

Business case / AccorHotels

TOURISM 

AccorHotels streamlines payment experience for customers around the world



“ Without the experts at Ingenico ePayments, we’d never have been able to get so far in revolutionizing the customer payment experience. Over time, our partnership has come up with lots of projects, each more innovative than the one before. ”

Bertrand Kleimberg / Payment Solutions Director, AccorHotels

In order to remain one of the world’s leading hotel groups, AccorHotels is launching several ambitious projects to provide an increasingly seamless, modern and personalized customer experience. Against this background, online payment is now at the heart of the matter.

Every three days, two hotels in the AccorHotels group open somewhere in the world. This illustrates the strong growth of the group which now counts 250,000 employees. However, despite this unprecedented momentum, the powers that be don’t expect to just stop there and sit back. Streamlining the customer experience is firmly in their sights. The AccorHotels group has committed to a huge digital transformation program top of its list is optimizing the customer journey so that the group remains no. 1 in the hotel industry. With this in mind, several innovative initiatives have been launched with the aim of revolutionizing the customer experience.

New demands, new challenges

This is a mammoth challenge for the hotel group. At a time when 65% of travelers make hotel bookings online, according to an Ipsos survey in 2016, AccorHotels wants to offer an innovative and seamless experience to outclass the competition. Customer expectations, especially those of the new Generations Y and Z, are now extremely high in terms of speed and online services. To take just one example, 49% of Internet users would like to be able to pay online in just a click, according to a study by Accenture in 2016. There are so many demands requiring the payment stage, at the heart of the customer journey, to become more fluid. “We’ve been working with Ingenico ePayments since 2008. Its payment experts have always shown great professionalism and a continual ability to innovate. So, it seemed only natural for us to look to them for a number of our projects involving the digital customer experience” explains Bertrand Kleimberg.

A partnership to enhance user experience

The first initiative is the Welcome program which aims to make checkin and checkout at the group's hotels that much easier. In just a few clicks, customers who want to use the service can check in online the day before their stay and collect their keys on arrival, without any further formalities. And the same goes for checkout as guests simply receive their bill by email the morning of their departure. And so, the program, developed in close collaboration with specialists at Ingenico ePayments for the payment stage, represents a giant leap as far as service flow is concerned. Guests no longer have to wait at the reception desk of the 3,000 or so hotels where the Welcome program has been rolled out.

And AccorHotels teams don't intend to stop there. So, what's the next challenge? Make it much easier to pay online, which already accounts for 40% of the group's direct sales - that's one transaction every 7.3 seconds, by offering customers their preferred payment methods in a virtual wallet, accessible on mobile phone, tablet and computer. In this way, they have been able to streamline the customer buying experience even further. To put it another way, future guests register their preferred method of payment and then pay in a few clicks when they book. This wallet means that customers, especially the most frequent, don't have to reenter their payment details for each transaction. They feel more at ease and are more likely to book. This is paramount to the group's customercentric program.

In addition to these new innovative services, teams at AccorHotels and Ingenico ePayments have put lots of initiatives in place to fall in line with customers' purchasing habits as well local regulations. In the Netherlands, Ingenico ePayments has integrated iDEAL, the most popular Dutch bank transfer method, on the AccorHotels website. It has done the same in Poland with Przelewy24, allowing it to tap in to a customer group that do not have a bank card and so, until now, were not eligible for prepaid offers.

As for the mobile side of things, the AccorHotels group has decided to bring its services together in a simple and ergonomic app. Here again, Ingenico ePayments stepped up to the mark and integrated payment for the different features of the app (such as restaurant reservations, activity programs and loyalty points). Bookings made on mobile phones represent a significant and growing share of AccorHotels' sales. Making transactions on this channel easier is therefore essential, especially for lastminute bookings which are mostly made by smartphone.

Attract, retain, and innovate

The new mobile app quickly proved a hit with customers. *"We have seen more than four million downloads of the app and the payment conversion rates have also rocketed to 84%. We are boosting customer loyalty and that's due in large part to all the work we've done with Ingenico ePayments to streamline and simplify the payment stage"*, Bertrand Kleimberg is proud to say.

On the back of this initial success, teams at AccorHotels are already working with Ingenico ePayments again. So, what's the next challenge? To move from a Gateway model where Ingenico only acts as technical service provider to a Collecting model for alternative payment methods where Ingenico manages endtoend technical and financial flows without the need for a thirdparty acquirer. At the end of the day, it is a huge step forward in terms of streamlining and productivity for teams as they now have just the one contact for online payment and do not have to manage cumbersome contractual procedures every time that AccorHotels opens up in a country.

Key benefits

- Increased conversion rates
- Easier handling for AccorHotels teams
- Reliable and secure solution
- Ability to innovate
- Coverage throughout Europe



AccorHotels is far more than a worldwide leader. The 250,000 men and women of the group are united by the same passion for welcoming people, and driven by the same promise: Feel Welcome. This promise resonates in the 4,200 addresses of AccorHotels across 95 different countries.

Find out more on : www.accorhotels.com/gb/usa/index.shtml