



Basic CRM vs. hospitality CDP:
Which one will help your hotel come out on top?

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01 Introduction

You don't need us to tell you that the mountain of data you're dealing with grows larger each day.

Nor that your guests expect you to provide them with seamless, personalized experiences. In the face of these challenges and the fierce competition for direct bookings, the technology you leverage to transform your data into actionable insights can either propel your success or hold you back.

If you're still using a standard customer relationship management (CRM) system that relies primarily on PMS data, then you likely can't capitalize on the growing sources of [zero-party](#) and [first-party data](#) you now have access to.

According to our [2024 Hospitality Benchmark Report](#), guest records for hoteliers increased by an average of 28% globally in 2023, indicating a shift toward more data-centric approaches in the industry. Your fragmented data and integration challenges are leading to missed opportunities and a disconnect between your brand and your customers' needs.



By choosing Revinate's hospitality-specific [Customer Data Platform \(CDP\)](#), however, you can efficiently collect and organize all data from multiple customer touchpoints across your portfolio in real time. It empowers your team with a rich 360-degree view of each guest, enabling you to make faster, smarter decisions about how to deliver tailored experiences and marketing campaigns that drive greater loyalty and direct revenue.

Navigating today's hospitality market is no walk in the park. It's complex, it's constantly evolving, and it can be pretty overwhelming. Investing in the right CDP is a strategic decision that can make all the difference — giving your portfolio a solid foundation to build on for long-term success.



02 The difference between a CRM and a CDP

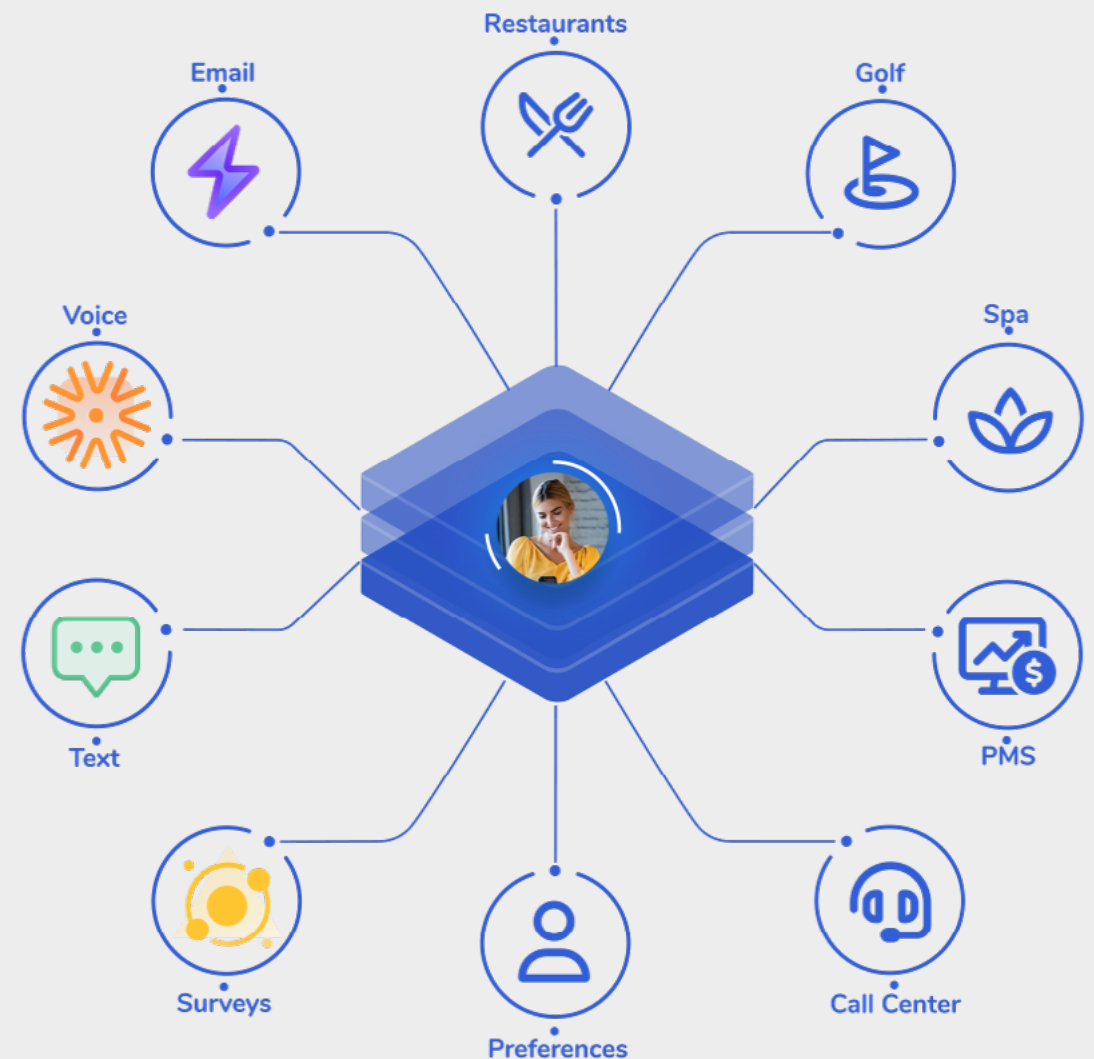
Let's start by taking a look at the difference between a basic CRM and [a CDP that's purpose-built for hospitality](#). While a standard CRM is great for interacting with your guests and managing customer relationships, it's simply not capable of keeping up with and utilizing all the data you collect.

