



SPOTLIGHT ON

David Goldstone

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By Sharon Hirschowitz

As technology innovations lead the way out of the pandemic, David Goldstone tells us how their strategy made them stronger and more customer-focused, while introducing new tech services and solutions that will add to the guest experience.

We know you are dedicated to ensuring the best customer service at all times. How have you navigated such a challenging year?

More than anything, the past year has proved to us how important relationships are. People have always been at the core of the hospitality industry and despite such a challenging year, I've been amazed at how well we've all come together to support each other and come out on the other side hand-in-hand, and literally bigger, better, and stronger than ever.

Even though the hospitality industry was arguably one of the hardest hit, WCI was fortunate and unique in our competitive set to not lay off or furlough a single employee. Instead, we had the unique opportunity to expand our team and services in preparation for the post-COVID rebound we are currently seeing. We've continuously viewed the challenges the industry has faced over the past year as opportunities to continue serving as a dedicated partner to our customers and be well-positioned to further support them past the pandemic.

In addition to providing industry-leading in-room entertainment solutions for hotels, we were also able to introduce ImpruviX, a service that improves a hotel's wireless connectivity by evaluating a

property's current wireless platform and then independently recommending improvements using the latest technology, design tools, and product sets. ImpruviX allows us to design, build and manage a wide range of technology solutions including cloud-based surveillance, cellular boosting, and smart room technology.

WCI has always had a strong focus on our hotel partners to ensure that we deliver every time, with no exceptions. Our hotel partners remain at the forefront of every decision we make and we are constantly striving to identify new solutions and processes that will deliver the greatest impact for hotels and their guests. We've kept this same mindset over the past year and I believe it's positioned us to enhance our reputation as a trusted partner to hotel owners and properties.

What have your customers been asking for and how have you responded?

The impact of technology has been pivotal in adapting to the new guest preferences that have evolved over the past year. One of our most significant advancements created out of customer feedback was the invention of contactless technologies. We proactively checked in with our hotel partners to see how we could best support them and their guests and then quickly developed technology solutions to meet these needs.

Some of the contactless technology solutions we've created include a mobile remote feature deployed to over 300,000 rooms that allows a guest's personal device to completely control the guest room TV, alleviating the need to touch the in-room remote. Additional features include in-room concierge services where guests can order room service or request more towels straight from their TV. We've also invented a housekeeping app that instantaneously alerts staff and guests when a room has been cleaned and sanitized. These innovative technologies have given guests greater peace of mind during their hotel stay.

to increase security. Thousands of people pass through a hotel on a daily basis – hoteliers can protect guests and staff by implementing technology focused on video surveillance security (hotels are also protecting their hotel's reputation while creating a safe, comfortable environment for guests and team members).

Circling back to my earlier point, I've personally seen the greatest impact through fostering relationships with our hotel partners during this time of need. I've learned that you should never underestimate the power of something as simple as a handwritten note, a gesture I've

At WCI, we are constantly trying to find new ways to take our partners from liking us to loving us. As a result of our consistent focus on our hotel partners, WCI was able to provide much-needed financial relief to over 2,000 of our hotel partners during the height of the pandemic to do our part in helping the hospitality industry overcome the unforeseen challenges of the past year.

What trends are you seeing as tech leads the way out of the pandemic, especially for the luxury sector?

We believe that the pandemic has accelerated many of the technology trends that were previously in place in addition to generating a demand for new technologies. The pandemic showed us that hotels that had a well-executed technology strategy were able to adapt quickly to the changes in guest and operational needs. Hotels that leverage technologies to digitize the guest experience will continue to see future success and set them apart from their competitors.

One of the most significant trends to come out of the pandemic is the need for personalized experiences, especially among luxury guests. Today's consumers say that personalized experiences, cleanliness, and privacy are now the most desirable luxury amenities. Travelers are looking for greater control over their stay, and one way to offer these experiences is through technology.



Another area of focus has been expanding our high level of customer service. We've made significant investments to increase the caliber and capabilities of our professional services, starting with our employees and contractors. In addition, WCI is delivering CCTV

