



MOOD:MEDIA

# 12 ESSENTIALS OF EFFECTIVE HOTEL MUSIC

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The music you play at your hotel is much more than a necessary element of the ambiance you're aiming to create. **When executed the right way, music can be a powerful tool that helps you engage your unique clientele on a deeper, more emotional level.**

Using music to connect with your guests on an emotional level can actually develop and strengthen the fibers of their loyalty to your property – and your brand. However, there are several elements that you must first address in order to position your hotel music to make such a connection. We explain those essentials in depth, below.

### **1 THE MUSIC SOUNDS LIKE YOUR BRAND - AND YOUR DESIRED EXPERIENCE**

The music you play should present an accurate reflection of the look, feel and personality of your brand. Is your brand modern and cheery? Classic and elegant? Hip and techy? Homey and comforting?

The music should also support and enhance the experience that you're trying to create. Remember – music can have an incredible influence on our perception and feelings, so consider your target clientele and how you want them to feel at your property. Should they feel relaxed or energized (*see tip #7 for more information on "dayparting"*)? Should they feel at home or in an exotic place? Your answers to these questions and others will also go a long way in helping your Music provider recommend the right programming for your brand and your location.

### **2 MORE VARIETY AND REGULAR UPDATES**

Make sure that the provider you choose offers a [huge selection of programs and genres](#) that fit the experience you want to create. The last thing you want to do is loop the same program every day. By the same token, you also don't want to resort to playing off-brand music just for the sake of variety. Again, a qualified provider will help guide you in the right direction.

Additionally, you also should seek out a provider that proactively updates your programming. Between major labels, independent publishers and artists around the world, every day thousands of new tracks become available. It's up to your provider to discover new content that suits your brand and guest experience. They should also know when specific tracks

need to be rested or removed from rotation. The goal is to create a branded sound that is constantly evolving – one that always provides a familiar, yet fresh experience for returning guests.

### **3 THE MUSIC DELIVERY IS RELIABLE**

Any idea what it sounds like when your music platform goes down? If you guessed "nothing," you're absolutely right.

Silence in the general areas of your hotel will undoubtedly detract from the quality of the guest experience, so you can't afford to have an unreliable music platform. Additionally, the skips and blips that often come along with consumer-based streaming technology will also disrupt the experience and make a poor impression on your guests.

With many new providers in the industry providing only streaming music solutions without a media device, it's important to remember that the reliability of a device-less solution is entirely dependent upon a) your internet connection, and b) the strength and reliability of the provider's feed.

Additionally, if you have other devices and computers consuming bandwidth on your network, your playback quality could be affected as well.

The point here: make sure you go with a reliable provider that offers a commercial-grade platform for music playback. And if you choose a lower-cost [streaming-only solution](#) that doesn't use a device, it's even more important to go with an experienced provider that has a quality feed and robust technology in place.



#### **4 THE SERVICE IS “MONEY WELL SPENT”**

Everyone has a different budget for background music, but generally speaking, you get what you pay for. The market for hotel music is flooded with low-cost providers boasting the latest-and-greatest, and many of them lack important things like quality, variety, control, reliability and service.

At the end of the day, these elements are well worth the cost of a few extra cents per day that you might pay with a more experienced provider.

#### **5 THE POWER OF HUMAN CURATION**

Any IT hack or coder funded by a start-up investor can load up a bunch of songs, sort them by genre and create a streaming music product. But these people aren't going to build you an effective playlist that accurately expresses the true sound of your brand.

Instead, you want to work with a company that has true music experts who handpick your music and curate your programs. These are the professionals who not only know and love music, but they also have a keen sense for what your brand should sound like. They'll even help you make the right selections so that the tunes are consistent with the experience you're looking to create.

Platforms and technology are fundamental, but they can't account for the power of human curation, executed by professional music designers who have a deep understanding for the symbiotic relationship between music, brand and your unique guest experience.

#### **6 IT MEETS YOUR SPECIFIC NEEDS**

Hotels vary widely in size, footprint and clientele, from renowned brands with national and global footprints to boutique hoteliers, independent motels, extended stay lodgings, luxury resorts and many others. That fact is no news flash to you, but it's worth mentioning because these different types of organizations have very different needs when it comes to their music.

