# Transforming Your Website into a
# Booking Powerhouse:

## The AI Chatbot and Booking Engine Guide

Booking confirmed

Booking confirmed

The development of new technologies has created an array of opportunities for hotels to enhance every facet of the guest experience. From direct bookings and personalized service to guest satisfaction and future return visits, this ebook explores important tech and how it's transforming the industry.

Each chapter includes real-world examples of how advanced software is being used effectively within the hospitality sector, along with tips on easy ways to boost direct bookings, increase website traffic, and understand user-friendly features and tools.

**This ebook is not just about introducing hotel professionals to new technologies; it also aims to provide data and step-by-step plans that you can implement in your business right away.**
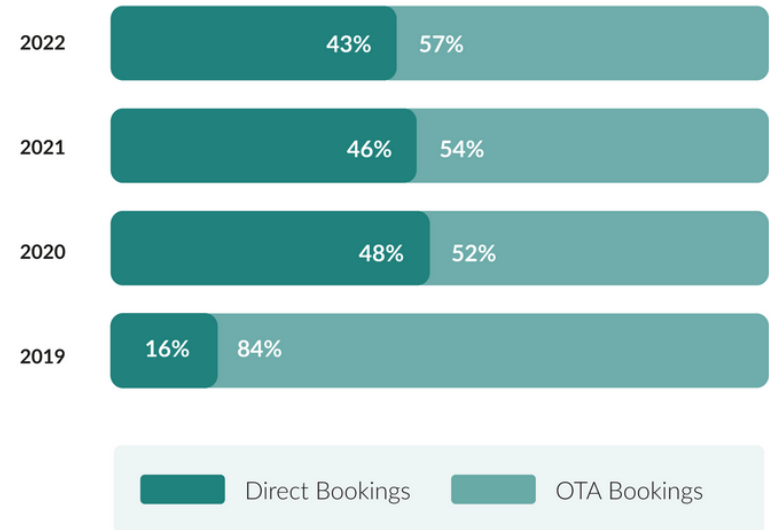
Whether you're an experienced hotelier, an investor, property manager, or simply an enthusiast about how technology is shaping guest experiences, this is a stepping stone to choose the best alternatives to keep pace with this technology-driven era.

Get ready to step into the future of hospitality, where technology empowers us to create unforgettable guest experiences to streamline business operations like never before.

# Data by RoomRaccoon reveals a **positive trend in the number of direct bookings** made by guests

RoomRaccoon, the hotel management software for independent hotels, analysed thousands of properties in 45 countries worldwide and found interesting insights into current booking behaviour.

## Direct Bookings

| Year | Direct Bookings | OTA Bookings |
|------|-----------------|--------------|
| 2022 | 43% | 57% |
| 2021 | 46% | 54% |
| 2020 | 48% | 52% |
| 2019 | 16% | 84% |

■ Direct Bookings  ■ OTA Bookings

The data shows that 2020 was pivotal for levelling direct hotel bookings and those made through online travel agencies (OTAs).

At the height of travel restrictions, travellers favoured booking directly with hotels for their flexible booking policies, which may account for the shift.

Since then, direct bookings have been on an upward trajectory, **increasing by a staggering 169% from 2019**. At the same time, OTA bookings are recovering from low pandemic levels.

# Why it pays to invest in direct bookings

As a hotelier, it's essential to take time to explore the potential of direct bookings. Harnessing the right technology to ensure your hotel website is easily bookable not only lowers booking costs from third-party services, but it creates a far better experience for potential guests.

According to RoomRaccoon findings, those who book a stay directly through the hotel's website have a higher tendency to revisit. This is because guests have a consistent, personalised brand experience right from the beginning instead of taking the impersonal OTA route.

Rather than just viewing a listing on an OTA, you can provide guests with a glimpse of your hotel's brand, ethos and values. This will give them insight into what to expect when they stay at your property and create an experience that resonates with modern travellers.

