

14IP | Hospitality Technology Guide

Hotel AI Buyer's Guide:

Choosing the right AI system for your hotel

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Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming the hospitality industry, helping hotels improve guest experiences, streamline operations and reduce the pressure on front desk teams. One area where AI is delivering significant value is hotel guest communications, particularly through AI-powered Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems and virtual voice assistants.

Hotel AI voice assistants can automatically answer and manage guest calls before, during and after their stay. From handling common enquiries and housekeeping requests to providing hotel information and assisting with reservations, these solutions help reduce call volumes, improve response times and free up staff to focus on delivering exceptional guest experiences.

However, not all hotel AI solutions offer the same capabilities. Choosing the right AI IVR solution requires careful consideration of factors such as guest experience, integration with existing hotel systems, scalability, data security, implementation and return on investment (ROI).

This Hotel AI Buyer's Guide explores the key questions hotels should ask when evaluating AI voice assistants and IVR providers. It provides practical guidance to help hoteliers compare solutions, understand their capabilities and make informed decisions about introducing AI into their guest communications.

Why AI matters for hotels

Artificial Intelligence is becoming an increasingly valuable tool for hotels looking to improve guest communications, streamline daily operations and make better use of staff resources.

From answering routine enquiries to coordinating guest requests, AI can support hotel teams throughout the guest journey. Its value lies not simply in automating interactions, but in helping hotels deliver more responsive, efficient and personalised service.

Improving guest experience

AI-powered voice assistants can provide guests with immediate access to hotel information and assistance 24/7. Common enquiries about check-in times, facilities, reservations and local recommendations can be handled without guests having to wait for an available member of staff.

Increasing operational efficiency

Hotel teams manage a constant flow of enquiries and requests, many of which are repetitive. AI can help reduce this administrative workload by answering routine calls, directing enquiries, and when integrated with hotel systems, creating service requests for departments such as housekeeping and maintenance.

More personalised service

When connected to relevant hotel systems, AI can use authorised guest and reservation information to provide more relevant assistance. This might include recognising an existing booking, responding to a specific reservation enquiry or helping guests access services appropriate to their stay.

Giving staff more time for guests

One of the most important opportunities for hospitality AI is its ability to support human interaction. By managing straightforward enquiries, AI can give front-of-house teams more time to focus on complex requests, individual guest needs and meaningful face-to-face service.

Supporting commercial performance

AI can help hotels improve resource allocation, reduce repetitive workloads and minimise missed guest enquiries. Depending on the solution and its integrations, it may also support reservation handling, guest feedback collection and opportunities to promote relevant hotel services.

Things to consider when choosing an AI IVR solution

Identify your hotel's needs

Before investing in AI solutions, hotels should identify the specific challenges or opportunities they want to address.

Start by evaluating existing guest communication processes, including call volumes, frequently asked questions, peak enquiry periods, missed calls and repetitive administrative tasks. Understanding where staff spend their time and where delays occur can help identify opportunities for automation.

Research and shortlist AI IVR providers

Conduct thorough research to identify reputable AI solution providers specialising in the hospitality industry. Consider factors such as experience, reputation, client base, and technology expertise.

Shortlist providers that understand the specific requirements of the hospitality industry. If your hotel is part of a larger group or brand, check whether preferred or approved AI technology suppliers are already in place. These providers may have undergone assessments covering security, compatibility, operational requirements and brand standards, potentially simplifying the selection process.

What problems should hotel AI solve?

The most effective hotel AI solutions address specific operational challenges rather than trying to automate every interaction. For example, AI-powered virtual assistants can help reduce the number of calls to the front desk, provide immediate answers to common requests, and direct requests to the correct department.

However, not every interaction is suitable for automation. Complex complaints or sensitive enquiries should have a clear route to human assistance.

Hotels should therefore evaluate AI based on its ability to resolve genuine guest needs and reduce unnecessary workloads on staff.

What makes a good AI guest experience?

When evaluating AI voice assistants, hotels should consider how effectively the technology understands and responds to guests, rather than simply how human-like it sounds. A successful AI solution should make interactions straightforward, provide accurate information and help guests complete requests with minimal effort.

Traditional IVR vs conversational AI

Traditional Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems typically rely on predefined menus, requiring callers to select options or follow a series of prompts to reach the correct department.

