

A guide for independent hoteliers

How to set up a hotel website to increase *direct bookings*



amenitiz

Empowering
independent hoteliers.

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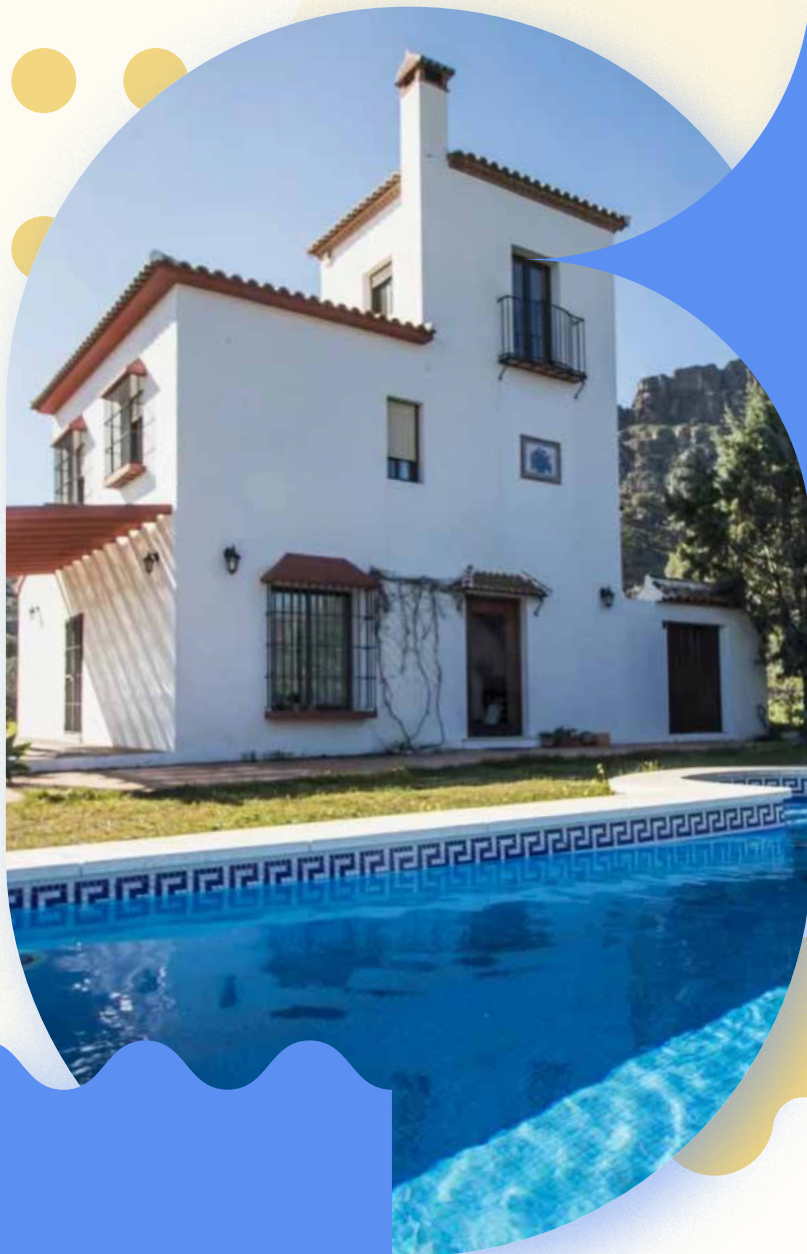
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Introduction



Web presence, essential for hoteliers today

Being an independent hotelier also means knowing how to adapt to changes in the market and in travellers.

And over the past 10 years, the changes have been dramatic. The behavior of travelers has changed enormously: 80% of searches and reservations are now going through the web.

OTAs have understood this and are occupying an increasingly important place in the hotel market.

The occupancy rate of your hotel and its success therefore now depend on its presence on the internet. This requires a presence on OTAs but above all through the development of your website, which must be attractive and easy to use.

This guide explains, step by step, how to make OTAs a simple search engine for travelers and your website your reservation centre.

Customer attitudes

OTAs have very good indexing, which is a great opportunity for your accommodation.

Did you know that

52% of users visit the hotel's official website after discovering it on an OTA?

However,

76% still book through OTAs.

Why? Because your website is not effective enough to convert visitors into customers.

