

From a help desk on fire to a clean and easy solution

Industry

Hospitality

Company Size

More than 170,000 employees worldwide and over 6,000 properties.

Location

Global, with headquarters in the US

Product(s)

- Tailor-made URL-shortener
- Analytics platform

How Hotel Industry Giant Saves Thousands of Hours by Implementing Custom-Made Link Shortener

Our customer, a global leader in the hospitality industry, managed to replace millions of help desk hours with BLINK's simple URL-shortening solution. The tool was implemented in less than 30 days and required zero training for its 6,000+ users worldwide.

BLINK's simple and easy-to-deploy solution saved our customer time and resources and resulted in an improved guest experience.

About Our Customer

Our customer is a multinational hospitality company headquartered in the United States. With over 100 years in the hotel industry, the group has 20 brands across the luxury, upscale and midscale markets.

The company owns more than 6,000 properties in 118 countries and is one of the world's largest and most well-known hotel brands.

The Problem: 36 Hours To Create A Short URL

The customer, a multinational hotel industry giant, reached out to BLINK in late 2021. They needed branded short links to share group reservation information with people attending large events (such as weddings and corporate conferences).

The link-shortening aspect was just one of the challenges they faced. They also needed hotel managers from every corner of the world to be able to generate these links easily and with minimal training.

With more than 6,000 properties in 118 countries, this was no easy task.

Long URLs = Distrust

Our customer's reservation system generates extremely long URLs containing the hotel brand, the type of event, the event dates, and many other key details.

These links are usually several lines long and are uncomfortable to share with event attendees. They can break easily and look suspicious to recipients (who would want to click on a 4-line long URL?).

By the time they contacted BLINK, the hospitality group had already tested several solutions to create short URLs. Because they needed their links to be standardized, they started by having a centralized help desk that would take URL-shortening requests from hotel managers worldwide.

But, of course, the help desk was not just handling this request (they would also address printer issues, email problems, etc.), and a backlog would often pile up.



Challenges

Hotel managers worldwide needed to create custom branded short links with group reservation information. They were using a centralized help desk to handle the task but a backlog would quickly build up, leading to delays that negatively affected the guest experience.



Approach

BL.INK proposed a customized link shortening solution that required zero training for hotel managers and reduced link creation lag time from 36 hours to virtually zero. BL.INK's tool proved to be simple, accessible, secure and led to higher user engagement.



Results

- Short link generator was implemented in under 30 days and adopted by over 6,000 hotel managers worldwide.
- Fast deployment as the new system implementation required zero training
- Branded URL-shortening portal reduced lag time for short link creation from 36 hours to virtually 0.

Hotel managers would wait up to 36+ hours to get their shortened links, to then be able to share them with their Event Manager, who would then send them to the event's attendees. It was a cumbersome process.

In need of a better solution, hotel managers had resorted to using generic link generators to speed up the process. The solution, however, was not good enough: the links did not feature the brand name and failed to generate trust that the link was actually from the hotel.

The Solution: A Tailor-Made URL Shortener

This hotel industry giant had been a BL.INK customer since 2020. So when the need for a new technical solution came up, the team was able to naturally extend BL.INK's functionality and solve an entirely new and unexpected use case.

This time, they desperately needed a link shortener adapted to their specific needs:

- They needed short links that could be customized for each hotel brand.
- They wanted standardized links regardless of who had created them - a hotel manager in New York, Rio de Janeiro, or Bali.
- They wanted the system to require as little training as possible.
- They also needed the link to expire gracefully once the event was over.

“We leveraged our robust API and built a self-service page that allows anyone who can access that URL to build a branded short link. Hotel managers can paste their long URL into a single field and one click later have a link out to a happy guest. We flawlessly extract the brand, the reservation code, and the reservation's end date and provide the branded short link,” explains Andy Meadows, BL.INK's CEO. “So it's one field, one button, one response.”

Apart from being extremely easy to use, BL.INK's solution is more secure. By taking the reservation's end date from the original URL, the tool also deactivates the links once the reservation is over.

“Otherwise, there would be millions of links out there that are potentially a security risk because they are now routing into a system that is not expecting them,” says Andy.

Security

Accessibility and security are also critical to our customer. The system had to be accessible to hotel managers worldwide. Still, it needed to avoid “the possibility of being abused or of somebody using it nefariously to create a branded short link to a destination that is not allowed,” explains Andy.

To avoid this, BL.INK put in a **validation system** that ensures that users are only shortening and redirecting links to authorized locations. Event managers from brand 1 automatically receive group reservation short links for brand 1. If they need to create short links for additional services - like the pool, the spa, or other corporate services -, the system automatically uses the short domain for the parent brand.

The key is to ensure that no bad actor can use the branded short link to redirect to a URL outside the company.

Simplicity and Zero Training

BL.INK's solution was an instant hit. It was **simple, accessible, secure, and required zero training.**

“There is a help link on the page. After the first two weeks, we stopped receiving any messages from the Hotels. So it is a very intuitive solution; everybody understands it.”

Real-time Engagement Tracking

BL.INK's analytics platform also gives the hospitality company the possibility of **tracking engagement in real-time.** By analyzing link creation and clicks, the group gets complete insight into which brands and hotels are using the system and whether the event attendees click on the links.

They can, for example, look into whether a specific brand is using the system infrequently and why. Is it a wariness issue? A training issue? Or is that brand or the particular hotel not generating many group reservations in the first place?

Even shortly after implementing the new system, it was evident that **short links had significantly increased user engagement** as compared to the long, ugly links the hotels were using in the past.

The Takeaway: An Improved Guest Experience & Easy Deployment for 6,000 Locations

BL.INK's custom-made short link generator ticked all the boxes for this hospitality industry giant. The new system was **quickly and easily adopted by hotel managers worldwide**, who can now send the links to guests immediately without waiting 36 hours.

The branded short links also **increased customer engagement**, leading to higher trust and better brand recognition. Clicks on the shortened links were substantially higher after implementing the new system.

Ultimately, BL.INK's custom URL shortener allowed this huge multinational company to create standardized and secure branded short links, **improving their guests' experience** even before they arrived at the hotel.

BL.INK connects the world through managed, monitored, and measured branded links enabling marketers and technologists to connect with their audience via advanced routing technology. Since 2008, BL.INK has powered link management for many of the world's best brands as a critical infrastructure component. BL.INK unifies attribution strategies by connecting internal and external systems to enrich insights and visibility into global performance metrics.



**Ready to improve
your brand
experience?**

<https://www.bl.ink/features/>