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# How Streamlining Hotel Operations Can Help Drive Success

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LOS ANGELES—Jeff Zarrinam knows hotels and he knows Hollywood, too. He is president/CEO of Zarco Hotels, Inc., which owns the 130-room Hollywood Hotel and has been the hotel's director for 22 years.

As a Hollywood native—how many can say that?—he is also a resident expert on Tinseltown and is deeply involved in the tourism industry, from serving as senior vice chair of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce to the Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau to board chair of the East Hollywood Business Improvement District. He works with many in the industry, exchanging and sharing ideas.



Jeff Zarrinam, Hollywood Hotel

A self-described voracious reader and researcher, Zarrinam is constantly in search of new ways to enhance the hotel's business and guest experience. Walk a mile in his shoes and you'd likely encounter him "listening to the needs of guests and staff; looking for new or different ways of doing things via new products and services; and staying aligned with traveler booking and communication trends," said Zarrinam.

And business is doing well, with occupancy at 90% year-round. He credits the hallmarks of hospitality, such as a central location, friendly service, value and a complimentary hot international buffet breakfast as part of what keeps guests coming back.

"Our hotel and newly refreshed rooms are clean, quiet and intimate. Guests and locals alike appreciate the hotel's state-of-the-art extras and thoughtful amenities such as free WiFi, on-site fitness center and open-air fountain courtyard. A unique feature is the Hollywood Hotel's own comedy club, which brings all-star comedians to the property on a weekly basis," said Zarrinam. "More than 50% of our guests are international travelers who are excited to experience Hollywood and all it has to offer. Due to renovations, the hotel's RevPAR has increased 12% year-over-year."

Zarrinam is putting forth his best efforts to enhance the guest experience by embarking on a multimillion-dollar renovation of the debt-free hotel—guestrooms, public spaces and rooftop—without incurring any debt. What's in his secret sauce? It boils down to establishing solid efficiencies in the hotel's operations and capitalizing on good business practices.

"Since we have owned the hotel for more than 20 years, our debt service ratio is very, very low. The Hollywood Hotel is an internationally famous hotel and is one of the most recognized of any hotel brand in the world," he said. "With a very large repeat customer base comes high occupancies and consistent revenues that we can

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In the world of magazine publishing, where dates are always top of mind (deadlines, print dates, mail dates... Did I say deadlines?) we're very conscious of time, always planning a few issues, at the very least, ahead and where the near-term future is now. So, in my world, we're already at the end of this year, with 2017 right in front of us. Here are some end-of-year chances and next-year opportunities.



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Local mobile parking entry system that enables digital registration of guest and visitor license plates so guests can prepay their parking without the need for a parking attendant

GoMoment app for mobile text-based requests from guests

Three Tesla car chargers, in addition to 3 J1772 Plug chargers for any other electric vehicles

Guestbook, an instant cash-back booking program that rewards users with 5% cash back off the lowest hotel rates

Moncierge app, where the hotel can connect their guests to on-property and off-site information

"Our hotel is in constant transition due to the renovation and implementation of the new technology and systems so I liken it to putting together a giant puzzle whose shape changes every day," he said. "We assign renovation teams according to unoccupied rooms or by floor and project. Some of our new operating systems are back-of-the-house and put into use without any disruption to guest service. Others are implemented in stages and turned on when all testing has been completed."

While new technology can help drive efficiencies, he's careful not to lose sight of the basics: friendly service, value and cleanliness.

"At the end of the day, our guests like a clean and quiet respite after a day of exploring," he said. "Our complimentary, hot international buffet breakfast is one of the most complimented aspects of our hotel on TripAdvisor because of its quality, the level of service in which it's delivered and the value. It allows guests to fuel up before they head out for the day."

—Corris Little

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