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A GUIDE TO GUEST EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT FOR YOUR SPA



In the spa and hospitality world, guest experience is everything. Your guest experience is your brand differentiator, it's what sets you apart from your competitors and is one of the factors that can make or break your spa business success. It's the reason people choose your hotel, resort, or day spa over any other – beyond a convenient location or the right price. Guest experience is the reason people book a visit and the reason why they come back again and again, and it's the reason spas win awards and earn Forbes Travel Guide ratings. If you manage a hospitality business with a spa, or a standalone day spa, whether you're a boutique establishment, a family vacation spot, or a luxury resort, guest experience management should always be top of mind.

On this page we'll cover everything you need to know about guest experience management, why guest experience is important in your spa, how to manage your guest experience from end to end, and how a guest experience management strategy, customer relationship management, and spa software with CXM and CRM can help.

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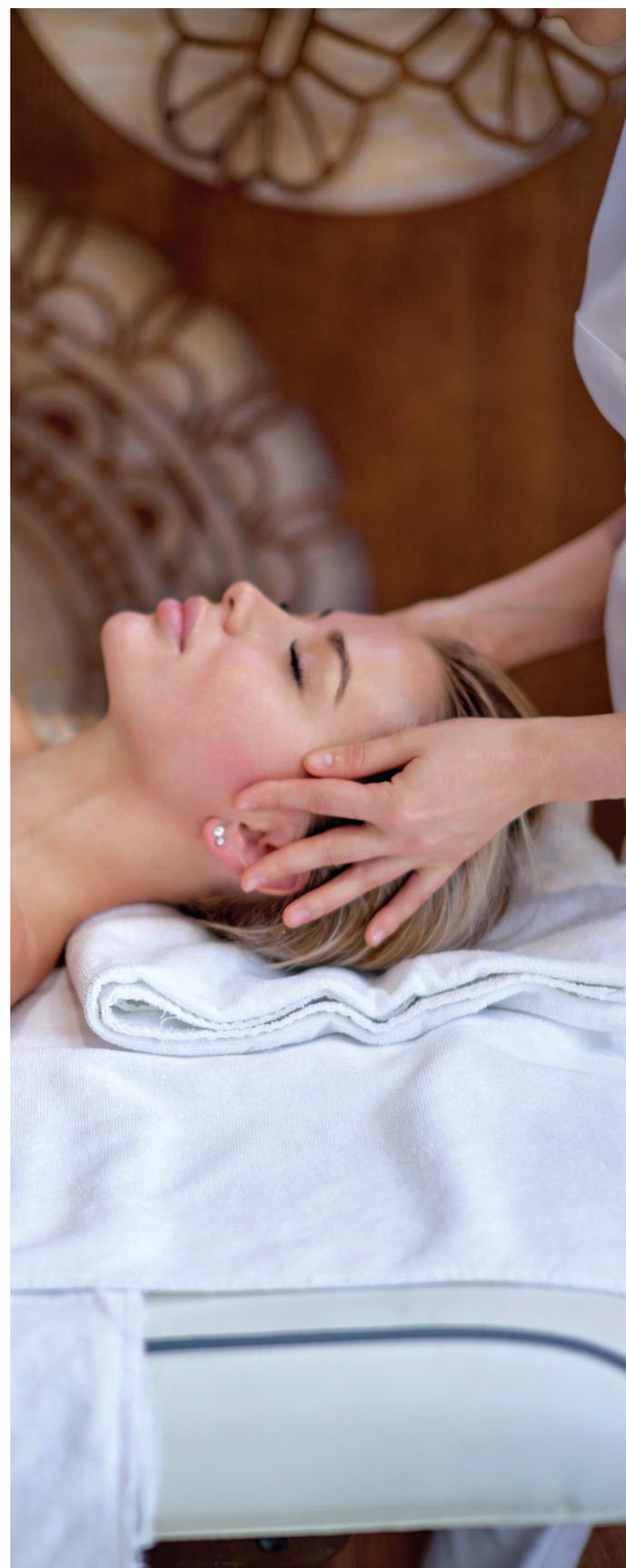
What is Guest Experience Management and Why Does it Matter?