Revinate's hospitality-specific CDP actually incorporates our CRM but goes a step further, because it has advanced graph-based technology powering it. It makes your CRM's guest data more complete, detailed, and useful because it can collect and unify data from multiple sources outside of your PMS — such as your spa, golf club, restaurant, and folio.

Unlike a basic CRM that simply provides centralized storage of contacts in a standard spreadsheet format, our [CDP offers full profile management](#). It holds a comprehensive view of each guest, including their activities and complete history with your brand. And it has [identity resolution](#) techniques that create a single, unified profile of each guest, even if their information is scattered across multiple systems or entered inconsistently.

It also lets you communicate with your visitors in whatever channel they prefer most, whether that's voice, texting, email, or webchat. It delivers actionable insights to help you understand individual guest preferences, identify upsell opportunities, increase direct bookings, and create those memorable stays that build lasting relationships with your guests.

Now, let's zoom in on the specific differences between relying on a basic CRM vs. our hospitality-specific CDP when it comes to optimizing each stage of the travel journey.





03 Transform dreams into data: Inspiration and research stage

You know how important it is to begin gathering customer data as soon as you can, starting with the inspiration and research travel stages.

Getting your hands on this information lets you really dig into how your potential customers behave when planning a trip. And it allows you to whip up campaigns that inspire travelers to pick your property for their next getaway.

What a basic CRM does

When customers are researching information during the inspiration stage of their travel journey, a standard CRM can typically capture basic guest information such as name, contact details, and stay history. But it likely lacks the ability to gather valuable insights from other touchpoints during this crucial phase.

As an example, let's take a "Birthday" campaign. A CRM may (emphasis on may) have the correct contact name and email address, as well as the correct birthday date. However, it won't have the latest updates on the guest's interests, preferences, likes and dislikes. So, the best you can do is send a simple, generic birthday offer.

What Revinate CDP does

On the other hand, Revinate CDP opens up a world of advanced data collection and activation possibilities during the inspiration phase. By integrating with multiple data sources — including website interactions, [phone conversations](#), text messages, and email campaign engagement — our CDP creates a comprehensive view of potential customers' interests and preferences. This rich data allows you to run targeted one-time and automated campaigns.



Looking at the "Birthday" campaign again, with the Revinate CDP you can see that the guest made a reservation in your restaurant during their last visit, and they raved about your signature chicken parmesan dish on Tripadvisor. You can also see that they played a few rounds of golf on your course. This knowledge allows you to [automate a personalized offer](#) — perhaps including a complimentary appetizer in your restaurant and an in-demand tee time for golf — speaking specifically to this guest's interests, and helping to strengthen their emotional connection with your brand.



