



# Unit 21: Technology and Digital Media in Hospitality

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## Delivery guidance

In this unit, learners develop a knowledge and understanding of technology and mobile and digital media in the hospitality industry. They explore the benefits, barriers and impact that these have on hospitality businesses.

Technology and digital media are increasingly central to the way hospitality businesses function. They are used to communicate with customers and guests in ways that would have been impossible many years ago. They allow businesses to analyse data and identify trends in their market, expand their customer base and become more cost-effective. Hospitality businesses have an ever-increasing reliance on technology to develop their organisational goals. Learners will investigate managerial and operational technologies used in hospitality. They will learn how technology and digital media are used throughout hospitality businesses in all departments. They will also be able to plan how to introduce new or emerging technology in a business using the knowledge that they gain throughout the unit.

You are likely to use a broad range of different teaching, learning and delivery methods in this unit, such as:

- trips and visits – one of the most effective ways of developing learners' knowledge and understanding of the technology and digital media used in the industry is to visit different types of hospitality businesses or trade shows showcasing the latest developments
- case studies – use these to illustrate the positive and negative impacts of different types of technology and digital media
- individual or group presentations – these can allow learners to explore a range of different technologies and digital media
- employer engagement – invite industry experts such as technology or digital media specialists to share their knowledge and approaches in different types of business, and they may also be prepared to share examples of planning materials, literature and insights into trends
- work experience – learners could undertake work placements at hospitality businesses and then share their experiences with others
- discussions – hold class and small group discussions on topics such as the different technologies and digital media that learners have experienced or emerging trends for different customer types.

Remember that group work is a useful and acceptable form of delivery and formative assessment, but you must ensure that each learner independently produces their own evidence, which contains sufficient depth and detail for summative assessment.

## Approaching the unit

Learning aim A primarily explores the uses of technology in hospitality. First, learners develop an understanding of the different types of hospitality business and the different technology they use. Set research activities across all types of hospitality business, as this will help to reinforce learners' understanding and help them to evaluate it in the context of different real-life businesses. A sensible way to deliver this is to use a wide range of examples of hospitality (selecting local examples may make research easier). There are lots of similarities between the different types of technology used in hospitality businesses but identifying the key differences between and unique features of particular businesses is a useful approach for you to consider. It is important that learners learn about the benefits of each technology to both the customer and the business.

An essential part of this learning aim is that learners develop their ability to conduct their own research, as this is going to be a vital element of their assignments. Allowing learners to conduct online research using search engines might take longer initially, but this is vital in ensuring that they are capable of finding correct, reliable information for themselves.

In learning aim B, learners should develop an understanding of digital media and mobile technology in hospitality. They need to understand how digital marketing differs from but still supports traditional marketing. You could start by asking learners to compile a list of definitions and examples of the different types of digital marketing used today. Learners need to identify current trends, such as the move to mobile communications and apps. Learners also need to understand the advantages and disadvantages of the different media used in digital marketing to target different audiences. Learners could work in small groups to collect examples of different marketing messages transmitted via different media types, as well as the different devices and formats that are available. At this point, it would be advisable to introduce mobile technology and apps in more depth and explore how they affect hospitality businesses.

Learners with part-time employment could explore how their employer handles its digital communications and mobile technology. Other learners may wish to research a variety of different organisations, which could range from charities to for-profit organisations, to identify potential differences in message, media and technology. For example, learners could investigate how businesses target specific market segments using different forms of marketing and advertising such as social media marketing, email advertising, display advertising and search engine marketing.

For learning aim C, learners will take all the knowledge that they have gained in learning aims A and B to produce proposals for new technology and digital media. Learners must be able to develop a detailed proposal and fully justify the choices that they have made. Learners will need to consider the role of the new technology in either a business of their choice or a business defined by the assignment brief. Learners could analyse the technology and digital media for a range of businesses and find out what considerations are important to each business. They will need to use business tools such as PESTLE and SWOT analyses to analyse and evaluate the current environment at a chosen business as well as competitor analysis to aid their decision.

