SmartDigitalPlug

The challenge

As confinement ends and citizens embrace the new normal, would families feel safe to rent a cosy apartment, a rural house or a small independent hotel? Would a business traveller feel secure to rent a cool studio or book on a boutique hotel?

In Spain and in Europe, more than 70 per cent of hotels are independent. On the other hand, legal alternative accommodations (rural houses, villas, condos, apartments, etc..), a growing category, in most of the cases are operated directly by the owners or by mid-size Property Managers. Both, small independents hotels and alternative accommodations, struggle to keep pace with the large travel players as technology evolves. This problem is even worse in rural environments.

Now they have to face the additional challenge to offer the same health and safety standards that we citizens have at our homes and the large travel players will be offering, as professional cleaning or the avoidance of any physical interaction which could be digitalized (check-in/out, access to the rooms or apartments, customer service and customer satisfaction, individual transfers)

SmartDigitalPlug platform offers to them an affordable, easy and fast to implement answer to that challenge.

The Solution: SmartDigitalPlug

We have put together a platform that enables alternative accommodations and small independent hotels to deliver a digital customer experience that is safer for both, the customer and the property´s employees. It eliminates physical interactions combining 6 digital services that the Property can easily handle from a single one-stop-shop.

Once the Property is registered in the SmartDigitalPlug site, all the services can be enabled for the Property (named The Apartment, for demo purposes):

1. [Automated Registration](#): The Property can check-in/out their customers, automate their registration and generate the official documentation with a web dashboard and mobile app. The Property can review occupation or who has not arrived as planned and contact them if needed. SmartDigitalPlug is using the technology of Checkin, which is already adapted to all touristic compliance regulations across the EU.

2. [Automated Guest Access](#): SmartDigitalPlug enables the travellers to access the property (both building and rooms) with their mobile phones with both NFC or smart mobile key, even providing a 24h Virtual Reception, using the technology of STAYmyway.

3. Automated Electricity Saving: SmartDigitalPlug enables the Property to drastically reduce the electricity consumption with sensors that detect the presence of the guests, turning off the lights remotely as the customer goes out, using the technology of STAYmyway.

4. Certified Professional Cleaning: SmartDigitalPlug enables the Property to automatically schedule and engage services that ensure guest-ready apartments done by professional providers, using the technology of Doinn, an online platform that integrates cleaning, linen & towel rental, laundry and final inspection services (once the final customer has checked out),

5. Private Shuttle Services: SmartDigitalPlug enables the Property to offer their clients online bookable options of a private transfer to/from the Property to/from near airport and stations, using the technology of Servantrip.

6. Automated Customer Service: SmartDigitalPlug enables the Property to answer to all the questions of the traveller in any phase of the trip using a chatbot on WhatsApp or Messenger (including obviously all the services provided by SmartDigitalPlug), deploying the technology of Visor.ai.

7. Automated Customer Satisfaction Monitoring: SmartDigitalPlug enables the Property to monitor the satisfaction of the traveller before/during/after the stay in real-time, deploying the technology of myHotel.

How we did it

During the 2020 EUvsVirus hackathon, Travel Tech 1 Venture Capital coordinated the efforts of 6 traveltech startups to design an integrated platform of the key services required by a small independent hotel or an alternative accommodation would need to cope with the requirements of the travellers that COVID19 has brought to stay. The 6 companies have worked together to combine their know-how and technology and create the SmartDigitalPlug platform. In the annexe, there is complete information about all of them.

Impact during and after the crisis

The impact of SmartDigitalPlug during the crisis is evident because it will allow those alternative accommodations and small independent hotels using it to have clients and not remain closed or even disappear because travellers are afraid to go to them due to the risk of contagion.

SmartDigitalPlug

The value of the SmartDigitalPlug after the crisis would be enormous because it will have allowed small independent hotels and alternative accommodations to be completely digitalized and professionalized in a simple and inexpensive way and adapted to the trends that travellers demand after COVID19, guaranteeing their survival, since they respond to their demands and, on the other hand, they achieve a great reduction in their operating costs, which facilitates their survival. Likewise, the digitalization provided by SmartDigitalPlug is positive for climate change, since it involves the control of electricity consumption and the elimination of paper.

