

Moving into the Hotel industry? Call in the Technology expert's



Major Properties has been successfully developing residential and commercial property for more than 20 years. But when the company decided to diversify its asset base into the hotel industry its commercial director, Baljeet Chima, knew that working with experts in the hospitality sector would be critical to ensure success.

Major Properties was keen to tap into an established hotel brand and worked with the Wyndham Hotel Group which operates the Days Hotel brand in the UK. Major properties first hotel project is the Days Hotel at Shoreditch in East London which opened in April 2008.

Baljeet Chima explains more; "We already owned the site in Shoreditch and knew that it would be perfect for a hotel. But despite our significant experience and reputation within commercial property, the hospitality industry is very specialised. Working as a Days Hotel franchisee with the support of Wyndham we have access to a vast amount of sales knowledge, distribution channels and industry experience."

"Like much of East London, Shoreditch has changed dramatically in the past 15 years," continues Baljeet. "It's now a vibrant area undergoing gentrification and very popular with corporate guests. The Days Hotel brand fits in perfectly with the area; we are able to offer the least expensive three star accommodation within a mile of Liverpool Street Station but there is absolutely no compromise on quality and comfort."

Being based so close to a huge corporate and financial hub like The City of London, Baljeet and his team knew that the

business services they would offer customers had to be superb.

"Telecommunications are a fundamental element of any modern hotel and have to integrate seamlessly with computer systems and in-room entertainment," says Baljeet. "Wyndham introduced us to QDOS Networks, its 'recommended telecoms supplier' for the UK and we are delighted that they did. We spoke to Simon Catterick who had a 'can do' attitude right from the start. Simon was willing to help us manage the project from start to finish – including the entire telecoms and IT system – and we were happy to accept his support. Whilst we have some experience of telecoms within commercial property, technology within the hotel sector is far more complex. Having someone on our team who could anticipate and prevent problems from occurring was invaluable. Not only did Simon recommend the right system specification for the hotel, he and his team managed the whole installation process."

"The Days Hotel brand sets very high brand standards but I'm proud to say that we've exceeded these," says Baljeet. "QDOS recommended an AVAYA IP Office 500 telephone system, which is ideal for a hotel of our size, plus a TIGER call management and voicemail system. We have direct dial telephones in each guest room plus guest voicemail and a built-in reporting system which interfaces with our property management and invoicing systems. Everything links together to provide a simple and effective solution for both guests and staff."

"We also provide our customers with hard-wired and wireless Internet access in guest rooms and public areas,

wake up calls by phone or TV and pay movies. Ensuring that all of these areas of technology worked together was hugely complicated but something that QDOS took in its stride. From supplying cordless handsets and installing cabling to negotiating with complementary suppliers such as BT on telephone lines and broadband – Simon and his team worked hard for us right from day one and were able to help us make very sensible business decisions."

QDOS provided Major Properties with a 'menu' of options at the outset of the project. "The fact that we could see exactly what we were getting and assess costs was a very refreshing way to work and prices were also very competitive," says Baljeet. "The QDOS team are obviously professionals in their field but also able to translate technical jargon into layman's terms that I, and my team, could understand. Dealing with Simon was so simple compared with other sub-contractors; every deadline that we set was met and any issues dealt with in a positive and proactive way."

It's now more than a year since the Days Hotel Shoreditch opened and, with preparations well advanced for the 2012 Olympics only two miles from the hotel, the future is looking bright for Major Properties.

"We are seeing significant growth in guest numbers and have plans to start work on another 180 bedroom hotel in Brent Cross, North London in the near future," says Baljeet Chima. "QDOS is still very much part of our team at Shoreditch, providing day to day support if we have any problems. It's good to know that, not only do we have a superb telecoms system, but a supplier that is with us for the long haul."



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