04 Optimize bookings with advanced data strategies

Snagging customer data and leveraging it during the booking stage provides a golden opportunity to customize your interactions with guests in ways that help you secure more direct bookings both now and in the future.

With the right information at hand, you can create irresistible deals and packages that will have them clicking “book now” on your website rather than scrolling through OTAs.

What a basic CRM does

During the booking stage, a standard CRM can access booking dates, type of booking (business, leisure, etc.) and basic contact info, allowing you to do things like send a generic confirmation email.



One problem though, is that a basic CRM won't be able to clearly show you additional information that may prove helpful, such as whether a guest has stayed at different properties within your portfolio. So, you'll have no idea if they're actually a returning guest, impacting the effectiveness of your interactions.

To illustrate this issue, using a basic CRM for a "Cart Abandonment" campaign gives you a one-time shot to try and capture the booking, but it doesn't take into account all the other touchpoints a visitor has had with your brand. Did they have a great stay during their last visit? Did they open your last marketing email? You're essentially flying blind, unable to harness the wealth of data that could make it truly effective.

What Revinate CDP does

It's a whole different story with Revinate CDP. Let's say that leading up to the booking stage a guest has communicated with your property in multiple ways. Maybe it started with a website interaction and [text with Ivy](#), then a phone call where your reservation agent took notes, and finally engagement with an email campaign. Our solution can ingest and analyze all those data sources so that you understand each guest on a granular, personal level. You can then send booking confirmation emails that include relevant recommendations and questions based on previous interactions, allowing you to gather even more information to strengthen guest profiles and benefit future campaigns.

Using the "Cart Abandonment" campaign illustration again, with Revinate CDP, when a customer abandons their cart it's not just a random event. It's a piece of the puzzle that fits seamlessly with the rest of their profile. You'll have the ability to tap into all the other interactions they've had with your brand, such as leaving reviews on Tripadvisor or clicking through your marketing emails. Now, you can craft a campaign that's not simply a generic reminder, but speaks directly to their preferences. You can even follow up with the voice channel to share a special deal or just to see if they need additional info to complete their booking.



05 Pre-arrival prep data tactics

Getting a sneak peek into your customers' minds before they even set foot inside your hotel is crucial for creating winning guest experiences and capitalizing on lucrative upsell and cross-sell opportunities.

By collecting and acting on this info, you can begin personalizing interactions and your marketing efforts from the get-go.

What a basic CRM does

During the pre-arrival stage, a standard CRM that pulls data primarily from your PMS will include basic reservation information and room preference. This allows you to send a pre-arrival email offering some standard upgrades. But frankly, it provides a fairly limited view of the guest. It doesn't give you much to work with when it comes to personalized marketing efforts during these stages.



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And since we know that [over three-quarters of consumers](#) consider personalized communications crucial for brand consideration — and are more likely to repurchase due to such content — without an advanced data-first solution, you're missing out on potential profits.

For instance, if you want to send out a pre-arrival campaign to your loyalty members, with a basic CRM every member gets the same generic message, regardless of their tier, preferences, purchase behavior or spending habits. It's like throwing spaghetti at the wall and hoping something sticks.

