

An Interview With Fabian Specht, EMEA Managing Director at IDEaS Revenue Solutions

Hello Fabian, it seems like 2014 has been a busy year for IDEaS?

Yes, we have launched five products this year and celebrated our 25th birthday. In those 25 years we have amassed a client base of over 5,800 clients and our technology helps hotels make decisions in close to one Million rooms around the world. In 2014 IDEaS has demonstrated, again, that it is the market leader and innovator in revenue management with our product launches both reflecting the market requirements and allowing our clients to operate effectively in a very dynamic market.

The hotel industry is seeing huge changes with the increasing popularity of serviced apartments, the increasing segmentation of markets including boutique and value sectors and the growth of third party booking options. Incorporating today's social, mobile and visually driven customer requirements has been a focus for 2014.

The hotel industry is under constant scrutiny with instant feedback - all powered by hugely influential social networks and online forums. How has IDEaS taken this into account?

IDEaS has recognised the impact of online reputation on customers' decisions and the relationship between a hotel's prices. Creating a first in revenue management technology, IDEaS Reputation Pricing module provides revenue managers with an additional layer of pricing decisions— Reputation Best Available Rate (BAR). The analytics offers pricing recommendations that capitalise on the relationship between a hotel market's online reputation and pricing to generate revenue uplift. Key is to present to the hotelier not just the data, but really fold that in to the analytics and optimization processes of the RMS so the best option can be applied to positively impact the business.

The hotel industry relies heavily on reports, what is IDEaS doing about making revenue management reports more effective within the hotel's management?

This year we launched IDEaS Revenue Performance Insights, a powerful solution that leverages IDEaS hospitality expertise and our parent company SAS' Visual Analytics to deliver dynamic reporting and business intelligence, providing revenue managers and executive management the ability to report, analyse and act on hotel performance through a web and tablet-friendly visual interface. Gone are the days where you have to search for hours for numbers on huge excel sheets and then still question what to do with it. Let alone spending valuable time creating and producing these spreadsheets.

With this visual analytics platform each user can obtain exactly the information he needs to act immediately for example on new trends and/or performance issues. In no time.

From a single property to multi-portfolio brands IDEaS RPI enables revenue managers to quickly identify underlying issues, determine revenue opportunities, measure key performance indicators and easily slice data into actionable insights. Our RPI product also allows users to view such data and take immediate action via PC or tablet, essential for mobile, connected customers.

How has revenue management changed over the past 24 months?

For the last two years we have seen a desire amongst revenue managers to evolve their activities from the tactical to the strategic and in turn collaborate more fully with the senior hotel management. Our IDEaS G3 Revenue Management System has been developed with this goal in mind with advanced features allowing hotel revenue managers to capture more revenue opportunities—more often—by integrating strategic and innovative data elements into their decisions. Also new persona driven Dashboards are available for the different functions in the organization expanding the use of the RMS to different departments in the organization.

The system is fully scalable, capable of creating pricing decisions for one property or worldwide estates. Guided workflows, informative dashboards and best-fit analytics models enable users to produce robust reports with extremely high levels of detail.

As well as improving staff efficiency and reducing time spent on tactical activities, IDEaS G3 RMS can assess the impact of pricing decisions using risk-free "What-If" Analysis, forecast and reports with greater accuracy using granular transaction data.

You mentioned that IDEaS has been taking some steps towards Total Revenue Performance - can you tell us more about this?

The next stage for hotel revenue management is to tackle areas other than rooms within the hotel such as function space. A 2011 survey by Sherri Kimes, Professor of Operations Management at Cornell University and a leading revenue management academic, recognized function space as the area with the highest likelihood of success outside of traditional rooms revenue management. Revenue management for function space can be very complex. However, it has huge potential to drive revenues. To optimise function space revenue, it is vital hoteliers have all of the fundamentals of good revenue management in place, including the right reporting, data, forecasts and pricing approach. So IDEaS has launched Function Space Revenue Management. The first solution in the industry to forecast function space demand with associated revenue streams and costs. This unique module empowers sales as well as meetings & events departments to evaluate not only group room business for a hotel, but also meeting & event business. Allowing them to take the right decisions for the hotel taking the total revenue impact into account—including rooms, food and beverage, function space and more with associated costs and profitability.

Fabian Specht

EMEA Managing Director at IDEaS talks about the latest developments in revenue management technology and how IDEaS is closing in on the goal of Total Revenue Performance.



IDEaS[™]
A SAS COMPANY

We need our latest revenue forecasts and occupancy data *now*.

The IDEaS Mobile RMS app lets us make critical decisions on the go.



Sophisticated revenue management is key to success in an ever more competitive hospitality market. As the world leader in pricing and revenue management software, services and consulting for hotels, resorts and casinos, our tools can help you drive better revenue for your business.

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