**An integrated booking engine is the perfect way to deliver a connected guest journey from start to finish. This system allows for easy management of the booking process, as well as providing a personalised experience before, during and after their stay.**
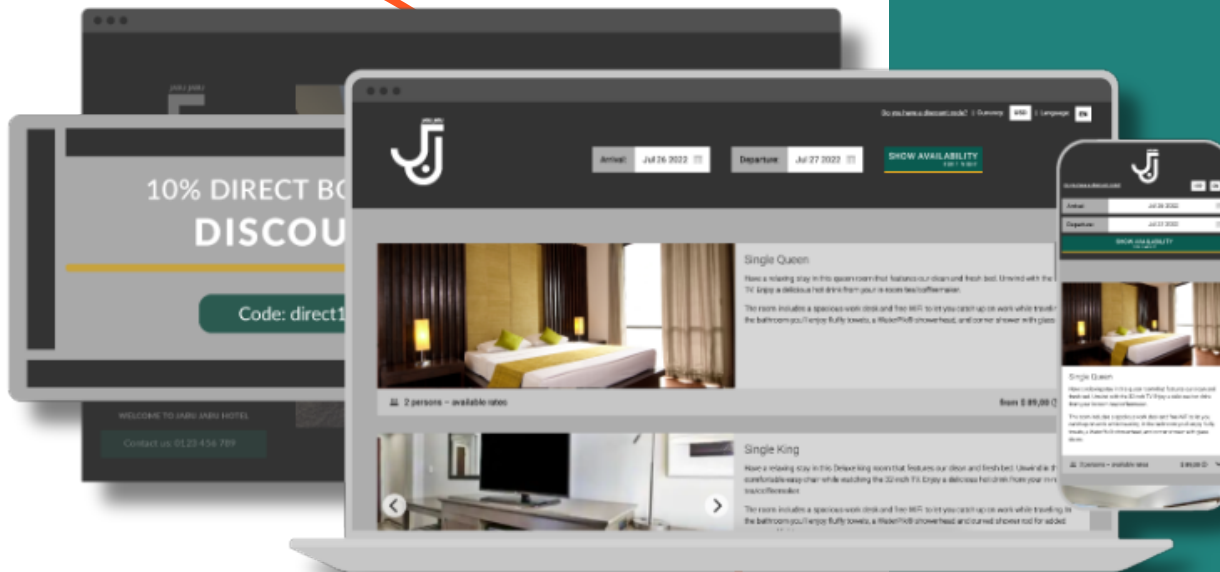
RoomRaccoon's built-in booking engine

# Turn your website visitors into paying guests by integrating a booking engine

An online booking engine is an indispensable software solution for hotels, hostels, B&Bs, holiday rentals, and similar accommodation businesses to capture online bookings through their website, social media channels, and other marketing channels 24/7.

By integrating a booking engine on your website, guests can instantly view your availability and book their stay with 5 easy steps, eliminating the need to fill out forms or visit third-party websites:

**Step 1:** Check the availability on the calendar

**Step 2**: Select their desired room

**Step 3:** Choose from specific add-ons, like a bottle of champagne

**Step 4**: Proceed to the cart for an overview of their order

**Step 5:** Confirm their booking and make payment

By reducing your dependency on OTAs, you bypass hefty commissions and maximise revenue while providing guests with a hassle-free booking experience and the convenience they crave.

# Understanding how to use the user-friendly tools & features

RoomRaccoon has taken the booking process to a new level with their cutting-edge booking engine. This innovative module boasts a variety of features that enhance the user experience and bring in more direct business.

## 1. Rate shopper

The Rate Shopper is a comparative guest-facing tool that compares your direct booking rate to your rates listed on popular booking channels (Booking.com, Expedia, Agoda, and Airbnb). This tool is specifically designed to show window shoppers that you offer the best available rate!

## 2. Multi-currency & multi-language converter

Cater to international guests with a booking engine that adapts to different currencies and languages as necessary, making it easy for guests to book through your website. This is an effective way to provide a stellar guest experience and promote your hotel in all markets.

## 3. Add-ons and packages

Does your hotel offer services like a spa? Perhaps you collaborate with tour operators? Creating special packages is easy, and you can offer bookable add-ons right from the booking engine. Offering website visitors the opportunity to upgrade their stay by adding extras such as spa treatments or late check-out will increase guests' incentive to book directly with you and increase your RevPAR.

**UPGRADE YOUR STAY**

**Chocolate**
From $8

## 4. Google compatibility

In order to benefit from the advantages of Google Analytics and Google Hotel Ads (GHA), it is essential that your hotel's booking engine has the ability to incorporate tracking codes and is compatible with GHA.