Before we get to guest experience management, let's talk about guest experience. What is guest experience? Guest experience is an offshoot of customer experience. Customer experience (CX) refers to how customers perceive your brand based on what they are exposed to at every touchpoint of the purchase journey. Customer experience refers to a person's sensory and cognitive perception of your brand. In a spa, your customers are your guests, hence the term “guest experience.” Here, we may use the words “customer” and “guest” interchangeably.

The [Harvard Business Review](#) defines customer experience as encompassing “every aspect of a company's offering, including the quality of customer care, advertising, packaging, product and service features, ease of use, and reliability.”

Guest experience is everything in a spa. From the pre-visit stage, through every part of the visit, to post-visit, this experience is what drives customer acquisition, repeat visits, guest referrals, positive reviews, and brand awareness.

“Customer experience management” is [defined by Gartner](#) as “the discipline of understanding customers and deploying strategic plans that enable crossfunctional efforts and customer-centric culture to improve satisfaction, loyalty and advocacy.”



Guest experience management is a set of tools and strategies to manage all aspects of the guest experience in your spa or hospitality wellness business, including customer engagement and satisfaction, and your relationships with them.

Why does guest experience matter? As we mentioned above, guest experience is your brand differentiator, and that critical element of your business isn't going to manage itself. Actively and effectively managing your guest experience will elevate your brand, increase revenue, customer loyalty and acquisition, and reduce churn.

For this, you need guest experience management software. Book4Time's spa software system will help you elevate and improve your guest experience and every aspect of your guest experience management.

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Some Guest Experience Statistics You Should Know

- ✓ 76% of global customers expect companies to understand their needs. ([Hubspot](#))
- ✓ \$1.6 trillion is lost each year in the US due to poor customer service. ([Hubspot](#))
- ✓ Consumers will spend 17% more for a good experience. ([Hubspot](#))
- ✓ More than half of consumers would pay more if they knew they would receive great customer service. ([Forbes](#))
- ✓ 32% of consumers would walk away from a brand they love after one bad experience. ([PwC](#))
- ✓ Consumers who had the best past experiences spend 140% more than those who had the poorest past experiences. ([HBR](#))
- ✓ 80% of consumers are more likely to make a purchase from a business that personalizes experiences. ([Epsilon](#))
- ✓ Consumers tell an average of nine people about positive experiences, but an average of 16 people about negative ones. ([Deloitte](#))
- ✓ 67% of consumers say their standard for good experiences is higher than ever. ([Salesforce](#))



Five Key Elements of Guest Experience Management

Understanding guests' needs

Understanding customer needs is the first step towards meeting them. This should be your focus. The most successful companies figure out what people need – and provide it. This doesn't just mean finding out what guests want, because wants and needs are, as Mick Jagger once pointed out, often two different things.

How do you find out what people need? Start by asking what they want through actions like collecting feedback at every stage of the journey, paying attention to what people are saying on social media, sending surveys. From there, figure out what they need – and give it to them.

Exceed guest expectations

Meeting needs is brilliant and wonderful. Now, it's time to talk about expectations. It's great if you can fulfill customer expectations but even better to exceed them. You want your guests to say "wow!" and tell their friends. According to Salesforce 67% of customers say their standards for good experiences are higher than ever, and in 2022, guests expect seamless experiences that are facilitated by technology. You want your guests to be not just satisfied but thrilled.

Understanding their needs will help with this. From there, every aspect of the experience must be seamless and intuitive, thoughtful and simple. These are the elements that allow for flexibility – another key element. Some tips for exceeding guest expectations in your spa include being swiftly responsive, incorporating the element of surprise, and under-promising and over delivering.

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Identify and improve pain points

Start with pain points but, beyond that, you should be zeroing in on even the smallest glitch in your guest experience – anything that disrupts their bliss. Where are the bumps on the road in the journey? Find out what these are. For example, are potential guests calling a phone number to book appointments and being put on hold during business hours or getting a voicemail outside of them? Are they sitting in a busy reception area being asked to fill out paper intake forms? When they go to the spa at another one of your hotel or resort properties are they being treated like a net-new guest and asked to provide their



their information again? These are just a few examples of experiences that are not pleasant and should be modified.

