



Coming Soon: The Internet of Everything (IOE) Hotels

By Bob Eaton

We are not going to recognize the world around us in 2025. In all phases of our life, guaranteed it will all be different and presumably

“better.” We may not use hotels in the same way either. We were guests recently at a presentation given at **California Polytechnic University** by Dave Evans, a futurist and lecturer on the IOE. After the presentation of this new world, we were left trying to imagine what our lives would be like in a decade and how our professions and industries may change. No one knows where all this data and connectivity will lead and the impacts in the future may not even have an existence in today’s “modern” world.

The central theme of our now digital society going forward is centered on one thing: individuality or as some may say...narcissism. With computing capability and micro transmitters being placed in “devices” as small as the dot ending this sentence, increasingly enormous data can be captured and stored and used. It will be having massive data available instantly in high definition and virtual reality. FitBit is just the beginning of our own self-monitoring.

This will result in total connectivity with your world, including your doctor, your nutritionist, your fitness instructor, etc. New products being produced by 3-D Printers will enable many exciting advances, none more anticipated than organ and limb replacement, leading to life expectancies for our grandchildren born today approaching 200 years. Your food will be produced by a 3-D printer that is attached to food/nutrition tubes and a computer will digitize and produce steaks and shrimp that are nutritionally superior, sustainable—and the best you’ve ever had. Your gardening will be 100% robotic and nutritious and zero environmental impact, etc.

How might a hotel be responding in this world of 2025

and beyond? It just may be entirely too complex to really know, but here are some suggestions:

- ▶ Many commercial operations including hotels will employ robotics for some form of customer interaction. Robotic room service carts, with a video link delivering the food and beverages to the rooms. All functions will be controlled by the guest’s smart phone.

- ▶ Business travel will be mostly social in nature, as there will be no practical need to go on a business trip unless it has a strong social agenda. Therefore, hotels may become customized places for leisure activities that can be infinitely customized for each guest’s preferences and desires.

- ▶ International ownership will likely increase because the only impediment was the distance and time factors. In our new world, you are virtually “in your real estate” in real time and not forced to travel endless hours for a brief tour and a face-to-face. For hotels there will emerge a single major source for measuring guest satisfaction and hence financial results because dynamic pricing will include your true satisfaction registered by BIO GUEST, a startup in 2021.

- ▶ Maybe checking in, you’ll be given a very small Band-Aid patch that will monitor your entire well-being and the hotel will include a choice on what

health evaluation you’d like, Mayo Clinic or Stanford. In place of the patch the bathroom mirrors will perform similar functions.

- ▶ Because entire walls can be a digital screen with the bandwidth to die for, guests can simply design their room’s art, etc. Throw in a little virtual reality and you could have a game show in your room.

- ▶ Maybe the whole industry becomes Airbnb? Why do we all have to stay in a big building of uniform design? How is quality defined in the future? This will be very interesting as traditional hotels compete with the disruptors while this technological wave is unrelenting.



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▶ Traditional hotels could stay where they are with the minimum technology package and soon become relics, where people come to stay for the “quiet experience.” Traditional hotels could convert to assisted living.

▶ Will there really need to be the same number of people staffing a hotel? Probably not and differently. Engineering would be off-site with 100% monitoring. Kitchens and staffs might diminish. It seems the hospitality equation will have to always include people delivering generosity and friendship to visitors, but I’ve not met your robot yet.

In consideration of these and other relevant factors, our “hospitality” advisory council for the current Cal Poly program has agreed to a name change for that program. Henceforth the program will be known as EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT. Maybe that will more adequately describe the industry than we even know now. ■

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