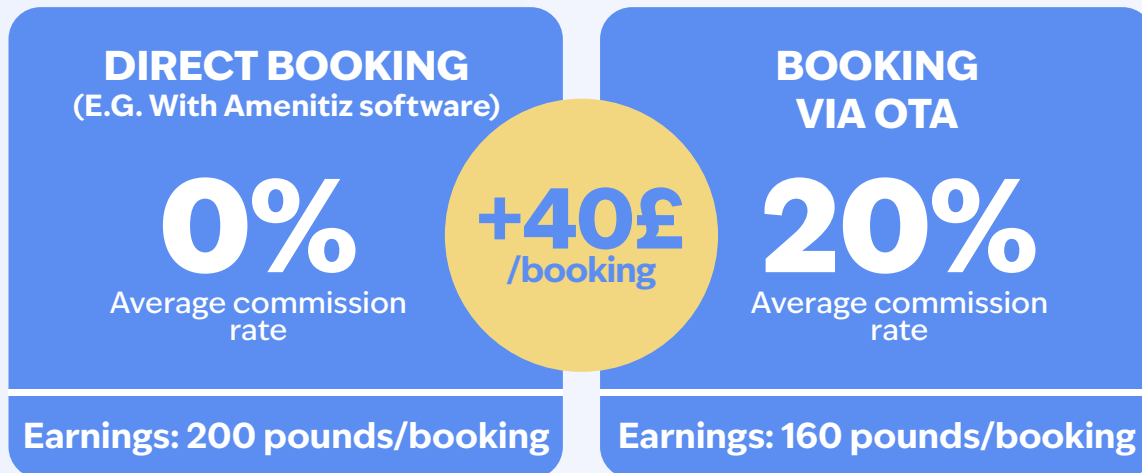
In this guide you will discover all the must-have elements of a successful website which will persuade that 52% of visitors to book directly on your site.

1. Connecting A booking engine: what are the benefits?



Instant gain

Let's assume that you manage to get just one more direct booking per day.



Turning **1 booking/day**
into a **direct booking**
40 x 365 days =
a profit of **14,600**
pounds per year

2. A key tool

The integrated booking engine



A booking engine directly within the website

80% of users search for the hotel they would like to stay at on the Internet. It is therefore crucial that your website

allows online booking so as to convert visitors into customers.

Rule No. 1? Centralise as much as possible!
On-site management ≠ off-site management

By on-site management we do not mean the various software packages that are added to a website.

Most of the booking software on the market compels the user to leave the site to complete the booking, thus having a negative impact on the user experience. This type of management software is called off-site because it is totally independent of the hotel website.

Comparison between on-site and off-site systems

ON-SITE BOOKING ENGINE

- ✓ Ability to set prices by period and day
- ✓ Addition of extras to your booking
- ✓ Possibility of booking in different languages
- ✓ **Visitors stay** on the hotelier's website to book
- ✓ The design of the booking page **is the same** as on the hotel's website

OFF-SITE BOOKING ENGINE

- ✓ Ability to set prices by period and day
- ✓ Addition of extras to your booking
- ✓ Possibility of booking in different languages
- ✓ **Visitors must leave** the site to book
- ✓ The design of the booking page **is different** from that of the hotel website

