

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

## Shangri-La acts on Tencent partnership with WeChat rollout

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Shangri-La teams with WeChat. Image credit: Shangri-La

By STAFF REPORTS

Hospitality provider Shangri-La Group is making it easier for Chinese travelers to complete payments at its locations across the world with WeChat integration.

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Starting June 1, the group will launch a WeChat Mini program and WeChat online pay service. The programs will eventually roll out to all of Shangri-La's 100 locations worldwide.

Hospitality and technology

WeChat users will now be able to pay deposits and purchase online through the WeChat ecosystem.

Shangri-La says it is the first hospitality group to offer a range of electronic services within the WeChat platforms. The group is hoping to enhance communication with consumers through messaging, as well as provide more convenient payment options.

The initiative comes from a partnership signed with WeChat developer Tencent last year. It will begin this week with all of Shangri-La's properties in China, which total 50 locations.

Other locations will see the WeChat programs roll out in stages.

Members of Shangri-La's rewards program, Golden Circle, will also be able to link their accounts with their WeChat accounts.

Logging into the mini program for the first time will result in 100 rewards points for Golden Circle members. After that, they will earn double points each time they book through the mini program.

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A post shared by Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts (@shangrihotels) on May 27, 2019 at 6:20pm PDT

### *Instagram post from Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts*

Golden Circle members will be able to control their accounts directly through WeChat.

The WeChat mini program allows guests to search, book, check in and out and pay for their stays at Shangri-La locations.

For those who make offline deposits, the messaging application will allow users to track the deposit and receive an instant refund after checkout.

"Working with Tencent has enabled us to make much progress in our joint efforts to drive the technology transformation of the hotel industry," said Yang Jian Cheng, chief technology officer at Shangri-La Group, in a statement.

"We are excited by the many possibilities and innovative solutions that comes from leveraging technology to create even more convenient and personalized experiences for our customers," he said. "We look forward to bringing more unique offerings to our guests."

Most of today's tech-savvy travelers are inclined to use their own smart devices on trips, underscoring that hospitality brands are better off investing in mobile applications rather than in-room devices.

More than 70 percent of travelers are interested in using mobile applications from their favorite hotel brands, according to a survey from hospitality tech firm Criton. Travelers are also interested in hotel technology that streamlines loyalty programs and the check-in process ([see story](#)).

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