

Hotels upgrade their 'no-stay' lists

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Room thrashers, constant complainers may be left out in the cold

Most travelers know about the Transportation Security Administration's 'no-fly' list. It's a collection of seemingly random names of passengers who either can't fly or must endure extra security measures for unknown reasons. But did you know that many hotels keep a similar list of guests that they block from making reservations and setting foot on their properties?

Pretty much every property management system - that's the generic term for the computer systems hotels use to run all aspects of their business - has a data field where a staff member can enter comments about guests. Employees populate the field with reminders that it's your birthday, an alert that you've had a package arrive or information about your likes and dislikes.

But that field is also used to track guest 'issues.' As a customer service tool, it's great, because other staff members can see if you've had a previous problem, and can therefore go out of their way to make you happy. Those comments have also been a way for hotels to track guest patterns of complaining, late cancellations, room damage - you name it.

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