Value for the Society of SmartDigitalPlug

Few industries have been hit by COVID-19 as hard as Travel and Tourism. SmartDigitalPlug will allow the opening of thousands of small independent hotels and alternative accommodations (apartments, condos, villas, rural houses et...) that otherwise would have been closed temporarily or even permanently as citizens are afraid to go to anyplace lacking the same health and safety standards they feel they have at their own home or probably in large hotel chains.

It is a simple and affordable solution for alternative accommodations and small independent hotels to digitalise their operations and provide a first-class digital experience that:

- Meets the health and safety standards required by the travellers in the "new normal".

- Catches up with the large travel players which have access to bigger resources, and the latest technological advances.

- Keeps up with the environmental agenda, avoiding paper-based transactions, unnecessary commutes and reducing energy consumption.

What's next

In order to carry on and complete and launch the platform, there are several lines of activity that need to be completed and would require additional funds and a full time dedicated team. Main lines of activity are:

- Design and development of a unified user interface across the platform translated to all EU languages.

- Define and seamlessly integrate the 6 subsolutions to enable data sharing and single sign-on. All of them are operational and have a significant client base on their own.

- Define and agree on the pricing model and the commercial strategy.

- Build up an operations team for SmartDigitalPlug, a brand owned by the six startups behind the project: Chekin, Doinn, myHotel, Servantrip, Staymyway and Visor.ai

SmartDigitalPlug

ANNEXE

CheKin

We automate the guest ID and legal compliance of Check-in process in a single solution. API Solution to integrate our technology in other products or processes

info

doinn.co

doinn is a global housekeeping provider. Cleaning and laundry services with quality and established companies for property owners, property managers and property management systems.

info

myHotel

Guest Intelligence platform that transforms feedback into key operational insights and marketing tools. Currently, we are focused on the hospitality industry.

info

servantrip

We are the leading B2B platform and the Worldwide Consolidator in Transportation Services, Hourly Drivers & Activities In Over 170 Countries.

info

STAY my way

STAYmyway is an affordable, safe and secure cloud-based mobile key and access management tool designed specifically for Hotels and Vacation Rental properties. Provides versatile Access Solutions, chargeback proof and energy optimization.

Info

info

visor.ai

Visor.ai can help you automate the most frequent interactions in the chat channels so that the customer service can focus on the most sensitive issues, lowering company costs and improving customer service

info

STAYmyway

They have developed a Bluetooth technology that is installed in the door locks of hotels and alternative accommodations, allowing its primitive use together with the opening through the mobile phone. For apartments, STAYmyway has even developed its own cylinder to be included in the lock, allowing the remote opening and even has developed a system to open the main door of the apartment building.

Its business model is subscription (aka, SaaS), that is, it does not try to make specific sales of technology or services, as if it were a provider, but agreements that implied a recurrent long time revenue. In this way, Staymyway becomes a partner of the hotelier or the alternative accommodation, with the advantage that there is an important barrier to entry or competitors once the "parasite" of STAYmyway is installed in the lock. Logically that part of the experience can be integrated, as a single piece, into global solutions for the customer experience and therefore STAYmyway also maintains B2B relationships with companies focused in offering reservation services, CRM, PMS, etc. to hotels, in which the STAYmyway solution is integrated. For hotels, they have three main products: STAYmyway Update, allows you to upgrade the hotel door locks, giving the guests access with their mobile phones; STAYmyway Replace allows to completely replace the functionality of the locks, making them accessible with both NFC and smartphone mobile key; and STAYmyway Presence allows the hotel to limit the energy consumption in rooms by detecting the presence of guests, maximizing energy savings of the hotel and removing the physical cardholders. Without changing the locks, without disabling existing card systems, compatible with most brands of locks. STAYmyway has worked as well a solution to ensure recovery of reserves for a stay at the hotel. STAYmyway Charge Back certifies guest's stay at the hotel and all access has been made. We know that many guests return the charge made on the credit card directly after the stay alleging that they have not and therefore cancelling their payment of the reservation. The bank is forced to reclaim the return to the hotel and is obliged to make such a refund unable to prove the guest's stay. STAYmyway, in collaboration with banks, has developed a solution that provides hotels with a guest stay's certification at the hotel.

