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5 reasons reliable connectivity makes or breaks the guest experience

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Stay competitive with high-quality connectivity

As guests' thirst for speed, bandwidth and digital content continues to grow, delivering high-quality and reliable connectivity has become a business necessity for hotel properties. When done right, it is a powerful way to boost occupancy, guest satisfaction and revenue.

WiFi is the top influencing factor when guests are making a hotel booking decision.[1] WiFi is a top hotel amenity. Your guests expect to be connected at all times. If they're not, or the connection isn't sufficient, they won't be happy — leading to negative reviews. According to a 2023 Hotel Management survey titled "Taking Your Technology Pulse," hoteliers said slow Internet/WiFi was a top technology concern from their staff (28%).[2] The most desirable hotels — and the ones with the highest guest retention rates — are properties that offer fast, free WiFi and dependable internet access with bandwidth capable of supporting multiple connected devices.

Hotel operations also must run efficiently in order to ensure a positive guest experience. Enabled by high-quality connectivity solutions, staff can better provide guests with the best experience possible by increasing productivity, automating guest services, streamlining daily operations and much more.

This e-book outlines the top five reasons your property, guests and staff need reliable connectivity to remain successful, satisfied and competitive.

67%
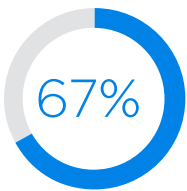
of guests selected high-speed WiFi as the top technology feature when evaluating a hotel.[3]
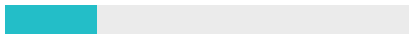
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What is the top technology complaint from your hotel guests?[4]
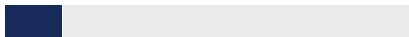
52%

Slow, unreliable WiFi

21.5%

Inadequate in-room entertainment
(limited casting/streaming capabilities/
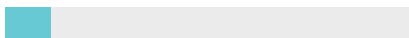choice of live programming)

12%

Concerns about network security
to protect sensitive information

7.5%

Lack of free WiFi

7.5%

Lack of a connected guest room
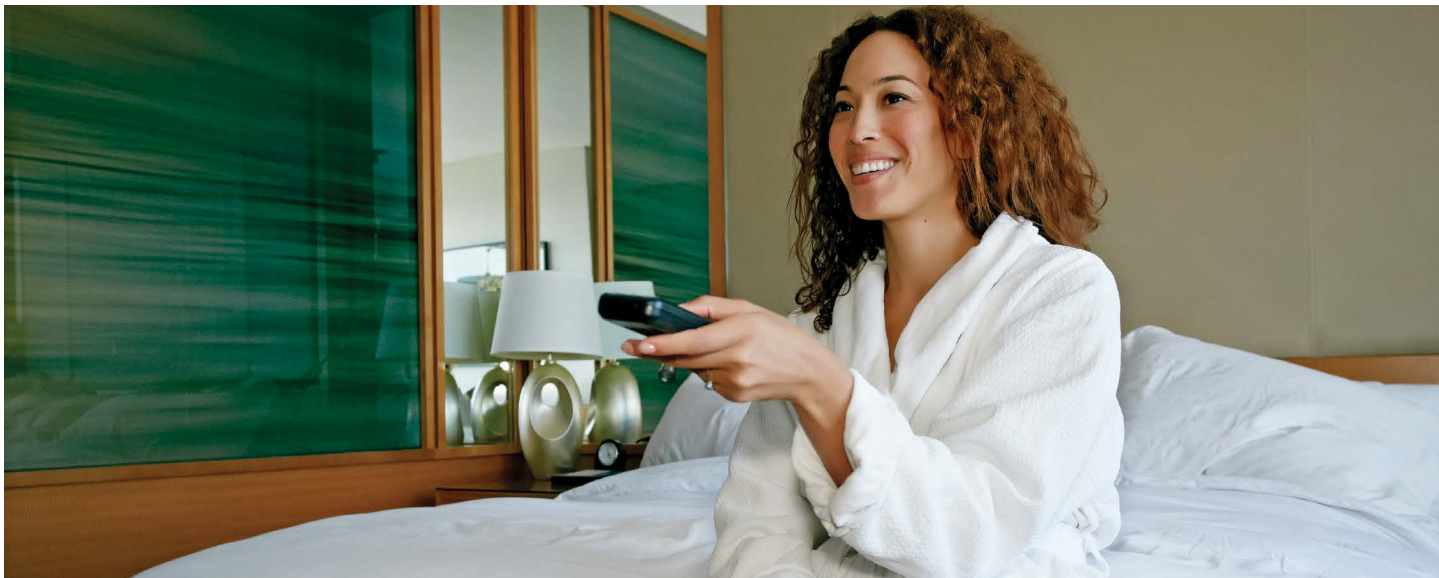experience
(via an app or their mobile phone)