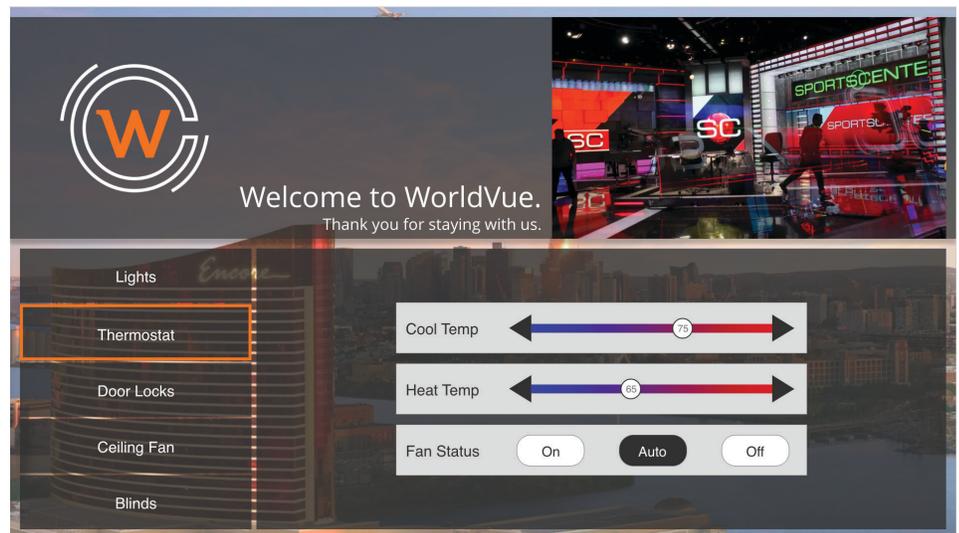
always made a point of doing with all of the many hotel partners I meet with. This was made even more of a focus during the past year. Letting our hotel partners know that we are there for them at any time is something that we pride ourselves on.



Smart room technology is therefore becoming an important emerging trend in the luxury sector. The Internet of Things (IoT) allows guests to control and personalize every aspect of their stay, from the lighting to the drapes to HVAC, with the touch of a button. By tracking guest preferences, hotels can cater to returning customers by setting their preferred temperature, lighting and even tune the TV to their favorite program all before they walk in the door.

This technology is not only a luxury feature for guests but benefits hotel owners as well. When guest rooms aren't in use, hotels can adjust the temperature and lighting to energy-efficient settings to promote an eco-friendly environment – something many guests are now considering when choosing a hotel.

We've also seen a greater focus on health and wellness among luxury guests. When choosing a hotel, many guests are looking for a place to relax and recharge. Technology solutions like in-room channels are an easy way to market a property's on-site wellness opportunities or even show on-demand workouts for guests to follow along from the comfort of



their room. Another increasingly popular feature on our WorldVue entertainment platform is our Relax app which offers guided relaxation videos and soothing sounds to give guests a better night's sleep.

The emergence of Wi-Fi 6E and 5G is also creating many new opportunities when it comes to connectivity. Together, these advancements bring next-level, seamless functionality to the wireless world. 5G opens the door to personalized, in-the-moment experiences that help properties easily engage with their guests while Wi-Fi 6E provides a faster, more efficient connection than current wireless connectivity.

Your professional services ensure continuous support for customers throughout every step of your partnership. What can a World Cinema customer expect that sets you apart from the rest?

The goal of our professional services is to serve as a property's trusted technology advisor throughout their entire customer journey. From in-room entertainment to connectivity, WCI serves as the one point of contact for installation, service, and support nationwide.

Our team of technology engineers, system designers, and project managers are dedicated to a property from development all the way to ongoing support. Our hotel partners can expect hands-on project management and a centralized point of contact for all of their needs.

Our hotel partners can then utilize our Customer Care Center for ongoing 24/7 /365 support. Our team of customer care specialists provides remote technical support and troubleshooting solutions in addition to submitting equipment orders, dispatching field technicians, and remote monitoring equipment. We have significantly grown our Customer Care Center and made substantial updates to its structure to best serve our hotel partners.

Our hotel partners are also assigned a dedicated customer success manager to aid hotels with everyday needs. The customer success team helps our hotels receive value quickly by managing product implementation and on-boarding, establishing the hotel's clear goals while sharing educational resources to be the property's trusted partner.

We pride ourselves on always focusing on our hotel partners and their specific needs and we will continue to evolve our business to ensure we enable hotel owners to capitalize on new opportunities generated by technology solutions.

What is your outlook for the remainder of 2021?

We've experienced the return of leisure travel over the past few months as a result of rising

vaccination rates. I believe that pent-up demand will continue to drive leisure travel in the coming months with guests willing to spend more money on luxury travel experiences. I also believe that business travel will not be far behind with many in-person events starting back up and companies returning to the office.

While a number of airline and hotel executives are erring on the side of caution as it relates to business travel, I believe that we will see a faster than expected return to this segment of the hotel business far sooner than expected. My business travel is at 80% of where it was in 2019 and I fully expect it to be back to 100% by early Q4 2021.

Technology will continue to be an important factor in welcoming guests back and catering to their differing preferences. While some may prefer in-person interactions, many may still opt for contactless experiences for the foreseeable future. It's important for luxury hotels to continue to provide the high level of service they are known for while recognizing that this may look different for each guest.

Identifying ways to utilize technology and data to cater to guest preferences will set properties apart from the rest. This includes the ability for guests to watch their

favorite content whenever they want through casting technology or streaming applications. Guests are also bringing more devices with them during their hotel stays than ever before, and we expect to see this number continue to rise, making the need for seamless connectivity a must-have for many properties.

Choosing a technology provider you trust as well as one that is financially stable is critical in delivering these experiences. Technology providers can advise what technology solutions will help future-proof your property and help you implement new technologies as they emerge to ensure you are set up for continued success.

