



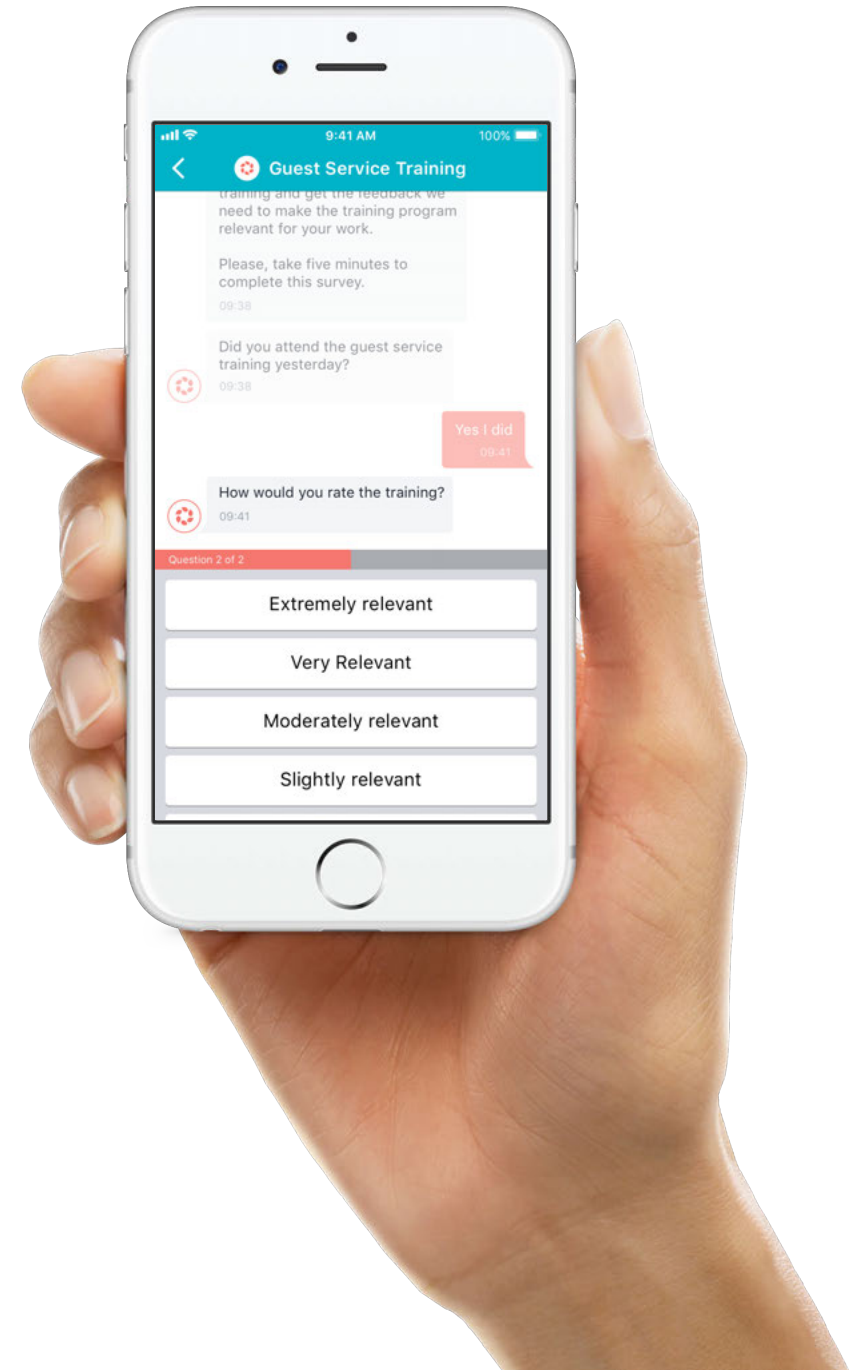
eBook

HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY TRENDS FOR 2019



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	3
2	Operations	5
3	Information Technology	6
4	Executive Staff	10
5	Internal Communications	13
6	Human Resources	16
7	Conclusion	19





INTRODUCTION

Thanks to recent waves of innovation within the travel industry, hospitality professionals have many exciting trends to look forward to in 2019. Unlike many sectors struggling to adapt to changing technologies, the hotel business has proven uniquely agile in its ability to embrace the future with open arms. In fact, travel and tourism is reported to be one of the world's fastest growing industries.

The reasons for growth in the hospitality industry are as expansive and diverse as the scores of guests flocking to hotels for a temporary escape from reality, but the data is crystal clear: with the average hotel reaching profitability at 55% occupancy, the US has hit a national average of 65%. From an international perspective, Deloitte reports that travel and tourism currently account for 1/10th of the global GDP.

With low unemployment numbers driving disposable income up and increased competition amongst airlines driving flight prices down, there has never been a better time for hoteliers to fully digitize both corporate culture and marketing strategy. In 2019, we are poised to see many of the digital industry trends of the past few years come into maturity.

