

**10** ways to increase the profits of your hotel through good interior design.

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Lets say you already own your hotel , perhaps for a few years, and the space is just getting tired. The last refurbishment was quite a few years ago now and it's time you invested in the space before it's too late. So, where do you begin? You have some idea of time and budget but with so much to do it seems like an uphill struggle. Some hoteliers like the challenge and love to go head to head with the beast, but these are few and far between and most opt for employing a designer. So, who do you look for and what can they do for you that you couldn't do yourself? Well, first of all, it's definitely not a 'Changing Rooms' type of designer you are after, it's a commercially trained, spatially aware individual or company that has experience in working with contractors, architects and quantity surveyors. It's not just about making a place look good, the designer must be able to work with your budget and time frame, offer practical budge driven solutions, solve a mass of on site queries with the contractors, and have a good working knowledge of current Health and Safety and BS issues.

So, you have agreed to employ the design company, one of the most important things that they must understand (which is very often overlooked) is your return on investment. You haven't gone to all of this trouble just to have a place that looks good. Yes, it's got to look good to get the press and PR machine working to get the customers in, but this is just the beginning of the process. Similarly, the space must be carefully thought out to work alongside your business model, i.e. the correct lighting specified to help reduce power costs, contract furniture that will survive until the next refurb, correct space planning, especially of the public spaces, to reach your 'Cap X' for turnover, etc.

So how can you increase the profits of your hotel through design. Below is a simple bullet list of key pointers on how to achieve this... (there are many more but these really are key). These pointers are aimed at hotel refurbishments but can be applied to new build spaces as well.

1. Employ a commercially trained interior designer, consultant, or company.
2. Stage your work. If you can't afford to refurbish the entire space, stage the process. What areas are the most profitable.. restaurant, bedrooms, bar.. and look at treating those first of all.
3. Brand. Many hotels, even the newer ones, have a dated brand identity. The brand informs the interior and vice versa. Without a strong brand presence your hotel will slip into obscurity, especially in today's design fuelled market.
4. Space planning. A good space plan is key to the success of any space. A restaurant can be re-planned to increase the number of covers, more seating can be created in a bar area with the clever use of space. This is often overlooked and is vital. Bums on seats equals profits!
5. Attention to detail. Key. You have created a carefully designed space that looks great and everyone is talking about, don't let it down by forgetting the 'smaller' things. POS, menus, promotional materials, staff uniforms, and the rest, have all got to be considered during the refurb.
6. A good lighting scheme. Replacement of those horrible old halogen fittings for new LED units is a long term investment but they are practical, low maintenance, better for the environment and produce a good light source....not to mention slashing your electricity consumption!

7. Bar. Make the bar a destination place, a space that people want to go to and have a drink, even if they are not hotel guests. Thus you can increase your prices without causing offence.
8. Embrace technologies. Free use of wifi internet, internet TV, new audio systems. Make sure these are in place and working - too many hotels still don't even have a wifi connection in 2011!!
9. Try to re-use what you have. You'd be surprised how a bit of timber cladding and glass can transform your old bar! However, this only works in some cases and sometimes can be cheaper to just rip it out and start afresh, it all depends on the what's there already.
10. If your designer is specifying things which are too expensive for your budget - sack them! They obviously are unaware and oblivious to your budget and don't have any experience in understanding your need for a return on investment.

So, key pointers to increase your hotel's profits through commercial interior design. We hope you have found these useful. Have a look at our work and if you need a professional help, don't hesitate to call or mail.

The team at Studiopublic, Commercial Interior Design.