

Embassy Suites Plans Kiosks in all its Hotels

24 Feb 2005, Memphis, Tenn., Conrad Hospitality, LLC

Ratcheting up the kiosk convenience wars, Embassy Suites Hotels announced plans today to install self-service, multi-purpose EmbassyDirect Registration Kiosks at all of its hotels. The automated technology will appear in 75 percent of hotels by year-end 2005, and in 100 percent of hotels by June 30, 2006.

The automated technology was pioneered by Hilton's IT division and IBM. IBM is providing kiosk hardware, the operating platform, systems management tools and project management support.

"This is a big step not only for the Embassy Suites Hotels brand, but also for the hotel industry," said David Greydanus, senior vice president, brand management, Embassy Suites Hotels. "By placing the EmbassyDirect Registration Kiosks in all of our hotels, we can offer our guests more choices, convenience and control when it comes to their hotel stay."

The automated kiosks are designed as a convenience for guests when checking in and checking out. The EmbassyDirect Registration Kiosks were first introduced to Embassy Suites Hotels in October 2004 and the kiosks are currently featured at six Embassy Suites hotels, including: Memphis, Tenn.; Salt Lake City, Utah - Downtown; Nashville South - Cool Springs; Charleston, SC - Airport/Convention Center; Portland, OR - Downtown; and Anaheim, Calif. - South.

Currently, 10 percent to 12 percent of guests on average are using the technology within the hotels that offer the service. Based on customer satisfaction research conducted by Embassy Suites Hotels, more than 90 percent of guests replied they would "definitely use the kiosk again."

Service applications for the kiosks include room check-in (ability to select the room, disbursement of room keys and printing of registration information), check-out (printing of folio and modifications to method of payment), personalized messaging to guest, and coupons for hotel services in selected locations. Additional enhancements include expanded ability to: offer visual room selection, hotel services such as bundled high-speed Internet access and phone services; and review resort package options.

"We have been testing this feature in our hotels, and the response from guests has been very positive," Greydanus added. "As an innovative hotel brand, we wanted to stay ahead of guest demand and place them in our hotels when the timing was right. As travelers are becoming more accustomed to the self check-in process at airports and other travel destinations, we expect to see a surge in popularity and usage of the kiosks by year-end. For guests who prefer traditional interaction with front-desk staff, that option continues to be available throughout all of our hotels."

Greydanus said customers who have used the kiosks, close to 80 percent, have commented they were "very satisfied" with the technology. While the kiosks are completely automated, guest services staff assigned to the kiosk area are available to assist guests who have questions.



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10-06
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Further Information

For further information on the IBM e-access solutions, please visit www.ibm.com/kiosk, or send an email to eaccess@ca.ibm.com