Conversational AI uses technologies such as natural language processing (NLP) and large language models (LLMs). AI voice assistants can interpret everyday language, allowing guests to explain what they need without navigating complicated menus.

For example, an effective conversational AI system should be able to understand a request like “Could I have an extra blanket and some pillows delivered to my room?” and be able to recognise both requests and respond appropriately.

Why natural language understanding matters

Guests communicate in different ways, using varied phrases, accents and languages, and may make multiple requests in one conversation. An effective AI solution should understand natural speech, manage multiple requests, respond to follow-up questions and recognise clarification when needed. These capabilities help create a smoother guest interaction, reducing the frustration often associated with traditional automated systems.

Balancing automation with human interaction

Not every guest enquiry should be handled by AI. An effective AI solution should recognise its limitations and provide a straightforward route to a human team member when necessary. This helps ensure that automation supports guest service rather than becoming an additional barrier.

Hotel AI integrations

Integrations allow hotel AI solutions to connect with existing systems through application programming interfaces (APIs), enabling them to exchange information, personalise guest interactions and automate operational tasks.

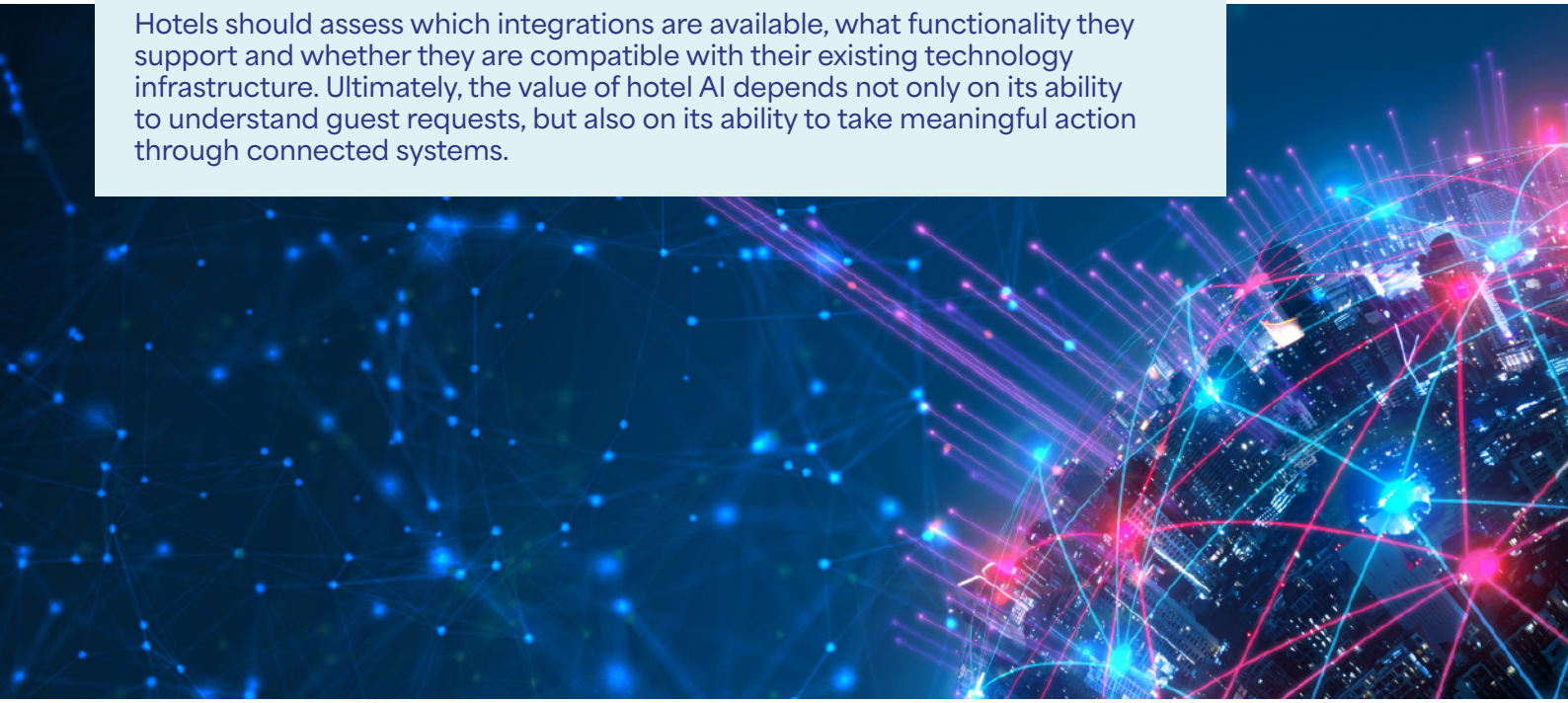
Key integrations include Property Management Systems (PMS) for guest and reservation information, PBX systems for call handling, guest request platforms for housekeeping and maintenance, and restaurant or spa booking systems for reservations.