Nowadays they have clients as relevant as ACCOR, Omni Hotels, Barceló Hotels, etc.

Servantrip

It is a service of aggregation and booking of transfers to the airport, rental of drivers by hours, in almost 200 countries. The way that is configured is an online marketplace, since on the one hand Servantrip syndicate thousands of professionals, companies and distributors that offer the services before cited, which implies a B2B relationship; and on the other hand it makes available that marketplace to different travel players, such as travel agencies, Tour Operators, Activity Banks, airlines, GDS, in a B2B relationship, within a B2B2C transaction, since the aforementioned players offer to potential travellers those services.

Servantrip has an infrastructure that allows creating its own content and product -even combining different services suppliers to create new product types, as a product aggregated by competing third parties, especially in the part of transfers. Therefore, it has a Metasearch as a base to make reservations for services. It also has an infrastructure that allows the integral management of requests for services by potential customers, confirming and operating them, which includes after-sale services. Therefore, its services cover all parts of the transaction, with the exception of the sale to the end customer, which allows Servantrip to provide more added value and thus be able to integrate into a B2B model with the companies before cited with just one API, that has a lot of traffic on their websites or a lot of demand of B2B services but does not have a solution for the online reservation, especially for hourly drivers. Servantrip can be integrated into a B2B2C transaction with a model of commission or net prices with these companies, which is enormously scalable, instead of having to rely on having the capacity to acquire traffic and generate the "network effect". It is especially noteworthy that Servantrip has also the ability to integrate into B2B2C transactions of double phase, as in the case of its sales to the Banks of Activities, Tour Operators or GDS, because in those Servantrip has a B2B relationship with them, and these, in turn, maintain a B2B relationship with travel agencies, TMCs, etc .. which are the ones that finally have the B2C relationship with the traveller. Servantrip has also developed a solution to aggregate thousands of tours and activities from many of the largest providers worldwide, all accessible under the same API, under a B2B approach to cater those travel distributors to compete with the likes of Getyourguide or Viator. It is also implementing an offer of vacation rental accommodation with the same logic to make it accessible under the same API.

Visor.ai

Customer support made it easy. If a company deals with repetitive interactions from its audience, then those interactions can be automated. Using Chatbots and Artificial Intelligence you are able to automate and reduce the costs and workload of your customer support team whilst satisfying even the most demanding of users. Visor.ai provides a cloud-based solution for building a chatbot without coding needed from the side of the client.

Visor.ai develops a technology based on Machine Learning and AI focused on the development of chatbots specialized in customer service, in order to automate repetitive and massive processes, reducing the cost for the company or entity. Therefore, its model is B2B, since its customers are companies or entities that hire the development and operation of a chatbot, normally multi-language.

Visor.ai has developed its own Chatwidget that can easily be deployed to any website and branded at its own style. So be where your audience is: choose where you want the chatbot to be, either in your website, Facebook Messenger or app. But there's more to chatbots than just chat. Clients use Visor.ai platform to customize the chat experience using GIFs, image galleries and videos, all with an easy drag and drop interface.

Logically, Visor.ai has developed a Hybrid Solution with Robot + Humans, deploying Artificial Intelligence. Visor.ai uses Machine Learning and Natural Language Processing to make the chatbot able to answer the most common questions your company deals with. All the knowledge base can be easily managed by your team using our platform. Chat is the preferred form of contact. Visor.ai provides you with a Live Chat feature so when the chatbot doesn't know the answer, human agents can answer multiple chat questions at the same time whilst increasing the efficiency of your customer service.