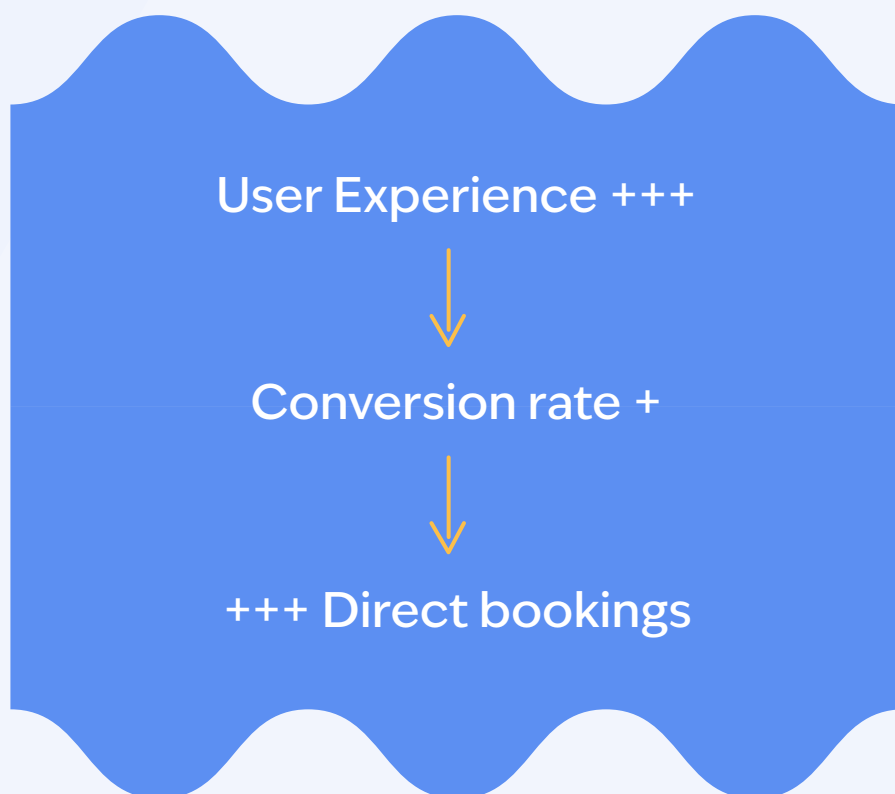
Explanation

In terms of technical specifications, these two types of management systems are practically equivalent and equally effective.

As mentioned above, the substantial difference between an on-site and an off-site management system lies in the user experience. In an off-site context, the user experience is more negative. Ideally, the user should never leave the hotel site.

Most of the latest booking software allows hoteliers to customise the design of the software with their own colour palette to improve the user experience as much as possible. This is all to encourage travellers to stay on the site and make a reservation.

Always favour software that focuses on the user experience, as this is the only way to increase direct bookings.



3. Homepage

To attract customers



The homepage is the very first impression of your hotel that potential guests receive. It is the page that must convince them to book. This is why it is fundamental for the traveller to navigate the page easily. It must make them want to continue the experience with a stay in your hotel.

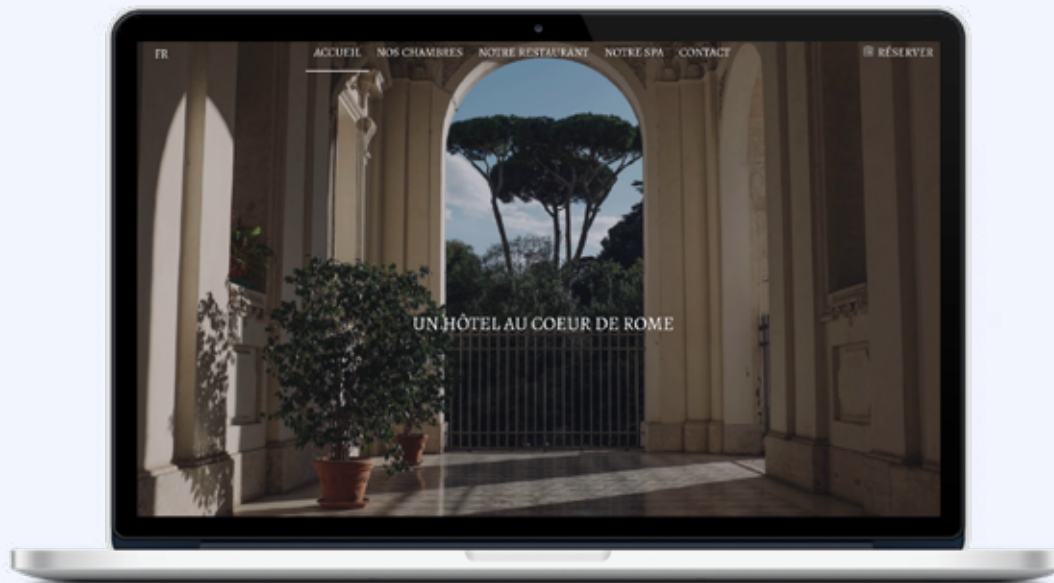
Think of this page as being the reception area of your hotel. Every independent hotelier's wish is to make guests comfortable and do everything possible to make their stay enjoyable. The same attention must be paid to your website, the most important place for showcasing your hotel.

The importance of visuals

The 'wow' effect is important. As you might well imagine, the most striking aspect for a user beyond the text is the images you choose.