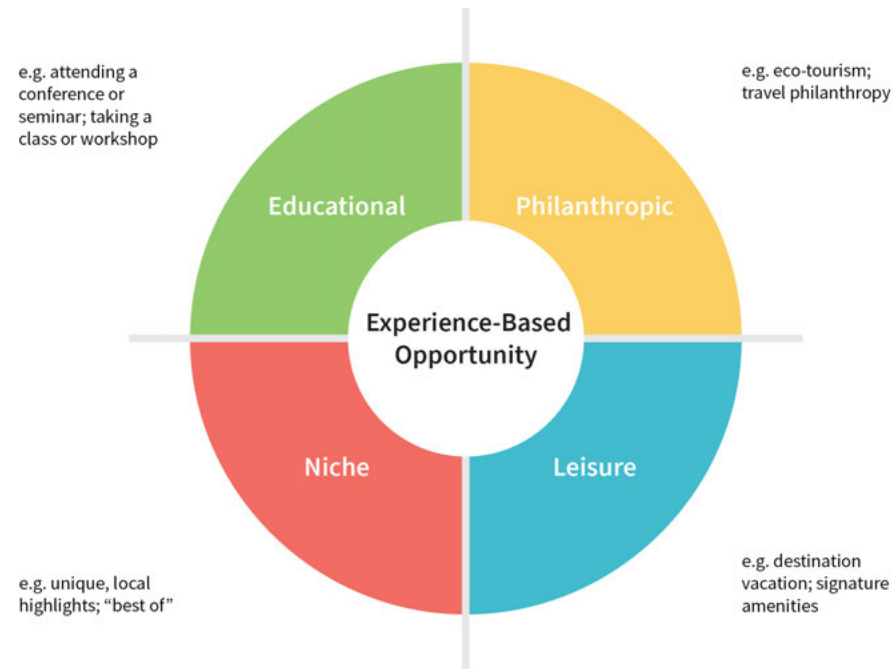
As millennial purchasing power continues to skyrocket, the task of creating memorable travel experiences, and leveraging them to drive new and repeat bookings, will remain key for hospitality professionals. If 2018 was about transforming even the most banal elements of travel into Instagrammable moments, 2019 is slated to be the year that even more lifestyle brands move in to perfect the aesthetic.

In a recent survey, 45% of respondents listed lifestyle brands as the most desirable lodging products and elements to invest in to attract the upwardly mobile millennial crowd. The so-called "Experience Economy," driven by the millennial preference for authenticity over product, is ruled by the notion that travel should not only be a time for relaxation and indulgence, but also a time of personal growth.



What is the Experience Economy?

A shift in consumer behavior, associated with and attributed predominantly to the millennial generation from material-driven purchases (happiness is gained from accumulating and owning objects) to experience-based ones (product is the experience itself and the emotional and social capital).



In order to adopt and execute a successful digital strategy in 2019, it's important to keep in mind the trends that are poised to dominate the hospitality industry in the coming year. We've broken these trends down into five categories so you can easily assess how each of these trends will impact your respective departments.

First, we'll look at emerging digital tools that will take operations and IT task efficiency and cohesion up a notch. Next, we'll look at ways in which your executive team can level up digital marketing strategy based on projected trends. After that, we will investigate ways to perfect digital internal communications in the coming year to bolster customer experience and morale. Last but not least, we'll take a look at how digital trends can impact human resources.



OPERATIONS

Whether you're aiming for an organizational overhaul to become more competitive in your market or merely seeking to cut down on costs of everyday business, these trends may deliver the results you need to meet your operations management goals in 2019.

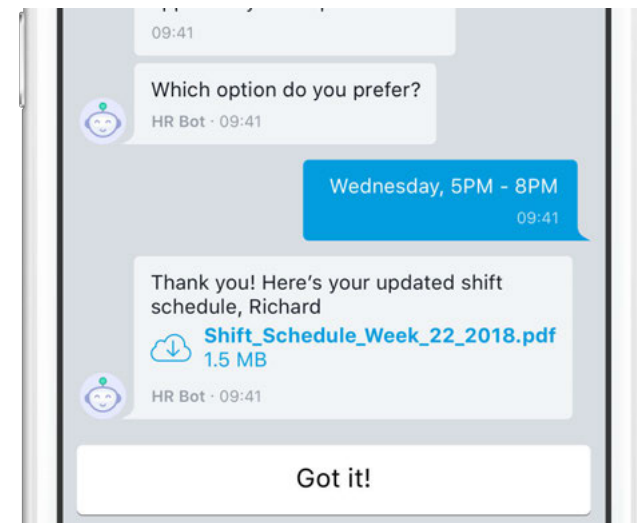
Automatization

The automating processes throughout your hospitality business can save money and increase efficiency when it comes to all areas of hotel management. Online reservation services, automated chatbots, inline translation functions, and mobile hotel check-in features are only a handful of examples of business dependency on technology. In 2019, these features are poised to continue to mature and grow.

By dedicating machines to specific business tasks, companies are freeing up employee time for focusing on their products and their customers. Rather than assigning an employee to monitor the company website and answer the same questions multiple times, programming a chatbot to respond to FAQs saves company time and resources.

Performance Measurement

Detailed analytics give companies a baseline for implementing changes in areas from development and production to customer service. In the coming year, recent innovations will allow for these metrics to be reported in even richer detail. Delivering comprehensive measurements, hotel owners will be able to make more informed decisions regarding business practices and priorities looking ahead and take action sooner.