For example, rather than simply acknowledging a guest's request for extra towels, an integrated AI solution can automatically create a housekeeping task and notify the relevant team. By connecting with existing hotel technologies, AI can move beyond answering questions to actively supporting daily operations.

What should hotels look for in AI integrations?

Not all integrations offer the same capabilities. Some provide read-only access to information, while others support two-way data exchange or allow AI to trigger actions within connected systems.

Hotels should assess which integrations are available, what functionality they support and whether they are compatible with their existing technology infrastructure. Ultimately, the value of hotel AI depends not only on its ability to understand guest requests, but also on its ability to take meaningful action through connected systems.



Customisation and scalability

Hotel AI solutions should be flexible enough to meet the needs of individual properties while supporting future growth. Independent hotels may require straightforward solutions tailored to their services, while multi-property groups may benefit from centralised management, consistent reporting and the ability to customise AI interactions for each location.

Data collection and privacy

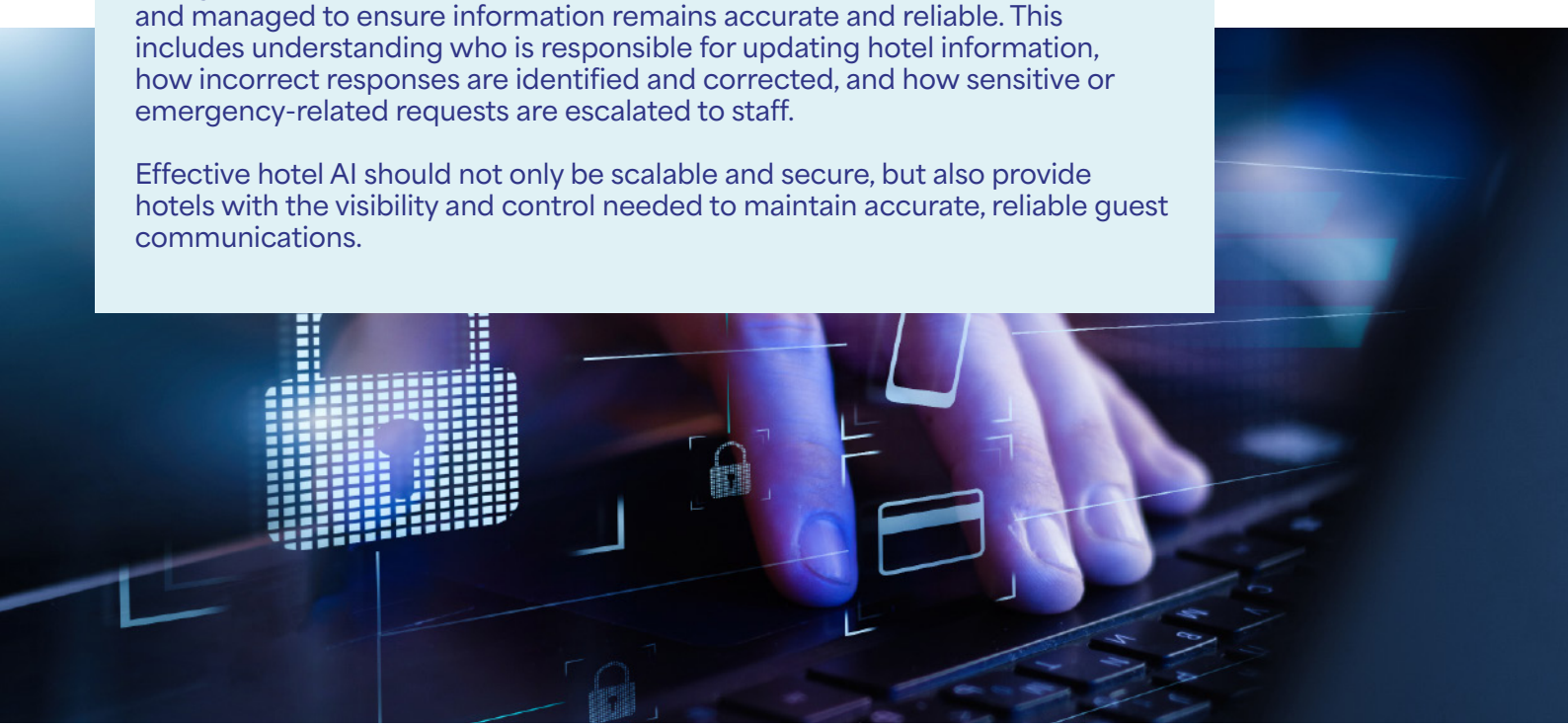
Protecting guest information is essential when introducing AI into hotel operations. Hotels should understand how a solution collects, processes, stores and protects personal data, particularly when integrated with existing systems.

