

OLD IDEAS

VS

NEW TECH

How do they compare?



Postcards



Social media posts

- Used as souvenirs or to send greetings back home, postcards were a classic way for guests to **share their travel experience**

PRO

Kept as sentimental keepsakes and can keep advertising your hotel for years

CON

Limited reach – only visible to the guest's immediate family and friends, expensive to print and keep in your giftshop

- Travellers can **post on social media anytime**, and practically anywhere
- Thanks to multiple platforms and large networks, their **reach is extensive**

PRO

Free advertising for your hotel to potentially global audience in every social media post – luring new guests to your hotel with insta-jealousy and fear of missing out

CON

You don't have control over where the photos are taken, so your hotel should be photo-ready at all times

Make the most of it

- Make sure your [hotel's presence on social media](#) is **exciting** and part of the conversation
- Use creative decor to create **"instagrammable"** visual moments in your hotel to [encourage social posts](#)
- Offer guests the option to **communicate** with you on social media using hashtags – ([Sol Wave House](#) lets guests order drinks by the pool via Twitter with the #poolbarorder hashtag)

Comment cards



Online surveys

- Physical pen-and-paper cards filled out by guests in their rooms or on check out to let management know **how they felt** about their stay

PRO

Doesn't require any specialised technology

CON

Often only filled out if the stay was exceptionally good or bad, limited space to leave comments, and may get "lost" or be illegible, difficult to extract and consolidate data for insights over time

- Filled out by guests via email invitation after their stays, and **data is saved** for future reference

PRO

Allows for more honest feedback, contains all the info you need, can be stored and analysed digitally, and gives guests time to think about what they loved during their stay

CON

Requires staff to collect correct email addresses for your guests

Make the most of it

- Use technology to track your [big data](#) over time and visualise the effects of **operational decisions** in graphs
- Use guest feedback to inform staff training and **marketing efforts**
- Collect guest data and use it to **personalise your communication** with guests (provided they have given you permission!)

Brochures



Websites

- A glossy print **showcasing photos of your property** and all you've got to offer
- Used for **advertising your hotel** and attracting new guests who would not have come across you otherwise

PRO

Nice to hand out at travel shows, or stock in brochure stands at tourist information kiosks, airports etc

CON

Limited reach and information eventually becomes outdated, expensive to print

- An online showcase of your property that can be kept up-to-date with **new photos and special offers**
- Used for advertising your hotel to new guests, **letting guests make bookings**, broadcasting your latest news and so much more

PRO

Unlimited global reach, and easy to update with new pricing and information

CON

Hosting and maintenance fees, especially if you don't have the digital skills in-house

Make the most of it

- Make sure your website is [mobile-friendly](#) to reach the **widest possible audience** at the right times
- Streamline your **user experience** on your website to [encourage online bookings](#)
- Ensure [website copy](#) is well-written, unique, **tells a story** and captures guests emotions

Word of mouth



Online reviews

- One of the most trusted forms of advertising**, guests will still tell family and friends if they have had a very negative or positive experience

PRO

Cheapest and most trusted form of advertising

CON

Can be damaging if negative and impossible for a hotelier to keep track of.

- A way for guests to share **exactly** how they found their stay. This is **usually done on an OTA** (Online Travel Agent) or review site

PRO

Thousands of potential readers, can be scraped by ORM software and analysed for insights

CON

Thousands of potential readers, can be faked by unscrupulous competitors

Make the most of it

- Use [online reputation management software](#) to keep track of what's being said about your hotel online
- [Respond appropriately](#) to **online reviews** wherever you can
- Make sure your [OTA and review site listings are optimised](#) and **maintained**

Whitney Rack or bookings diary



Property Management System (PMS)

- The old-school option for **keeping track of which rooms are booked**, by whom and for how long

PRO

Requires no specialised technology, cheap

CON

Data can't be shared easily with other departments or technologies, mistakes that would be flagged by technology like double bookings are possible

- Used to **digitally record room inventory** and occupation data as well as details about guests

PRO

Keeps data safer for longer, can be integrated with online booking engines, guest feedback tech and so much more

CON

Must comply with data protection regulations, may take some time and training to set up, can be costly

Make the most of it

- Use your PMS to **keep track** of guest data to help personalise future stays
- [Integrate your PMS with other technology](#) at your hotel to **automate** processes wherever possible and prevent data silos

Check-in forms



Online check-in

- Filled out by guests as they arrive** at a hotel and are impatiently waiting to get to their rooms so that they can relax and let their holidays begin!

PRO

Cheap and easy to print, little to no staff training

CON

Time-consuming to digitise

- Completed by excited guests before they arrive** at their hotels in the hopes that they can simply relax and let their holiday begin on arrival without any extra stress or fuss

PRO

Saves time for guests and staff

CON

Initial cost in setting up the technology and training staff

Make the most of it

- If it makes sense for your hotel, an **app** can offer guests online check-in, keyless door entry, and other value adds, while keeping them loyal to your hotel brand
- Use your online check in process to **collect data** on your guests that can be used to [personalise their stays](#)

Room bills



Online payment

- Charging everything to the room so guests can **pay one lump sum** rather than having to pay during their trip

PRO

Easier for staff

CON

Guests can be shocked by final amount

- Can be done easily** throughout a guest's stay via EFT, PayPal, Snapscan or other convenient online platform

PRO

Easy for guests to **keep track** of what they've spent

CON

May take setting up

Make the most of it

- Make it clear to guests that they can pay in whichever way they find more **convenient** – the technology is there to make their experiences at your hotel more pleasant

Embracing technological changes won't just make your life easier – **it will up your guest experience game as well**