The first thing users see

Before choosing an image, think about the layout of the page. The most important image should take up 80% of the screen.



The traveller should be absorbed into your world. Whether it is a mountain hotel, a business hotel in the city or a

cosy B&B, this is absolutely the first step to a positive user experience.

What users discover when they scroll down the page

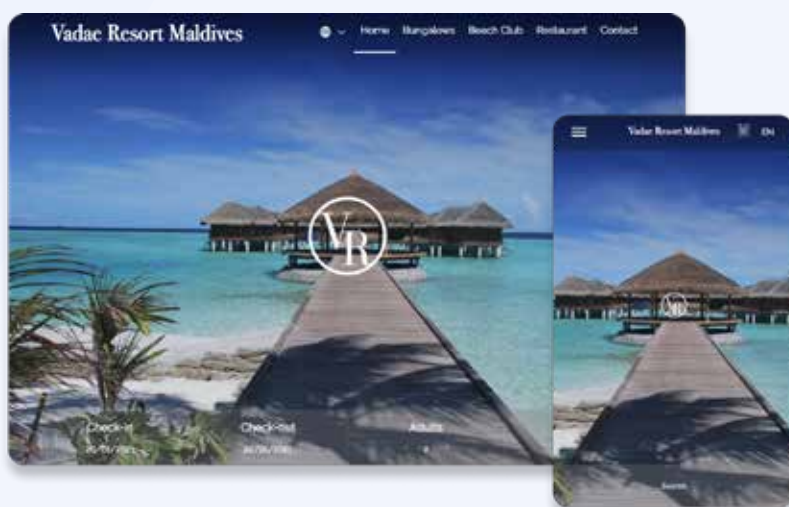
The pictures that your visitors should be able to see in this second stage are of course those of the guest rooms. Pick an image that is big enough to give users a good overview.

As for the rest of the homepage, we recommend that you publish the images that best highlight the hotel's strengths. Do you have a business hotel? Show the meeting room. Is the spa your additional asset? Add a photo of the relaxation area.

How to design the homepage

What to show first to users

In addition to an attractive image, visitors will immediately notice the content. Therefore, make sure that the texts are clear and convincing.



All the essentials in the menu

A booking bar to facilitate reservations and a maximum probability of conversions

A short sentence to give a preview of the hotel's atmosphere

What the user should learn by scrolling down the page

From the homepage, travellers should be able to get a clear idea of your hotel. Ideally, create a homepage with at least 3 sections. For effortless reading, use a layout with image + text and then text + image.

4. The pages

How to design the guest room pages



Why 'pages'? Having at least two separate pages to display the rooms to visitors is vital. On the first page you could list the available room types, while on the second page you could go into greater detail for each room type and describe its features precisely.

Rule n°1: Always keep the booking bar visible. Think about SALES!

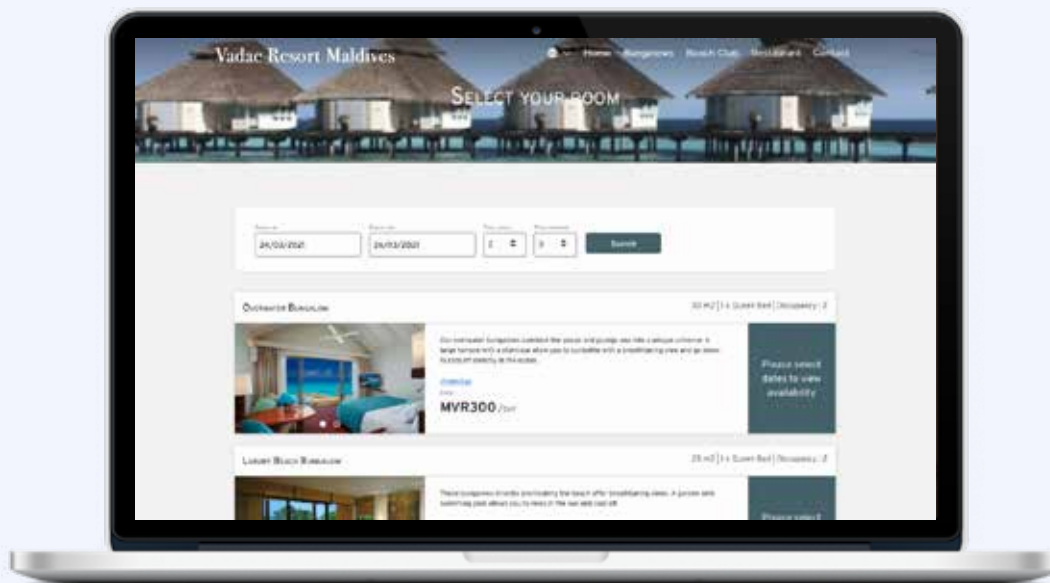
Rule n°2: Each guest room type should be described on a separate page.

