

**Hotel & Motel Management**  
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**The Sales Clinic**  
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**FINDING BUSINESS LEADS CAN BE EASIER THAN YOU THINK**

**In these current times, where we see an overbuilding of properties in some areas of the country, operators are getting nervous about the potential drop in occupancy as well as competitors reducing rates to bring in business. Many queries are being received from managers and owners of non-branded properties asking about how to go about seeking business leads when there is no sales person on staff. Everyone wants more business, and in these days one cannot just sit still and wait for the customers to walk in.**

**What we need to understand is that in this industry of hospitality there is, and always will be customers to fill our rooms. However, we must seek ways to locate prospects for our properties, and then turn them into customers. Success in hospitality sales is mostly a result of developing good business leads, and it is not a question of flying all over the country to find these leads. There are more leads right on your hotel premises than most managers realize.**

**Think of your current guests. People who stay at your property are prime prospects for future room business as well as other types of activities such as small meetings or social activities. A quick check of your guests' reservation profiles would give you a large amount of information on each guest. From this you could easily determine if a guest's company could be a prospect for future rooms, conference or social activities. Some properties are using the simple on-property promotional activity go collect business cards in a bowl or briefcase. The incentive, of course, is for visitors to leave their cards for a monthly drawing of a gift. This is just another way for a property manager to gather information for a database of leads for future business. In setting this up we need to look for information that would identify corporate officers, association representatives, sales managers, personnel managers, etc. These are the people, for the most part, that decide on**

housing for their traveling staffs, or who set up meetings and social events for their organizations.

Employees of your property are also in the position to provide leads to you. Many of your staff associates belong to a variety of organizations that would be helpful to you in locating leads, such as: church groups, garden clubs, school groups, sporting activities, etc. Through these organizations there could be a wide variety of people who come into town and need rooms for overnight stays, as well as small groups for meetings. Further, sports teams coming to town for tournaments need rooms. Ask you staff for help in providing these lead opportunities to you. Meet with all your employees to explain to them how they could be in a position to help fill rooms through connections they may have with their organizations. This could develop into a great motivational movement for your staff by asking them to help. Almost immediately you will see employees become more involved in working together. The message here is: “Everyone Sells” which could be a good motto for you.

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