This way, you can track the success of your marketing campaigns and promote your direct booking rates through GHA, benefitting from the pay-per-stay bidding model, which ensures you only pay for guests who successfully complete their stay at your accommodation.
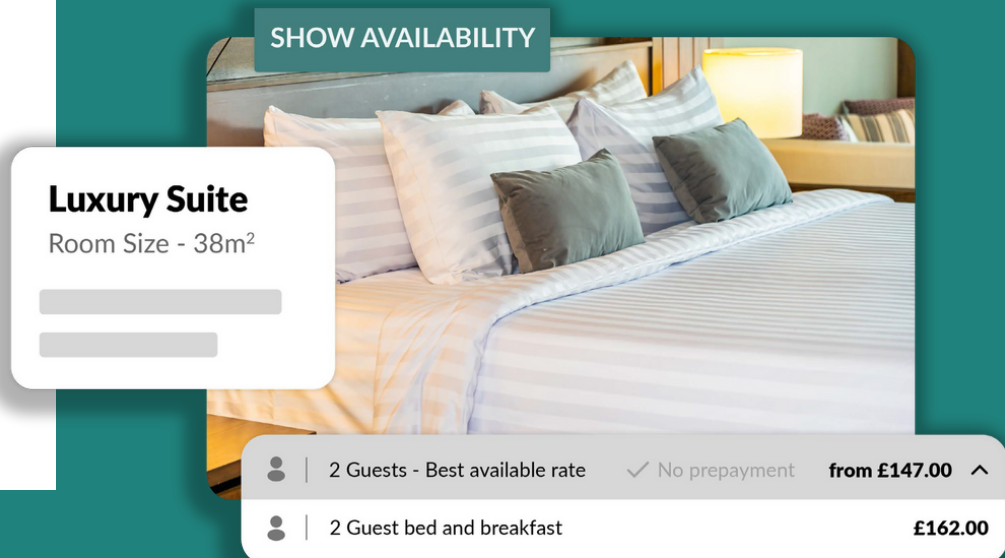
## 5. Discount codes & revenue management

With a discount code widget, you can promote exclusive direct booking discounts on your website and run post-stay marketing campaigns to encourage more bookings from new and past guests. RoomRaccoon's Yield Manager can automate the rate management, ensuring your booking engine rates are up-to-date with the latest market demand.

## 6. Personalised booking confirmation emails

It's the small details that matter, and hoteliers know that they can have a huge impact in setting up a positive experience for your guest before they even arrive. As soon as someone books with you, send them a timely confirmation email consistent with your brand image and tailored to their specific stay. RoomRaccoon offers free email templates - from pre-stay to post-stay - which are designed just for this purpose.

## 7. Online payments

A booking engine can process online payments securely through the use of integrations with popular payment service providers (PSPs). Hoteliers can choose to request pre-payments to reduce no-shows and authorise credit cards. This transfers the risk away from you, the hotelier, and reduces the risk of chargebacks. Importantly, guest data is stored in an encrypted form using tokenisation for optimal security.

SHOW AVAILABILITY

**Luxury Suite**
Room Size - 38m²

2 Guests - Best available rate    ✓ No prepayment    **from £147.00** ∧

2 Guest bed and breakfast    £162.00

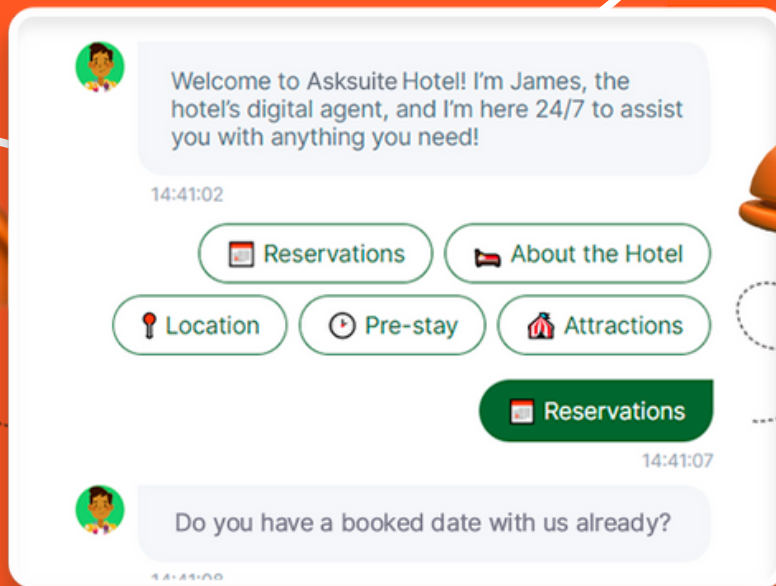# Leveraging AI-driven chatbots for exceptional customer service



Outstanding customer service starts at pre-stay. If travellers have a disappointing experience at this stage, the probability they'll turn to a competitor is very high. And if, for some reason, they complete the booking, it can set the mood and mar their entire experience at that hotel.

