The daunting task of navigating distribution of hotel rooms consumes a great deal of intellectual and business effort on behalf of hotel owners, asset managers and operators. Brand managers of the major hotel concepts being franchised today also have a formidable challenge.

But let’s not forget that so do sales leaders; they, too, have a complex and considerable mission. Merging, blurring, overlapping issues such as social media and guest ratings require sales professionals to stay on top of far more information and messaging outlets than ever before. Yet, the key to sales effectiveness is understanding the needs and issues of the corporate, association and meeting-planner communities. Staying deeply involved within the local demand generators and potential group business is still essential.

Today’s technology connecting sales folks with prospects and leads augments the daily activities to capture group business and capitalize on opportunities. Responsive continues to escalate. Face-to-face business development with potential buyers, travel wholesalers, association executives, receptive operators or others, is still a key agenda item of sales leaders. In addition, many sales professionals must maintain active social media persona and connect with their prospects and clients, as well as past and potential future clients via the major networking outlets to strengthen relationships, stay top of mind and stay relevant.

In addition, sales professionals are to build relationships with revenue professionals on property, brand representatives and perhaps cluster-organized colleagues within the ownership group. The sales professionals today require greater breadth of skills than ever before. They serve as one part analyst, needing to understand...
data and integrate it into action plans, as well as one part utility infielder, willing to do what needs to be done. Great hotel sales specialists need to have excellent emotional intelligence and creativity to rival the best event organizers. The stamina it takes to travel constantly, pivot to the needs of clients, and empathize and negotiate, not only with buyers, but internal stakeholders as well, is unprecedented today.

The homework and research a great hotel salesperson needs to do is unending if they wish to be prepared for a fruitful conversation with prospects or advance a sale. It is wise of hotel owners and operators to remember the value that sales managers bring to their property and investment. Sometimes a sales professional’s value is distilled to roomnights sold or total revenue produced and yet there is so very much more that every salesperson does and so much more to their contributions to a property, brand and guest experience.

Great salespeople are marketers, analysts, ambassadors and community builders. Taking care to understand the greater impact of exceptional hotel sales teams will ensure long-term returns.

Read more on Hotel Sales, Improving Sales, Sales & Marketing Professional, Penn State

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