

Timeshare's Personal Touch

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Resorts & Development

Taking notes can go a long way toward fostering owner loyalty.

Timeshare resorts have a built-in advantage when it comes to cultivating loyalty: Owners pick home resorts that they plan to visit multiple times. But don't take that fact for granted. "Owners are the beating heart of the property," says Abed Ereikat, general manager of Hilton Grand Vacations Club at Tuscany Village, in Orlando, Florida. To retain them, it's important to balance attentive service with a comfortable environment—staff should provide service that's personal without being too casual or making guests feel uncomfortable.

"The balance is understanding our guests and anticipating their needs while unobtrusively pampering them," Ereikat says. He recommends greeting owners by name upon arrival and incorporating a few personal touches. Are guests celebrating a special occasion? If so, consider placing balloons or a banner in their room. "These touches make an impact and help owners become our biggest brand ambassadors," Ereikat says.

Staff should take notes during an owner's stay to help personalize service. Did an owner express an interest or lack of interest in a particular amenity? Is there an activity he or she does during every stay? It's important to prioritize the right details, such as a favorite restaurant, over potentially intrusive ones, such as what time guests go to bed each night.

Then find ways to seamlessly incorporate niceties into an owner's stay. For example, if an owner plays the on-site golf course every visit, leave a voucher for the driving range in his or her room to be found upon check-in.

To attract prospective owners, Ereikat suggests focusing on the property's characteristic features. "Converting a guest to an owner happens organically through demonstrating what sets the resort apart." And one way to set your resort apart is through attentive customer service. "Don't look at them as guests, don't look at them as numbers, look at them as people coming home," Ereikat says.

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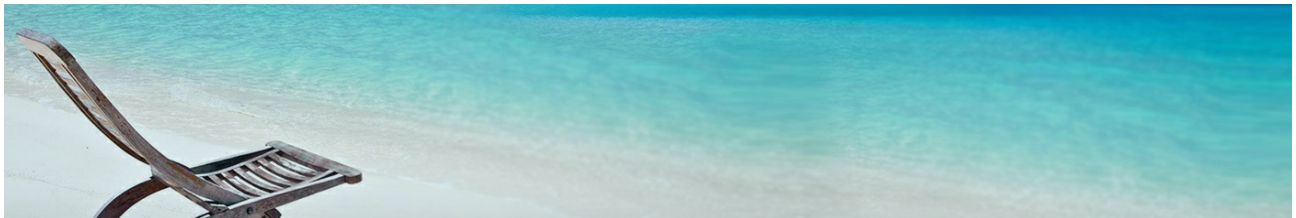
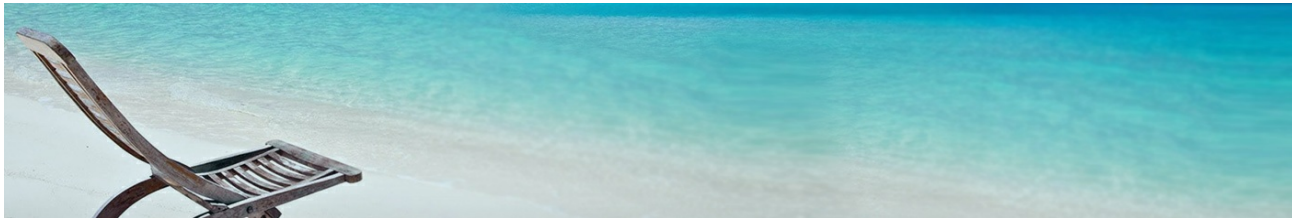
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