Enter chatbots. A chatbot can hook potential bookers as they're browsing your website. At this point, travellers have already identified a need and moved on to the research stage of the buying cycle. When a chatbot is available, travellers might not continue to the next logical stage of comparison, providing hotels an opportunity to reduce booking abandonment.

Without depending on OTAs, **a chatbot like Asksuite's will often quote the best prices and then activate cost comparison built-in features.** If a quote is not at an optimal price, the AI will divert to other buying triggers, such as customer reviews, room comparison, or special packages.

# The power of an AI chatbot integrated with your website booking engine



Welcome to Asksuite Hotel! I'm James, the hotel's digital agent, and I'm here 24/7 to assist you with anything you need!

14:41:02

Reservations    About the Hotel

Location    Pre-stay    Attractions

Reservations

14:41:07

Do you have a booked date with us already?

14:41:08

## • Invisible demand

Data from more than 3000 hotels worldwide working with Asksuite shows that 50.4% of chatbot interactions happen outside business hours. This invisible demand is a huge revenue opportunity. Enter a round-the-clock chatbot and the problem is nearly solved. That's why hotel chatbots offer such an attractive ROI.

## • Standardization

One of the major issues reported by reservation teams is the volume of repetitive questions unrelated to bookings. AI chatbots provide consistent answers, reducing the chance of miscommunication, while freeing up agents to work on sales.

## • Multilingual assistance

A well-known fact is that speaking a customer's language increases the chances of capturing their attention. This can be incredibly difficult in the hospitality business, which often serves international guests from virtually anywhere. Chatbots like Asksuite's speak more than 40 languages. Problem solved.

Are pets allowed?

Do you have promotional packages?

Could you email me a quote?

Got it. Thanks!
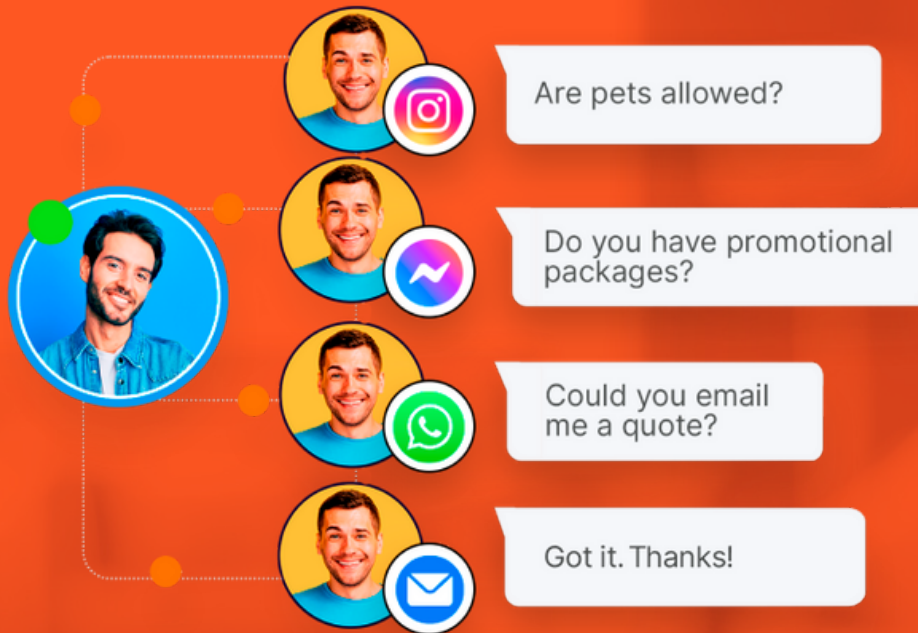
## Language processing

Where once there was hesitance involving chatbots and their limited understanding rate, Natural Language Processing (NLP) changed that as it reads, deciphers, understands, and makes sense of human language in an impressive way. This particular AI employs computer algorithms, human language, and various methods to understand and generate language. It closes the gap between human communication and computer understanding.