Rule n°3: Add a beautiful image for each guest room type.

Rule n°4: Show rates clearly and openly (the room should never cost more than the OTA rates).

Bonus: Add a 'Find out more' button for a better user experience and to encourage the visitor to explore the features of the room.

Implementing these tips will help you get more direct bookings



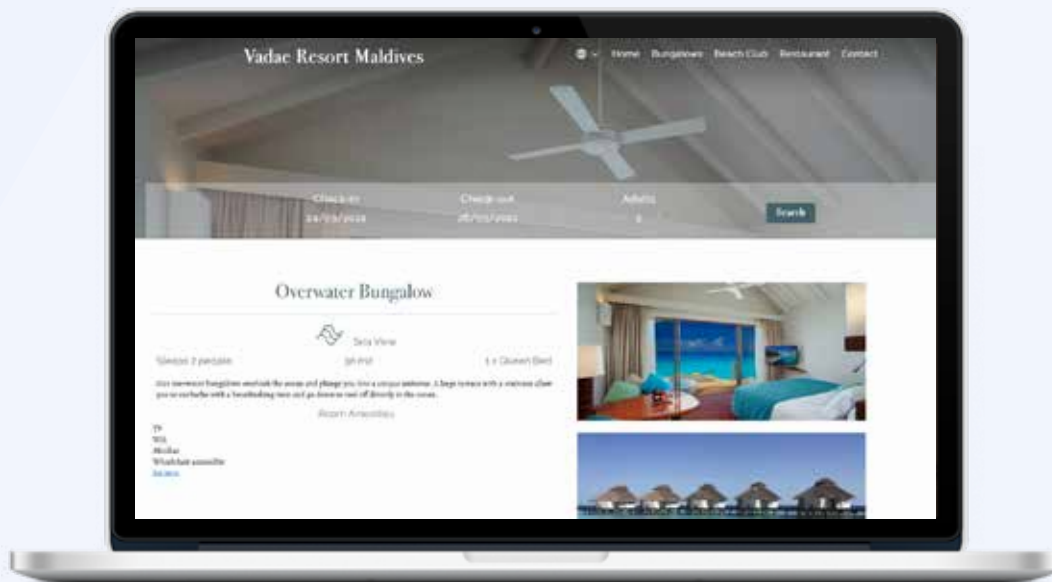
An example of a "Guest Rooms" page to increase sales (Source: Amenitiz)

The guest room page

It is particularly important that each guest room has its own page, which should be directly accessible from the page listing the different guest room types.

This page should have a simple but striking design. Don't overfill it; make it easy for visitors to find:

- ✓ Photos of the guest room (at least three, in thumbnails and with the possibility of zooming in on them in a slideshow)
- ✓ Room type
- ✓ Price
- ✓ Size
- ✓ Offers for this room
- ✓ Room facilities
- ✓ Possibility of choosing your own room from the page



5. Website

Where to go to create?



Freelance developers and web agencies

There are countless freelancers and web agencies available to create your hotel's website.

If you have a good budget, having a professional website created for your hotel is an excellent idea. Depending on the requirements and the complexity of the website you would like to have developed, quotes will range from **2,000 to 7,000 pounds**.

Turning to a developer or an agency is definitely the best option if you already have a fairly clear idea of the website you would like and if you already have some guidelines to submit to the experts who will support you along the way.

Relying on developers and web agencies implies accepting that you do not have direct control over your website. This may be good for large hotel chains, but small hotel owners prefer to manage and update content themselves.

For example, if a month after your website goes online you want to make a change and add a page describing your new meeting room, you will have to contact the developer once again and they will charge you for this service. In short, this is not the best option if you consider that a hotel owner needs to change the images and content of his site very frequently. We therefore recommend that all those who own a hotel always choose an option that allows them to manage their site easily and independently.

