

DUBAI TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF DIGITAL MATURITY AND REVENUE MANAGEMENT IN HOSPITALITY SECTOR

- *New independent report assesses the digital maturity of Dubai's hotel sector highlighting best practice digital technology*
- *80% of hotel searches and 60% of travel searches in the Middle East and North Africa made using mobile phones, emphasising importance of digital, social and mobile first strategy*
- *Revenue management training sessions rolled out to stakeholders, stimulating global price competitiveness*

Dubai, UAE, 10 December 2018: Dubai's Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) has unveiled a third-party research report on the digital maturity of hotels in the emirate, with the objective of further improving the competitiveness of the travel and tourism industry. The report was commissioned by Dubai Tourism as part of its on-going commitment to facilitate and promote disruptive technology as set out by the government's 10x Initiative, with research carried out by leading management consultancy InsightsOut, specialists in the hospitality and service industries. Findings showed that 80% of hotel searches and 60% of travel searches in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region) are made using mobile phones, demonstrating the importance of a digital, social and mobile first strategy when designing booking platforms. With digital maturity a hugely significant factor in tapping into today's generation of technologically advanced travellers, the report aims to equip hotels with the relevant analysis in order to identify areas for further improvement, as well as the best tools to use during implementation.



The research carried out a digital maturity assessment across all classifications of hotels in Dubai, using leading competitive cities around the world as a benchmark. The results revealed that 83% of hotels currently have an internet booking tool, with 78% already implementing a digital marketing strategy, reinforcing the industry's increasing online presence. Whilst 63% of properties already offer digital guest surveys to improve their service, the report highlighted customer relation management (CRM) as an area for further development with 21% currently operating the process. Further results showed the positive revenue impact that increased digital maturity will have on hotels and the wider destination, empowering stakeholders to offer personalised, timely and differentiated customer service experiences - these features were identified as top priorities for the modern-day global traveller, with 86% of consumers preferring personalised communication in emails; 84% seeking recommendations based on their visit history; and 81% looking for geo-targeted offers and services. The report also highlighted the most suitable digital technology stack for each classification of hotel including a self-assessment tool, providing the industry with additional comprehensive guest insights and performance analytics that will enable hotels to further build on their individual guest profiles with the ultimate aim of offering even more dynamic customisation.

His Excellency Helal Almarri, Director General, Dubai Tourism, said: "Guided by the vision and future-focused agenda of **His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai,** our goal is to leverage technology to offer best in class digital experiences for our guests, enabling Dubai to lead the way into a smart future. Today, consumers are hyper-connected and expect real-time product updates and personalisation tools on mobile devices to tailor their hotel and destination experiences, underpinning the importance of

customer relationship management at every stage of the journey. There is a constant need for further technological diversification across the travel, tourism and hospitality sectors to offer better customer experiences and the Digital Maturity Report offers data-led insights into the importance of smart systems in the hospitality industry for both guests and hoteliers. As we work towards the Tourism 2022-2025 Strategy, the need for a new generation of innovative and smart technology increases in order to enhance the customer experience. We look forward to furthering this work in partnership with the private sector in order to ensure we are constantly evolving to cater to travellers' needs, and where relevant will continue to call on third party research to ensure Dubai is leading the way when it comes to best practice in world-class digitisation”.



Revenue Management Training

In addition to the Digital Maturity Report, Dubai Tourism and InsightsOut have also developed an interactive training programme to ensure Dubai's resilient hospitality sector continues to maintain global price competitiveness. Working with hotels to further streamline and maximise revenue performance, the Revenue Management Workshop programme invited hotel revenue managers, reservation managers and sales and marketing managers to attend practical sessions, to share fundamental best practices in yield management and forecasting, in addition to monitoring applications and tools to manage the emirate's overall occupancy levels, revenue per available room (RevPAR) and average daily rate (ADR).

Offering immediate takeaways inclusive of templates, worksheets and monitoring tools, attendees were offered insights into key aspects of revenue management, including data analysis, optimising and driving demand, and evaluating industry standards to set best possible pricing strategies. The comprehensive programme consisted of 22 workshop sessions, training a total of 419 professionals across 411 properties, with each session hosting a maximum of 25 participants to ensure a personalised and immersive learning environment.

“These are just a few of the strategic projects in place to further empower Dubai’s hotel industry professionals. As the partnership between the public and private sector goes from strength to strength, we are working collectively to increase contribution towards the city’s thriving tourism landscape, ultimately driving better revenue for the industry. With further insight into revenue management tools, processes, and how to apply the concepts to manage rates and inventory remain key to designing effective strategies, allowing us to thrive in prevalent market conditions. We are accelerating our agenda for digital maturity across the board, providing opportunities for stakeholders to advance their processes, more effectively tap into the global industry and cater to the needs of the next generation of travellers. These developments also represent the tangible outcomes of **His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai’s** vision and are integral to placing Dubai on the world map in a highly digitised global travel ecosystem,” added **His Excellency Helal Almarri**.

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About Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world’s leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai Tourism’s mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai among global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the emirate. Dubai Tourism is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai’s tourism sector. It markets and promotes the Emirate’s commerce sector, and is responsible for the licensing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the Dubai Tourism portfolio include Dubai Business Events, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment.

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