

The Situation

CHALLENGES

Attracting and retaining meeting planners is an absolute key objective for the success of the Town & Country Resort & Convention Center. To attain this goal, Town & Country had to overcome many challenges:

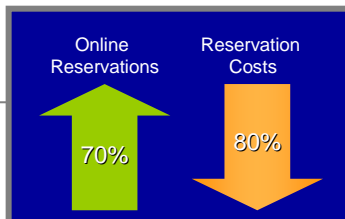
- Attract major convention and group business in the highly-competitive San Diego market
- Provide meeting planners with the tools necessary to ensure their meetings' success
- Streamline the inefficient process of making and managing group blocks and reservations
- Allow hotel staff to concentrate on serving guests, not booking rooms
- Minimize the high cost of handling group reservations

SOLUTION

Town & Country implemented Passkey's group reservation system.

RESULTS

- Reservation costs are down 80%
- Group attendee length of stay up 10%
- Repeat business increasing dramatically
- 70% group reservations have been shifted online
- Group business streamlined, resulting in major savings
- Group attendee emails captured for effective marketing



"We have truly revolutionized our business with the use of Passkey. Convention housing will never be the same, and that's a good thing. Passkey provides us an important competitive edge in the meetings market—we can now offer group planners and attendees the tools they need to ensure their events' success, while allowing our staff to stay focused on serving our guests with excellence."

—Dominique Zavrados, Reservations Systems Manager, Town & Country

About the Property



PROFILE

At more than 40 acres and 1,000 rooms, the Town & Country Resort & Convention Center is the largest privately-owned convention and meeting hotel on the West coast.

LOCATION & COMPETITION

Located in San Diego, the Town & Country operates in one of the most competitive convention markets in the United States, for reasons that make perfect sense: San Diego is California's second-largest city and boasts an idyllic climate, more than 70 miles of pristine beaches and a dazzling array of world-class family attractions.



GROUP BUSINESS

Groups and conventions drive more than 85% of Town & Country's revenue.

Being a privately-owned convention and meeting hotel—part of the three property Atlas Hotels chain—means that Town & Country can't rely on a national brand for pulling in group business.

Instead, it needs to rely on creating the ultimate customer experience. In the business of group meetings, the "customer" is the meeting planner.

The Details

GROUP BUSINESS AT TOWN & COUNTRY

For Town & Country, success in attracting and retaining group business—everything from conventions and corporate meetings to weddings and sporting events—hinges on two factors: First is ensuring that meeting planners are successful, and second is ensuring that planners and attendees enjoy a superior event experience at Town & Country.

This can be accomplished by ensuring two major successes prior to and during any event. Prior to the event, the meeting planner needs the tools necessary to do their job and make sure all loose ends are tied up. During the event, the meeting planner's customers—the guests—need to enjoy the ultimate customer service experience from the hotel staff. While Town & Country had nailed down the guest experience, the event planning element—specifically, group room reservations—presented myriad challenges.

SHIFTING GROUP RESERVATIONS ONLINE

While online hotel booking has been a mainstay of consumers and business travelers for nearly a decade, the group reservation process was stuck in an era of phone calls and hardcopy room grids. Meeting planners worked closely with a hotel's staff to block off rooms, and manually passed guest information into hotel reservation systems. Unfortunately, this created challenges for everyone—it was cumbersome and time consuming for the hotel staff and the meeting planners. Plus, it was inconvenient for guests to book rooms or make changes.

In fact, Town & Country found that they were spending nearly \$5 per reservation simply to make the reservation. This is directly off the bottom line; and beyond that, it's a cost and challenge that's keeping hotel staff members from doing what they do best—ensuring their guests enjoy excellent stays at the property.

In 2006, Town & Country turned to Passkey, the leader in online group reservation systems. Why Passkey? A strange phenomena occurred at Town & Country, one that has happened at dozens of major hotels nationwide—meeting planners who had used Passkey at other venues, called and demanded the hotel standardize on Passkey.

Passkey's innovative system takes the headaches and guesswork out of managing event hotel bookings, making it an easy and predictable process for all involved — planners, attendees, and hotels. Passkey lets Town & Country's event attendees make and manage their hotel reservations online in an interactive and secure shopping environment that presents only the meeting's contracted room block, while providing planners and hotels online access to real-time event reports and inventory management tools.

IMPLEMENTING PASSKEY

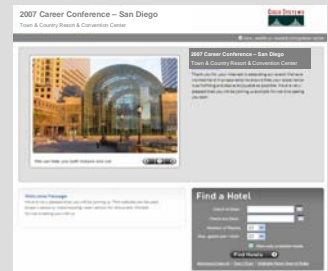
Passkey was quickly implemented, and the hotel immediately began to notice real results. By using Passkey, Town & Country has become even more attractive to planners and has significantly increased its repeat business while increasing the revenue and length of stay per attendee.

Town & Country now uses Passkey for all of its events—everything from a small wedding to a major convention. Meeting planners can now manage their group blocks on a 24/7 basis. Passkey's SmartAlerts™ automates the formerly time consuming reporting process within the hotel, and with planners, delivering vital event information at critical event milestones (as defined by the users to give all involved an instant event snapshot).

“We’ve taken a highly inefficient, manual process and, by automating it, are saving our valued meeting planner customers significant headaches all while focusing on what we do best—providing the best possible venue for groups of all sizes,” says Dominique Zavrados, the reservations systems manager for Atlas Hotels. “We have had great success using Passkey and consider them an important partner for helping Town & Country to become a key player in the competitive Southern California market.”

Passkey's Customized Group Reservation Portals

A Portal for Each Event



Convention



Wedding