Visor.ai has evolved its platform to comply with the strict requirements in terms of security and privacy of Banks and Insurance Companies, which has supposed that most of the Portuguese finance entities are their clients, following its SaaS model.

Chekin

Chekin has developed a framework that covers everything related to guest registration on touristic accommodations. Chekin has made it extremely easy to register guests for third-party software providers (startups, travel companies, Hospitality software and so on..), in two aspects,

1. It helps with all the local touristic regulations across the European Union

2. With a set of APIs that facilitates all the guest registration process.

Chekin is the premier supplier of trusted software solutions for digitalizing the check-in and check-out (and all the key legal points to take into consideration in between). We provide a stack of optimized, ready-to-run software solutions, and support for implementation on travel tech companies. Further, Chekin rapidly updates applications according to regional law changes to ensure optimal results. Chekin integration model is to be embedded into the partner solution, this native integration provides a better experience for the end-users, a trusted tool for the hotelier, and lower their cost due to the guest data collection process.

With Chekin web dashboard and mobile app a hotel or apartment can check-in their guests, generate the official documentation and send the guest data to the authorities automatically in just a couple of minutes. With CheKin app they can optimize and automate the registration of guests reducing the waste of time and money. Both in-app and web version the clients will be able to manage all your information only with a couple of clicks.

Its business model is sometimes a SaaS and others B2B with different variances.

myHotel

myHotel founders are passionate travellers who believe in creating opportunities for hotels to offer improved experiences by incorporating guest feedback into the central pillars of their hospitality strategy. They fully dedicated themselves to this cause by the end of 2014, focusing on independent hotels and regional chains in Latin America, on a SaaS model.

myHotel is currently operating in 23 countries in Latin America, and they are constantly innovating to prove that it is possible to develop and distribute powerful technologies from the region. They offer a Fidelity Suite that provides the hoteliers with a 360-degree overview of the hotel services. A simple platform connected to the Property Management System (PMS). The dashboard fidelity suite is composed by PreStay Logo (Offer preferential service reservations and online pre-check-in before the guests arrive at the hotel); Fidelity Onsite (Identify unsatisfied guests early and solve issues before check-out); Fidelity FollowUp (Measure guest satisfaction, monitor quality standards, and compare your performance with industry standards); Fidelity Collect (Gather guest reviews after their stay and improve your online brand); and Fidelity Online (Aggregate online reviews and monitor feedback in real-time. Compare your results with your competitors). Each module can be used separately; as a whole, they complement each other perfectly to boost the hotels bookings and improve the guest experience.

myHotel is the leader in the Latin American hotel industry. They have clients in 23 countries across the region (and growing fast!). They distinguish themselves by maintaining a close relationship with the hotels. Their products are the reflection of their continuous conversation with their clients about their needs and challenges. They are now beginning to offer their services to other industries as they already have Hospitals as clients.

Doinn

Doinn.co is an online platform where short term rentals hosts and property managers can automatically schedule and buy services such as housekeeping and laundry, provided by quality and professional companies.

Thanks to automatic integration using our seamless API all our customers (OTA platforms like Airbnb, property managers, PMS or channel managers can now offer housekeeping and laundry services and make sure their hosts have guest-ready apartments done by experienced providers. For the cleaning and laundry companies, Doinn has the first Vendor SaaS that optimizes and simplifies their operations for vacation rental.

Doinn offers Cleaning (All cleaning is done by professionals, with specific training, and following a rigorous and streamlined procedure); Linen and Towel Rental (All rented linen and towels are high quality. Each set consists of sheets (single or double), a duvet cover, pillowcases (1 or 2), face towels (1 or 2) and bath towels (1 or 2).); Laundry (the laundry service is of industrial quality. They wash the bed linen and bath towels at high temperatures and with professional cleaning products. All rented linen and towels are maintained in optimum condition.); and Concierge Services (Receiving and accommodating guests, as well as check-in and final inspection, all can be arranged).