Reopening for Business: A Checklist for Rates and Distribution

Establishing a strategy for rates and distribution will be a top priority when your hotel reopens – and it’ll require dealing with several new factors. Before the economy regains momentum, business likely will be affected by low demand, restricted inventory and competitive pricing. We’ve developed a checklist of actions and considerations to help you navigate an altered marketplace.

☐ 1. Confirm restrictions on room capacity with local government and/or appropriate regulatory agencies.

☐ 2. Consult with General Manager and Housekeeping team to determine reopening strategy. Considerations should include:
   - Opening property completely or keeping sections/wings/buildings closed until occupancy increases.
   - Reevaluating policy for designating rooms – upon guest checkout – as available inventory. (Potential new guidelines may require rooms to remain “out of order” for a certain duration as a health safety precaution.)

☐ 3. Audit reservations with OTAs and distribution vendors. Address the following:
   - Cross reference reservation details and review contact information. OTAs may provide greater access than usual to guest information due to circumstances.
   - Assign responsibility to contact guests and confirm their travel plans.
   - Confirm if OTAs and distribution partners have changed their cancellation processes.
   - Confirm OTAs’ policies for handling deposits, reservation cancellations, and commissions.
4. For GDS bookings, check if your hotel's travel agencies have COVID-19 travel and cancellation policies. Do the same with FIT Wholesalers and anyone working with allocations (e.g., airlines).

5. Meet with Catering and Events team to review upcoming events and contact event planners. Check immediate events first and then follow with the rest.

6. Reestablish relationships with all local, negotiated-rate companies.

7. Assess competitive set to determine if any adjustments are needed.

8. Based on competitive set adjustments and inventory, review pricing strategy.

9. If a revenue management system is in place, examine operations with RMS vendors. Specifically, confirm if rate and restriction changes are being accepted automatically – if yes, determine whether the RMS forecast model has been changed.

10. Review restrictions that may have been placed pre-closure; run the Restrictions Detail report in OPERA.

11. Evaluate projected market mix.

12. Evaluate packages to determine if all its elements still are relevant. This may be a great time to offer new packages.

13. Review Best Available Rate approach and update as needed.

14. Revisit rate configuration to adjust any constraints.

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