

Hotel chains check into AI world to optimise costs, boost services

Hotel chains in India are increasingly adopting AI technologies to enhance guest experiences and operational efficiency. Initiatives include AI-powered chatbots for seamless bookings, AI-driven virtual assistants, and smart room systems for optimized resource usage. These implementations aim to improve customer service and streamline hotel operations.

The next time you check into a hotel, you may not be greeted by the familiar front office staff.

Hotel chains in India say they are leveraging 'cutting-edge' AI technologies to enhance customer service, streamline operations, and amplify overall guest experience.

Tata Group backed Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) said it has successfully piloted a robot assistant at its Ginger hotel at Mumbai Airport, setting the stage for 'a new era of hospitality.'

IHCL said the robot assistant will also offer room services, such as delivering amenities, providing information about hotel facilities, concierge services, and assisting with in-room dining requests. "One of our key implementations is the IHCL Response Assistant (IRA), a 24/7 AI-powered chatbot that enables seamless room bookings, minimizes navigation, and reduces the need for phone-based customer support," said an IHCL spokesperson. "A range of AI interventions is already yielding positive impact. Our online bookings and net promoter scores have improved, reflecting the effectiveness of these AI-driven enhancements," the spokesperson added.

Nikhil Sharma, MD, and COO, South Asia, at Radisson Hotel Group said the chain is piloting AI-driven virtual assistants across select properties, allowing

guests to access 24/7 support via QR-code-enabled chatbots that improve response times while optimizing manpower.

“To further enhance decision-making and operational efficiency, we are leveraging advanced tools like Gemini, which enable us to search and analyse multimodal data across multiple cloud platforms,” said Sharma. “Many of our hotels feature smart room systems, voice-activated controls, and AI-based energy management systems to optimize resource usage. We are also piloting AI-driven revenue management systems to dynamically adjust pricing and maximize occupancy,” he added.

Unlike sectors such as banking and financial services, hospitality was perceived as a laggard when it comes to disruptive technologies such as artificial intelligence, but post the Covid-19 pandemic, things have changed drastically, said Harshvardhan Amle, co-founder and CEO of Upswing Cognitive Hospitality Solutions, an Indian startup developing automation and energy management solutions for the hospitality industry.

“We are in talks with a top international hotel chain in India for AI solutions to enhance guest experience and to help them with manpower resource planning. Our basic product is a guest data platform that helps chains target specific customers based on their detailed profiles, but for the past six to seven months, we have been working on a hospitality driven large language model using Google’s Gemini,” he added.

Akshay Thusoo, senior VP, commercials, at Sarovar Hotels said the chain’s upcoming property, Sarovar Portico in Sriperumbudur will feature IoT-based systems that monitor and optimize the performance of key infrastructure such as HVAC systems, energy consumption, and water treatment plants. "Real-time data analysis will allow us to predict maintenance needs and minimize downtime, ultimately increasing operational efficiency,” he added.

As per a report by Noesis Capital Advisors, artificial intelligence offers ‘powerful tools’ for creating more ‘personalised’ and ‘engaging’ guest experiences for the hospitality industry. “For example, AI can analyse past guest

behaviour to provide tailored recommendations for activities, dining options, and room settings that align with individual preferences. The use of chatbots and virtual assistants allows hotels to offer 24/7 customer support, answer guest inquiries, manage reservations, and handle requests in real time,” the report said.