What Revinate CDP does

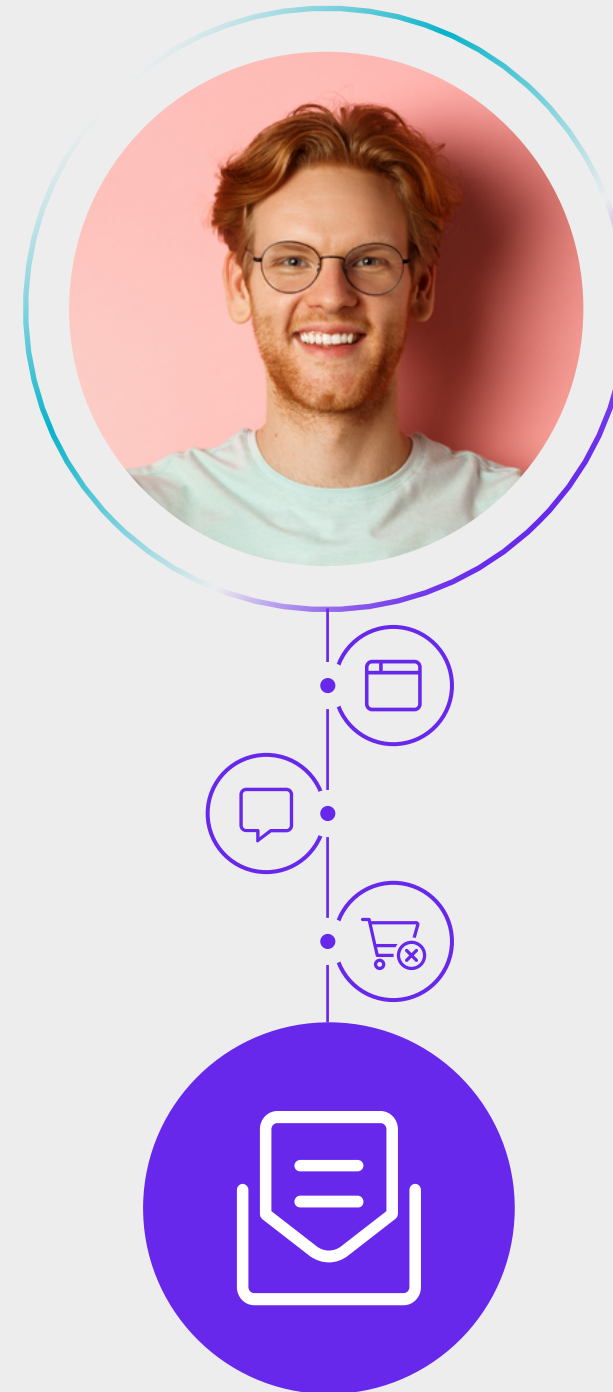
Revinate CDP unifies guest data from across your entire portfolio, so you get an accurate view of each guest's overall lifetime value. Our CDP's [identity resolution](#) function uses advanced AI and machine-learning algorithms to cleanse, merge, and de-dupe data — including unmasking OTA emails — helping to ensure that your loyal, repeat guests don't slip under the radar.

All of this means you're in a position to create customized pre-arrival campaigns that really hit the mark. Pre-arrival campaigns can offer room upgrades or a present a spa package based specifically on a customer's past behavior. And if a guest cancels a reservation, our CDP can trigger a cancellation campaign that reaches out to understand their reasons, allowing you to offer incentives to rebook based on their responses.

You can also move beyond the email channel to present high-converting upgrade offers via the messaging or voice channel.

Moreover, our CDP's advanced [segmentation](#) capability lets you refine your customer segments by very specific data points, allowing you to create highly customized messaging.

For instance, using segmentation you could develop a loyalty campaign that rewards guests who have stayed more than two times across your portfolio, have a lifetime spend of over \$2,000, and have reservation revenue greater than \$200. Targeting your most valuable guests based on their specific behaviors helps drive repeat business and brand advocacy.



06 On-site insights

Gathering data during the on-property phase lets you keep track of your visitors' preferences in real time.

It also allows you to delight them by anticipating their needs, whether that's surprising them with a bottle of their favorite wine, or offering a complimentary session with your personal trainer. These types of small touches can transform an ordinary stay into an extraordinary one.

What a basic CRM does

Because the data you have access to with a standard CRM is more limited, the ways you can activate that data are equally so. You may send a generic welcome message and offer some standard amenities, but you can't do much more than that.

Moreover, a basic CRM doesn't communicate well with all of your different systems, leaving valuable data lying dormant — such as your spa data remaining housed in your spa department, or your restaurant data sitting trapped in your food and dining software system.



As a result, you don't have much insight into your visitors' actual on-property experiences, nor their unique needs and desires. It's like trying to solve a puzzle with a bunch of missing pieces.

What Revinate CDP does

The beauty of the Revinate CDP during the on-property phase is its ability to gather data from every touchpoint in real time, like text conversations with a digital concierge or hotel staff, in-room service requests, and even reviews about your property that occur during their visit.