For some technology and digital media investigations, learners will need to conduct market research. This could be done in their workplace or through research. This learning aim would benefit from a guest speaker whose role is to acquire new technology for a business. The speaker could guide learners through their decision-making process and considerations. In the next phase of the learning aim, learners need to prepare a proposal and they will need



guidance, which could be given using case studies and template proposals. In these proposals it is important to cover the learning aim content to give the learners everything that they need to write a valid proposal.

The final part of this learning aim covers evaluating the technology and deciding whether it has met the business's needs while looking at its benefits and risks. Learners could complete this activity in groups and/or individually and present their assessment to other learners, who could test their depth of knowledge by asking questions. Learners will be more successful in completing this task if they have first researched an extensive range of technology and digital media used by a wide range of hospitality businesses.

### Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
<b>A</b> Explore the use of technology in hospitality businesses	<b>A1</b> Technology in hospitality <b>A2</b> Technology enhancing business productivity and customer experience to meet business objectives	Written documentation or project investigating the key content areas of technology in hospitality and how this enhances business productivity and customer experience.
<b>B</b> Explore the use of digital media and mobile technologies in hospitality businesses	<b>B1</b> Uses and types of digital media systems in hospitality <b>B2</b> Mobile technology and apps	Written documentation or project investigating the key content areas of digital media, mobile technology and apps in hospitality.
<b>C</b> Develop a plan to incorporate technology that will aid productivity and enhance the customer experience	<b>C1</b> Assessment of technology needs strategies <b>C2</b> Technology proposal <b>C3</b> Assessing technology has met business needs	Complete assessment of technology needs and develop a plan that will be presented to a hospitality business.

### Assessment guidance

It is recommended that this unit is internally assessed through three assignments. All learners must independently generate evidence that can be authenticated. The main sources of evidence are likely to be a written document or project and plans, together with individual research and the original learner-generated evidence.

It is essential that you allow individual learners to select their own examples of businesses to investigate as well as the research evidence to include in their work, if they are to show the individual creativity required to achieve the universal distinction criterion.

The first assignment covers learning aim A. It is a written assessment or project investigating the key content areas of technology in hospitality and how they enhance business productivity and the customer experience. In order to achieve the assessment and grading criteria, learners will need to select and research different businesses in hospitality and explore the managerial and operational technology that they use. Learners could explain the importance of the technology and support their claims using data and statistics wherever possible in their reports. They could include an evaluation of how a company's efficiency is enhanced by technology in order to meet its objectives. Ensure that the examples selected by learners provide sufficient scope for them to fully complete the assessment.

The second assignment which covers learning aim B is a written assessment investigating the key content areas of digital media, mobile technology and apps in hospitality. In order to achieve the assessment and grading criteria, learners need to select and research different businesses in hospitality and the digital media and mobile technology they use. Ensure that the examples selected by learners provide sufficient scope for them to fully complete the assessments. Learners need to be familiar with digital media and mobile technology used in hospitality and they will need to analyse the effect that this has on the customer experience. Extensive research and exposure to a wide range of technology and digital media will



therefore better prepare learners to undertake the tasks associated with this unit. It will enable them to evaluate the benefits and barriers associated with the use of technology and digital media in the hospitality industry.

The third and final assignment covers learning aim C. Learners need to complete an assessment of technology needs in a hospitality business. They need to pick a hospitality business (which could be a work placement or an example provided by the brief) and develop a proposal for new managerial and operational technology that will aid productivity. Learners could use businesses that they have previously investigated during this unit. Learners also need to develop a proposal for new digital media and mobile technologies in the same hospitality business to enhance the customer experience. This means that, again, extensive research and exposure to a wide range of emerging and new technology and digital media will better prepare learners to undertake the tasks associated with this unit. Where appropriate, assessors should complete observation records, while other people (such as work colleagues) can complete witness statements. Observation records alone are not sufficient sources of learner evidence: the original learner-generated evidence must support them.