How can you smooth out the guest journey? If guests are calling a phone number to book appointments, Book4Time's online and mobile booking would be a solution you need. Nobody wants to have to call back later to book an appointment when you're open if they decide they want to book at 11 pm at night. They will likely just go book with another spa that offers online or mobile booking. Waiting in reception areas can be reduced with Book4Time's digital intake forms and guest contact information can be recorded and shared across multiple locations with Book4Time's note taking function to spare the guest having to provide it anew at every visit. Anything that reduces the joy of your guest experience should be addressed and improved.

Anticipate and intuit

In an interview with Book4Time's Spa Executive Magazine, [Pat Makozak](#), Spa Director at Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea, said the best guest experience is intuitive. "It takes a certain kind of individual to be aware and present, to listen, and to understand what the guest needs before the guest even knows they need it."

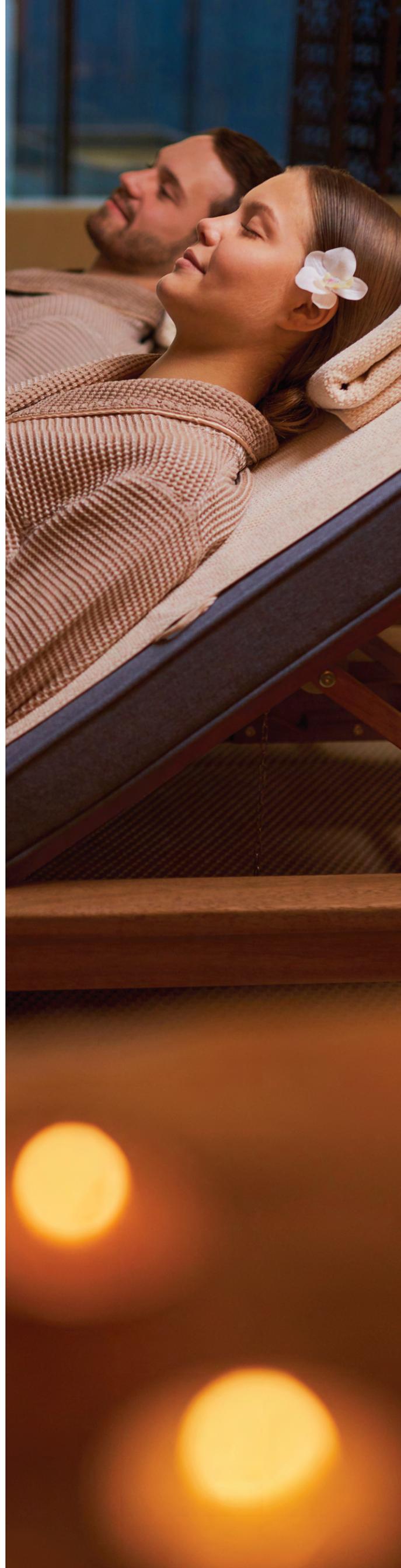
And [Arabelle del Pilar Rosario](#), Spa & Wellness Director for Melia Hotels International in Dominican Republic, said in a separate interview when asked what makes a great guest experience: "We have to be proactive and anticipate people's needs. When they arrive at the spa, we should know what they need and provide it before they ask."

Intuiting what a guest needs and providing it for them without them having to ask is one of the best ways to elevate your guest experience.

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Personalize

A personalized customer experience is imperative. Research has found that [75% of consumers](#) are more likely to purchase from a company that knows their name and purchase history and recommends products based on their preferences, [33% of consumers](#) who ended their relationship with a company in



in 2018 did so because the experience wasn't personalized enough, and [42% of consumers](#) say that if a company doesn't offer a personalized experience, they're likely to switch brands.

Personalization is particularly important in spa. It's nice when a retail clothing store employee remembers you, but downright insulting when a massage therapist doesn't. But there's a right way and a wrong way to personalize the guest experience. Blasting people with ads for purchases they've already made, making assumptions based on a single purchase, and not maintaining updated records are wrong ways. Thoughtful, curated, and well designed, truly personalized experiences are the right way.