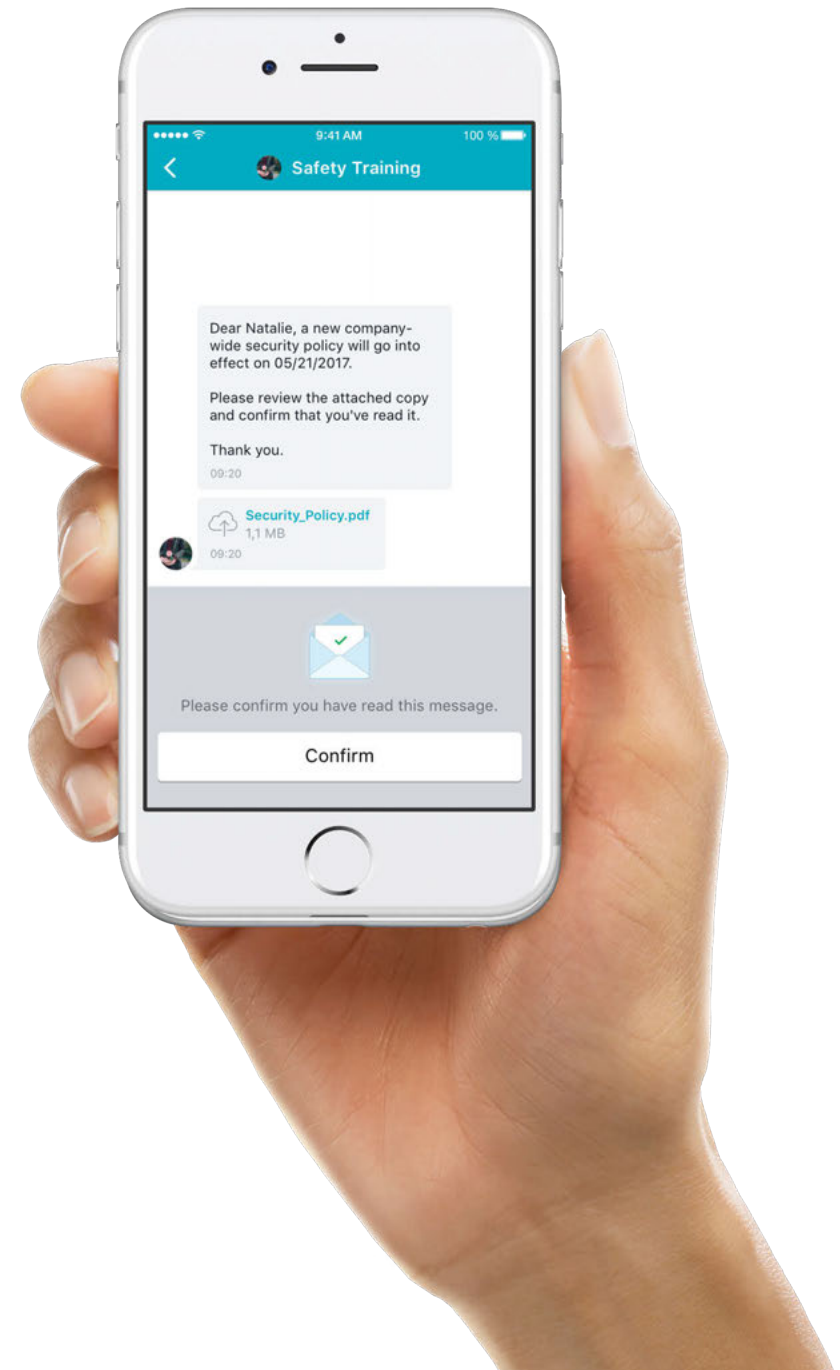
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

From the rampant adoption of mobile internal communications tools to artificial intelligence to the Internet of Things, IT departments across the hospitality landscape should prepare to see some big shake-ups in their lineup. In addition to innovative gadgets and software, 2019 will also be a year for IT to uphold international security compliance across all digital properties and tools.

Since hotels host travelers from all over the world, the chance that your property will process the personal information of international travelers is a probable likelihood. Recent data breaches at well-known hotel brands like Radisson—in which guest names, addresses, email addresses, company names, phone numbers, Radisson Rewards member numbers, and frequent-flyer numbers were compromised—places renewed emphasis on making sure hoteliers are prepared and take the potential for data breaches seriously.

Increased Security and Confidentiality

As the EU put GDPR into effect in May 2018, **ensuring the continued security of your internal communications channels will be more than just a trend in 2019—it will be an absolute necessity with costly consequences if ignored.** Adopting a private platform for internal





messaging will help employees discreetly convey necessary information amongst themselves without unnecessarily involving guests. As nowadays these sensitive messages can take many mediums (such as email, direct message, video, and image), adopting a platform that can support a variety of media formats will be important in the coming year.

With a secure team communication tool in place, any confidential company or HR information will remain protected. While corporations can establish confidential communication solutions within internal apps, they can also document employee activity and collaboration for posterity. For teams that work in customer service, this can prove invaluable as information is readily accessible yet secure should employees require it.

Smart Rooms

With more people using voice-activated devices in their homes, it's only natural to use these same devices to make rooms more "smart." In 2019, **IT departments should anticipate continued adoption of technologies that allow guests to control lights, temperature, and other features in a hotel room that can be difficult to decipher.**





Adding a voice-activated device like a Google Home or Amazon Echo can eliminate the risk of a poor online rating or review, or a middle-of-the-night complaint to the front desk. The guest can control specific functions of the room, just like at home. While the upfront hardware costs may seem steep, it is important to keep in mind that because voice assistant technology is always evolving, the software will be constantly improving upon itself throughout the year.

A recent [Google Think study](#) confirms that consumers not only want immediate attention to their concerns, they expect brands to anticipate their needs, such as having extra towels on hand without having to ask, or 24/7 mobile check-in. Smart room technology on the guest-facing side of the business, and an operational communication tool for your hotel team, ensures real-time transfer of information can happen as expediently as possible across all aspects of your hotels operations.

According to The Wynn Las Vegas, over 4,700 of their rooms will be equipped with an Amazon Echo to help guests control things like lighting and temperature with ease. Don't be surprised if you start seeing rooms with "smart" beds that can determine whether or not a guest is asleep or awake and heat or light a room accordingly.

