



Hotel Technology Next Generation (HTNG) Workgroup Charter
Workgroup Name: Content Management
Version 1.0, for Release to Members
Revised 09 January 2006

Revision History

09 January 2006 - v1.0 Released

Sponsors

Cendant Travel Distribution Services
Global Hyatt Corp.
Lanyon
Leonardo Media
OpenTravel™ Alliance
Pegasus Solutions
Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc.

Background

In order for hotels to sell rooms in today's business environment, they need far more than a brochure and a reservations agent who knows the product. They need text descriptions that are appropriate for hundreds or even thousands of external distribution channels, often in multiple languages or customized for specific market segments. They need photographs that will reproduce well in brochures and on web sites. They may have videos that are made available through web sites. They may want to make maps or mapping services available, so that guests can easily get directions.

Today, the management of this "rich content" is often haphazard. Hotels spend substantial sums to get their content "just right" for one channel, but often find they must start anew when they need to do the same thing for another channel. Inconsistent and confusing storage formats, complex conversion algorithms, manual maintenance of descriptive information in distribution systems, and even the absence of a basic database describing what information about the hotel has been published where, all contribute to the inability of hotels to effectively leverage information about their products as widely and as cost-effectively as possible.

Key aspects of the business problem are as follows:

- Rich content includes graphics (both low-resolution for web display and high-resolution for print), mapping, video (for web, DVD, and broadcast), and text content (which may be required in multiple languages).
- Rich content may vary by target market, e.g. a graphic or text item appropriate to promote the hotel to one target market may be inappropriate for another. Target

markets may vary based on trip purpose, geography, language, distribution channel, or other factors.

- Images are maintained by hotels and hotel companies in various sizes and using different digitisation standards. Each channel has its own color and video standards and resolution requirements. The conversion of images within the supply chain is confusing and inefficient, and few hotels have staffs that understand this process.
- The current, largely unautomated process makes it very difficult and/or expensive for brands to maintain the currency of content, and therefore the consistency of the brand message.
- The current process for handling rich content is highly manual, tedious, and inefficient for hotels. We are in the early days of using rich content so the problem will grow.

Many parties play roles in content management:

- Hotels and hotel groups design and produce content, a process which often involves multiple people and approval processes.
- Graphic designers, photographers, videographers, cartographers, production houses, and printers convert creative concepts to still or moving images and/or audio.
- Translation houses, and sometimes local market experts, convert text and audio to different languages, or modify messages to match the needs of specific target markets.
- Content aggregators receive and store content, and use it to populate supported distribution channels, directories, and promotional publications.
- Distribution intermediaries, such as switches, receive and store rich content and provide it on a transactional basis to distribution channels.
- Global distribution channels and Internet booking sites receive rich content and provide it to end users, directly or indirectly.
- Printed and online hotel directories, often published by distribution intermediaries such as wholesalers, use rich content.
- Hotels themselves use the same content in transactional systems (central reservations, property management, web sites) and in offline media (group directories, videos, DVDs, printed brochures)

Objective:

This workgroup will seek to create one or more solution set(s) that hotels, hotel companies, distribution channels, promotional channels, and intermediary service companies can “plug into” to achieve simple and consistent management and delivery of rich content from the source (hotels and hotel companies) to the destination (distribution channels and promotional channels).

Hotels should have a *single point of entry* from which they can manage rich content in all connected distribution and promotional channels. Distribution and promotional

channels should have a *single point of access*, from which they can receive rich content from all connected hotels and hotel companies.

Intermediary service companies (image enhancement, mapping, translation, etc.) should have a single point of access, under the authority and control of content owners (typically the hotels), so that they can participate appropriately in the production process, receiving updates to content from the hotels, performing their enhancement services, and forwarding information onward to appropriate channels.

The approach should support key functionality that will enable hotels to manage the creation and maintenance of rich content, and to ensure its consistency across all supported channels.