Key considerations include what guest information is collected, whether calls are recorded and how long data is retained. Hotels should also assess who can access this information, whether it's shared with third-party AI providers and what security measures are in place to support compliance with applicable data protection legislation, including UK GDPR or EU GDPR where relevant.

AI accuracy and governance

Alongside data privacy, hotels should consider how AI responses are monitored and managed to ensure information remains accurate and reliable. This includes understanding who is responsible for updating hotel information, how incorrect responses are identified and corrected, and how sensitive or emergency-related requests are escalated to staff.

Effective hotel AI should not only be scalable and secure, but also provide hotels with the visibility and control needed to maintain accurate, reliable guest communications.

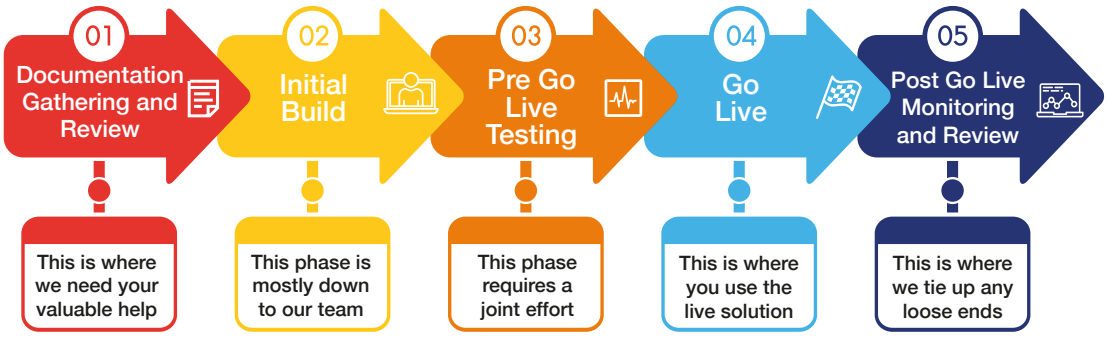


Hotel AI implementation and performance

Implementation process and timeline

Successful AI implementation requires careful planning, integration and testing to ensure the technology works effectively alongside existing hotel operations. Before deployment, hotels should review their existing systems, prepare accurate information about their services and facilities, and identify any integration requirements.

The diagram below illustrates 14IP's approach to implementing hospitality AI.



Performance analytics and insights

Measuring the success of hotel AI involves more than tracking the number of calls answered. Hotels should assess how effectively enquiries are resolved and whether the technology is improving guest experiences and operational efficiency.

Key performance indicators include successful resolution rates, calls transferred to staff, abandoned calls, guest satisfaction and recurring enquiry trends.

Beyond measuring performance, AI analytics can provide valuable insights into hotel operations. For example, frequent complaints about room temperature or repeated questions about hotel policies may highlight areas requiring attention.

By regularly reviewing these insights, hotels can use AI not only to improve guest communications, but also to identify opportunities for wider operational improvements.

