

OPERATIONAL INPUT ESSENTIAL FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Input from the operator is best sourced very early in the development process. The management company has access to teams of operational experts including chefs, maintenance engineers and housekeepers. This team provides the input that ensures the development functions efficiently, in addition to looking good. And these two aspects are not always compatible.

It requires a very particular skill to examine plans and envisage how it will look and operate when completed. An experienced operator will ask questions like:-

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- Can the reception staff see the entrance door and the guest lift entrance?
 - Is the balcony railing in the middle of my line of sight when I sit down?
 - How can the guest reach the bath taps?
 - Where will the luggage be stored?
 - Where do you plug the iron in?
 - Where do you sit to tie up your shoelaces?
 - How do we clean under that type of bed?
 - Where can we hang the towels?
 - How do you get from your room to the restaurant (or car park) in the rain without getting wet?
 - What do you see when sit in the bathtub? Or on the toilet?
 - Where will the room attendant's trolleys be stored?
 - What sort of vacuum cleaners will be used? And where will they plug in?
 - Where does the hairdryer go?
 - Is there a discreet way of getting back to the room after a swim in the pool?
 - Does the laundry chute finish close to where the linen will be picked up?
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- Is there ample bench space in the bathrooms?
 - Can you fit a standard kettle under the sink taps in guest rooms?
 - Is the layout of the development efficient for accessibility of cleaning staff, housekeeping staff and room service?
 - Have the electrical circuits allowed for sections of the property to be isolated at different times of the day to save power and money?

Most good operators have comprehensive checklist they run through when examining plans, in addition to loads of wisdom from having done these many times before. But every new development is unique and needs a fresh review from an experienced operator. Involving the operator with the resort of your team will also imbue a sense of ownership and enduring pride.

David Catterall is the founder of Best Management Group and has direct experience in the management of 97 different hotels and resorts over three decades.