Automated platforms

Nowadays, the web is teeming with platforms that allow you to create websites on your own.

These tools are intuitive and easy to use, although they are not specifically designed for creating hotel websites. They are templates suitable both for selling soups and for presenting your property. Obviously, some essential changes have been made to these templates to ensure that they can meet the specific needs of the hotel

industry. However, unless you have small accommodations such as a B&Bs, these solutions are really impractical in the long run.

The only solution exclusively dedicated to the creation of hotel websites is Amenitiz. With its own booking software and integrated channel manager, Amenitiz allows you not only to create a site but also to manage it easily on a daily basis.

Amenitiz website builder

Amenitiz is therefore a 'website builder', or rather an automatic website creator. But that's not all.

It is a software created by specialists in the tourism sector who grew up in a family of independent hotel owners. A platform created by hoteliers for hoteliers.

An extremely simple system. Two hours are all it takes to create your hotel's website. The entire structure and layout of this tool was designed by UX designers (conversion and user experience specialists) so you are entirely free to add the content you would like to display.

The biggest advantage of this solution is that it is designed specifically for independent hotel owners and therefore includes all the appropriate tools. You will thus be able to quickly build your own website which includes a reservation management system. This centralised solution aims to help you increase direct bookings and save you valuable management time.

Try our platform free of charge for 21 days by clicking [here](#)!



Conclusion

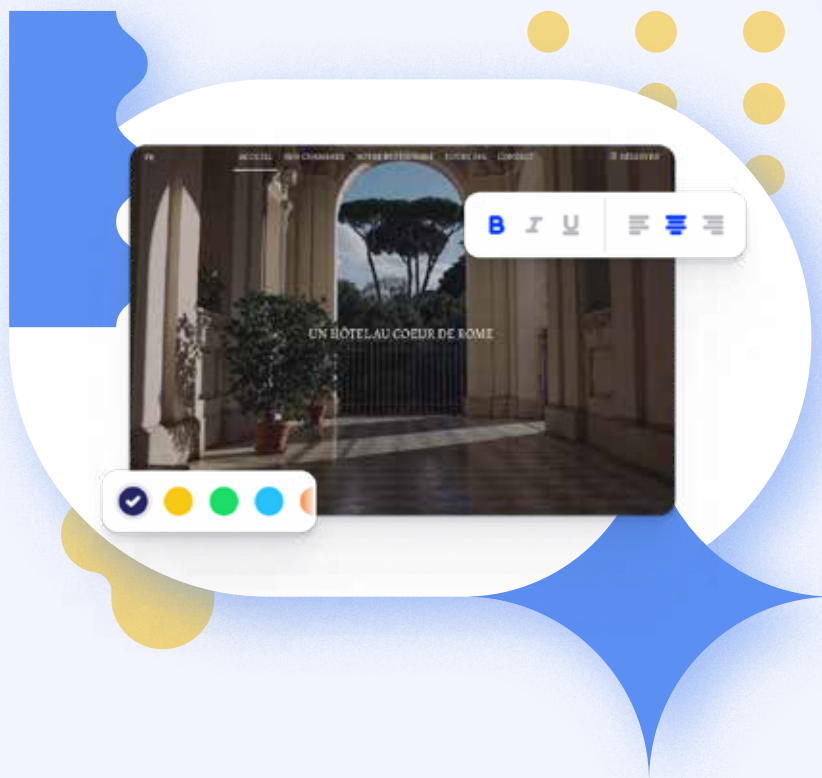


Creating an effective and high-performing website is quite an easy task nowadays. Many easy-to-use tools have been created so that you can work on the site independently and update it whenever you want.

Always remember that your website reflects your hotel. By following the tips in this reference guide and choosing the structure and layout we recommend-

ed, you will definitely transform more visitors into customers and encourage former guests to come back.

Seek guidance and choose website builders that are exclusively dedicated to independent hotel owners. Your website is an invaluable tool so rely on professionals in the tourism industry. IT professionals are a must, but they won't be enough.



Since you downloaded our guide, a free one-hour web consultation is now offered for your independent hotel.

Request a call-back or schedule an appointment with one of our experts!

Get in touch *with us*

contact@amenitiz.com

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