Vagabond Inn

CLIENT INFORMATION

Since opening the first Vagabond Motor Hotel in 1958, this iconic California brand has become synonymous with West Coast hospitality, continuing to attract road trippers and business travelers alike with an easy price point and welcoming atmosphere. The chain currently boasts 35 Standard and Executive hotels ranging from 30-200 rooms each, totaling 2,700+ rooms, with all but eight hotels being franchises. Though largely located within California, Vagabond Inns may also be found in Arizona, Nevada, Texas, Oregon, and Utah.

"So many of the larger CRS companies today were born out of a systems-based mentality, so if the system is up, they're happy. SHR is hotelier-based at its heart, which means they aren't happy until we are."
—Chuck Valentino, VP of Operations, Vagabond Inn

SPECIFIC PRODUCT/SERVICE

Windsurfer® CRS, TopSail™, Call Center, GDS, OTA, Direct Connect

SITUATION

For 20 years, Vagabond Inn had been running its hotels on a home-grown solution that housed both a Central Reservations System (CRS) and a Property Management System (PMS). But time and technology wait for no hotel. With limited reporting, no cloud access, lack of mobility, and a booking engine that was less than attractive, VP of Operations, Chuck Valentino, and VP of Marketing, Kyle Lee, realized that their current system had reached its limits.

The inherent uniqueness of each hotel property at Vagabond Inn had to be addressed as well. "Selling rooms on Interstate-5 at 2:00 a.m. is completely different from selling a room in Los Angeles," explained Chuck. "Because of this, we felt it was very important to choose a CRS that would not only deliver measurable results to our franchisees, but one that would be easy to learn, use, and customize."

OUTCOME

After completing its first hotel conversion in April of 2016, Vagabond Inn quickly recognized the potential Windsurfer had for their needs. "With Windsurfer's more varied reporting, we can do things across the entire chain now very quickly, and still see each individual hotel," said Chuck. "For instance, to change our logo, I don't need to put it in 30 different places 30 different times anymore. I do it one time, and it's done for all."

The TopSail booking engine gives Vagabond Inn flexibility as well. "Each franchisee can customize their booking engine layout," explained Kyle. "For example, one hotel may prefer to list each room type by rate but another hotel prefers to display a grid of rates from which to choose. With TopSail, everyone can do whatever works best for their needs."

Notably, the decision on which new PMS to go with would depend on if that PMS were compatible with Windsurfer. "Honestly, we chose the SkyTouch PMS largely because of their seamless two-way interface with Windsurfer, not the other way around," Chuck explained. "Windsurfer was that important to us."

THE FUTURE

The numbers are already proving that decision out. In comparing the first four months of 2017 to the same period in 2016 on mobility alone, Vagabond Inn has experienced a 41% increase in mobile sessions, a 35% increase in average time spent on mobile pages, and a 1606% increase in booked revenue from mobile devices.

The company also plans on doing more guest-focused loyalty and marketing programs. "That's going to mean piles of guest data to wade through," said Kyle. "Because of the steady progression of system enhancements we see with SHR, and their willingness to be there for us, we know we have the right tech and the right partner now to handle anything that comes our way."

Visit **vagabondinn.com**