

It's not home, but it's the next best thing



Staybridge Suites Liverpool is the first hotel of its kind in the UK and is located on the famous Kings Waterfront. The Staybridge Suites concept is well established in the USA, offering an all-suite, upscale, extended-stay hotel for people who are looking for hotel standard accommodation which feels like home. The BDL Hotel Group appointed Q\DOS to deliver the telecoms solution for this prestigious development.

Staybridge suites offers guests more space to live and work than a conventional hotel room. There are luxury furnishings and the latest technology in the form of free Wi-Fi, broadband and flat screen tvs. The fully-equipped kitchen in every suite means guests can prepare meals and entertain friends or colleagues – it really is like a second home. At the centre of Staybridge Suites Liverpool is the hub kitchen where breakfast is served every morning; the hubs are also the location for regular after work receptions where guests can get to know each other and unwind after a busy day. With 24 hour room service, a business centre, fitness room and free guest laundry, the studios or one-bedroom suites offer something very special.

The BDL Hotel Group was formed in 1997 to develop and operate new build branded hotels and, 11 years on, the company operates 18 hotels with a further seven under construction. Whereas BDL usually goes on to operate every hotel that it develops, Staybridge Suites Liverpool was something very different, with its own particular set of challenges.

"We were contracted by InterContinental Hotel Group (IHG) to develop the first Staybridge Suites in Europe and the Middle East before handing it back to IHG to manage," explains Stuart McCaffer, director of BDL Management Ltd. "Although the Staybridge Suites brand is well established in America, IHG needed to adapt the brand for the European and Middle Eastern audience. Staybridge Suites Liverpool was effectively a trial project; we had to take the very aspirational brand standards and interpret the brief to make it meaningful for the UK market."

Due to the incredibly high specification of Staybridge Suites, and the nature of guests being targeted, IHG requested a telephone system which could deliver a range of advanced functions.

Every one of the 150 suites has a direct dial facility but whereas with a normal hotel, guest voicemail would be cleared on checkout, IHG wanted guests to have access to messages for several days afterwards – recognising that they may have used their Staybridge Suite as a home office for weeks or months. The client also needed a hybrid system with cordless handsets so that staff could answer calls on the move. Guest suites also benefit from cordless handsets as well as fixed phones.

In order to meet IHG's very specific requirements Q\DOS installed an Avaya IP Office telephone system, integrated with property management system, Tiger Voicemail and Tiger call accounting software. In addition Q\DOS supplied the latest model of Telematrix digital cordless handsets (DECT) as well as Telematrix standard handsets in the suites.

Stuart McCaffer continues; "As with every BDL project, Q\DOS designed a complete solution for Staybridge Suites Liverpool and adopted a flexible approach in order to fit in with other elements of the build and to integrate with other parts of the IT system. Because we were working in partnership with IHG we had to ensure that they were happy with every element of the development – from design themes, furniture, fittings and the equipment to include the telecoms infrastructure. Because the telecoms system needed to be very sophisticated in order to meet the needs of customers and the hotel operator the brief was not simple."

"It is important to emphasise that there was a significant element of trust involved in this development. We trusted Simon Catterick and his team to represent BDL in negotiations that were pivotal to the success of the project. We relied heavily on Q\DOS to liaise with IHG on our behalf to analyse their requirements and come up with innovative yet practical solutions."

"Having worked closely with Q\DOS for many years on projects all over the UK I was not surprised that the level of service and support we received was first class and that the project was delivered without problems, within budget, and on time."



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