You're also capable of getting info on guests who are just visiting for the day to use your spa, dining venues, or golf course. This wealth of information allows you to run marketing campaigns that boost ancillary revenue while speaking directly to guests in ways that enhance their overall experience.

As an illustration, you could send personalized "On-Property Promotions," such as a special offer at the golf course. Our CDP also enables you to send targeted "Amenity Upsell" messages that are more likely to convert, like offering a romantic dinner package to a couple celebrating their anniversary. You can even send timely "Event Announcements" to guests who've shown interest in specific activities like wine tasting or live music performances.



You also have the power of "In-Stay Surveys" at your fingertips. Gather [valuable feedback](#) that allows you to address any issues in real time, heading off potential negative reviews and replacing them with positive ones. Capitalizing on the advanced data collection and activation capabilities of Revinate CDP allows you to create unforgettable on-property experiences that help keep your guests coming back for more, all while driving higher profit margins.

07 Departure data dive: check-out and post-stay

The check-out and post-stay stages of the travel journey provide an opportunity to get the full scoop on how your customers really felt about their experience at your property. By gathering feedback, you're able to spot areas for improvement, create winning personalized offers, and transform one-time visitors into loyal, lifelong fans.

What a basic CRM does

As a visitor's stay comes to an end, a basic CRM can collect information such as the check-out date, total charges, and maybe a generic satisfaction score. As a result, you can only send a standard thank you email that may include some general survey questions. But this won't give you true insight into your customer's overall experience. And it also won't give you the tools to create customized post-stay campaigns that will encourage direct bookings in the future.



When you run an “OTA Winback” campaign with a basic CRM for example, you’re faced with a ticking clock and limited opportunities. You only have a brief 30-day window to reach out to guests who booked through an OTA. And even then, you may never gain access to the visitor’s real email address. This means that once the window closes, you lose the ability to communicate with them altogether.

What Revinate CDP does

In contrast, the comprehensive view of each guest provided by the Revinate CDP allows you to run highly effective “Check-out” and “Post-Stay” campaigns. Because of its powerful integrations, it’s possible to collect and analyze rich data and feedback from the mobile check-out process, responses to post-stay surveys, and even online reviews — incorporating all that valuable info into individual customer profiles. Our solution even helps you identify your happiest guests, so you can then encourage them to share their positive experiences online, fostering strong guest connections and boosting direct booking conversions.

Returning to our “OTA Winback” campaign illustration, if a guest booked through an OTA, Revinate’s CDP is able to automatically merge a real email address from other interactions with a customer’s profile. You can then send a campaign via their preferred channel that highlights specific aspects of their stay and offers exclusive perks or discounts, inspiring them to book directly next time.

