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Winning Your Hotel Market With CRS Tech—On

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“Napa is a fiercely competitive market. We use the flexibility, channel outreach, and visibility of our CRS to not only stay in the game but to win it more often.”

—Corrina Cuevas, Revenue Manager, Wine Country Inn & Cottages Choosing the right hotel software is a constant concern for the majority of hoteliers these days. According to this year’s lodging study on [frictionless hotels](#) and technology spending, 48% planned on upgrading their PMS, 24% their CRS, and 16% their RMS software.

Yet for decades, [Wine Country Inn & Cottages](#) attracted its visitors by reputation alone, foregoing mainstream hospitality technology. One look at their location, and it’s not hard to see why. Founded in 1975, the unique Napa Valley boutique hotel, located between the towns of St. Helena and Calistoga, is surrounded by acres of world-class vineyards, boasting one of the only panoramic views of the Valley.



Changing Seasons

But by the Fall of 2016, as Revenue Manager Corrina Cuevas recalled, it became clear that the hotel booking landscape had [grown in new ways](#), along with Napa Valley itself. “On the main streets, new hotels started popping up faster than we could have ever imagined,” she said. “So, not only were we facing more competition but being tucked so far back behind the wineries, some locals didn’t even know we were here.” They needed to reach a wider audience, build package offerings that could pull in that audience, enhance their local relationships, and generally reaffirm their position of strength in their market. It was time to invest in some real hospitality technology.

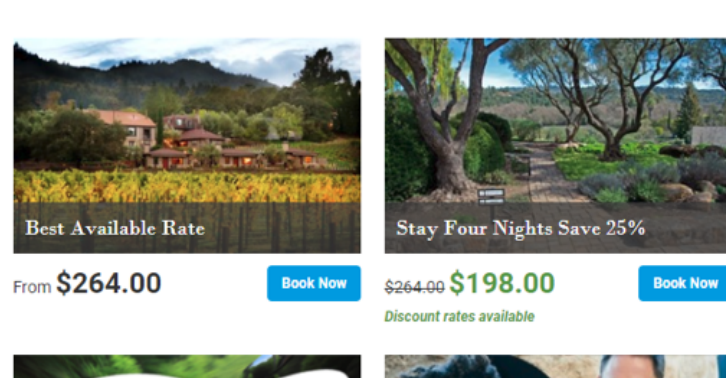
A New Road

Their first purchase was a new PMS system, but when it came to building flexible guest packages, using multiple rates, and pulling reports, it wasn’t enough. “For instance, our PMS wouldn’t allow us to build dynamic packages where your price fluctuates off your BAR,” explained Corrina. Investing in a truly customizable [new CRS and booking engine](#) remedied the situation. “Now we go around this by using the add-on feature in our CRS.”

The Inn is also seeing longer stay lengths now via a technique called [blended rates](#). “We’re not able to do multiple rate plans within a single reservation in our PMS, but with the blending capability in our CRS, we can do multiple nights over weekends, and our bookings are going up because of it,” said Corrina. [Pulling reports](#) for the hotel has been enhanced as well. “We really need detailed segmentation reports,” she explained. “What we can’t pull through our PMS we can easily pull through our CRS with no problem.”

Seriously competing in their market has also meant using OTAs, and making better use of their winery partners. While the Inn’s reach can’t compare with the OTAs, they can compete in OTA-style using the more advanced features of their CRS’s booking engine. “With the strike-through feature, for instance, our guests can see exactly how much money they’re saving in real time,” said Corrina. The promo codes and rate codes that can be created have also added to their marketing options. “We just generate a unique code for each winery to use on their site so they can steer guests right to us, and we can track the source easily,” she said. “This has helped strengthen our relationships with our neighbors, as well as boosted our bookings.”

PACKAGES & RATES



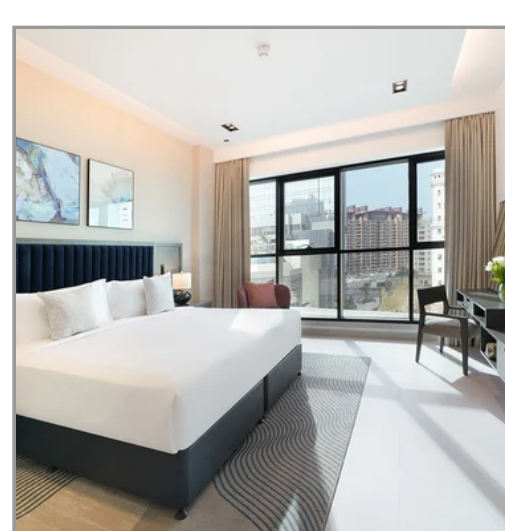
Building the Future

In an increasingly competitive market, using technology to squeeze the most value out of each marketing dollar is paramount to the Inn’s strategy. “With new tools coming out all the time, like the recent room upgrade feature in our CRS, where guests can book up a few levels in price without feeling it as much, we’re hoping to further reduce our need to discount,” Corrina explained.

But like many savvy hoteliers, it’s not just flexible technology, but [the relationship](#) with their CRS provider that sealed the deal for Wine Country. “One night I called after hours, so I wasn’t expecting to get a callback, but I got one in about fifteen minutes,” said Corrina. “It’s situations like that when you know you made the right choice.”

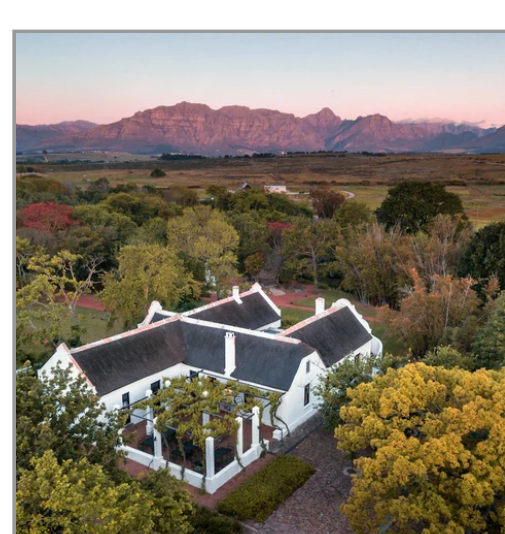
And choice is really what it’s all about. Like Wine Country, choosing the right hotel technology and making the most out of that technology can give you the tools you need to carve out—or even reclaim—your rightful place in the hospitality landscape.

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