Valencia Group

CLIENT INFORMATION

Recognized for their distinctive designs, life-style amenities, and natural settings, Valencia Group hotels are destinations and gathering places aimed at being as unique as the guests they serve, right down to their own *V Magazine*. With hotels in Texas and California at an average of 200 rooms each, locations include San Antonio, Houston, College Station, Austin, and San Jose—each just steps away from impressive restaurant, retail, and entertainment options.



"We believe in a holistic approach to our guest experience, and that translates over to our expectations for our technology choices as well. SHR brings all the pieces together."
—Wendy Norris, Corp. Director of RM and E-Commerce

SPECIFIC PRODUCT/SERVICE

Windsurfer® CRS, Booking Engine, Direct Connect, Call Center, GDS

SITUATION

Before coming to SHR, Wendy Norris, Corporate Director of Revenue Management and E-Commerce for Valencia, was seeing a very fractured picture when she looked at her distribution landscape. "We had one company for GDS, one for CRS, and another third-party for web booking," she said. With her team needing a centralized approach to maximize online marketing and revenues through trending and strategic thinking, this was not acceptable. Looks were also a consideration. "Our website booking engine, for instance, was just not attractive enough for our guest demographic," Wendy explained. Yet just great technology would not be enough. "We looked at many different companies, but they were simply too big for us to get the right amount of attention," she said. "We can't afford to be just a number. We wanted a real partner, one who understands our needs."

OUTCOME

Valencia Group hotels run at about an 80% occupancy, and with that comes a lot of peaks and valleys in booking rates—and the need for changing up those rates quickly. "If we're sold out for a certain rate code, for instance, we must be able to get in there and manage it," Wendy said. "With Windsurfer, we can do this not only quickly but easily, which helps our ADR."

They were also trying to reduce their dependency on the OTAs, and Wendy reports that she has made serious headway toward this goal with the Windsurfer's booking engine. "Now, we can serve up packages all on the same attractive screen, plus we can customize virtually everything," she said. "It's really about the guest experience, and yet selling ourselves at the same time." She also likes the strike-through capability, as it shows the value to the guest in an OTA fashion. "It tells our guest that we sold X amount of rooms in X amount of time, which really helps create that sense of booking urgency for them," she explained.

As for that need for partnership, Wendy feels that it's not only the amazing availability of her rep, Derrick, that matters, but the vast amount of experience the whole SHR team brings to the table. "SHR has a good thing going for its clients in that so many of their people are long-time hotel pros who've worked in so many different capacities," Wendy said. "It's that experience that makes all the difference to us."



THE FUTURE

Valencia Group is approaching one year with SHR, and has already seen measurable results, with lifts in ADR and call volume. "With the great reporting features of Windsurfer, I can't wait to run our full YOY stats," Wendy said, and the future looks solid. "Between streamlining our systems, the improved interfaces, and the ability to call upon SHR when we need them, we're home."

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