



CASE STUDY
NOVATO OAKS

■ HOTEL BACKGROUND



(BEST WESTERN PLUS NOVATO OAKS INN)

Best Western International, Inc. owns the Best Western Hotels & Resorts brand, licensed to over 4,700 hotels worldwide, including more than 2,000 hotels in North America. The Best Western Plus Novato Oaks Inn is an upper mid-level franchise in Novato, California with 108 rooms.

Michelle Duffy, General Manager, describes her role as being “in charge of everything,” she half-jokes. In addition to overseeing Maintenance, Housekeeping, and Operations, she fills in for the Front Desk, Conference Department, IT, and gives staffs break. The staff have been at the hotel for a long time and there is low turnover.

■ BUSINESS CHALLENGES



STAFF COMMUNICATION WAS CHAOTIC

Generally, all employee communications was done by email threads or a paper memo book, which was passed around to staff and resided at the front desk. “If they staff needed help or had a question, they would call or find me,” Michelle says. “I was the source of answers to all questions from staff so it was tough to keep up.” Add to that, when using paper for tracking issues, it wasn’t an efficient use of time. Staff would have to go to the front desk to see the paper notes. Handwriting wasn’t always legible and sometimes no photos to document issues so determining the exact problem and diagnosing was difficult sometimes.



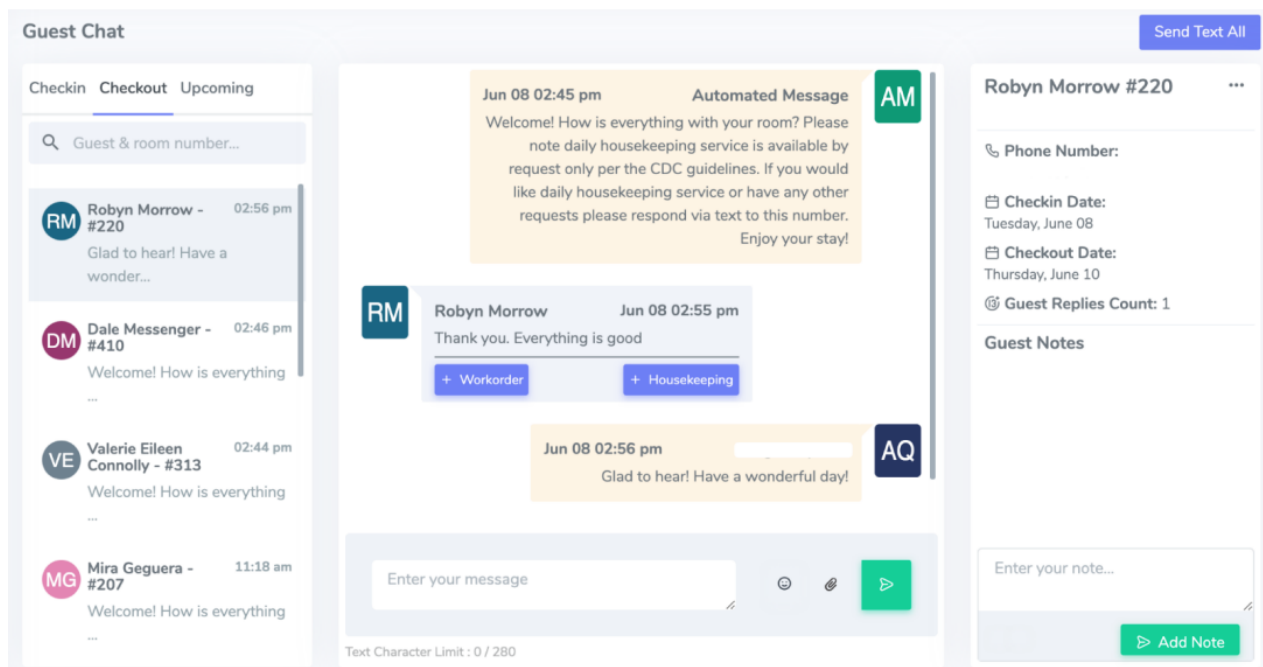
GUEST TEXTING WAS CLUNKY

The hotel adopted a guest texting product to help with guest requests and issues. Unfortunately, it was so complex for staff and guests to use, engagement was low and it wasn’t being used much. This resulted in a poor investment of money, training, and time.

■ THE GUEST EQ SOLUTION

The Novato Oaks Inn adopted GuestEQ, a digital messaging platform to personalize guest engagement and streamline hotel operations, creating a more efficient, effective workflow. Traditional paper processes like guest service requests, maintenance work orders, and staff schedules are replaced by SMS texting for seamless guest communication and staff action items. Ultimately, her hotel staff builds better connections with guests, leading to an improved hospitality experience, return visits, and more positive reviews.

Michelle says, “We can keep in touch in parallel with all the hats I wears at the hotel. It’s improved everything way beyond email and paper, plus our cross department and guest communication is much better now. Add to that, my feedback is taken into consideration and often implemented into GuestEQ. This was not the case with other vendors and made a huge difference.”



A much-appreciated feature is guest chat, which is often mentioned in reviews. Chat with guests to resolve issues, along with automated check-in welcome texts and departure texts with review requests.



TRACKING ISSUES IS A BREEZE

Maintenance and Housekeeping teams can be notified of and track open issues from anywhere on the property. They can receive a photo of the issue in GuestEQ and know exactly which tools to bring to the job. It saves them time and there is less worry from Michelle or the Front Desk staff about whether or not it will be completed.



CHECKLISTS ARE COMPLETED

With all of the hotel's to-dos documented digitally, Checklists are a vast improvement over paper tracking, with uneven follow up and closure. "The speed and ease of use is critical to keep things flowing here at the hotel," Michelle says.

■ RESULTS BY THE NUMBERS

The hotel measure its success and KPIs a number of ways. This includes Medallia Service Scores, and Google and TripAdvisor Star Ratings. Michelle has been thrilled to see Medallia Service scores now 93 out of 100, near top of the industry, and TripAdvisor and Google are 4.5 out of 5 Stars (very good).



More than 300 Hotels using GuestEQ to run their Daily Operations. Find out why. Contact scott@guesteq.com to schedule a demo.