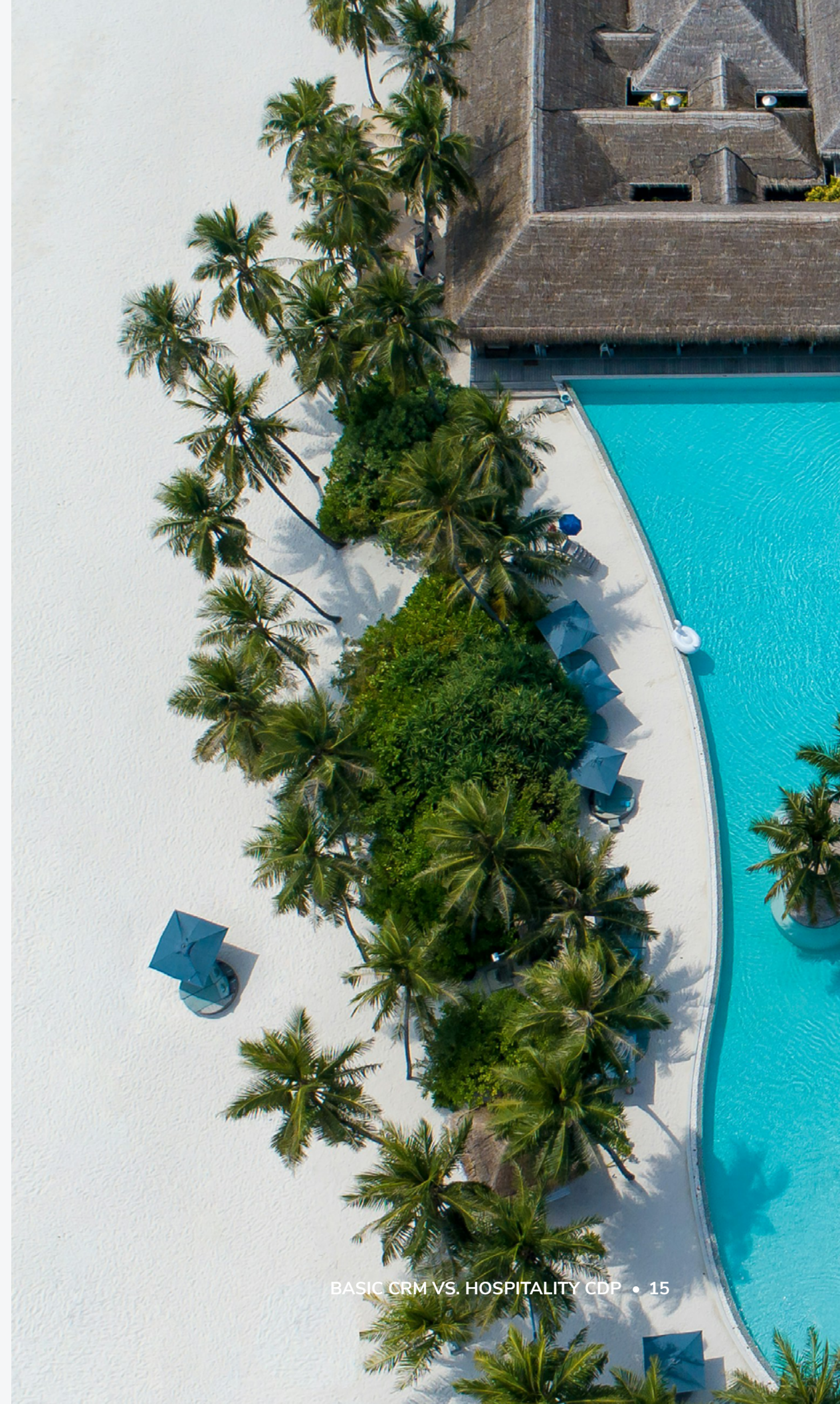


08 The next evolution in guest data management

Getting the right guest, into the right room, at the right price, through the right distribution channel: this is our north star.

This is what you need, and so this is our focus. We don't create new tech solutions simply for the sake of creating new tech. We are always striving to help you do what you do best even better: delight and serve your guests.

