




# All guests want are the Three C's

by **Terence Ronson** 

**In hotels, technology has the power to make things easy for the guests... or make them complicated. Terence Ronson, one of the hotel industry's true polymaths, boils down the needs of our guests to three simple precepts.**

On a regular basis, I participate and organize hotel technology conferences, have discussions with users of hotels, and hold planning meetings with organizations who build hotels, about the effective and efficient deployment of tech. And when you get right down to it, the basic requirements of a hotel guest are as simple as 1-2-3:

1. Connectivity
2. Charging
3. Control

Having said that, discussions and deliberations can go on for hours, days, even weeks and months, about how to overcome and satisfy these petty yet significant annoyances that guests have – which often make an appearance on guest satisfaction surveys and TripAdvisor reports.

## Connectivity

For example, a question that pops up on a fairly regular basis is, should we still be placing a wired Internet connection at the desk? As a reader of this publication, you should know exactly the type I refer to – one that has either a cable spring-loaded from some kind of heavy blob sat on a desk, or a coiled up cable found loose in the desk drawer. Perhaps if you are staying at a more up-market property, it will be housed in a nice cable bag. All too often, these have broken connectors, meaning they don't necessarily hold well in the socket of the guest's computer, contributing to a faulty and unstable connection.

In response to this question, someone from the Sales or Operations team may have a knee jerk reaction and say “yes,” mistakenly believing companies still need it, and that by not providing it, the chances of getting business from corporate clients will be jeopardized. Personally, I have yet to find a significant source of business that still requires this – especially through the arrival and prolific penetration of smartphones and TABs. If you do, then please let me know – I'd love to hear from you.

So if you ask me whether you need it, I say, “No, just go with Wi-Fi.” Save the infrastructure cost and associated headache.

If you have particular guests who really needs this, then direct them to your Business Center, or if you have IP phones in your rooms, then the likelihood is that there will be a through port which could be enabled for this purpose.

While on the subject of connectivity, there are a couple of extra golden rules you should apply:

- Do not restrict the number of devices a guest can connect to the Wi-Fi network. It's very possible they are carrying three items: a laptop, a phone and a tablet. When you have a family staying, that number increases exponentially.
- Do not keep asking guests to re-authenticate on your Wi-Fi network when they move across your property. For example, moving from the guest room to the Coffee Shop and then to a function room. It annoys them to no end, and let's not overlook the annoyance when you try and charge them double.
- And lastly, if your guest stays more than one night, and wants to pre-pay Wi-Fi (if you charge) for three days – let them do it all at once. Don't ask them to re-authenticate every 24 hours.

### Charging

This is not whether or not you charge for Internet access (although that is also something we could discuss for a very long time), it's more to do with the quantity and positioning of power sockets – not just inside the guest room, but also in public areas.

Walk around any airport, mall, coffee shop or place where people congregate, and what are they doing or trying to do? Tether their mobile device to some kind of power source, and get a quick boost. For a lot of people, seeing that their battery level is less than 70% is like seeing the reserve fuel light come on in their car – panic sets in, and they start to wonder if they have enough to last the journey.

If you don't believe me, ask yourself why some companies have been so successful in selling portable battery packs for mobile devices...

Provisioning enough power sockets reminds me of the famous saying by John F. Kennedy: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." And in the context of hotels, they should provision more power sockets.

Over the last four decades, **Terence Ronson** has morphed himself from being a chef, to hotelier, to hospitality IT consultant, and most recently to inventor. His diversified career has taken him to work in both the UK and Asia, where he has been residing for the last seventeen years. In his spare time, he also organizes and as well as writing articles like this one.

Yes, I realize power (energy) is a big expense, but put yourself in the shoes of your guest. They come to your hotel to re-charge and re-energize their bodies by having a good night's sleep. Since a mobile device is now being classified as an appendage to the body, it kind of makes sense that the re-charge and re-energize also refers to their gadgets, doesn't it? Oh yes, please be sure to have power sockets next to the bed, within easy reach in public areas, and consider having the new type, which incorporates USB power. The guest will love you for it.

### Control

We all like to be in control of our lives, but all too often when we stay in a hotel, we place ourselves in the hands of interior designers and consultants who think they understand what is needed – yours truly included.

Well, I can safely say that one of peeves – if not the top peeve – that guests have in hotel rooms is "how to switch off the #@\*! lights!"

Bedside control panels, controls on the TV and all sorts of apps are no substitute for the simple master switch found within easy reach of both sides of the bed.

Fooling ourselves into believing that the guest needs any more than this is way off tangent. Yes, you can have moods, modes, dimming and all sorts of bells and whistles, but when you boil it all down, they just want to switch off the #@\*! lights and go to sleep.

Life is simple. It's just about the Three C's.



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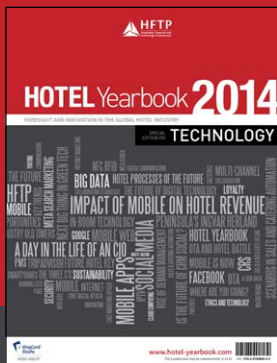


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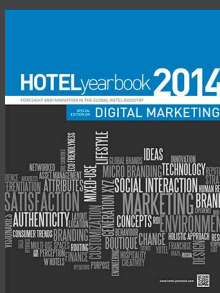
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