1. Connectivity issues are the top source of guest discontent

The first thing guests do upon arriving at a new hotel is connect to WiFi. They expect the process to be simple and fast, and they want the assurance they'll get the same reliable, high-speed connectivity they get at home or in the office. Hoteliers reported in the "Taking Your Technology Pulse" that the top technology complaint they hear from guests at their hotels is slow, unreliable WiFi (52%).[5]

Guests also desire the freedom to access digital content as they please, using whatever device they wish, anywhere on your property. If the connection process is difficult or speed is too slow, it has an immediate negative impact on their experience, perception of your hotel and decision to return.
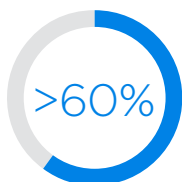
Certain digital trends are reshaping the industry and placing even more demands on your connectivity. Hotels are increasing adoption of touchless and self-serve technology. Furthermore, hotel guests enjoy spending time outdoors in comparison to enclosed spaces, so to keep guests happy, properties need to ensure that guests can connect as easily in outside spaces as they do when inside your hotel.

This priority comes in part with expectations of having an interactive, connected hotel experience. According to the 2023 Customer Engagement Technology Study, among the most important features guests expect when visiting your hotel are reliable and secure WiFi (92%), smart TVs/content streaming in the guest room (70%), and the ability to make contactless payments (53%).[6] If investments in these technologies are not in your plans, know that they are in the forecast for your competitors and will influence guests' decisions on where to stay.

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>60%

of guests use online reviews as a significant deciding factor in hotel bookings.[8]

2. Poor bandwidth affects loyalty and revenue

Today, each U.S. household has an average of 17 connected devices.[7] When you combine this with the knowledge that today's hotel guests seek a more touchless and seamless guest experience using their own devices, you can expect the need for bandwidth will only continue to increase. There's a very good chance each of those devices will be used to stream video or run data-intensive applications, placing an exceptional amount of strain on your existing network.

With this influx of devices competing for connections and thick, concrete walls obstructing signals — lag, outages and dead spots are common challenges. These disruptions create a negative experience for both guests and staff if their connection drops or processing takes too long. To avoid intermittent outages, you need to ensure you have adequate coverage and reliable service to support maximum connectivity during peak usage times. Additional access points may be necessary to sustain high-bandwidth applications and provide a seamless connectivity experience property-wide. If not, you pay the price in lost productivity and dissatisfied guests.

Chances are high your guests are going to write online reviews and rate your hotel, no matter what their experience. And with the proliferation of social media and travel review sites, if the news is bad, it can be spread far and wide — resulting in a highly visible and persistent critique of your property. By providing a connectivity experience that exceeds expectations, you can gain a competitive advantage, increase hotel ratings and help ensure sustainable revenue growth.