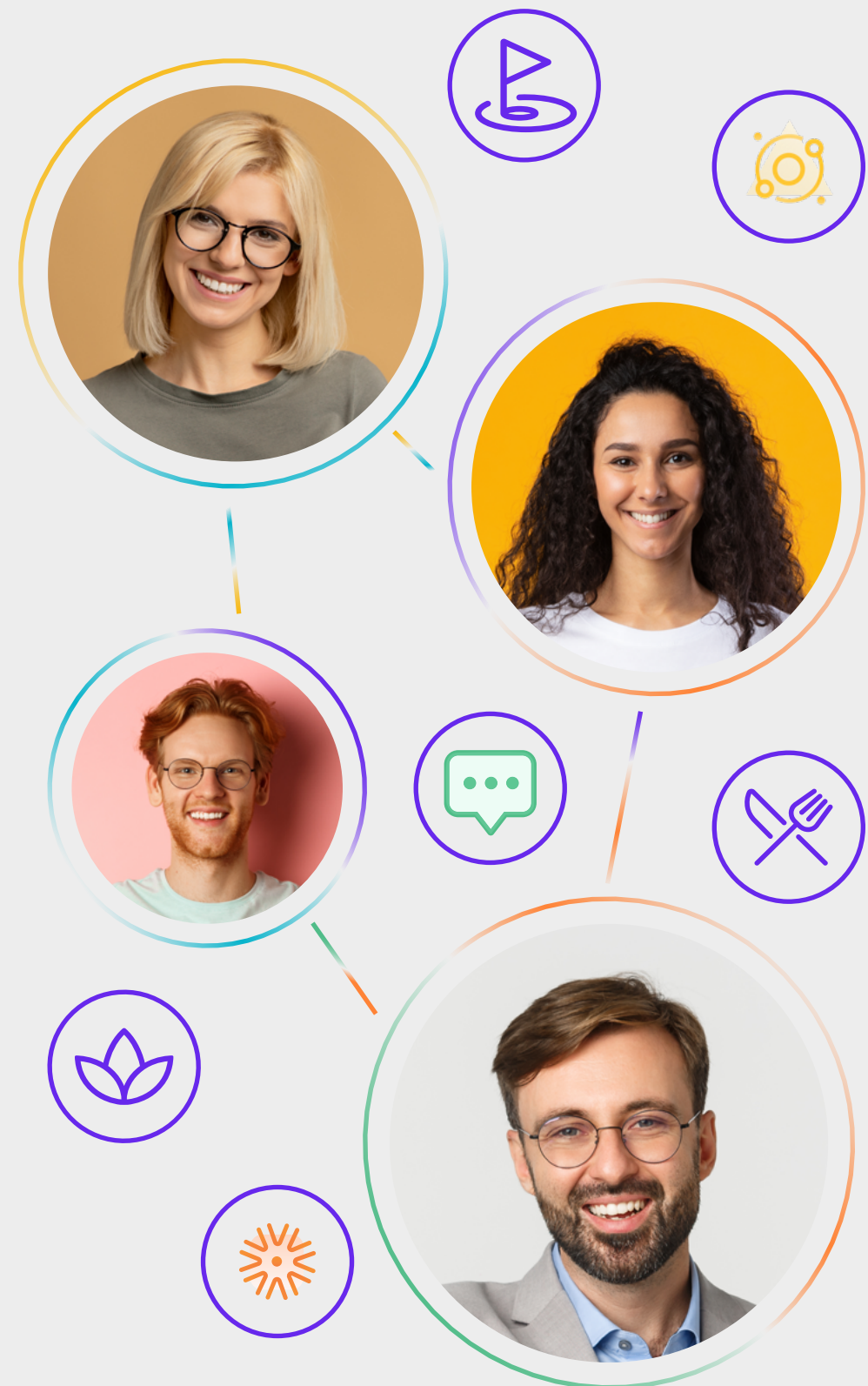
It's clear that relying on a basic CRM just isn't going to cut it anymore in hospitality's increasingly data-driven world. Every action with a CRM is independent and one-off, lacking the critical connections and context that enable truly personalized experiences and campaigns.



If you really hope to crush it — win greater guest loyalty and score more direct bookings — you need a hospitality-specific CDP that allows you to [weave together data from every touchpoint](#). Revinate CDP helps you to run super targeted, money-making campaigns throughout every phase of the guest journey: from personalizing the booking experience to creating exceptional on-property experiences and building the kind of guest relationships that stand the test of time.

Let us show you how Revinate CDP can help unlock your portfolio's full potential. Once you see it in action, you'll wonder how you ever managed without it.

[Request a demo!](#)



How Revinate can help

Revinate is on a mission to take hoteliers to new heights of performance.

As the global leader in CDP-driven direct booking platforms, Revinate is purpose-built to seamlessly power omnichannel guest lifecycle communications, feedback, and commerce for tens of thousands of hotels. Whether an independent hotel, small group, or large global brand, Revinate is known among customers as hospitality's most efficient and proven system for driving direct revenue and profits.

Our one-of-a-kind platform combines multiple interoperable guest data solutions that get smarter and more powerful over time as richer data is added, synthesized, and analyzed. This makes it an essential part of any hotel's quest to become more guest-centric as it empowers hoteliers to make data-driven decisions that result in higher online rankings, improved guest experience, more personalized communications, stronger relationships, and increased direct revenue.

Get a demo now.

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