For example, the boutique hotelier may aim to create a truly unique experience. As such, they would benefit from a streaming solution that offers them full control over what their guests hear.

On the other hand, a global hospitality organization will have much different needs. Differentiating from the competition and ensuring consistency are essential for this type of hotel brand. As such, they'll likely look for multiple custom programs in order to create a signature experience across their entire footprint.

They may also want to vary their programming by region in order to provide a more localized feel. While the music may vary slightly by region, it should still provide the loyal guest with a familiar sound that they'd expect of the hospitality brand they love. Additionally, such brands will likely want their provider to manage all of these variables on their behalf.

Then there are luxury resorts, which may need several different programs to play in different zones – one for the pool area, one for the Asian-themed restaurant, one for the gym, and so on.

As a final example, a franchise-based organization might want a series of pre-made programs that they can allow their franchisees to choose from, providing a fair balance of choice and brand consistency. Or it's possible that they'll want to centrally manage the music for all franchisees.

We can go on and on with all of the different needs and possibilities, but the main point here is that effective hotel music doesn't come from a one-size-fits-all provider. The company you work with should offer multiple programming and control options so that you can find the best solution to meet your needs.

Additionally, it's also good to work with a provider that can deliver the music through your preferred medium. While internet is the most reliable and efficient method for music delivery, not every hotel wants a solution that uses their internet connection. Sometimes they want it on a CD or need music delivered via satellite. Others want a caching solution that stores the music as it downloads. Just make sure that the music works for you, and not the other way around.

## **7 IT ALLOWS DAYPARTING**

Simply put, dayparting is a fancy term for playing different types of music at different times of the day. This strategy is important because it enables you to set different energy levels in your hotel by morning, afternoon and evening. The solution you use should allow you to schedule programs throughout the day and days of the week. Your provider can also daypart your programs for you.

## **8 IT BETTER BE REALLY EASY TO USE**

Whether your solution uses a background music player or not, you should still have the ability to easily manage content, set track preferences and schedule programs.

A poorly designed content management interface or player can cause a ton of confusion – and that's the last thing you want to deal with when it comes to managing your music.

Make sure you can see a demo of the content management system before you sign up for the solution. Additionally, you'll also want to make sure that the provider offers telephone and on-site support in the event that you need assistance.

## **9 BUSINESS-APPROPRIATE CONTENT**

Remember – the music you play in your hotel is a representation of your brand, and if you cater to families, playing tracks that are inappropriate is an easy way to tarnish your brand image. Whether or not your music is appropriate for business should never be a concern, which is another reason why it's so important to work with an experienced professional background music provider that proactively filters content that isn't suitable for a family experience.

## **10 IT OFFERS MORE THAN JUST MUSIC**

Hotel music is an investment in your guest experience – and what better way to maximize that investment than by working with a music provider that also offers other important services, such as AV systems, [scent marketing](#) and digital signage?

Music providers that focus on the total guest experience can offer incredible value and savings by allowing you to bundle your music with additional services. In the end you'll save money, elevate the guest experience and make your job easier by working with fewer vendors.

## **11 THE MUSIC IS BACKED BY FAST LOCAL SERVICE**

Getting the music up and running simply isn't enough. As we briefly mentioned in #8, you want to make sure that your music provider has local technicians they can send over to your property in the event of an issue in addition to 24/7 service by phone and email.

## **12 LICENSED FOR BUSINESS**

You need to ensure that your music is licensed for business use, since federal law requires that you secure licensing rights for any music you play in your hotel. Think of it as paying the artists in return for them providing music for your business. Using a consumer-based streaming app or your personal collection for overhead audio are practices that violate federal copyright laws.

Performing Rights Agents travel the country visiting businesses of all sizes to make sure that their background music solution is licensed for commercial use. If they catch you playing unlicensed music, you could be penalized \$750-\$150,000 in fines for each song you use illegally.





The good news is that most hotel music providers will obtain those licensing rights for you on your behalf. Additionally, your property may be subject to special licensing requirements if it contains multiple business areas, and your provider should be able to walk you through any additional requirements you may need to comply with. You can learn more about licensing by visiting our [Music Licensing page](#).

If you have any questions or want to learn more about hotel music solutions, [contact us](#) today! Our experts will show you just how easy we make it to bring together all 12 elements mentioned above so you can connect with your guests in a meaningful and memorable way.