## Getting started

This provides you with a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

### Unit 21: Technology and Digital Media in Hospitality

#### Introduction

A simple way to introduce this unit is for learners to produce a short presentation on two different forms of technology and digital communications that they have encountered recently. Other learners can then ask questions about why they chose those two technologies and which, of the two, they believe to be the most effective at communicating a message and why.

#### Learning aim A: Explore the use of technology in hospitality businesses

- You could begin with an introductory discussion on the aim of the unit to make learners aware that, to become a supervisor in hospitality, it is imperative to know about and keep up to date with the latest technologies and digital media. Discuss how an understanding of technology and digital media (including their possibilities and limitations) can be applied in order to plan solutions, as well as analyse and evaluate outcomes and decisions, in many situations.
- It might benefit you to hold a discussion to gauge learners' understanding of technology used in hospitality, either from previous experience or from research. You could follow this up by giving a presentation, starting with common devices such as computers and mobile devices before moving on to more specialised or less common technologies. You may wish to introduce digital devices along with an overview of the tasks that they can perform to give learners context. Ask each learner to research a different technology and list their findings ask them to look at what departments this technology is used in or to investigate whether it is used across the whole business.
- Ensure that learners understand the difference between managerial and operational technology and how these meet the objectives of different businesses. Using the list of technology created in the previous activity, ask learners to split their lists into two lists: one of managerial technologies and one of operational technologies. Discuss the findings as a class to ensure that learners understand the difference between them and the definition of each. As an extension activity, learners could write a short report on how each type of technology contributes to different businesses and helps the business meet its aims and objectives.
- Use a range of group and individual activities to give learners opportunities to explore the managerial technologies in hospitality and their uses. For example, learners could research the use of available managerial technologies through a group visit to a hospitality business or through role play. Introduce learners to more common uses of technology first before progressing to more specialised technology.
- Give a presentation on managerial technology, looking at the main systems and their uses. This could include a guided practical demonstration and a learner activity using a type of managerial technology, such as a property management system completing customer room bookings.
- Split learners into groups and ask each group to research a different type of managerial technology. Learners then create a presentation that describes the use of their technology in two specified businesses and present their findings to the rest of the class. As an extension activity, learners could write a report on the benefits of using the managerial technology in the researched businesses.



- Use a range of group and individual activities (such as case studies, research activities or practical activities using operational technology) to give learners the opportunity to explore the operational technologies in hospitality and their uses. Introduce learners to more common uses of technology first before progressing to more specialised technology.
- Give a presentation on operational technology, focusing on the main systems and their uses. Learners complete a matching activity, matching types of operational technology and their uses.
- Split learners into groups and ask each group to research a different type of operational technology. Learners then create a presentation that describes the use of their technology in two specified businesses and present their findings to the rest of the class. As an extension activity, learners could write a report on the benefits of using the operational technology.
- Deliver a presentation on established and emerging technologies and how they influence the ways in which individuals and organisations use systems. How might the 'Internet of Things' (IoT) revolutionise hospitality? How does 'Big Data' measured in real time contribute to hospitality? You could give further local opportunities to research this and traditional classroom-based activities can be supported by visits and guest speakers.
- Pick a business to use as a case study and start a discussion about the technology it uses. Ask learners to discuss as many potential considerations as they can about how the technology benefits both the customer and the business. Show learners how the same business could be run with different or no technology and discuss the positives and negatives of these alternative scenarios. As an extension activity, learners could write a report comparing the business discussed in class with another case study company and how their use of technology is similar or dissimilar.
- The final part of this learning aim considers how technology enhances business productivity and the customer experience. Introduce this using a presentation that describes the ways in which a business and its customers can benefit from the use of technology. Split learners into groups and ask each group to create a poster about each of the specification points and why they are important.
- Learners could research and make a list of hospitality businesses that use different types of technologies, as examples. These businesses could come from learners' previous visits or prior research and learners need to know about their use of technology. Learners could then work in small groups to create a written report describing how technology enhances two contrasting businesses.
- Ensure that learners are prepared for assessment before giving them the assignment brief.

