

# People, technology, content: The three tenets of hospitality marketing in 2023

The hospitality industry has showcased not only its resilience over these past few years, but also its ability to adapt to new and challenging environments. It has remained steadfast throughout disruption from the digital age, the emergence of new industry models, and a global pandemic.



Source: Supplied. Stephanie Aboujaoude, senior area director of marketing and communications Middle East & Africa at Radisson Hotel group.

However, as a result of these significant shifts faced by the industry in recent years, we've also seen consumer expectations change drastically with products and services taking a backseat to any brand's ability to create meaningful experiences for, and authentic relationships with, customers.

This has translated into an expectation of deeper care and connection, along with increased engagement and interactivity, from organisations within the industry leading to traditional marketing strategies largely proving ineffective, driving new change in the way that the sector engages and influences travellers.

"As we approach the start of a new year during a time of recovery for the industry alongside a growing appetite for travel, we can expect to see some new and evolving marketing trends emerge within the hospitality industry as it adapts to a consumer base caught between the cautiousness driven by the pandemic and the need to reconnect with friends, family, favourite travel destinations and new experiences," says Stephanie Aboujaoude, senior area director of marketing and communications Middle East & Africa at Radisson Hotel group.

For those hospitality brands looking to lay the foundation for success in 2023, here are three simple principles they can follow which are guiding marketing trends in the industry in the upcoming year:

## Centering people in marketing campaigns

Consumers today respond much better to personalised communication and experiences that speak to their wants and needs, such as catering to convenience and speed as well as prioritising quality over quantity.

According to recent research, tomorrow's travellers are looking to be immersed in local culture and are attracted to destinations that offer unique experiences and activities linked to local customs, traditions and lifestyles.



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Additionally, as people continue to become more socially conscious about their impact on the world and the environment, travellers are increasingly adopting more sustainable travel practices.

“By creating tailored day-cation and short vacation stays that celebrate all things local, hotels can better cater to the new culturally-sensitive traveller while also embracing and supporting local economies and communities. This also enables hotels to offer unique experiences that position them as holiday destinations in and of themselves,” Aboujaoude added.

## Leveraging technology to create innovative experiences

Technology has become an extremely powerful tool in creating enthralling experiences within the hospitality industry by melding together both the digital and physical worlds. Today, hospitality brands can make use of technologies such as voice search and control to not only change the way guests interact with travel elements such as activity planning, room temperature control and more but also to create more accessible travel experiences.

Additionally, by communicating a hotel's efforts to make a guest's stay easier and more convenient through the adoption of technologies that enable simple changes like mobile check-ins or chatbots that enable guests to find information faster and easier, hotels can make themselves significantly more attractive to customers.



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Even the gamification of planning a stay at a hotel can help to make travel less of a chore while also allowing a hotel to integrate enticing rewards into the process.

“Incorporating virtual reality into the way customers can view and book their rooms online is one of the ways that Radisson Hotel group is looking at creating new immersive experiences for customers during their first interaction with us, before they've even become our guests,” shares Aboujaoude.

## Fun and creative content is king

The quality of marketing content is a crucial element in building trust by clearly communicating what you have to offer to consumers and helping to answer any questions they may have. This helps to develop relationships with customers,

improve conversions and generate new leads.

In today's age, content marketing needs to move beyond images and offer more personalised and creative ways to captivate attention, creating unique guest experiences.

By tapping into digital content drivers like social media platforms, hospitality brands can make use of video content, influencer marketing and user-generated content to engage with customers more effectively and authentically.

While social media marketing has become a norm within the hospitality industry in recent years, there is still room for hospitality brands to evolve their social media marketing strategies. Over the next year, we can expect to see an increase in sharing content through short-form video with platforms like Tik Tok and Instagram Reels becoming the norm for presenting immersive content.

"Marketing offers the hospitality industry a unique opportunity to build meaningful relationships with its customers and connect with them in an authentic way. But, this requires communication through authentic, engaging and rich content that meets customers where they are and gives them the experiences they not only want but deserve," she concluded.

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