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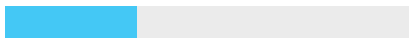## Digital expectations of guests[9]

67%

High speed WiFi

41%

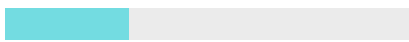Keyless entry or mobile check-in and check-out

33%

In-room smart devices (e.g., TV, voice assistants)

30%

The latest cell-phone charging stations

30%

Contactless payment options

3. Future success is dependent on providing guests enhanced digital services

Guest demand for digital access to hotel amenities and services has accelerated. Guests increasingly expect technologies that enable a contactless experience, such as the use of mobile check-in/out, keyless entry and digital concierge services. As smart homes are more commonplace, hotel guest demand for smart and sustainable technologies such as devices that control in-room features — think lighting and thermostats — is growing.[10]
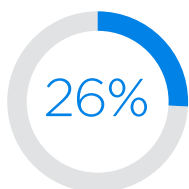
Guest entertainment tastes are changing as well, thanks to the ubiquity of streaming media. The traditional TV offering is giving way to advanced entertainment solutions that offer access to a wide variety of streaming applications, casting capabilities and digital guest and concierge services — in addition to standard TV programming and extensive on-demand content.

Ensuring you meet these growing guest demands is vital to success in a market that's increasingly competitive. All guest experiences have the potential to be enhanced by the right technology. A reliable fiber network can provide the digital infrastructure necessary to expand essential guest offerings and exceed expectations. With increased bandwidth, you can provide advanced entertainment solutions that enable guests to make reservations, book spa appointments and tee times, order food delivery, or even provide information about local events and attractions from their in-room TV.

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4. Quality connectivity improves your bottom line

The nature of business meetings has changed. Hybrid meetings — those containing an in-person and virtual component — are a growing trend, and one that is likely to remain. In fact, over 26% of meeting planners indicate that hybrid meetings will be a part of their future events.[11]

The short-term bandwidth demands of hybrid events may often exceed daily internet access needs. Conferences and events can have a tremendous positive impact on your revenues. It's essential to be prepared for these surges in traffic and bandwidth demand as attendees file into your property with their laptops, tablets and smartphones. If you want your hotel to be first in line as conference and event business planners choose venues, you must have the robust WiFi and IT capabilities in place to support bandwidth-intensive hybrid events.

Some service providers, including Spectrum Enterprise®, offer comprehensive managed WiFi in addition to dedicated internet access connections for hotels. These solutions include managed guest WiFi authentication and access that support a wide range of bandwidth and pricing models. Hotel properties, for example, may provide free basic WiFi access to guests and offer enhanced service tiers for an additional fee. Hotel management can schedule, manage and view internet usage for conference facilities in real time — and the reports will display event-specific bandwidth usage for managing peak demand. The ability to quickly provision additional bandwidth for scheduled time periods, then return service to standard levels, allows you to purchase only the capacity you actually need. Solutions such as these enable your hotel to capitalize on future revenue opportunities presented by the ever-increasing demand for added bandwidth, while containing unnecessary costs.

26%

of event planners said they were planning virtual or a mix of in-person and virtual events in 2024.[12]

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Arlo Hotels sees connectivity as key

Learn how advanced connectivity options helped a boutique hotel chain facilitate contact-free check-ins and seamless television casting via guests' mobile devices.

Read the case study

"The one thing I can count on from Spectrum Enterprise is reliable service. Our uptime is nearly 100%, always-on connectivity."

DARREN DESILVA, VICE PRESIDENT OF TECHNOLOGY, ARLO HOTELS

5. Connectivity significantly impacts hotel operations

Hotels nationwide are embracing digital transformation to increase the speed and efficiency of operational processes and to provide an even more customer-centric experience for their guests. Reliable, fast connectivity enables hotels to automate essential operations and guest services extending the value of initial investments. For example, new technologies that integrate with your property management system (PMS) can help housekeeping and maintenance departments keep track of guest requests to ensure their needs are filled quickly and efficiently, track which rooms are occupied and need servicing, and ensure employees are working most productively.