### **Learning aim B: Explore the use of digital media and mobile technologies in hospitality businesses**

- As an introduction to this learning aim, you could have a discussion to find out about the digital media and mobile technology that learners have encountered and then focus their thoughts on its use within hospitality businesses. What types of technology are there? How often do they use it? Does it add value or encourage them to buy products or services.
- Give a presentation about the three types of digital media categories. Give learners an outline to base their group research on. They can then work in groups to explore each category in more depth and present their findings to the rest of the class using examples from the hospitality industry.
- Discuss an example of a hospitality business and its digital marketing objectives. Ask learners to research digital marketing objectives for a range of hospitality businesses, then discuss and

compare them as a class. These will not vary significantly from normal marketing objectives, as the main objectives of any marketing campaign are to create brand awareness, to generate new leads and to ensure customer satisfaction and retention. Digital marketing has the same objectives. Learners should then research a range of digital marketing campaigns that have these specific objectives. As a written activity, learners could compare different campaigns to look at how different businesses use technology or digital media, giving their opinions on why the campaigns or methods are similar or dissimilar. It might be that the methods are similar but the campaigns are not, or that the campaigns are similar but the methods are not. As an extension activity, learners could decide whether they would change any of the objectives they have researched.

- Explain that digital media and digital marketing are an extension to traditional marketing methods rather than a replacement for them. Start with a class discussion on the different types of marketing communications and ask learners to consider whether they are effective at meeting the original objective. This basic introduction could include small-group research to enable learners to produce a list of definitions and examples of the different types of digital marketing used today.
- Marketing messages use various channels and are delivered in a number of different ways. Each group of learners could research one marketing channel and identify its advantages and disadvantages, then present their findings to the class. For example, pop-up ads may be cheap but they can be intrusive, leading to consumers being irritated by them, which could affect future sales.
- A whole-group research task could help learners to compile a case study of how communications messages are delivered. Learners should also consider the trend towards social media and other methods such as video blogging (vlogging). A visiting speaker could inform learners of current trends in content and contact development.
- Learners need to understand the ways in which the different devices used affect the way the message is presented. For example, will the message fit equally well on a tablet, laptop and mobile device such as a smartphone? As an experiment, learners could use a range of devices to view the same website.
- Hold a discussion to introduce the mobile technology and apps used in hospitality in more detail. How are they used and what are their characteristics? How does this fit in with what learners have already investigated? What are the similarities and differences? What are the key considerations? Ask learners to investigate uses of mobile technology and apps in hospitality. Ideally, these applications could be explored on appropriate devices to enhance the learning experience. Present the findings back to the class, possibly in the form of a video or a guided demonstration
- A visiting expert would be useful at this point to give a real insight into both digital media and the mobile technology that is available now and that is emerging.
- After the visiting expert's talk, learners should have little problem identifying the pace of technological change, either in the range of products and services offered or in the way retailers operate. Ask them to identify which technology they think will be the most important for hospitality in the future and one that they think is not going to work. Ask them to fully justify their reasoning in a written report. They could add statistics or data that they have found during research to support their arguments.
- Learners need to understand the reasons for the growth of online booking and how mobile devices are helping to drive change. Learners could produce a timeline to show the growth in booking and try to predict future technological change in this area. They must be able to assess how this type of change is likely to impact on their selected hospitality businesses.



- Give learners opportunities to explore how online services are used to meet the needs of hospitality organisations and individuals in a range of contexts. This could be done through a combination of research activities, case studies, visits and guest speakers.
- Lead a discussion on the benefits of and barriers to using digital media and technology in hospitality. As an extension activity, learners could analyse some of the barriers associated with certain types of technology or media in a specific business.
- Ensure that learners are prepared for assessment before giving them the assignment brief.

