



El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel

CLIENT INFORMATION

Boasting a 12,000 sq.ft. ball room, a five-story Basco Vazko mural, and a guest list that rivals any landmark hotel in its class, the “El Trop” is also the first hotel built along the famed San Antonio Texas Riverwalk. From LBJ to the Rolling Stones, to hundreds of weddings and parties, including the popular Fiesta San Antonio, the 308-room hotel continues to be one of the most popular venues for social and cultural events in the city.

“Without a real revenue manager, we would have chaos. There are too many channels, group rates, and relationships out there to manage on our own. With SHR, it’s all under control.”

—Tim Reed, GM, El Tropicano



SPECIFIC PRODUCT/SERVICE

Revenue Management for Hire

SITUATION

Having worked at El Tropicano for over seven years, General Manager Tim Reed knows his hotel inside and out. So, when it became clear that their in-house revenue management strategy was not having the impact they had hoped, he knew it was time for a change. “We had reached a point where we were reactive to our market instead of proactive,” Tim said. Because of this, opaque channels like Priceline and Hotwire had become the norm for them instead of the exception. “We became obsessed with simply selling out,” he explained. “We do 70% of our leisure business via the OTAs, so we need to make the most of our rates.” He was familiar with SHR’s technology, so he reached out to see if they could help.

OUTCOME

Tim was matched with SHR revenue manager (RM) Nicole Adair, who quickly set to work assessing not just revenue numbers, but the hotel itself. “She

spent time getting a sense of the property, our quirks, and our surroundings,” Tim said. “Then she talked to our customers, seeing who they were, and what mattered to them.” Nicole discovered one surprise—El Tropicano’s super short booking window. “Our guests literally decide to come to the hotel on the spur of the moment,” Tim said, “which is just one more challenge we face.”

After the discovery phase, Nicole sat down with Tim and laid out a strategy to boost rates and maintain occupancy—without instantly resorting to opaques. “The core of our method now consists of planning much further out than we used to,” Tim explained. “Before, we were only looking toward the end of each month. Now we’re looking a full six months out. Plus, now we look at our groups, rates, local demand generators, and the compression from big events.”

Tim likes SHR’s approach as well. “They rely on people, not just algorithms, which makes us feel very secure,” he said. “For example, if it’s a Tuesday and I have 122 rooms to book by the weekend, I’m not worried anymore because we have a real revenue partner now.” As for the cost of having an SHR RM, Tim said it’s no contest. “Nicole costs less than half of what our in-house management did—and she does twice as much.”



THE FUTURE

Tim and El Tropicano have been with SHR revenue management for almost two years now, and he has no plans of changing course. In fact, based on his RM experience, Tim is planning a more complete move to SHR in the coming year. “Nicole has such great analytical skills, and she’s an independent thinker,” Tim explained. “I need those traits in my distribution technology as well. That makes SHR the natural choice.”