

Luxury where it matters, budget where it counts



The best way to sum up the Hoxton Urban Lodge, located in stylish Shoreditch near to the City of London, is "Luxury where it matters, budget where it counts". The team behind the Urban Lodge concept, including Sinclair Beecham founder of Pret A Manger, aims to redefine the urban hotel experience and is already carving out an enviable reputation, winning the title "Best UK Hotel" in the Guardian & Observer Travel Awards 2009. Q\DOS is obviously proud to be the hotel's telecoms supplier.

Whilst the Hoxton provides discerning guests with all the facilities and special details they would expect from a top hotel – fabulous linen, Aveda toiletries, luxury power showers and large flat screen televisions – its pricing structure reflects an underlying respect for customers. David Taylor is the Hoxton Hotel's general manager. "When we developed the Urban Lodge concept, we knew right from the word go that we didn't want to rip our customers off by charging ridiculous prices for the 'added extras' which often form the basis of a hotel stay," he explains. "

David continues; "Value and integrity are key to our organisation; we want our guests to be loyal to us and can't expect them to return if they leave feeling uncomfortable with what they've been charged. In our view, if a customer has paid a fair price for accommodation they shouldn't have any nasty surprises when it comes to 'phone bills and other extras."

Q\DOS was appointed to work with the Hoxton due to its proven experience and great reputation within the hotel sector. "Due to the scale of the project we recommended an NEC Philips 2000 IPS system with voicemail facility. Because the Hoxton has 205 bedrooms the system had to be large and powerful enough to accommodate this number of extensions," explains Simon Catterick, managing director of Q\DOS. "We also needed a system capable of integrating with associated technologies such as a property management system, pay movie TV system and high speed internet access."

"The flexibility of the system is ideal for us," says David Taylor. "Unlike many London hotels, the Hoxton only charges a standard 3p per minute for all UK and European calls but in the near future we plan to change that to make all UK, European and US landline calls free for customers. We can adapt the programming to suit these changes."

The reception of the Hoxton Urban Lodge is not your typical austere London hotel lobby. With a shop for 'essentials', an open plan bar, restaurant and lounge area, it is uber cool and never quiet. This caused some acoustic challenges in the early days. "From the word go we've cultivated a New York lobby style culture at night," explains David. "Particularly during the weekends our lobby is more like a busy bar than a typical hotel reception area. Add to this our ceiling height and you have a pretty noisy environment."

"Simon Catterick from Q\DOS wasn't fazed by these challenges. He understood the problem immediately; our staff were finding it tough to take bookings and help customers on the 'phone due to background noise. Although this wasn't a simple matter to resolve, Simon liaised with NEC Philips on our behalf, arranging for the programming of the system to be altered in order to make it work more efficiently for us. He recognised that a noisy reception is fundamental to the Hoxton's atmosphere and that our telephones had to be able to cope with this – he stuck with us until the problem was resolved."

The NEC Philips system which Q\DOS installed works with Tiger call accounting, voicemail and property management system software which helps David Taylor and his team to run the hotel efficiently. "It is a really easy system for our team to manage and importantly, it can be adapted to meet the changing needs of the hotel as we grow and evolve," says David. "Because our main focus is always on delivering superb customer service and a really warm welcome we don't have time to spend hours on re-routing calls and dealing with 'phone problems – the simplicity and reliability of the Q\DOS solution is therefore a great asset to our business."

"I've been really impressed by Simon and his team and I love the fact that he keeps in touch to make sure everything is running smoothly, even though the job was successfully finished many months ago," says David. "We're currently planning our next hotels and we hope to work with Q\DOS again."

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