**Learning aim C: Develop a plan to incorporate technology that will aid productivity and enhance the customer experience**

- This learning aim is particularly well suited to a range of practical research tasks. This work can help learners to build up a bank of information to use when producing a proposal for a new technology. During their investigations, learners will collect data to satisfy a range of marketing purposes, such as identifying trends or competition. Learners must produce a proposal for new technology for a hospitality business. This practical activity draws on the theory and practice covered so far. The proposal should follow the strategies identified in the unit specification, set clear objectives and identify a specific target.
- Recap PESTLE and SWOT analyses to help learners develop their analytical and evaluative skills.
- It would be useful for learners to investigate and analyse a range of hospitality businesses that have integrated technology and digital media successfully, either through case studies and research or by visiting real businesses. They could then write a short report evaluating why they think these businesses have successfully integrated this technology, using examples from the businesses to highlight their points.
- Using different sources, learners could research a range of markets to obtain data on a given subject, which they can then analyse using a variety of evaluation and decision-making tools. For example, internal sales records could provide data on which they can base future forecasts, while external journals or newspapers could provide data on market size or other external factors that might affect future demand.
- Explain that a decision is only as good as the data on which the decision has been based. Learners need to be able to evaluate the quality and validity of the research they have undertaken. They will need to consider whether there is sufficient data or whether data from other sources such as trade journals or news articles would help improve validity.
- A range of case studies could help learners to practise and develop the analytical skills they will use in the assessment. It is also a good idea to use a case study to elicit a practice plan and/or proposal from learners so that you can give feedback on their approach.
- Give learners practical tasks that ask them to analyse scenarios and make informed choices when selecting technology. Learning activities should be supported by realistic scenarios that allow learners to consider a range of factors that influence the choices. They could present their choice and reasoning to other learners in order to gain the skills and confidence that they need to deliver a presentation. The other learners could ask questions and provide feedback.
- Give learners an example scenario, such as a large hotel that wants to introduce a customer relationship management (CRM) system that will be used across the business by both technical and non-technical users, including office based and operational staff. Ask learners questions, such as: How would all users interact with the systems? What technologies could be used? What would the concerns be? Are there any technical restrictions that would need to be accommodated? It would be good practice for learners to write up a proposal and the

justification behind it using the information gathered in this activity. Learners should remember that there is no right answer, but they must be able to defend their judgement.

- When justifying the rationale for their technology, learners need to use a range of evaluation and decision-making tools. Learners need to understand the basic concepts of the product life cycle and PESTLE and SWOT analyses. They should be able to apply these concepts and tools to a range of data or to case study stimulus material. They could present their analysis to peers for review and make amends based on feedback as preparation for assessment.
- To help develop learners' reviewing and evaluating skills, organise a review panel so that learners have an opportunity to present their case study solutions. It is advisable to get subject experts and learners to sit on the review panel. Ask learners to produce a short presentation about their plan, focusing on their proposal. The review panel will give feedback on the proposal and suggest improvements. It is important that the groups listen carefully and take notes to get the maximum benefit from the process.
- The final part of the process is assessing whether the technology has met the business needs. Again, using case studies showing the benefits, risks and issues will provide invaluable preparation.
- Ensure that learners are prepared for assessment before giving them the assignment brief.



## Details of links to other relevant units/qualifications

The unit links to:

- Unit 1: The Hospitality Industry
- Unit 16: Accommodation Operations.

## Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC Internationals in Hospitality. Check the Pearson website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

### Textbooks

Chaffey, D. and Ellis-Chadwick, F., *Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practise* (Seventh Edition), Pearson, 2019, ISBN: 9781292241579

The book gives practical guidance on how businesses can get the most out of digital media to meet their marketing goals and, as such, gives appropriate examples that learners could consider for their own marketing task. Suitable for all learners.

Ryan, D. and Jones, C., *Understanding Digital Marketing: Marketing Strategies for Engaging the Digital Generation* (Fourth Edition), Kogan Page, 2016, ISBN: 9780749478438

This book examines the world of digital marketing, including how it started and how it got to where it is today. This is best used for tutor reference.

WSI, *Digital Minds: 12 Things Every Business Needs to Know About Digital Marketing*, Friesen Press, 2013, ISBN: 9781460230206

This book gives guidance on strategies for content marketing, social media, responsive web design, display advertising, email marketing and more. Suitable for all learners.

*Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling students to access them through the school/college intranet.*