

**Hotel & Motel Management
The Sales Clinic
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**UNDERSTANDING PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE.....THINK COMPETITIVE
ADVANTAGE**

To be effective in sales, all staff personnel, at a property need to be thoroughly knowledgeable about everything available in a facility, be it a hotel, conference center, convention hall, or any meeting hall. This means knowledgeable about not only the physical property, but services that are available at the site, as well as off the site.

Sales department staff members need to have available to them, a property fact sheet, created by themselves, physically and individually, by conducting a personal physical inspection of the facility, and asking questions of key staff personnel in all departments. Pertinent information would include (but would not be limited to) the following:

- **General Property Description – location, age, anything unusual, or appealing**
- **Guest Rooms – number, type, size, rates, taxes, in-room amenities, security, ADA accommodations, parking available, number connecting rooms**
- **Restaurants and Lounges – number, and types, sizes and capacities, hours, menu types, sample prices, taxes, room service, house specialties**
- **Meeting/Banquet Facilities – number, sizes, capacities for different types of set-ups, banquet menu information, audio visual services available and prices, ADA services; have floor plans available**
- **Transportation – distance to airport, transfers available with cost, any local transportation provided by facility**
- **Recreational Facilities – types, locations, rates, transfers**
- **Outside Services – secretarial services, baby sitting, special vendors, shopping nearby, hair salons, entertainment activities**
- **Local attractions**
- **Guest Mix – types of travelers, groups, market segments come to property**

Different things appeal to different people and groups. Understanding everything there is to know about a property, and matching facilities to needs of a prospect is what helps make a sale.

Translating Features Into Benefits: Successful salespeople realize that they do not sell products or services; they sell the benefits that prospects receive when they purchase products or services. Most prospects that are potential guests become interested in the features of a property only when they perceive how those features will benefit them directly. Translating property features into prospect benefits takes practice. One good exercise is to prepare a features/benefits worksheet for each type of visitor or market segment group. For example, the following features/benefits worksheet format might be prepared to help sell corporate groups:

PROPERTY FEATURES

Large size guest room

Wi-fi available in room

Electronic door locks

PROSPECT BENEFITS

plenty of room to also do work

Easy access without cost

Feeling of safety and security

Note that the benefits of a property or service are often intangible. What prospects really expect to buy is the satisfaction of their needs. Satisfaction often takes the form of feelings, pleasures, and images.

The following sales phrases indicate that, when selling to prospects, an experienced salesperson can smoothly translate property features into prospect benefits:

FEATURES

“I’m glad you asked about security in our guest rooms. We have the latest in keyless lock technology……

BENEFITS

our electronic keycards are simple to use, and provide the kind of security that will make everyone in your group feel safe”.

The benefit list is the most valuable tool a hotel sales person can carry. Actually, When selling, your benefit list is your product. When someone has to pay more for a product than having paid in the past, the decision to pay more will be made primarily on the basis of benefits you can deliver.