- Role-based security for people and entities that create, edit/review, approve, modify, delete, distribute, or receive rich content; for example, hotel staff may be authorized to create and approve new descriptions for certain items, while the hotel group marketing staff may hold this authority for other items. Translation houses may be able to create or edit a hotel's text in three languages, but not in the hotel's native language. Some rich content may be restricted so that is provided only to certain distribution sites, while other rich content may be designated as available to anyone.
- Each hotel and hotel company should be able to define the roles to match its organization, structure, and business processes.
- The solution should support the myriad of workflow processes govern production and distribution of rich content.

The solution should leverage efforts by existing industry players to support this process, including technology vendors, hotel companies, and associations such as OTA, HEDNA, and CIC/APEX.

Scope

To include all systems that deal with content that describes hotel products, and that is essentially static in nature. To the extent that the workgroup deals with information that may be considered transactional (such as rate plan descriptions), the scope may include such information upon agreement of the Property Distribution Workgroup.

Anticipated Deliverables

1. Within the first month, the workgroup will identify specific deliverables to be delivered within the first 5-8 months, based on priorities, interests, and practicality. Subsequent deliverables will be selected at or near the completion of prior deliverables, with each deliverable targeted for 5-8 months.
2. Deliverables will include working demonstrations by the vendors of capabilities (one or more solution sets) that are created by the workgroup, specifications that will constitute the definition of a particular solution approach, and

- documentation of specific business processes that may be deemed a necessary part of the solution set.
3. Deliverables may also include a framework for vendor-specific extensions to capabilities. The details of actual extensions that may be implemented by specific vendors may be included or excluded from the deliverables.
 4. Intermediate deliveries will include working drafts, papers, and meeting notes posted on the HTNG collaboration website and available to all HTNG members

Eligibility for Participation

Participation in this workgroup is open to (a) companies that hold Corporate memberships in HTNG; and (b) hospitality companies who have at least one employee who holds a Regular Individual membership in HTNG. Individual Industry Partner members and Allied members are not eligible to apply at this time, but may apply to the workgroup after its formation, provided that in HTNG's sole judgment, they are representing the interest of the industry and not of any particular technology or technology-based service vendor.

Interested parties must apply to participate according to the procedure outlined on the HTNG website at http://www.htng.org/workgroup_policies.htm. Applications will be accepted from 30 January 2006 through 8 February 2006. Applications arriving prior to 30 January 2006 will be deemed to have been submitted on that date.

Applicants' HTNG membership dues must be fully paid at the date of application, and other accounts with HTNG (whether for the member company itself or for any of its appointed or registered participants for HTNG activities), must be no more than 30 days past due. Applications received from non-members and members whose dues are not current or whose other accounts are more than 30 days past due will not be considered to have been received until all amounts owed have been paid in full, and funds (or pending credit thereof) has been received and verified by HTNG.

Selection of Initial Participants

The workgroup will be composed of a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 25 companies. If no more than 25 companies apply to participate, all will be selected. If more than 25 companies apply to participate, then participants will be selected in each of the following categories up to the limit for that category, based on the priority order established by HTNG workgroup formation rules. Remaining participation slots, up to a total of 25, will be allocated in priority order to applicants who were not selected within any category.

HTNG will determine, based on application materials, the category or categories for which an applicant qualifies.

- Hotel and hotel representation service companies who have at least 20% of their room stock (and at least 25 hotels) located in places where the company's home language is not primary. (Limit 4)

- Other hotel companies (Limit 2)
- Content management companies that, as a primary business, store or stage content from multiple hotel groups for use by distribution channels or other end users (Limit 3)
- Companies that operate global distribution systems (GDSs) (Limit 3)
- Companies that operate web-based booking systems that have active relationships with 5,000 or more hotels (Limit 3)
- Companies that operate the primary central reservation system for 5,000 or more hotels (“primary” means that the CRS connects the hotels to GDSs; Limit 2)
- Translation houses (Limit 2)
- Image enhancement companies (Limit 2)
- Relevant industry associations, such as OTA, HEDNA, and CIC/ Apex (Limit 2)

Relevant industry associations may, but need not, apply. Association participation will be solicited by HTNG, and selection will be governed by HTNG’s assessment of relevance, not by the workgroup selection process.

