

Appendices

Tony Blackburn Interview Transcript

Logan - My name is Logan O'Hara, and I'm going to be interviewing Mr. Tony Blackburn, who works the front desk of Graduate Fayetteville. So, first question: Would having the ability to customize the light color or brightness of a guest room to a guest's precise request be a good selling point for your hotel's market?

Tony - I believe it would, because guests are always saying how dark the rooms are, so with more light, I would feel like they would be more happy with that.

Logan - Yeah, definitely! Perfect. And second, would your front desk crew benefit from having self-check-in kiosks in the lobby, regularly sanitized, to offer alternative ways to socially distance guests?

Tony - I also believe that that would help out a lot as well, with everything that we're going through with COVID and everything like that, that it would help out a lot.

Logan - Nice, okay. Then, third question, would having simplistic user interface panels in guest rooms make it more convenient to receive and perform maintenance/housekeeping and food & beverage requests?

Tony - I believe it would as well!

Logan - Yeah, perfect. Let's see, does your central reservation system already work with AI services that increase guest engagement, like Oaky or Upsell Guru which use the Opera PMS to send offers? (That is something that we have here!)

Tony - I mean, we do have that?

Logan - Yeah, so, Opera has joined with Upsell Guru, which basically sends out promotional offers to the guests without having an actual, physical person to do it.

Tony - I'm sorry!

Logan - No, you're fine! It's okay. Alright, the last question, number 5: Service robots are becoming very popular across the world, and employing them creates a point of interest for the guests. Do you think that your front desk workers would have more time for other duties with these assistants?

Tony - Yeah, definitely, like if we were here by ourselves, you know, that's always a way that it can help.

Logan - Yeah, that's fantastic.

Background Questions

- What is your age? - 41 years old
- What is your gender? - Male
- What level of education have you completed? - Completed high school
- How long have you been working in the hospitality field? - 14 years
- Have you heard of AI being used in hotels? - Yes

Brennan Smith Interview Transcript

Logan - Hello, my name is Logan O'Hara, and today I am going to be interviewing Brennan Smith, who works at the front desk of Graduate Fayetteville. So, question 1: Would having the ability to customize the light color or brightness of a guest room to a guest's precise request be a good selling point for your hotel's market?

Brennan - I believe it would be a great selling point, I don't know if going and retrofitting all the rooms would be worth it, but if you were building a hotel, there's no reason not to. I think the prices on those lights are just as affordable as the other lights. So yeah, I think that would be a huge selling point.

Logan - That's true! It definitely makes sense that it would be cheaper in the long run to do it for a new property. So, question number 2: Would your front desk crew benefit from having self-check-in kiosks in the lobby, regularly sanitized, to offer alternative ways to socially distance guests?

Brennan - Yes, especially on the weekends, I find myself not focusing so much on check-ins, but more talking to guests, explaining how to do things, where to go eat, so being able to alleviate or get rid of some of that traffic with check-ins would allow me to have more time to speak with guests, talk to them more, more in depth, give them more of a personal feel, what they want to do, instead of just trying to get them to where they're going, to be able to help the next guest in line.

Logan - Yeah, that's it, it really helps with the human element, with the trivial stuff set to the side, and you're able to have a real conversation, to really augment their experience. Yeah! Okay, so, question number 3: Would having simplistic user interface panels in guest rooms make it more convenient to receive and perform maintenance/housekeeping and food & beverage requests?

Brennan - I think yeah, this is like a no-brainer at this point, I think something like this should be implemented in every hotel. Um, because it can alleviate charges, you know, as soon as someone wants a water bottle, boom, it's charged to the room, you don't have to worry about the guest service representative not doing it. Um, it keeps ordered track of information, allows the

guest to see what your property fully offers, in a nice, clean way. Yeah, there's just so much you can do with that type of stuff, more towels, remote to the TV, remote to the lights, all from one central hub.

Logan - Yeah, definitely a lot more convenient. This one, for someone who works at Graduate, it's a little already answered, but does your central reservation system already work with AI services that increase guest engagement, like Oaky or Upsell Guru which use the Opera PMS to send offers?

Brennan - Yes, uh, you actually may know a little more about this than I do, and how this works, but I know that we use Upsell Guru, to offer - uh, why I am blanking on the - upgrades to the room for a certain price, if that room's available. Um, that's kind of the extent that I know how we use it.

Logan - Yeah, that's it! And, lastly, service robots are becoming very popular across the world, and employing them creates a point of interest for the guests. Do you think that your front desk workers would have more time for other duties with these assistants?

Brennan - I think so, I think it would. Sam, one of our housekeepers, here, is always having to clean rooms, do room moves, and a lot of the time she has to stop doing what she's doing to be able to go fill a guest service request, whereas if we had a robot to just take them a towel or a water bottle, it would allow her to continue the job, instead of having to stop every ten minutes. So yeah, that would be a huge relief off of Sam, or whoever is working that position.