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Programs Continue to Prosper

With the rise of mobile communication apps for the workplace comes the expectation that messages will be responded to in real time, or at the very least, in a timely manner. While it is up to your company to establish rules of engagement so that employees don't burn out or rack up overtime while dealing with off-the-clock internal communications, it's also important to make the digital workplace app as accessible to all employees as possible.

For many, this means using a personal mobile device. The key for 2019 will be to make sure that every employee's device version is compatible with the internal communication software you use. When selecting a team communication app, be sure to adopt a platform that will accommodate as many mobile operating systems as possible.

AI is Further Demystified and Becomes an Asset

Depending on who you talk to, artificial intelligence (AI) is either met with excitement or skepticism and worry. While there are many industries that will eventually be dominated by AI, **the hospitality industry isn't likely to go full-automation in 2019, given the importance of the human element in hospitality interactions.**



With that said, many businesses within the hospitality industry have begun to incorporate some friendly robots to help out with some of the housekeeping and other tasks that don't require a lot of face-to-face interaction. AI will ultimately help the guest experience by improving the quality of any person-to-person exchanges.

Automation is not meant to threaten a booming industry but rather keep it streamlined, error-free, and maintain high standards in what it does best; striving to make the customer experience as impeccable as possible.

AI-Augmented Analytics and Development

As AI's power permeates more aspects of enterprise software, it will begin to assist with the calculation of analytics previously handled by expert data scientists. In fact, **Gartner predicts that by 2022, at least 40% of new application development will have AI co-developers assisting with production.** For hospitality industry executives, this means that you will be able to cut technical costs by doubling down on AI technology.



EXECUTIVE STAFF

In 2018, we continued to see many technology and business leaders become household names thanks to the rise of “personal brand” afforded to us by social media. While it might not suit all executive schedules to maintain an active presence on external and internal social media platforms, **it will be important to work with your PR team in 2019 to find a strategy that makes sense for your personality and leadership style.** In addition to amping up your thought leadership identity throughout the industry, it is important to invest time and energy honing your brand’s social strategy.

For many lifestyle brands in 2018, this has meant putting your company’s vision and values front and center. While prior generations may view the mix of business and politics to be controversial, millennials, and Gen Z, have a proven track record of investing in brands that align with their values. Working with an influencer to promote your brand—such as a celebrity, or a popular travel blogger—who embodies your brand’s core values, vision, and lifestyle is a trend we will see continue to gain momentum in 2019. Through carefully-curated posts and on-brand content, influencers can offer special promotions to their followers and subscribers, driving new business directly to your hotel from a source that customers trust.





How Millennials are Shaping Bleisure Trends

Embracing the Bleisure Class

As millennials climb in their careers and have more disposable income to spend on travel, executive hotel staffers should **be prepared to continue branching out with new initiatives that will capture the unique social media-fueled spirit of this generation.** In 2019, expect to see a continued interest in ‘bleisure,’ also known as business travel mixed with leisurely travel.

For young professionals, bleisure is the perfect opportunity to extend a week of business-related travel, mandatory meetings, and networking mixers into a personal vacation. Not only do these extended vacations help keep hotels full and dinner reservations booked, but a happy millennial in vacation mode is also more likely to spend money on other amenities. It’s a win-win for every category within the hospitality industry, so be sure to utilize resources properly and keep an on eye on conferences in your region, tailoring promotions to cater to the captive audience that will be in attendance.





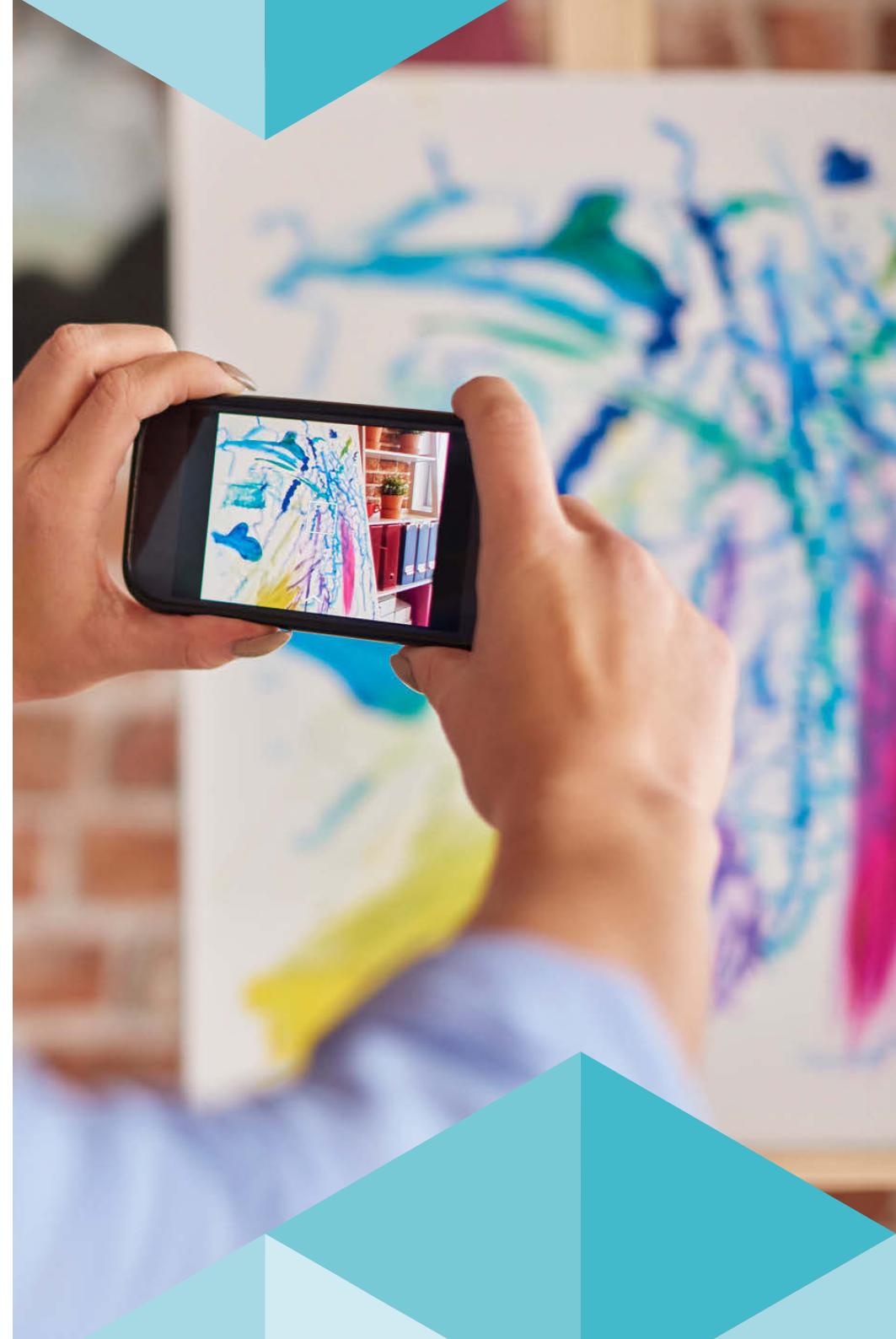
Playing to the Instagram Crowd With Photo-Ready Experiences

