

DOMA HOTELS

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Clare Coyle – Director of Revenue Management, Doma Hotels, Canberra, Australia

Doma Hotels is Canberra’s largest independent hotel group, leading the way in contemporary luxury hotels in the Australian Capital Territory. Their hotel portfolio consists of five hotels and apartment-style establishments. Ranging from 5- to 4-star ratings, each property is known for its understated elegance, sophistication and luxurious amenities.

Four of the group’s five properties are set in Barton, on the footsteps of the Parliamentary Triangle, and the other is in the heart of Kingston. This placement offers Doma Hotels’ guests access to a diverse range of lifestyle and commercial outlets in the urban resort-style Realm Precinct.



Our Challenge

Compared to the rest of the hotel market in Canberra, knowing the market demand is critical for us. Four of our five hotels are located only a stone’s throw from Canberra’s Parliamentary Triangle, and experience many sudden changes in demand, brought on by spontaneous government meetings and events. Knowing the demand factors and how competitors react is therefore critical so we can adjust our pricing strategy immediately.

Unfortunately, this was not possible with our previous rate intelligence tool. To get details about the market, we had to request a report and wait for about twenty minutes for it to come through. Especially in a quickly moving market which requires us to react fast, this meant we were often lagging behind on price optimisation because the rate report was most likely outdated by the time we received it.

Checking parity was another big challenge for our hotels. Again, we had to request a report and wait for it, before being able to see current issues. Since the report did not show all five hotels at once, we had to collect data from each separate file and collate it to get a full picture of how all our hotels were doing. This was very cumbersome and time-consuming and only led to a quickly expired snapshot.

Since our former tool only let us scan the competition rates by leading room type, it left us in the dark for comparing our remaining room categories. To find this information, manual shops were necessary, which cost us a lot of time and effort

“Since Rate Insight lets us map and choose the category we want to compare, we saw that while we may have had our pricing set correctly for the one-bedroom apartment, we were leaving revenue on the table when selling the larger ones.”

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The Solution

We were at the Maximum Occupancy Conference in Sydney when we first learned about OTA Insight and their **Rate Insight** tool. It immediately caught our interest. We were interested in seeing if OTA Insight's product was a good alternative since running the revenue side of five hotels that sit very close together and often compete with each other was not easy with our old system.

Rate Insight convinced us because it is very simple to use, especially when you manage several hotels.

The new platform allows us to switch between our properties quite easily and always shows up-to-date information, whether it concerns parity, our hotels' ranking on OTAs or live demand changes in the market. And what's even better, now we can compare all our hotels' data at a glance.

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Our Results

Increased efficiency

The biggest way Rate Insight saves time for us is that now we do much less manual shopping. On the parity tab, we can check rate parity for all five hotels on all channels within seconds. Issues are made easy to spot so they can be fixed immediately, and we can move on with our day.

Changes in demand and the performance of individual channels are clearly shown too, so we no longer have to check each website separately ourselves. This lets us quickly adjust our rates to changes in the market and take advantage of spontaneously rising demand. Since Rate Insight is open on our computer the whole day, we can go through these steps several times if necessary and always stay up-to-date.

The live shop has been a true game-changer in terms of efficiency, and the quality and presentation of the information it provides. **Since we no longer have to request separate reports for each hotel and then rearrange the data into our own spreadsheets, we save a lot of time now which we can dedicate to other tasks.**

The short learning-period for Rate Insight was also great. During the first week, a few questions arose but they were quickly answered by OTA Insight's 24-hour customer service team. Their quick response time and openness to feedback helped make the transition easier and lets us get the most out of the tool.

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Increased ADR

When we started using Rate Insight, we were hoping to improve the performance of our apartment product, which makes up a significant part of the inventory at several of our properties.