Logan - Yeah, that's very insightful! Definitely. And other than that, we've just got some basic demographic questions.

Background Questions

- What is your age?

So, I'm twenty-three.

- What is your gender?

I'm male.

- What level of education have you completed?

I am currently a student at the University of Arkansas, going into my last semester.

- How long have you been working in the hospitality field?

I've been working in the hospitality field since I was sixteen. I started at a restaurant, then did a couple hospitality internships, now here I am working at the hotel.

- Have you heard of AI being used in hotels?

And then, I have heard of AI being used in hotels, a lot of hotels I've heard that are using it are those newer ones in Las Vegas, like bigger cities, but I think as that technology becomes more and more, like, recognized and accessible, it's going to be everywhere, no matter where you're at.

Logan - That's perfect, thank you very much! I appreciate it.

Nick Lange Interview Transcript

Logan - My name is Logan O'Hara, and today I am going to be interviewing one of our recent hires, Nick Lange, and here we go. So, question one, would having the ability to customize the light color or brightness of a guest room to a guest's precise request be a good selling point for your hotel's market?

Nick - I honestly think it absolutely would, they would be able to say 'they were able to do this for me, so I will definitely be coming back again because of this small gesture'.

Logan - Yeah, definitely! That's a good insight. Let's see, number two, could your front desk crew benefit from having self-check-in kiosks in the lobby, regularly sanitized, to offer alternative ways to socially distance guests?

Nick - I honestly think that it would just not be the same, you just, hotels are about human [interaction]. Really getting that one-on-one with your guests, so I honestly feel like it would hurt the hotel industry because you're not interacting with people. Because hospitality is basically the art of making humans feel welcome in their presence.

Logan - Yeah, that totally makes sense! I totally see where you're coming from. So, number three, would having simplistic user interface panels in guest rooms make it more convenient to receive and perform maintenance/housekeeping and food & beverage requests?

Nick - I honestly think that that would be a really good part, because they will send us the request, we'll be able to do what they need, and still have that human [interaction] with some help from technology.

Logan - Yeah, definitely! I feel like that would be especially helpful, here. Question four, does your central reservation system already work with AI services that increase guest engagement, like Oaky or Upsell Guru which use the Opera PMS to send offers?

Nick - Yes, yes we do.

Logan - That's fine! Basically, it will show up in our system as a fixed charge, and the guest will approve it. They'll get a personalized notification from Upsell Guru, and it'll offer them, like, the ability to upgrade. And lastly, question five, service robots are becoming very popular across the world, and employing them creates a point of interest for the guests. Do you think that your front desk workers would have more time for other duties with these assistants?

Nick - I honestly feel like we would, but it still wouldn't be the same. Because one of our things our hotel strives upon is just that interaction between the worker and the guest. So, I feel like with that technology in the way, it would just create more downtime and just, we still wouldn't be able to do that stuff for the guest in person.

Logan - That's a good point! Yeah, I see where you're coming from.

Background Questions

- What is your age? - I am 23 years of age.
- What is your gender? - I am male.
- What level of education have you completed? - I have a bachelor's of human environmental science.
- How long have you been working in the hospitality field? - I've been working in the hospitality field, probably, since I was fifteen or sixteen.
- Have you heard of AI being used in hotels? - I have heard of artificial intelligence being used in hotels, but I don't really like it.

Spencer Bradshaw Interview Transcript

Logan - Would having the ability to customize the light color or brightness of a guest room to a guest's precise request be a good selling point for your hotel's market?

Spencer - Yes, but I feel the cost would outweigh the benefits for already-built hotels. For newer ones, yes. And if you could change the color, hotels in locations like Vegas would be great.

Logan - Would your front desk crew benefit from having self-check-in kiosks in the lobby, regularly sanitized, to offer alternative ways to socially distance guests?

Spencer - Yes, some guests that come often would love this. It would allow for lower labor.

Logan - Would having simplistic user interface panels in guest rooms make it more convenient to receive and perform maintenance/housekeeping and food & beverage requests?

Spencer - Yes, we currently see many hotels developing [applications] for this. If we could start to have iPads in the room with easy UI, that would be amazing.

Logan - Does your central reservation system already work with AI services that increase guest engagement, like Oaky or Upsell Guru which use the Opera PMS to send offers?

Spencer - Yes.

Logan - Service robots are becoming very popular across the world, and employing them creates a point of interest for the guests. Do you think that your front desk workers would have more time for other duties with these assistants?

Spencer - Yes and no, I think robots helping deliver stuff would be amazing, however, I know some guests still wish for human interaction for certain things.

Background Questions

- What is your age? - 27 years old.
- What is your gender? - Male.
- What level of education have you completed? Bachelor's degree.
- How long have you been working in the hospitality field? 2 years.
- Have you heard of AI being used in hotels? No.