Support and maintenance

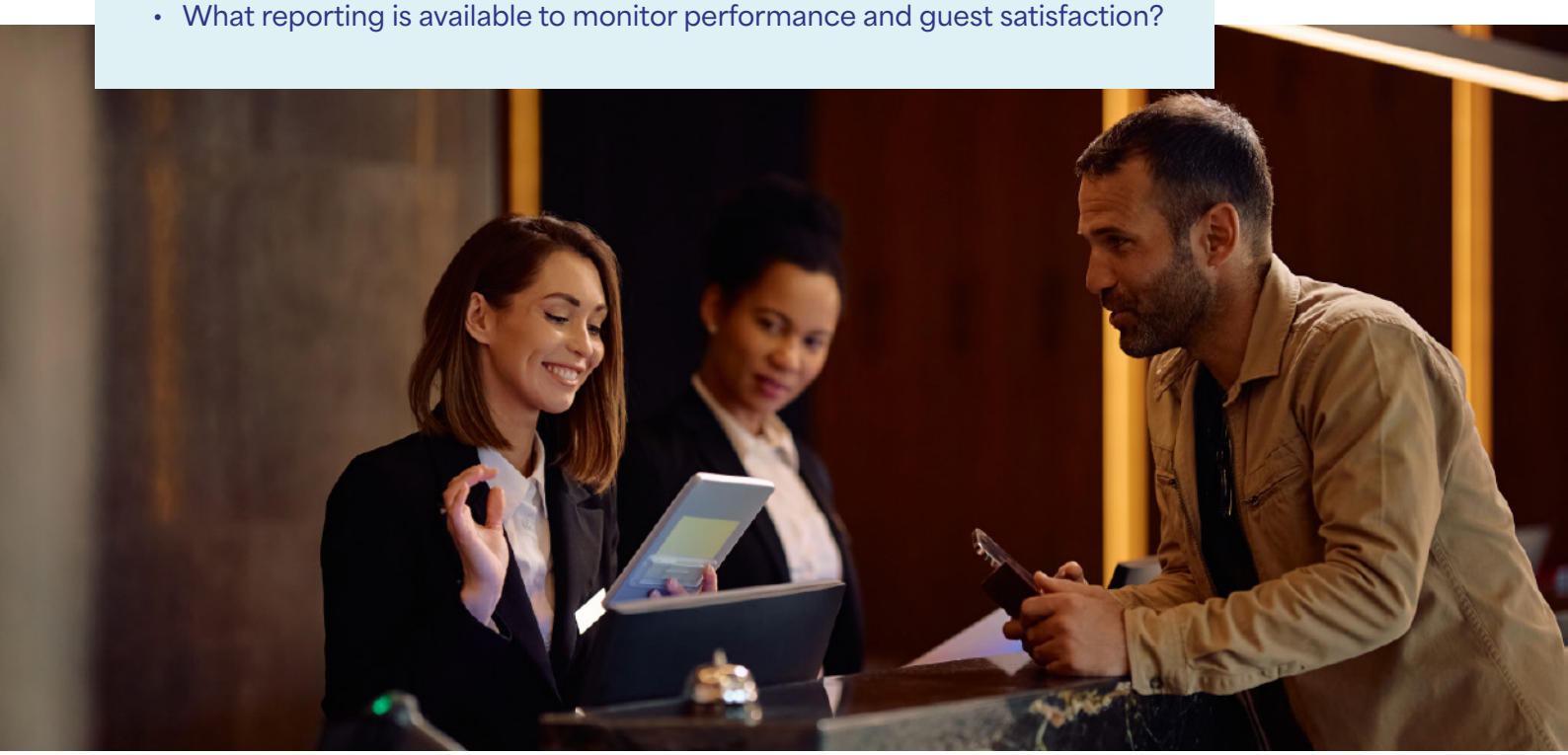
Ongoing support and maintenance are essential to ensuring hotel AI solutions remain accurate, reliable and effective over time. Hotels should establish how information such as opening hours, facilities and services is updated, who is responsible for maintaining it and how regularly system performance is reviewed.

When evaluating providers, consider the availability of technical support, regular software updates, system monitoring and procedures for managing outages or unexpected issues.

A clear support and maintenance strategy helps hotels maintain consistent service quality as operational requirements evolve.

Questions to ask about ongoing support

- What technical support is available, and during which hours?
- How are service outages handled, and what fallback arrangements are available?
- Who is responsible for maintaining the AI knowledge base?
- How are inaccurate responses identified and corrected?
- What reporting is available to monitor performance and guest satisfaction?



How should hotels calculate the ROI of AI?