Service and process automation, personalized digital services, location-based services, connected meeting rooms and other innovative technologies stress the bandwidth of traditional networks, leading to delays in response time, lags in performance or — in a worst-case scenario — network crashes and downtime. Service outages due to unreliable connectivity not only negatively affect the guest experience, but also take attention and resources from staff to troubleshoot the outage and get essential solutions back up and running.

In building a network that supports the new technologies used to increase operational efficiency, hotel management should consider investing in a dedicated fiber network to ensure their network operates at peak performance without interruption. Fiber optics reduces the likelihood of outages and keeps staff focused on providing a superior guest experience.

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Exceed guest expectations with superior connectivity

Spectrum Enterprise Dedicated Fiber Internet and Managed WiFi services provide the high-speed, always-on connection your guests and staff have come to expect. These advanced fiber-based solutions offer significant capital and operational benefits, enhanced service reliability and increased bandwidth to fuel hotel growth.

Dedicated Fiber Internet helps you:	Managed WiFi services help you:
• Avoid service outages, dead spots and unscheduled downtime. • Easily scale bandwidth up to 100 Gbps as business needs change. • Provide fast, symmetrical upload and download speeds. • Ensure guest satisfaction by leveraging an industry-leading service-level agreement (SLA) including a 100% uptime guarantee* and a 4-hour mean time to restore service.** • Deliver end-to-end security with optional managed security services. • Provide guests with the innovative technology solutions they increasingly want: express checkout, video on demand, digital guest and concierge services, digital room keys and more.	• Prepare for surges in demand by allocating the appropriate bandwidth to support peak usage needs. • Design, install and operate a wireless infrastructure, ensuring comprehensive coverage and high-quality connectivity. • Reduce burdens on staff by relying on your provider to monitor and manage your network. • Leverage real-time views of hotel operations provided by comprehensive management tools and property management system integration. • Reinforce hotel branding with customized guest landing pages. • Acquire additional revenue streams by setting profitable prices for enhanced service tiers and customizing WiFi services to meet expanded needs for special events.

Get in touch with one of our hospitality IT experts to learn how you can enhance the guest experience with reliable connectivity.

* Applies only to Dedicated Fiber Internet, Secure Dedicated Fiber Internet, Ethernet Services, Cloud Connect and Enterprise Trunking.

** 4-hour mean time to restore service SLA.

1. "2024 Outlook: Travel Intent & Consumer Preferences," Morning Consult, January 2024.
2. "Undeniable Need for Robust WiFi Dominates Survey Insights," Hotel Management, June 12, 2023.
3. "2024 Outlook," Morning Consult, January 2024.
4. "The time is now for network modernization," Hotel Management, January 2024.
5. Ibid.
6. "Customer Engagement Technology Study 2023: Rewriting the Rules," Hospitality Technology, 2023.
7. "At CES® 2024, Parks Associates announces new research showing average number of connected devices per US internet household reached 17 in 2023," Parks Associated, January 11, 2024.
8. Amita Mishra and Veena Tewari Nandi, "The Influence of Online Reviews on Consumer Decision-Making in the Hotel Industry," ResearchGate, September 2023.
9. "2024 Outlook," Morning Consult, January 2024.
10. "Customer Engagement Technology Study 2023," Hospitality Technology, 2023.
11. "Top 10 Meeting & Event Industry Trends for 2024," Cvent, December 2023.
12. Ibid.

About Spectrum Enterprise

Spectrum Enterprise, a part of Charter Communications, Inc., is a national provider of scalable, fiber technology solutions serving many of America's largest businesses and communications service providers. The broad Spectrum Enterprise portfolio includes networking and managed services solutions: Internet access, Ethernet access and networks, Voice and TV solutions. The Spectrum Enterprise team of experts works closely with clients to achieve greater business success by providing solutions designed to meet their evolving needs. For more information, visit enterprise.spectrum.com.

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