Mikayla Cantu Interview Transcript

Logan - My name is Logan O'Hara, and today I'm going to be interviewing Mikayla Cantu, one of our new hires for Graduate Fayetteville. Yes, so, thank you for participating! So, question one: Would having the ability to customize the light color or brightness of a guest room to a guest's precise request be a good selling point for your hotel's market?

Mikayla - Honestly, I would say no, because our market is more of nostalgia, not really about technology, like I really don't think people would care, some, like the younger people would, but mostly we have older alumni, so I don't think they would really care. They would think it's cool, but they wouldn't care.

Logan - Yeah, that's a good point! And especially for what this hotel goes for, it is for that nostalgia and the past, so yeah, that's a good point. So, question two, would your front desk crew benefit from having self-check-in kiosks in the lobby, regularly sanitized, to offer alternative ways to socially distance guests?

Mikayla - I'm going to say no on this one, too, just because some of our best reviews are about interacting with the front desk. So, I think people would actually be really upset if we made them go to that, or, like, if that was there for them. They would be like, 'but we like talking to y'all!' I don't think that really benefits us and our market.

Logan - That's a good point, definitely. And it does, it definitely changes based on which city you're in, what kind of demographic you appeal to, yeah! So, question number three, would having simplistic user interface panels in guest rooms make it more convenient to receive and perform maintenance/housekeeping and food & beverage requests?

Mikayla - I think yes, since people on the phone it's so hard to hear them sometimes, and it's hard to understand, so yeah. That would be a really cool thing to have.

Logan - Yeah, I wish we had that! Right, true. Okay, and question number four, does your central reservation system already work with AI services that increase guest engagement, like Oaky or Upsell Guru which use the Opera PMS to send offers? We do actually have that. Whenever we get those reservations from third parties that say Upsell Guru, like “add \$10 fixed charge”.

Mikayla - Oh, yes!

Logan - So, that’s basically what that is. Yeah! Let’s see, and then, last question, service robots are becoming very popular across the world, and employing them creates a point of interest for the guests. Do you think that your front desk workers would have more time for other duties with these assistants?

Mikayla - On a busy weekend, yes, but on the non-busy weekends, it would kind of be just overkill. But even then, on a busy weekend, you can just hire more people. So if we’re just gonna, I think a lot of people would say, “why aren’t you just hiring people instead of hiring robots?” So, it goes both ways.

Logan - Yeah, definitely. No, I totally see where you’re coming from.

Mikayla - It would be different without, different without.

Logan - Cool, and, lastly, we just have some basic demographic questions.

Background Questions

- What is your age? - 21
- What is your gender? - Female
- What level of education have you completed? - High school and fourth year of college
- How long have you been working in the hospitality field? - Long time, first job at 14

- Have you heard of AI being used in hotels? - Yes and no, I think I read it, I didn't pay much attention.

Lauren Restino Interview Transcript

Logan - My name is Logan O'Hara, and today I'm going to be interviewing Lauren Restino, one of our workers here at Graduate. Thank you for taking the time to do this for me! So, question one, would having the ability to customize the light color or brightness of a guest room to a guest's precise request be a good selling point for your hotel's market?

Lauren - I believe that yes, it would. I think every guest comes in with individual needs and any way that you can customize their experience is always a positive way.

Logan - Yeah, I definitely agree. And, would your front desk crew benefit from having self-check-in kiosks in the lobby, regularly sanitized, to offer alternative ways to socially distance guests?

Lauren - I think that that's a tricky question, there's definitely a lot of importance in having guest interaction, and that starts right from check-in, the second they walk in. So, I feel like having self check-in kiosks as the only option might kind of distance the guests from the hotel and the brand itself, but I do think that, again, having options to allow the flexibility for each guest is important.

Logan - Nice, yeah. Would having simplistic user interface panels in guest rooms make it more convenient to receive and perform maintenance/housekeeping and food & beverage requests?

Lauren - Yes, I definitely think that that is, like, here at the Graduate, we use the texting software which is really good, but this would just be taking that to the next level, which would be really helpful, and everything would be handled in real time.

Logan - That's true. Does your central reservation system already work with AI services that increase guest engagement, like Oaky or Upsell Guru which use the Opera PMS to send offers?

Lauren - Yes, we do here, so we already... Guests who book online can get upgraded through Upsell Guru.

Logan - Alright! Service robots are becoming very popular across the world, and employing them creates a point of interest for the guests. Do you think that your housekeeping and front desk workers would have more time for other duties with these assistants?

Lauren - Yes, I definitely believe that, while I understand the importance of guest interaction, like I talked about earlier, simple things like bringing towels can be done in several other ways, and can really just... Task completion is really important to me, so I feel like when I start something I really want to be able to finish it. But, at the same time, I want to deliver good service, so I find myself cutting myself off multiple times to bring things up to the room, when that can be served otherwise.

Background Questions

- What is your age? - 21 years old
- What is your gender? - Female
- What level of education have you completed? - High school and some college
- How long have you been working in the hospitality field? - Four months
- Have you heard of AI being used in hotels? - Yes.