OMNI HOTELS & RESORTS®

Optimizing and centralizing billing management across 60 international properties
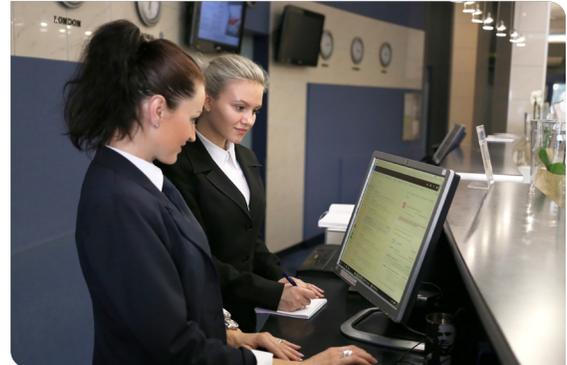
The Situation

With 60 properties in the United States, Canada and Mexico, OMNI Hotels and Resorts is the leader in the hospitality and resort industry for personalized service, local flare, and luxury accommodations. Their facilities offer dynamic business and event settings, along with golf, spa, dining and wellness services.

Like other international, service-oriented businesses, OMNI faces complex communications network requirements and billing every month. In the hospitality business, these complexities are magnified because guests commonly contract outside communications circuits and services for large events at OMNI properties. Contracted service companies often incorrectly assume OMNI as the client, rather than the OMNI guest who arranged the contract for the short-term event. High staff turnover at the property, common to the industry, means these added bills for guest-arranged contracts are not identified, and billing errors for locations can rapidly multiply.

OMNI had centralized their billing for all of their utilities with great success, and were seeking similar centralized billing for tele-communications services. The rational was not only to improve visibility and billing management for its multiple locations, but to also address the challenges it faced with circuits and services contracted by guests for short-term events at their properties.

"The total savings from recovery of incorrect telecom billing, optimization, and centralized billing management across OMNI's properties is over $900,000 to date"

– Dean Boswell, OMNI's Vice President of Finance

The Solution

Having worked with Tellennium previously at a large hospitality management company, OMNI's CIO contacted Tellennium to help consolidate billing and to address its unique issue with one-off communication services contracts created by their guests. Often bills for these agreements were transferred to OMNI properties for payment after the event had ended. In some cases, this continued for months after the event and contracted termination. One recent large convention at an OMNI property had contracted its own telecom circuits for the period, but they were never terminated after

TELLENNIUM
Integrated Telecom Management®

the convention ended. "It happened to be very big dollars for this hotel and it took quite some time to get ourselves out of these charges that the telecom company had inadvertently dropped onto the hotel," explains OMNI's VP of Finance, Dean Boswell. The experience was key in surfacing the need for a communications network expense management partner. OMNI selected Tellennium to address this challenge.

Tellennium performed a comprehensive audit and discovery process that identified and quantified the circuits currently in use and not in use for each OMNI property. They then pinpointed special-use, and critical low-use lines that must be maintained for safety and regulatory purposes (in elevators, for example).

With the circuit inventory in their database, Tellennium's experienced personnel then managed and negotiated the necessary billing corrections, terminated invalid contracts and circuits, and established an on-going monitoring system. Monitoring is done through TIMS, a comprehensive cloud-based software platform developed by Tellennium to process bills, manage circuit and services' inventory, and track usage, changes, contracts, and charges. This Integrated Telecom Management® platform also provides real time visibility for enterprise communications network services and charges. Unique proven processes are built into the system to manage changes, coding, and provide accurate and timely payment of invoices.

Tellennium now handles OMNI's telecommunications network billing, including accounts payable coding, payments and reconciliations. With the TIMS platform, which was a large factor in OMNI's selection of Tellennium as a partner, managing their telecom network is now efficient, consistent and accurate. "They [Tellennium] understand the telecom side. Hospitality has high turnover and generally a low skill set in the telecom space," explains Boswell.

He also notes that OMNI has one internal dedicated telecom specialist, who is now able to function more strategically as the liaison between OMNI properties and Tellennium. "She is able to now use the TIMS portal

to understand not only the billing, but to understand the inventory … she is able to manage a greater number of properties because she has better live information that she can see as a result of the portal. She has the details that she needs to be able to have a conversation with the local property to verify and validate what lines and inventory they have and how each service was initiated."

Tellennium provides regular training sessions for property staff, to address the oversights stemming from high property staff turnover, an ongoing factor in the hospitality industry. "Tellennium holds quarterly webinars on how to use their portal and how to pull your individual bills and statements and how to read the various statistical portions…," says Boswell, who notes that the results of this training and staff augmentation have been very positive.

The Result

The total savings from recovery of incorrect telecom billing, optimization, and centralized billing management across OMNI's properties is over $900,000 to date. Key to those ongoing savings, notes Boswell, is the fact that property staff is now properly and efficiently trained through Tellennium's quarterly process, minimizing the ramifications of staff turnover rates. And the unique challenges of managing telecom services and contracts generated by guests for short-term events held on property are now centrally controlled and easily monitored by OMNI management through the real time TIMS information portal.

As OMNI looks forward to growth through acquisitions and new property construction, Boswell says, it can rely on Tellennium's deep expertise and ability to address the entire telecom environment, with the staff and resources necessary to handle the chain's unique and dynamic requirements. And this frees OMNI up to focus on their core business of providing their guests with the highest quality experience possible.