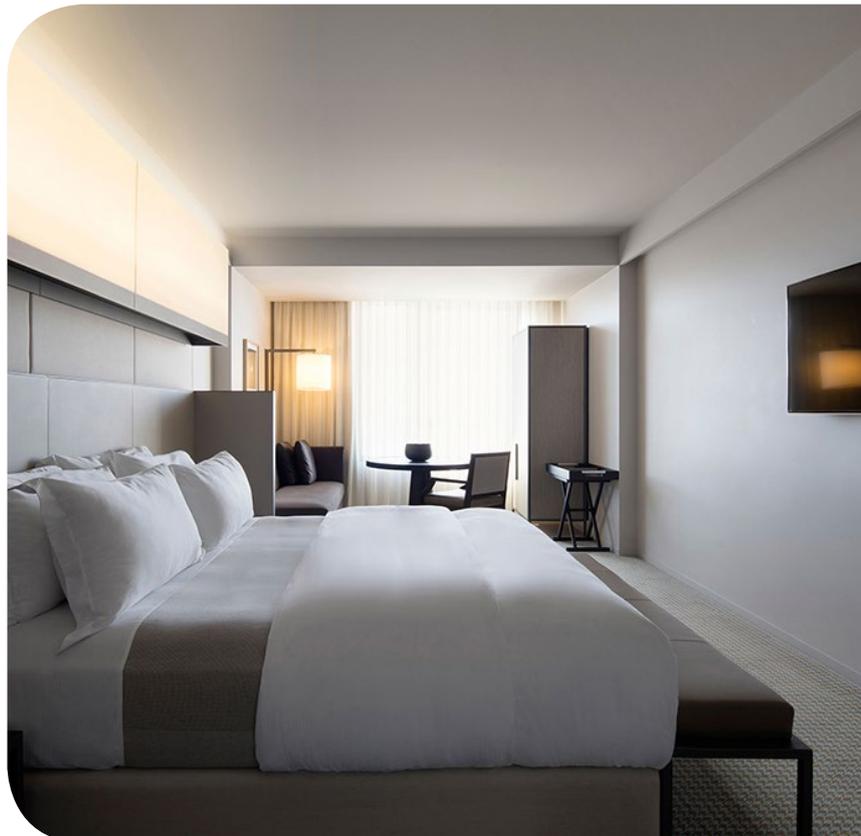
Thanks to Rate Insight's live shopping capability and the accurate information it provides, the growth in the apartments' average rate has been significant. In some cases, ADR grew by up to 10% compared to the same time last year. While the human element plays a role, a lot of this success is due to Rate Insight since it clearly lays out information about our competitors.

Designating an appropriate comp set is the backbone to getting relevant information from Rate Insight, especially when looking at different room categories. Previously, we were leveraging ourselves only against our leading room types, as this was the only option with our former tool. What we didn't know was that the supplements our competitors were charging as they went from one-bedroom apartments to two-, three- and four-bedroom flats were significantly higher than ours.

Since Rate Insight lets us map and choose the category we want to compare, we saw that while we may have had our pricing set correctly for the one-bedroom apartment, we were leaving revenue on the table when selling the larger ones.

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More flexible dynamic pricing practice

Since we can easily check the market situation several times a day and get accurate, live information, we now have the possibility to immediately adapt our rates based on our pick-up and our comp set's pricing.

For example, the Australian Prime Minister recently called an impromptu meeting in Canberra and we were immediately able to see how the market responded. With the old solution, we would have had to request a report and wait 15-20 minutes before receiving it. Especially in a situation where government officials were responding very quickly and booking rooms last-minute, the data may well have already been old by the time we got it. Thanks to Rate Insight's accurate live information, we were able to keep an eye on the market and update our rates accordingly.

In this case, it was particularly useful that we were able to check hotels we had previously designated as our comp set. That way we can always look right at our direct competitors and understand how they are responding. Since our hotels are so close together, we shop our own rates as well, to see everything in a bigger picture.

The benefits of live market insights are also felt in our strategy meetings. If there's a conversation about pricing, for example, we can pull up Rate Insight and we can talk through it. Now we are no longer looking at a report which was run hours ago but at live, accurate data and everyone can make suggestions or ask questions based on that.



Improved parity and management of online sales channels

On top of showing us that there is a parity issue, the parity tab also tells where it is happening, all in a matter of seconds. If needed, we can check several times a day, simply by hitting refresh. This makes it easy to take an up-to-date screenshot, share it with the market manager and request their assistance.

The ranking tab is also helpful as it shows me where our hotels show up in OTA search results. Before we would have had to go to each channel manually and physically look.

If we see that one

hotel ranks very differently on two channels, we look for the reason and ways to fix it, and move our properties further up in the search results. While this aspect of Rate Insight does not influence how we price our hotels, it is still very important as it enables us to improve our placement and make sure we get in front of our target audience.

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Discover how Rate Insight can help you make smarter pricing decisions. **Click here for a free trial.**

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