Influencer-based marketing isn't going anywhere in 2019. In 2018, the rise of "Instagram museum" experiences like the "[Museum of Ice Cream](#)", where every detail in every room is designed for social media documentation, proved to be exceedingly popular among those in their 20s and 30s. With that ethos in mind, **going the extra mile with selfie-ready aesthetics and amenities could be game-changing for your hospitality business.**

Interesting backdrops and curated art installations can take many forms. Transforming a generic hotel bar into a photogenic enclave with a signature cocktail or menu item for tourists and locals to flock to is a great way to get your feet wet with thematic design or pop-up installations.

If you wish to lean into this trend in 2019, you should plan to budget for social marketing to make the biggest splash. Allocating resources to explore the current roster of popular social apps allows hospitality businesses to constantly put their best creative foot forward. In 2019, Instagram will continue to reign supreme. Hire a photography team that specializes in social media-friendly content to capture images and moments that will rake in not only likes and comments, but also more bookings.

Overall, thinking long and hard about your company's public persona will help you further define your key verticals and customer cohorts, ensuring that all digital marketing efforts going forward are supported by hard and fast data about the consumer behavior driving purchasing decisions.





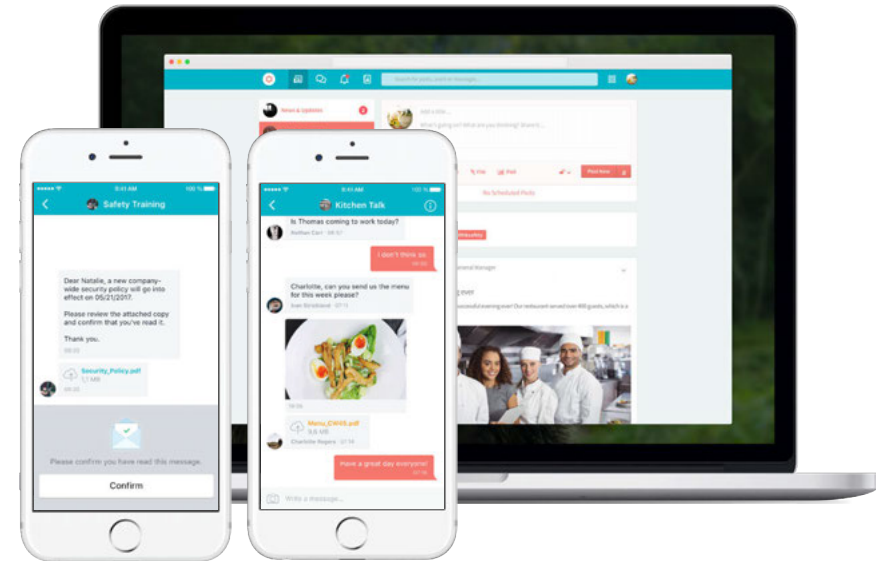
INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

In 2019, hoteliers that have transitioned their organization to a mobile, real-time operational communication platform will see continued payoff. Since the software that powers team communication apps becomes increasingly robust with each version, there should be a host of new ways to take further advantage of the digital communication hub you have adopted. These improvements may manifest in a variety of ways: peer-to-peer, top-down, and bottom-up communication, as well as cross-cultural engagement and personal productivity and enrichment.

Peer-to-Peer, Top-Down, and Bottom-Up Communication

Perhaps once considered optional, investing in a centralized digital workspace has become a mission-critical tool fostering employee engagement across the hospitality landscape. When the backbone of a hotel is rooted in a rich sense of purpose and positive company spirit, staffers at all levels will be far more likely to provide a positive atmosphere for guests while simultaneously yielding high productivity levels within their respective workflows.