## Data collection

AI chatbots can gather data from past interactions to provide personalized recommendations or assistance to travellers. Bespoke offers and packages, for example, or additional premium services based on previous purchases can result in more revenue. Preferred seasons, accommodation types, and varied activities all closely align with travellers' tastes and needs, making it more likely to generate bookings.
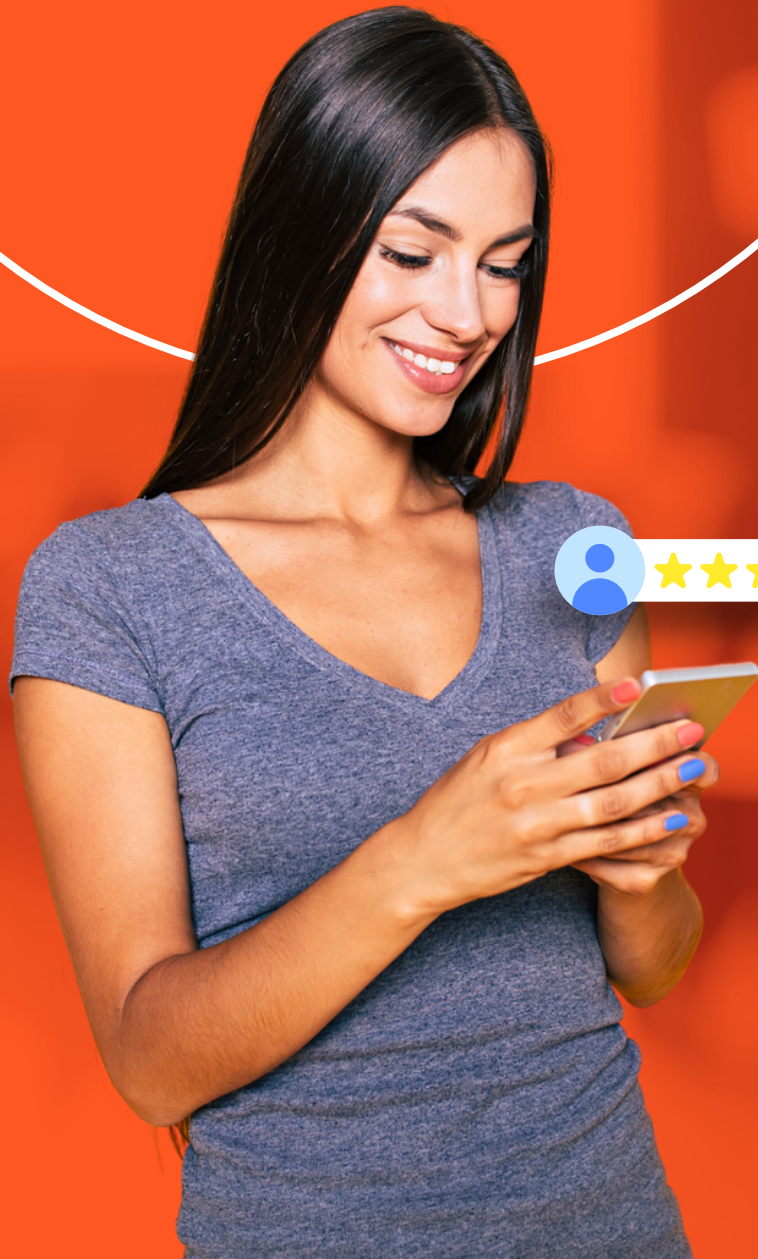
# Wrapping up

As travellers seek an increasingly personalised experience with brands that resonate with them, more hotels are prioritising direct business. By utilising the latest technology, hotels can ensure higher satisfaction rates from guests, which leads to higher customer lifetime value.

To maximise this potential, RoomRaccoon's booking engine, coupled with Asksuite's AI chatbot, can transform any hotel website into a powerful booking powerhouse that rivals the best OTAs.

**ROOMRACCOON**
cloud hotel management

**asksuite**

# asksuite

Asksuite is a global leader in omnichannel service solutions for hotels and resorts. Its mission is to make reservations, marketing, and revenue teams unstoppable by turning service requests into direct bookings and revenue. Asksuite's platform provides centralized control of all hotel communication channels with maximum automation.

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## ROOMRACCOON
cloud hotel management

RoomRaccoon is a customisable hotel management system boasting an all-in-one core product of an integrated booking engine, property management system, and channel manager. The award-winning platform is designed to provide independent hoteliers with everything they need for success. Schedule a free demo to learn more!

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