

CASE STUDY

InterContinental Singapore Generates Immediate Revenue with GroupSync Housing

When borders closed to contain the coronavirus, InterContinental Singapore could no longer welcome as many international visitors, business travelers, or groups attending meetings and events. The heritage luxury hotel needed creative ways to overcome this adversity and entice local residents to visit the property.

After implementing GroupSync Optimize, a housing and voucher sales solution, InterContinental Singapore saw a surge in bookings for staycations and vouchers for future stays, including weddings. The technology provided a needed boost to revenue and cash flow, while reducing labor costs and expanding the hotel's existing customer base.



Background

InterContinental Singapore is a five-star hotel and flagship property of IHG Hotels & Resorts in Southeast Asia. An elegant heritage hotel in the heart of Bugis, Singapore's cultural district, InterContinental Singapore offers 403 modern and luxurious guest rooms and award-winning fine dining at three on-site restaurants. The hotel can welcome up to 500 guests for meetings, events and conferences in 11 flexible function spaces that total nearly 11,000 square feet.



Problem

After the pandemic started in February 2020, the government of Singapore closed the city-state's borders to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. InterContinental Singapore hosted travelers who were required to quarantine for 14 days under the Stay-Home Notice program through September before resuming normal operations.

With borders still closed to travelers outside of Singapore, however, the hotel needed to devise a new business model to generate income. The hotel planned to sell staycations and special packages for local guests and future stays for those who lived out of town.

GROUPSYNC HOUSING

Housing Solution



A feature of GroupSync Optimize, GroupSync Housing provides housing and attendee engagement solutions for planners and hotels. Hotels can now build special room blocks for groups or promotional packages on an event-branded website that can stand alone or be integrated with a hotel's property management system (PMS).

Gerrit Luchau, director of sales and marketing for InterContinental Singapore, said his property is not only one of the biggest and most profitable of IHG's properties, but they are also one of the more adventurous.

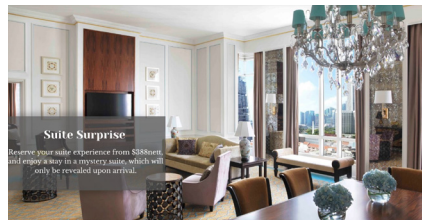
InterContinental Singapore used GroupSync Housing to experiment with experience-led promotions and flash deals for staycations centered on suites and deluxe rooms, niche communities, dog lovers, and escapes for frenzied professionals.

Key promotions included:



March Madness Flash Sale

A three-day promotion for room nights booked by the first of March and redeemed by the end of April with special perks and F&B savings. The hotel hoped to beef up business after a slow February.



Suite Surprise

A 30-day promotion that turned into an ongoing sale due to its overwhelming popularity. The fun promotion offers guests a chance to book a mystery suite that isn't revealed until they arrive at the hotel and spin a special wheel of fortune to reveal their selection.



Work from Hotel

One of the first such promotions in Singapore that garnered significant media attention, this offer served the hotel's corporate accounts and provided a serene environment for busy professionals needing a place to be productive outside their homes.

Luchau and his team maximized their marketing exposure through social media channels and key opinion leaders influential among leisure travelers.

Results



Increased Revenue

The March Madness promotion picked up “fast and furious,” selling 227 room nights and generating nearly SGD\$39,000 in room sales. Additional F&B spend through vouchers brought the promotion’s total to about \$56,000.

“We went live on February 15 and allowed people to begin booking by February 28,” explained Luchau. “Every weekend was taken up straight away. Overall pickup on the room block was 40%, which I didn’t anticipate. I would have considered this promotion a success if it had produced only \$20,000 in room revenue, but we nearly doubled that goal.”

Suite Surprise has sold more than 600 room nights worth about SGD\$220,000 as of March 2021. Ancillary promotions generated almost \$170,000 in additional revenue in less than two months.

Housing promotions through GroupSync generated almost SGD\$446,000 over the course of six months.



Higher ADR

With a reservations system based on best flexible rates, InterContinental Singapore couldn’t offer packages on a static-rate basis. Through GroupSync, the Suite Surprise promotion offered a static rate of SGD\$388nett, which helped drive a higher ADR in a market that had gone soft for lack of demand. Whereas rates in the hotel’s comp set used to be as high as \$400 or \$500, pandemic conditions had cut those rates in half.



“I needed to sell 30 to 60 Suite Surprise packages in a given month to push my ADR in the right direction, but we ended up selling more than 90,” said Luchau. “GroupSync delivers when we need it to deliver. If I have a potential shortfall, I can more easily make up the lost revenue thanks to these tools.”



Ease of Use

Prior to using GroupSync Optimize, InterContinental Singapore had tried implementing the Work from Hotel program manually. A hotel staff member took all the calls for reservations and credit card details, which turned out to be a long and tiresome process. By running the program through GroupSync, reservations and payments were received automatically, freeing up those lost labor hours.



Apart from the increase in revenue, GroupSync Optimize has made housing and voucher sales so much easier to handle,” said Luchau. “It’s easy to operate and visually pleasing, and it gives you easy access to your customers. I can set up a new package within a matter of minutes, whereas past systems came with a lot of limitations and took a long time. Once you’ve used GroupSync once, it just becomes child’s play, for both the hotel and the consumer.”



Testimonial



It has been amazing to work with Matthew Howden and Steven Hopkinson on implementing these campaigns. Their personal touch and vested involvement makes a big difference in our experience with Groups360 and the GroupSync platform, compared to the more distant technical guidance from other meetings and events software systems we have used in the past. Any time we have had a question about setting up one of our packages, we know we can call on Matthew as if he were simply an extended member of our own team. It's been a great, genuine working relationship that benefits both sides.

One of the benefits of working with a start-up like Groups360 is that they are agile and can thus make adjustments as needed to suit their customers' needs. We are excited about the possibilities with GroupSync Optimize, not only for immediate revenue as we continue to emerge from the current crisis, but also for ways to drive pilot programs and coordinate housing among our sister properties for citywide conventions as the market opens up and groups and meetings return to Singapore.”

Gerrit Luchau
Director of Sales and Marketing
InterContinental Singapore

Learn how you can enjoy similar breakthrough results.

Contact Groups360 at info@groups360.com or visit www.groups360.com to schedule a free online demonstration of GroupSync.