-performing wireless 802.11ac Wave 2 technology to support the demands of busy hotels and restaurants. Upgrading a network from older, slower technology to 11ac future-proofs it for the next five years. You can quickly and affordably add 11ac wireless coverage and increase network capacity in hotel restaurants, conference rooms, and pool areas.



Lower CAPEX + Lower OPEX = More \$\$ for Other Guest Amenities

EnGenius' industry-leading price-performance value delivers enterprise-class performance at affordable prices without licensing or subscription fees. By providing larger front-end discounts than its competitors, EnGenius lowers overall Wi-Fi capital and operational expenses, helping operators stretch their technology budgets or provide room for other advancements.



ezWiFi Planner Network Design Assistance & Unparalleled Customer Service

Have a simple configuration question or need the assistance of our site design services? EnGenius offers a full product support system with CWNA-certified Field Application Engineers and Customer Service Technicians. Get the pre-and post-sales support you need to confidently deploy a high-performance network for your facility and guests.



ezMaster™ Network Management Software

The ezMaster's simple, intuitive Web-based interface allows flexible access point monitoring locally, remotely, or via a cloud-based service with no licensing or subscription fees. Quickly and easily set up, manage, monitor, and troubleshoot multiple APs at the same time. See real-time network performance and monitor AP traffic through ezMaster's at-a-glance dashboard.

ezMaster provides business-class features, unlimited scalability, and centralized management of hundreds of EnGenius APs and switches.



About EnGenius

Our Mission

Our mission is to deliver best-in-class voice and data solutions that empower mobility, enhance productivity, and embrace simplicity. We believe connectivity should come with reliability, rich features, and personalized service while maintaining affordability.

Our Company

EnGenius pioneered long-range, high-powered wireless communications and radio frequency (RF) solutions in the early 1990s. Today, that legacy continues through its broad portfolio of business-class networking and telephony solutions. As a leading global manufacturer, EnGenius maintains high control standards over its products and suppliers to ensure customers enjoy top performing solutions with enhanced features at an unmatched value.

Networking Technologies

EnGenius' portfolio of networking solutions includes a comprehensive line of managed and unmanaged wireless solutions, Gigabit switches, and IP-based surveillance systems that deliver long-range connectivity, robust feature sets, and versatility for class-leading price/performance value.



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