

MULTICHANNEL

The Plaza Hotel streamlines hotel operations with digital concierge service

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By RACHEL LAMB

Vying to stay au courant, New York's Plaza Hotel will provide guests with an enhanced stay via a new digital concierge service available on iPads, laptops and televisions in every room.

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The software will enable guests to order room service, book spa appointments, contact a concierge and make dinner reservations. The Plaza has partnered with Intelity to digitalize the guest experience.

“[Our Interactive Consumer Engagement software] enhances every hotel guest’s experience during their stays,” said Phil Schwartz, chief marketing officer of Intelity, Coral Gables, FL. “It presents all the hotel’s services, from in-room dining to transportation, requests for turn-downs and wake-ups, spa appointments, restaurant reservations, housekeeping, amenities, maps and even adjusting room controls such as lighting and temperature.

“For the hotel, it is the greatest innovation in guestroom service since the telephone,” he said. “At their fingertips, guests can access and order with ease.

“Everything is in their control.”

Intelity has developed the ICE software for more than 300 hotels. It claims a positive response, with more than 80 percent of guests using the software.

Special features

The Plaza iPads will feature a multimedia welcome video and provide easy access for controlling the entire hotel experience.

Digital concierge iPad walk-through

The array of features offered to Plaza guests ranges from ordering meals to checking and printing airline boarding passes.

The software is also available on laptops and televisions in the guests' rooms.

Digital concierge TV walk-through

On-the-go guests can download this software on their iPhone, Android and BlackBerry devices.

Changing the hotel business

With the ICE software, hotel guests do not have to speak with anyone and can use the

features on the iPads at any time of the day or night.

“For most hotels, currently about 300 and counting, it’s about delivering a smooth and enhanced guest experience, streamlining hotel operations, increasing revenues and offering something other, non-ICE hotels don’t have,” Mr. Schwartz said.

The Plaza is in good company with its latest digital effort to ease a discerning consumer's stay. Other luxury hotels are beginning to use iPads to connect with guests in similar ways.

The St. Regis’ ebutler application offers the same features that the ICE software does, and lets users download it on their iPads and iPhones ([see story](#)).

“For a hotel guest, it’s about convenience, content and control,” Mr. Schwartz said. “For a hotel, it’s about streamlining guest service, building revenues, saving on in-room printing costs and having a competitive advantage.

“It really raises the bar for luxury hotels and it shows that they are as advanced as their clients,” he said. “They are embracing it quickly and happily.”

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