

Future is hybrid

AI with human touch

While AI empowers hotel ops with personalised services, **Gaurav Singh** stresses the critical role of human connections in creating memorable guest experiences.



DDP Bureau

How is Chalet Hotels integrating digital innovations like Artificial Intelligence (AI), facial recognition and mobile-first platforms into its guest journey, especially at the check-in stage?

We are in the process of introducing AI-based technologies across multiple hotels in our portfolio. This ranges from deploying AI for guest interactions and customer service to creating a seamless, mobile-first check-in experience that reduces wait times and enhances convenience. In parallel, we are also leveraging AI to optimise our Building Management Systems (BMS), ensuring smarter energy use and more efficient hotel operations.

Do you envision a future with lobby-less hotels and fully automated stays becoming the new normal in your portfolio?

At Chalet Hotels, we see technology as a powerful enabler — mobile check-ins, digital keys, AI concierge and smart room controls are all innovations that can enhance convenience and efficiency. However, we do not believe lobby-less and fully automated hotels will become the norm in India anytime soon. Hospitality here is deeply rooted in human connection and the warmth of a welcome or a personal interaction at the front desk cannot be replaced by machines.

We also remain conscious of the employment opportunities our industry provides. For us, the future lies in a hybrid model — where smart



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technologies streamline operations, but the essence of service and personal engagement continues to define the guest experience.





How is Chalet Hotels using AI beyond chatbots — perhaps for demand forecasting or guest sentiment analysis?"

At Chalet, we are constantly enhancing our asset management and operational capabilities. A key focus is on ensuring the efficient use of energy, water and other resources through AI-powered BMS solutions, which we are actively implementing. From a guest experience perspective, AI for us goes far beyond chatbots — it is about creating more intuitive and effective guest journeys. By anticipating our guests' needs, we aim to offer them the right product at the right value, thereby making their stay both seamless and personalised.

How do you ensure data-driven personalisation does not cross the line into overreach? What safeguards are in place to protect guest privacy?

We have the utmost regard for our guests' privacy and strictly comply with all applicable data protection laws. Any communication with our guests is always based on their consent, and we make it a point to keep it relevant, meaningful and only when necessary. At the same time, we have robust safeguards in place to ensure

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that personal data is handled responsibly and securely. Our approach to personalisation is therefore about enhancing the guest experience without ever compromising trust.

In what ways has digitalisation contributed to revenue growth — be it through dynamic pricing, upselling, or increased direct bookings? Are there measurable gains you are seeing already across your portfolio?

Digitalisation has been a key driver of revenue optimisation across our portfolio, enabled by advanced revenue management systems and AI-driven tools. We have strengthened dynamic pricing and demand forecasting, ensuring better yield management and higher occupan-

cies. Digital platforms have also enabled more targeted upselling — from room upgrades to F&B experiences — driving incremental revenue growth.

While the gains vary across properties, we are already seeing measurable improvements in RevPAR and contribution from direct channels. Going forward, we see digitalisation as not just a revenue lever, but also a way to deepen guest engagement and satisfaction, delivering more personalised experiences.

If you were to imagine the hotel room of 2030, how would it differ from today in terms of digital touchpoints?

By 2030, hotel rooms will be far more intelligent and adaptive. Guests could walk in to find the lights, temperature and even coffee set exactly to their preferences, with spaces that shift easily between work, social and rest modes. Sustainability will be seamlessly built in through smart sensors that optimise energy use. At Chalet Hotels, we see this future as a balance — where digital innovation enhances convenience and personalisation, while the warmth of human service continues to define true hospitality. ▣