

## **Hotel Employee Safety Devices: A Case of React Mobile**



Source: Unsplash (2018)

### **Background**

While hoteliers are actively seeking ways to reduce costs, employee safety is an area that managers cannot afford to overlook. Employee Safety Devices (ESDs) not only assist hotels in passing quality inspections and complying with government regulations, but they also offer essential protection to employees. Ultimately, this enhances the hotel's reputation and helps lower insurance and compensation costs (Hotel Technology News, 2022).

React Mobile is a panic button solution that enables a swift emergency response from the hotel management (HotelTechReport, n.d.). Through the provision of Bluetooth or cellular devices, hotel staff can press and hold the panic button for 3 seconds or press it 3 times in rapid succession to trigger a silent alarm in case of emergency (React Mobile, n.d.). Once the button has been pressed, the distress call will be relayed to the React Mobile Dispatch Center to notify hotel management and emergency services (HNR Hotel News, 2021). At the same time, the red light on the device turns blue to signal the employee that help is on the way (Hotel Online, 2022).

Another advantage is that the technology can be integrated with hotels' existing property management systems (PMS) to enhance precision. For example, with both HotSOS Housekeeping and the React Mobile application installed, housekeeping staff will receive their daily assignments directly on their mobile devices, and by checking-in with the HotSOS app after cleaning each room, the React Mobile Dispatch Center will have more accurate information about the staff's current location when the panic button is activated (HNR Hotel News, 2021). This can significantly improve the system's capability to locate a distressed employee, particularly in larger hotel establishments with many guestroom floors.

The technology mainly benefits hotel employees who often work alone. Among the 701 hotel workers who were assisted by panic buttons in 2021, a valet who was assaulted by a guest

emphasized that this technology is exceptionally important for those working night shifts, when there are fewer people around to seek help (Hospitalitynet, 2022). As more countries mandate the provision of Employee Safety Devices (ESDs) in the hospitality industry, innovations such as panic buttons are becoming increasingly essential.

## **Challenges**

While Employee Safety Devices (ESDs) like panic buttons offer vital protection for hotel staff, they also pose risks of misuse or abuse. Employees might activate the panic button in non-emergency situations, leading to unnecessary dispatches of security or emergency services for minor issues. This misuse can strain resources, create delays in responding to genuine threats, and foster a culture of disbelief among staff and management, ultimately diminishing the system's credibility. Additionally, repeated false alarms can increase operational costs and complicate training. To maximize effectiveness, hotels must establish clear guidelines and training protocols to ensure panic buttons are used solely for legitimate emergencies.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Why is the implementation of Employee Safety Devices (ESDs) considered essential in the hospitality industry, particularly concerning employee safety?
2. What are the primary benefits of implementing Employee Safety Devices (ESDs) like panic buttons in hotels, and how do they contribute to employee safety?
3. In what ways can the misuse or abuse of panic buttons impact hotel operations, and what strategies can be implemented to mitigate these risks?
4. Considering the rapid advancement of technology, what future innovations in employee safety could be developed to further enhance the protection of hotel staff?

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### **Keywords**

- Employee safety
- Technology
- Emergency
- Workplace safety
- Hotel
- Hotel operation