

McNeill Preserves Demand Mix, Broadens Business Plan

Short Booking Windows Complicate Forecasting, Revenue Management Exec Says

By [Robert McCune](#)

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NASHVILLE, Tennessee — McNeill Hotel Company's success in capturing demand from the business travelers still traveling during the pandemic allowed the hotel ownership and management firm to reach 2019 levels in that segment last year.

Business-transient demand is still the largest missing piece of the pie for most hotels and companies as the industry recovers from the unprecedented demand crisis wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

But with a focus on the other "fish in the pond" in regard to business travelers, the mix of guests at McNeill's hotels hasn't really changed, Jennifer Driscoll, vice president of revenue management at McNeill Hotel Company, said in a video interview with Hotel News Now at the Hotel Data Conference.



[2022 Hotel Data Conference](#)

A particular challenge of finding and meeting that demand has been forecasting, particularly as most guests are still booking stays closer to arrival, she said.

"At times there's a big delta between where we think we're going to end up and what it is forecasting to be," she said.

"We've just got to use our market knowledge and our recent trends in order to make sure we've got accurate numbers. But with that short-term booking window, it can be really stressful. You think you're going to pick up and you don't pick up or you don't think you're going to pick up and you pick up a whole lot. The good news is we're getting more demand than we anticipated."

The company's success through the recovery has also allowed it to broaden its business plan.

McNeill has 24 hotels in its portfolio — flying the brand flags of Hilton, Marriott International and Hyatt Hotels Corp. Until recently, those hotels were primarily owned assets.

In July, the firm partnered with New York City-based private equity firm Prospect Ridge, which purchased 12 of its hotels. In the partnership, McNeill will manage the hotels.

"That's going to allow us to change the DNA of our company and focus not only on owned assets but also management contracts," Driscoll said, adding that portfolio growth will be a big focus for the company going into 2023. "We recently sold a few hotels, which is going to allow us to buy some new properties also."

For more from McNeill Hotel Company's Jennifer Driscoll, watch the video at <https://www.costar.com/article/1291692916/mcneill-preserves-demand-mix-broadens-business-plan>