

Technology trends shaping the hospitality sector

 By [Josephine Wawira](#)

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Technology is progressively becoming the backbone of the hospitality sector, and the impact is significantly being felt by hoteliers in their interactions with consumers. Below are some of the trends shaping the sector, as highlighted on the 2018 Jumia Travel [Hospitality Report](#).



Image by DisobeyArt

Internet and mobile penetration

Mobile penetration in Kenya is 90.4% of the adult population, while the internet penetration stands at 83% as of 2017, putting the country on a global map as a leader in share of mobile internet traffic.

Mobile Bookings

Mobile bookings are on the rise in Kenya, with Jumia Travel recording an impressive 44% in the company's Q3 2017 report in comparison to 41% in the second quarter of the same year.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

This is the best time for hotels to incorporate blockchain and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in their operations, as the Kenyan government puts up measures meant to encourage the adoption of such emerging technologies. AI, for instance, can help revenue management to enhance user experience and at the same time boost productivity and revenue conversions for hotels. The functionality of techs such as bots has already been tried and tested in various aspects of the hospitality industry, including in concierge robots, customers' response time, and data analysis among others.

Wi-Fi connectivity

Wi-Fi is one of the most sought-after amenities that guests look for in a hotel before booking a stay. They want to remain connected with their families, friends and the world at large even when travelling, sharing their holiday experiences via social media and perhaps storing their images and videos on the cloud. Such connectivity requires strong a broadband and hotels must invest in strong networks that will provide more personalized experiences to their guests while at the same time increasing efficiency in their operations.

Virtual Reality (VR)

Hotels and destinations are using Virtual Reality (VR) otherwise known as Augmented Reality (AR) to provide guests with a feel of the hotel rooms before they even get there. The aviation sector has also not been left behind, with a number of airlines offering virtual travel to show their customers the cabins in advance, with an aim to increase ticket sales. The VR technology is largely being used to enhance customers' experiences which offers them easy and reliable travel planning as well as for content marketing.

Internet of Things (IoT)

The IoT has now become a household term and has dominated the hotel industry since the advent of technology in the country. Today's travellers are searching hotels and comparing prices, then booking and paying at their own comfort. The use of apps and automated systems has given more independence and flexibility to both guests and hotel managers, thus reducing the waiting time during both check-in and check-out.

Online video marketing

It is one of the most vital marketing tools in hospitality, with 55% of people online watching videos every day, and 78% every week. Its high-level memorability and engagement make online video a popular mode of marketing among hoteliers in a bid to attract more customers and retain existing ones.

ABOUT JOSEPHINE WAWIRA

Josephine Wawira is a consultant in communication and public relations with over six years of progressive writing and broadcast experience. She is currently a writer for Africa's online hotel booking portal, Jumia Travel, focusing in the areas of travel, tourism and hospitality as it relates to Africa.

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