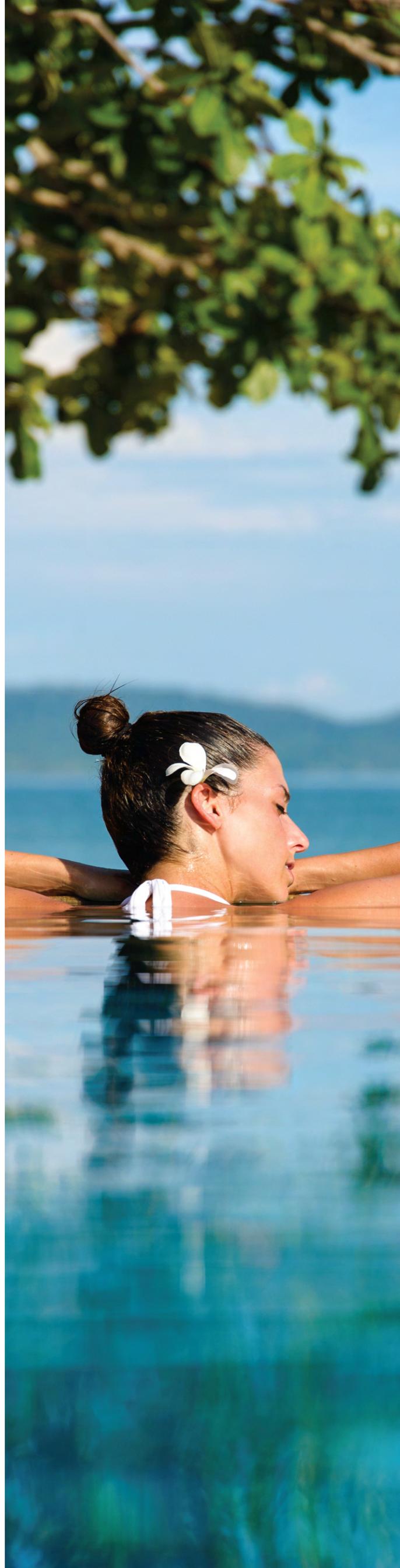
Book4Time's spa software with note taking functionality that allows therapists to record guest information and access it before appointments, and for this information to be shared across multiple properties, can facilitate this.

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Customer Relationship Management: An Important Element of Guest Experience Management

Customer relationship management (CRM) is another key element of customer or guest experience that deserves its own section. Customer relationship management and guest experience management are two different things, but CRM falls under the umbrella of guest experience, since our relationships are a part of our experience. We use the term “customer relationship management” (rather than “guest experience management” because it's a commonly used term and people know what it means).

According to [Investopedia](#): “Customer relationship management (CRM) refers to the principles, practices, and guidelines that an organization follows when interacting with its customers. From the organization's point of view, this entire relationship encompasses direct interactions with customers, such as sales and service-related processes, forecasting, and the analysis of customer trends and behaviors. Ultimately, CRM serves to enhance the customer's overall experience.”



When people talk about CRM, we are usually referring to the technology that is a CRM system, like Book4Time's, which helps you manage your contacts and relationships across the spa guest lifecycle. In a spa, this type of experience management platform can help manage your interactions and grow your relationships by staying connected, streamlining processes, and facilitating personalized service offerings, all of which serve to increase revenue and occupancy.

CRM can help you at every touchpoint in the guest journey at the spa. Spa leaders are inundated with tasks and being pulled in a million directions while taking care of day-to-day operations. CRM makes life easier for you and your team.

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Tips to Improve Guest Experience In Your Spa

There are a lot of ways to improve your spa guest experience. Here are just a few of them:

- ✔ **Personalize** – As we mentioned above, personalization is key to guest experience. Personalizing shows that you're paying attention and that a guest is valued. Everyone wants to feel valued.
- ✔ **Make sure everyone is on the same page** – Everyone must be aligned. Effective communication with your team about what is expected of them regarding guest experience and how it is to be provided to the guest is crucial. People can't exceed expectations if they don't know what they are in the first place.
- ✔ **Train your team** – Similarly, no employee should be left with questions about what they are supposed to do or how something works. Extensive, even exhaustive, training in operations, services, menus, brand mission and values, brand culture, software systems, and more, will ensure everyone is empowered to do their best.
- ✔ **Improve your employee experience** – **A happy employee makes for a happy guest.** A disgruntled, overworked and underappreciated employee will not provide the service you want them to. Treat your employees as you want them to treat your guests and they will pay it forward.