When evaluating hotel AI solutions, return on investment (ROI) should consider both financial savings and wider operational benefits. Hotels should assess the total cost of ownership, including subscription fees, implementation, system integrations and ongoing maintenance, against the potential improvements in efficiency and guest service.

Financial returns should not be considered in isolation. An AI solution must also be able to deliver its intended benefits safely, accurately and reliably. Hotels should consider the risks of incorrect information, failed requests, inappropriate automation and inadequate escalation procedures alongside the potential financial benefits.

Key factors to consider:

Staff efficiency: Time saved by automating routine enquiries and redirecting staff resources to higher-value tasks.

Guest experience: Improvements in response times, missed calls and enquiry resolution rates.

Revenue opportunities: Potential increases in bookings and ancillary revenue through more effective enquiry handling.

Operational costs: Savings achieved through streamlined workflows and reduced administrative workloads.



Putting hotel AI into practice: Xivea AI Hospitality

Xivea AI Hospitality (Xivea) from 14IP is your 24x7x365 AI virtual assistant, replacing outdated IVRs with a faster, more natural way to handle guest calls.

Xivea understands real speech, answers common questions, sends texts with directions or links, and intelligently routes callers to the right internal destination, just like a trained receptionist.

A better understanding

Xivea understands multiple intent questions in one sentence such as “Can I get a toothbrush and an extra blanket?” There is no pressing of buttons for specific choices of services. Likewise, restaurant bookings are simpler, with guests asking for availability of tables in one sentence with date, time and number of people information, which Xivea understands easily.

Multiple languages

Xivea can be deployed in 26 different languages including English, French, Spanish, German, and Italian, and can offer guests a choice upon answering.

SMS messaging and more

Xivea can send guests links to web pages, maps and loyalty applications to assist them. It can recognise loyalty status and respond to guests accordingly. Xivea can carry out customer satisfaction surveys, providing valuable marketing information, remaining polite, professional and on brand at all times, freeing up staff to provide more face-to-face guest services.

> **“Since adopting 14IP’s Xivea, routine calls are handled effortlessly in the background, which helps free our team to deliver more personalized service. Its integration has proven both effective and future-ready.**
>
> **We greatly appreciate how it seamlessly blended into our workflow and shed light on new opportunities for smarter, innovative integration.”**
>
> Jesse Ledesma
> Front Office Manager, Fairmont Austin

Hospitality AI: Results from real world deployments

	Select Service	Full Service	Resort
Measurement period	3 months	3 months	6 months
Number of calls per day	650	2,500	9,500
Total calls	60,000	225,000	1,750,000
Call reduction* average and (peak)	60% (100%)	62% (87%)	61% (87%)
Xivea time on calls	700 hours	2,000 hours	21,000 hours
Guest satisfaction	91% (750 surveys)	88% (2,500 surveys)	90% (18,000 surveys)

Understand the results

These results illustrate Xivea's performance across different hotel environments, including select-service hotels, full-service properties and resorts.

Call volumes - The total number of calls received during the measurement period, including internal and external calls.

Call reduction - The proportion of calls handled by Xivea without requiring intervention from a front desk or guest services employee. Figures in brackets represent the highest recorded reduction during the measurement period.

Xivea time on calls - The total time spent handling calls through Xivea. This indicates the volume of communication managed by the system, although it should not automatically be interpreted as an equivalent number of staff hours saved.

Guest satisfaction - The percentage of positive responses collected through guest satisfaction surveys, with the number of survey responses shown in brackets.

These deployments did not use API integrations with hotel management systems. Additional integrations may enable more requests to be completed automatically.

* Results will vary according to hotel type, call volumes, configuration and the integrations available.

About 14IP

14IP is a global provider of hospitality communications tchnology, helping hotels and hotel groups deliver reliable, secure and effective communications for their guests and staff.

Founded in 2011, 14IP has built its reputation on understanding the particular requirements of the hospitality industry, with solutions deployed in more than ones million hotel rooms across over 30 countries.

Working with independent hotels, international brands and hotel management companies, we provide a comprehensive range of communications solutions, including cloud, hybrid and on-premises telephone systems, SIP trunking, connectivity and AI-powered guest communications.

With an international presence and specialist hospitality support available around the clock, we work closely with our customers to help them select, implement and manage the right technology for their properties.

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