The already considerable attrition levels in the hospitality sector are made more challenging by current low unemployment rates. Bearing this in mind, **investing in sustainable ways to successfully manage and retain your hotel's frontline workers is more important than ever.**

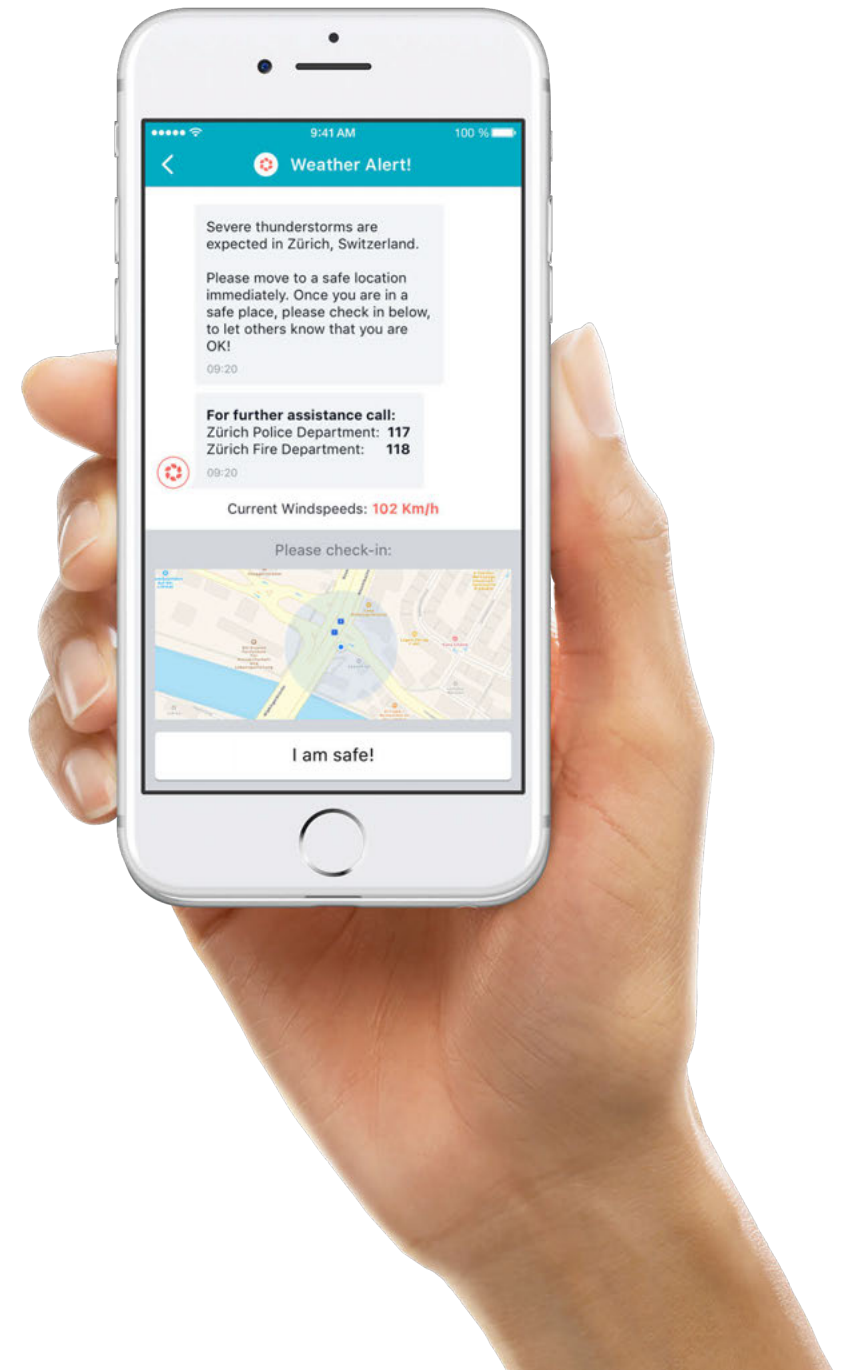


While maintaining this high level of employee satisfaction may seem like an obvious step toward productivity and high employee retention, gathering anecdotal data to measure employee satisfaction is nearly impossible without digital automation. Heading into 2019, the use of pulse surveys to gather quick feedback from hotel staffers, taking the temperature of your workforce before, during, and after any policy shifts, busy seasonal occupancy periods, or times of crisis will be essential.



Confirmation campaigns will also prove helpful, ensuring that key memos and announcements are read and understood, and employees can confirm their safety. This is especially important for the hospitality industry, as guests are constantly reliant on hotel employees to have accurate and up-to-date information about check-in and check-out, housekeeping, billing, and other logistics items. Dedicated communication streams also help distribute real-time updates internally to specific departments and among the organization at large.

In addition to pulse surveys and confirmation campaigns, **chat campaigns are a more low-stakes but equally crucial trend that hotel employees will utilize more in the coming year.** Chat campaigns allow employees to send personalized messages, allowing them to engage in empathetic exchanges with leadership and each other. Peer-to-peer and group messaging help specific teams and departments complete short and long-term tasks quickly through direct communication. Real-time operational communication through internally-visible, digital communication channels ensures that high levels of transparency are maintained throughout the hotel, from the front desk to housekeeping.





Multilingual and Cross-Cultural Engagement

For hotel teams comprised of employees from different countries or that speak different languages, inline translation tools will also make a prevalent appearance across mobile internal communications strategies. Inline translation uses artificial intelligence to translate any message sent in real time, ensuring that all employees are able to fully comprehend, respond to, and post their own important messages in the language they feel most comfortable speaking.

Planning for Communications in Times of Crises

Ever since the tragic recent uptick of mass shootings and natural disasters, such as the recent devastating wildfires in Northern California, **it has become increasingly important for hotels to have a robust operational communications plan in place**. In 2019, this trend will likely continue. After all, if a company experiences a local natural disaster, has a PR crisis, or suspects that competition is about to launch a negative narrative, advanced communication methods are a necessity. This is important both to ensure your hotel teams are informed and know what to do in the event of emergency, and can clearly and quickly advise hotel guests on evacuation routes and other crisis contingencies.

