



“I am convinced that going forward, customers will increasingly choose companies that are responsible in how they use customer data.”

Maud Bailly, Chief Digital Officer, Accor



INDUSTRY

- Hospitality

INFORMATION

- Head office: France
- 10,001+ employees

USE CASES

- Customer experience

CHALLENGE

- System integration and processing of customer data in compliance with the GDPR

TALEND PRODUCTS USED

- Talend Big Data
- Talend Data Catalog

PARTNERS

- AWS
- Snowflake

RESULTS

- 50 million customers. **300 gigabytes of data per day**
- **From 30 days down to 5:** searching information on the right to access data
- **12% increase in satisfaction** of Accor Elite customers

Creating a company culture where the respect of personal data is top priority

Accor is a world leader in augmented hospitality, offering guests a unique experience in 5,000 Accor hotels and residences located in 110 countries.

“The hospitality industry is blessed,” says Accor President Sébastien Bazin, speaking about the hospitality industry’s sustained and continual annual growth these past years. But this growth has also increased the appetite of new competition. And data has become an essential factor to stay ahead.

Accor has reshaped its core business around the idea of “Augmented Hospitality.” What that means is to go beyond the traditional hotel business by using data to anticipate even the simplest of customer needs.

“84% of travelers, even business travelers, are willing to share their personal information to make their stay more tailor-made,” says Maud Bailly, Chief Digital Officer for Accor. “The idea here is that whichever Accor hotel you stay in, you are acknowledged and recognized, and that Accor is able to anticipate your every need during your stay through the little extras that create moments of positive emotion. Nevertheless, we still have to create a company culture where respecting personal data is top priority.”

And to do that, Accor has made [data governance](#) a critical issue for all its employees.

System integration of customer data in compliance with the GDPR

Accor holds many different types of data about its customers: transactional information (reservations, emails, etc.), and personal data, some of which is highly sensitive (credit cards, passports, etc.). This data comes from several sources: satisfaction metrics (surveys, site reviews,

customer feedback); client interaction (log files from call centers, etc.); or information that some 60 million members of the Accor Live Limitless loyalty program provide about their food preferences, tastes, and lifestyle.

“Data is everywhere,” explains Agnès Roquefort, SVP Transformation Strategy and Data. Even more so since Accor undertook to transform its business model, which has further decentralized its data collection processes. After its split from the AccorInvest real estate asset management division, Accor decided to refocus on hotel services by providing tools and support to its hotel managers.

Accor also began developing an ecosystem of partnerships, such as with the website VeryChic, car rental companies, and airlines. As a result, Accor has acquired a wealth of information but needed to merge external data with internal data coming from its central Information System (IS) and its multiple local ISs.

Data privacy in the hospitality business is a critical issue. “When people stay in our hotels, we get to know something about how they live,” says Thomas Elm, Data Protection Officer. “We have to ensure that their rights are protected.”

[The General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#) guarantees an essential right, namely the right to information. What are you doing with my data? How did you collect it? When? For what occasion?

Besides the right to information, the GDPR also guarantees the right to access, the right to rectification, the right to erasure (right to be forgotten), the right to object, the right to restriction of processing, and the right to data portability, which ensures that any person can request and receive any personal data that applies to them.

"Thanks to Talend Data Catalog, we were able to reduce our response time searching information on the right to access data under the General Data Protection Regulation from 30 days to 5 days."



To comply with this new regulation, [Accor chose a data solution from Talend](#), one that can collect, process, and categorize huge volumes of data and at the same time establish trust and proper governance concerning its use.

Why Talend?

Accor uses Talend to collect 300 GB of data daily on 50 million customers in 50 different data flows from 11 business areas (reservations, e-commerce, payment, loyalty, marketing, preferences, etc.).

Talend also integrates data from Accor partners, the hotel network, or data from the web and social media. All this information is stored in [a data lake on AWS](#) and connected to a Snowflake data warehouse through Talend.

But the data itself is of little use on its own. "You have to have a lot of data, but also collect it properly, process it, and put it to good use," says Gilles de Richemond, Chief Information Officer.

"There was a regulatory risk, but also an image risk for the Group," he explains.

To mitigate these risks, Accor opted for Talend Data Catalog and invested a lot of effort in cataloging, creating a glossary, and developing documentation. Talend Data Catalog brought about radical improvement in data lineage, enabling Accor teams to find customer data more quickly, and depending on the specific request, either retrieve personal information or destroy it.

"The Accor data teams were already familiar with Talend. They were the ones who recommended Talend Data Catalog," says Elm.

[Talend Professional Services](#) was able to roll out the solution in a record time of four months.

Michael D'Eboli, SVP Engineering & Delivery explains: "The data lineage solution meant we could trace the history of any piece of data from start to finish, from its initial entry up to its deletion."

Thanks to Talend, Accor was able to establish an atmosphere of trust about how it collects data and reduces its response time searching information on the right to access data from 30 days, the GDPR legal time limit, to 5 days.

Privacy is a part of Accor's DNA: personalization with responsibility

"Privacy is in our DNA. We only use data to improve customer experience," says de Richemond. "20 years ago, we started with

Yield Management to optimize our room occupancy rates over several months and were able to offer customers a better price through dynamic pricing," recalls Roquefort. The move meant that Accor now uses predictive models and has boosted sales at its budget hotels by 10 percent (its brands offering rooms at a fixed price).

By correlating data from various business areas in its data lake, Accor was also able to improve major elements of customer satisfaction expressed in the Reputation Performance Score (RPS). "Some RPS issues were obvious, such as cleanliness," explains Roquefort. "But we also discovered that parking was really very important!" In response, Accor formed a partnership with the software company OmniPark.

Accor also took advantage of its greater data capabilities by correlating the RPS with conditions at its hotels to determine priorities in future renovations, such as air conditioning, bedding, etc.

More recently, the Group launched its Accor Customer Digital Card project, a new application that hotels can use to share customer preferences for any trip, whether traveling alone or with family, for work or leisure, and across all Accor hotel brands. The idea is to cater to customers' needs, even minor ones, based on their preferences during their prior stays.

"When the General Data Protection Regulation came into effect, we saw it as an opportunity to bring in more transparency in our interactions with customers," says Bailly.

"Through our quick responses, we also show that we are a company with efficient processes and that we take the rights of our customers very seriously," says Elm.

The data governance project was a joint effort by employees from various business areas and IT who worked together under the Accor Data Governance Board. The initiative also involved a team of 100 persons at headquarters comprising business area representatives and data specialist teams, who were in turn supported by another 80 data experts in each region and business area.

"The GDPR is not a legal concern. It concerns everyone," says Bailly. "The moment one of our employees processes any personal data, he or she is then responsible for protecting this data and using it properly."