- ✓ **Listen and respond** – Practice active listening and responding accordingly with your guests. If there are complaints or suggestions, take them seriously. If there are no complaints but you're not hearing accolades, what isn't being said is as important as what is.
- ✓ **Go above and beyond** – We always say this. Everyone says this. But it's true, and it's often the smallest gestures that mean the most to people. In an interview with Spa Executive Magazine, Forbes Travel Guide's Executive Vice President of Standards & Ratings, [Amanda Frasier](#), said, "Sometimes the most simple things are what makes the best experience. Yes, it's lovely to offer champagne and flowers, and acknowledge birthdays [...] But, sometimes you have to think small to be the most impressive. I think the best guest experiences are the ones that are genuine and naturally intuitive, where you get the sense that the staff have listened to you and have understood what you need and responded accordingly."
- ✓ **Make time** – You can't pay full attention to your guests' needs if you're busy answering phones, tracking KPIs, and manually managing schedules and more. Book4Time's comprehensive spa software system will take care of all of this and more, handling the day-to-day tasks that can take hours a week, so you can focus on what really matters.
- ✓ **Manage your relationships** – Again, customer relationship management is important. These relationships are just like any other relationship. They need to be nurtured and maintained. How are you making those relationships fulfilling and meaningful?

Analyzing Guest Experience Management

How does guest experience management contribute to your spa's bottom line and how is this measured? The answer is that it's measured in a variety of ways. These include but are not limited to:

Net promoter scores (NPS)

You should be sending out surveys after every appointment to find out how the guest feels about their experience. These scores tell you how you're doing, and if something isn't perfect, this is your chance to fix it.



Customer retention rates

How many times are guests returning to your spa? Are they coming once and never coming back? Or do they return again and again? Your return rates, which show in Book4Time's reporting dashboard, will tell you what's happening here. If they are not coming back, you need to find out why and fix it.

Online reviews

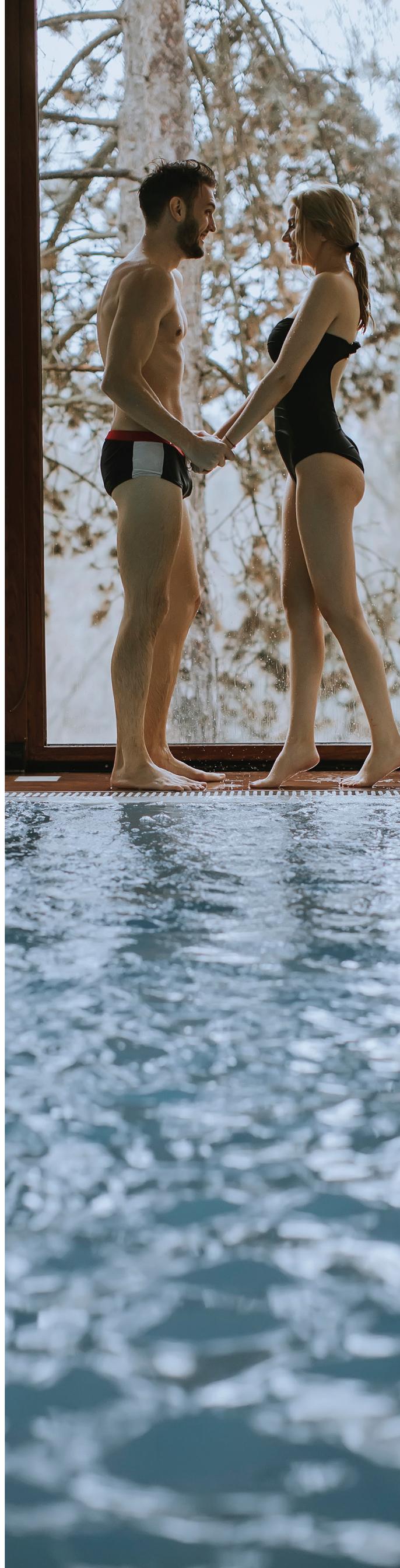
Your online reviews tell you how guests are feeling and are crucial to your customer acquisition and retention. A vast majority of consumers will not use a business with less than a 4-star review. Only a stellar guest experience will lead to 4 or 5-star reviews, so make sure this is what you're offering. And you have to ask people to leave reviews, because most will only leave a review when an experience is bad. Be sure to add links to review sites in your follow up communications.