In 2019, work with your mobile communication provider to see how you can utilize new and/or improved features to streamline vital information quickly. Group messaging lists, network connections, and even media alerts keep you and your team informed and connected.

One essential feature to look for in a mobile operational communication tool is a digital document repository. Ideally cloud-based, so that storage doesn't become an issue especially for teams that have a BYOD policy in place, a team app should possess the ability to quickly upload and view time-sensitive documents. Having instant access to maps of emergency meeting places and department or location-based protocols is a must-have for hotel teams that need to efficiently secure their own safety as well as that of their guests.



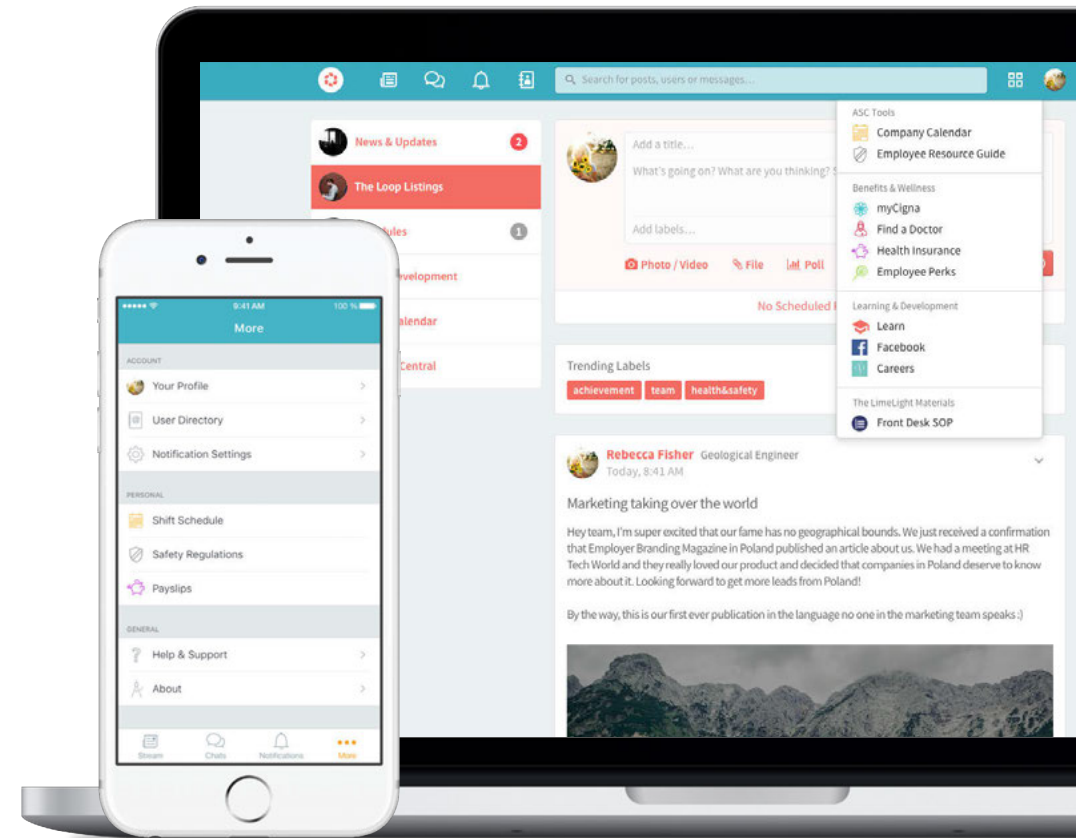
HUMAN RESOURCES

In the realm of HR, we'll continue to see an uptick in employee engagement strategies. While on the surface benefits like employee perk programs, or daycare come to mind, the trends will also point to more practical functions like payroll and scheduling. The reason for this trend is obvious: **when basic HR functions are digitally integrated, employees can spend less time focusing on personal logistics and more time on guests.**

Hosting digital interconnectedness within in a robust, well-designed multimedia forum is a surefire path to employee satisfaction. It's important not to underestimate the impact of making your employees' work lives easier by streamlining even the most mundane tasks, such as the ability to look up shift schedules, view enrollment reminders, or view holiday time-off calendars. Digital tools that incorporate instant communications such as push notifications, or that notify colleagues when they are tagged in a post for example, helps ensure your hotel teams get the information they need when they need it.

Reevaluating Payroll and Scheduling

Thanks to the slow demise of payday lenders and other high-cost cash advance services, many companies, especially those with large hourly workforces, will be looking for ways to digitally deploy earned wages on





demand in 2019. Just like the HR software integrations mentioned above, **organizations will build payroll software directly into their digital workplace hub so employees and managers can quickly access pay stubs, tax forms, check deployment, and any other task involving compensation.**

Similarly, the use of digitized scheduling will also increase in the coming year. Using digital and mobile scheduling services saves time, minimizes confusion, and makes it easy for employees to request time off or swap shifts. Being able to access schedules on demand and on-the-go leads to more agile, efficient, and productive team communication.

A New Chapter for HR Technology

As the future of work continues to crystalize for the non-desk workforce, the evolution of HR tools will play a crucial role in maintaining employee engagement and satisfaction amidst rapid changes to many industries. While more processes and workflows may be automated or redistributed, the basic human need to feel connected and fulfilled at work will remain an evergreen priority for employees and managers on the front lines.