Companies who apply before the deadline, but who are not selected as an initial participant, will be considered for participation by the full workgroup at its initial meeting. The workgroup may apply whatever criteria it deems appropriate in assessing any application, and can admit new members at any time based on majority vote.

Participation Fees

HTNG is a self-funded organization and seeks to operate workgroups on a breakeven financial basis. A nominal fee will be assessed to all workgroup participants, except as noted below, to defray expenses associated with managing the workgroup, which include professional facilitation of the initial meeting, staff travel, interns, meeting rooms, catering, teleconference costs, and similar expenses.

For this workgroup, the fee will initially be set at US\$250 per delegate for the first day of each face-to-face workgroup meeting; for meetings lasting more than one day, an additional fee of \$50 per delegate per half-day will be assessed. There will be a minimum charge of one delegate per participating company per meeting. Participants will be liable for this fee unless they formally resign from the workgroup at least 30 days prior to a scheduled meeting. Participant fees will be billed quarterly to the primary contact for each company.

The participation fee will be waived for:

- (a) academic and media participants approved by the workgroup
- (b) one delegate each from Association Partners of HTNG who are participants in the workgroup
- (c) self-employed consultants, and consultants employed by firms with less than US\$1 million gross revenue in their prior tax year

- (d) nonvoting participants invited as guests of the workgroup, unless they are admitted as voting members during the course of the meeting
- (e) one delegate per meeting from any participating company that has hosted at least one full day (or equivalent) face-to-face meeting of the workgroup in the prior 12 months (to have included at a minimum meeting space, digital projector and, as applicable based on meeting times, continental breakfast, lunch, afternoon snacks, and beverages).
- (f) up to five delegates from a workgroup participant company that provides the venue (meeting room) for a specific meeting.

The fee will also be waived for certain individuals who may incur unusually high travel expenses when they attend in person. This waiver applies in situations where a delegate meets all three of the following conditions:

- (a) the delegate actually attends the meeting in person;
- (b) the delegate is physically based on a different continent and at least 3,000 miles from the meeting location; and
- (c) the delegate does not normally spend more than 60 days per year working out of an office on the same continent as, or less than 3,000 miles from, the meeting location.

Since the number and duration of workgroup meetings is set by the workgroup itself, it is not possible for HTNG to provide an exact cost estimate for participation. As a guideline, other HTNG workgroups have held face-to-face meetings on average three times a year, for an average of between 1 and 1.5 days per meeting. Participants are responsible for their own travel and lodging costs.

This fee is subject to reassessment over time, up or down, based on the actual costs of the workgroup. Workgroups that are able to identify volunteer hosts for most meetings will generally have lower costs.

Chairperson

A chairperson and vice chairperson, or co-chairpersons, are to be selected by the workgroup at its initial meeting. Companies wishing to nominate an individual for this role should contact the Executive Director in advance of the meeting.

Duration

Maximum of 18 months

Collaboration Process and Meetings

Periodic face-to-face meetings, conference calls, workgroup intranet, and e-mail. Face-to-face meeting frequency will be determined by the workgroup at the first meeting. The first face-to-face meeting will be held in a major gateway city in Europe,

approximately 6-8 weeks after completion of the selection of participants. While the actual participants will determine the preferred venues and times for meetings, we anticipate that this workgroup will have heavy European participation and that some or all face-to-face meetings will be held in Europe. Workgroups generally schedule conference calls at times of the day that accommodate the greatest number of participants.

The availability of conference bridges for remote participation in face-to-face meetings is highly variable and somewhat unpredictable.