Customer referral rates

If your guest experience is excellent, people will tell their friends. If they are not referring more guests, why is that? Something is wrong. Don't you tell people when you love a business? Your guests do too. They can be your greatest ambassadors but you have to earn their loyalty.

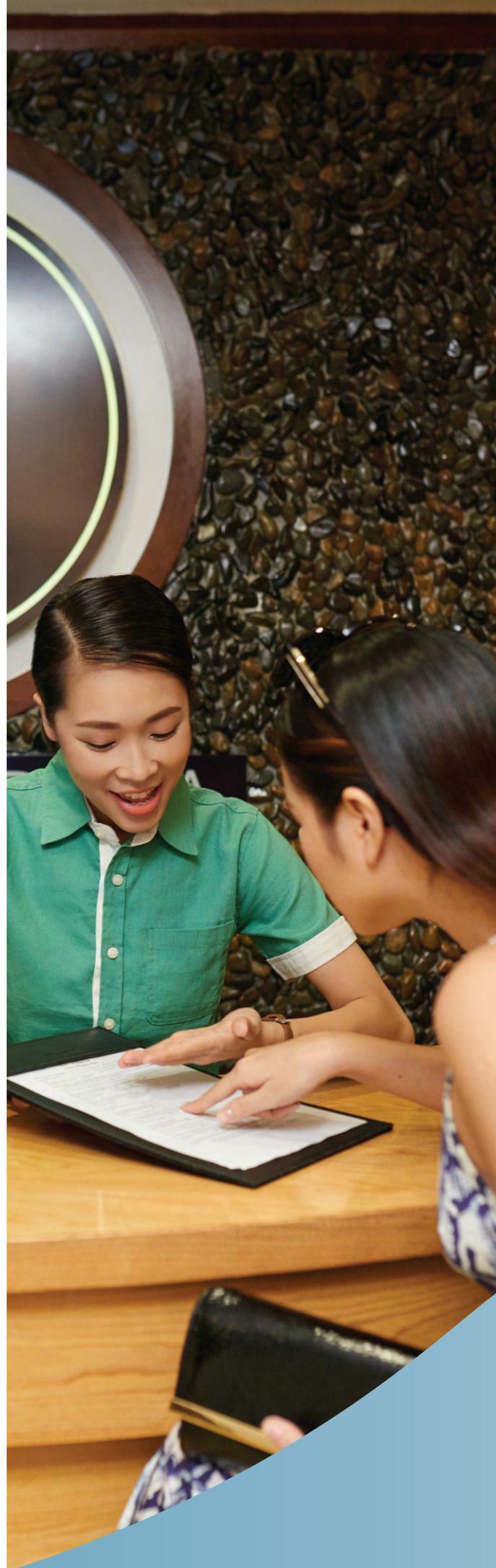
Book4Time can help you measure all of these metrics and more with a reporting dashboard that is probably easier to use and more comprehensive than anyone else's at any other spa software company anywhere in the world.

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Nurture Your Relationships

Customer loyalty and those wonderful reciprocal relationships are the best things to have in the spa business, and they are waiting for you to earn them. People want to find a spa business, a service provider, and a treatment menu that they love and can return to again and again, and where they can bring or refer their friends. They want a list of product offerings that make them feel good. They want the choice of where to go, who to see, and what services and products to purchase to be obvious and intuitive, because they've done it before and the guest experience was amazing, even transformational. All you have to do is provide that experience, and nurture those customer relationships with CRM.



Book4Time's spa software solutions have helped the best, most awarded spas around the world elevate the guest experience and can do the same for you.

[Schedule a demo today!](#)

www.book4time.com

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