Immersive AI-Driven Trainings

You already know we're big on workforce digitization around here, and from the looks of it, there are no signs that this trend will be slowing down in the coming year. The continued rise of predictive analytics and automation technologies will further catapult productivity to new heights, especially for non-desk workers. 2019 will continue last year's trend of streamlining operational communications into one virtual space, giving employees quick and easy access to all the tools they need to succeed. Bonus points if this digital hub is accessible from any device, particularly their own.

As artificial intelligence takes on more company tasks, it will also be up to HR departments in 2019 to both ensure that their workforce is properly trained on the new tech, as well as finding ways to expand or elevate current roles that will be augmented by automated tools. With proper training programs in place, building a successful digital workplace becomes a more intuitive, integrated tenant of company culture. In 2019, many of these training programs could have the capacity to become more immersive due to the proliferation of virtual and augmented reality (AR) technologies.



Corporate Well-Being Programs

In our hyperconnected world, it's no secret that burnout is a real issue. In fact, Harvard Business Review reports that nearly 50% of employees report frequent or constant exhaustion due to the high stress levels, physical demands, and social isolation of work. **A recent study cited a national revenue loss to the tune of \$30 billion thanks to stress-induced lost work days.** The antidote? Taking an active role in the well-being of your workforce.

By “well-being,” we don't mean your run-of-the-mill healthcare offerings, though those are important to keep up as well. In 2019, companies are projected to take a larger vested interest in holistic employee satisfaction metrics like quality of sleep, physical fitness, and highly customized content offerings based on data collected from employees over time.



Candidate Experience Improvements

In addition to improving conditions for workers internally, savvy HR departments in 2019 will also be looking for ways to optimize the recruiting process through personalized outreach and interviewing tactics, as well as employing quicker response rates through intelligent automated messaging. AI and sentiment analysis technologies will enable HR teams of every size to scale up their recruiting efforts, helping them find the most qualified candidates possible in quicker succession.

In addition to the prospecting phase, there are several budding trends within the interview process. Once candidates are in the interview pipeline, HR managers are using software integrations in increasing numbers to schedule interviews and garner employee feedback quickly. These integrations often link directly into the company's internal communications platform, meaning employees don't have to completely disrupt their workflow in order to give substantive feedback about the interview.



CONCLUSION

As digital workplace solutions continue to sweep the hotel industry in 2019, there are many features that hospitality executives should look out for when selecting the right tool for their employee base. Beekeeper is designed to iron out every pain point an organization may encounter as they transition their workplace to digital.

Beekeeper: Operational Communication Platform for Hospitality

Trusted by hundreds of hotel leaders across the globe, Beekeeper is an award-winning mobile-first operational communication app that creates a digital workplace for hospitality workers. It has been proven to improve guest satisfaction scores by streamlining communication, increasing engagement, and reducing turnover.

Every hotel is different, and therefore hyper-customized support is provided to each and every team. As your digital workplace partner, Beekeeper Customer Success Managers are equipped to provide any training resources needed, be it in-person seminars or onboarding sessions, in-app sample user flows, video tutorials, or written materials.

Fostering Efficiency and Engagement with Beekeeper Technology

In an increasingly mobile-first world, granting every member of your organization the keys to a singular digital hub is crucial. Beekeeper specializes in peer-to-peer, top-down, *and* bottom-up communication, meaning employees have the leverage and agency to get initiatives moving quickly and express rapid fire internal feedback. There are many Beekeeper features that speak to the hospitality industry's unique, fast-paced needs.



Chat Campaigns allow employees to send personalized messages, allowing employees to engage in empathetic exchanges with leadership and each other.



Confirmation Campaigns help organizations ensure that key memos and announcements are read and understood, and employees can confirm comprehension.



Pulse Surveys help take the temperature of your workforce to increase retention and employee satisfaction.



Inline Translation translates any message sent in real time, ensuring that employees from diverse backgrounds are able to fully comprehend important messages in the language they feel most comfortable speaking.



Communication Streams help disseminate real-time updates among the entire organization or specific departments.



Peer-to-Peer and Group Messaging help specific subsets and departments get things done quickly through direct communication.



Beekeeper's Integrations Marketplace helps incorporate functions like e-alarms, payroll, HR, file sharing, and other key operational tools when employees need them most.



The Analytics Dashboard feature allows leadership to quickly gauge communication effectiveness and monitor specific employee engagement.



Digital Signage allows for content to be automatically streamed, allowing any internal messaging to be visibly apparent to all relevant parties.

Beekeeper's dedication to solving the unique operational communication challenges faced by non-desk employees makes the mobile-first platform the perfect solution for workers across all functions of the hospitality industry. In today's tumultuous world, streamlining communications and operations in one place has become more crucial than ever. Beekeeper is the one-stop solution hotels can count on, helping your hospitality business stay on top of trends in 2019 and beyond.



Beekeeper is an award-winning operational communication platform empowering your non-desk workforces to work better together.

Our mobile-first and desktop-friendly solution lets you reach every employee across functions, shifts, locations, and languages through real-time peer-to-peer and group messaging. Dedicated streams get important messages and news to your entire workforce, or specific subgroups, through both top-down and bottom-up communication. Managers can easily send automated messages and measure responses with a robust analytics dashboard.

Quick to implement and even easier to use, Beekeeper integrates with the existing operational systems you rely on and makes them accessible to everyone in one central access point. Beekeeper keeps your frontline workforce engaged and on-task while combating turnover.

Simply put? Beekeeper makes the employee experience better.

[Get a Free Demo](#)

For more information, visit www.beekeeper.io
and follow us @BeekeeperSocial.

