

A DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS REPORT

2026 Guest Trends and Preferences in European Hospitality

Trends and insights from millions of guest conversations
across 1,000+ hospitality companies across Europe

10,000+

Sample Conversations

1.2M+

Interactions

1,000+

Properties

3

Property Types

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01

Executive Summary

A letter from our CEO

Dear hospitality leaders,

Over the past year, Runnr.ai has processed millions of guest conversations across more than 1,000 European properties — hotels, holiday parks, hostels, and campsites. This report distills those conversations into the trends and patterns that matter most for your business in 2026.

A few findings stand out:

Guests want flexibility above all else.

Check-in and checkout timing dominates guest communication — over a quarter of all hotel conversations relate to early check-in or late checkout. Properties that make timing flexibility easy to request and pay for will win.

Digital friction is the new front desk queue.

The dominant pain points are digital: broken payment links, missing booking confirmations, and check-in flows that don't work. Your digital touchpoints need to be as reliable as your front desk team.

Upsell appetite is real — and largely untapped.

12% of guests actively click to explore upsell options, and 18% of hotel conversations contain an unprompted upsell request. Breakfast, parking, room upgrades, and restaurant reservations are the biggest opportunities.

Holiday parks face a unique operational challenge.

Over 11% of holiday park conversations relate to maintenance issues. Cottage readiness isn't just a housekeeping issue; it's the single biggest driver of guest dissatisfaction.

Chatbot engagement is accelerating.

Monthly interactions nearly quadrupled over the year. Guests are choosing automated messaging as their primary communication channel, and they expect it to work in their own language.

The takeaway for 2026 is clear: guest communication strategy is no longer just about responding to enquiries. It's about anticipating needs, removing friction, and creating revenue opportunities — all through the channels guests already prefer.

I hope the insights in this report help inform your strategy for the year ahead.

Warm regards,



Michiel De Vor

CEO & Co-Founder, Runnr.ai

02

Methodology

How we collected this data

Runnr.ai is a WhatsApp, SMS, email, OTA inbox, and web chat platform used by over 1,000 hospitality companies across Europe. This report draws on three distinct datasets collected between March 2025 and February 2026.

10,000

Conversation Summaries

1,000

Negative-Sentiment Messages

1.23M

Button Interactions

Conversations by Property Type

5,632 Hotels

56.3% of conversations

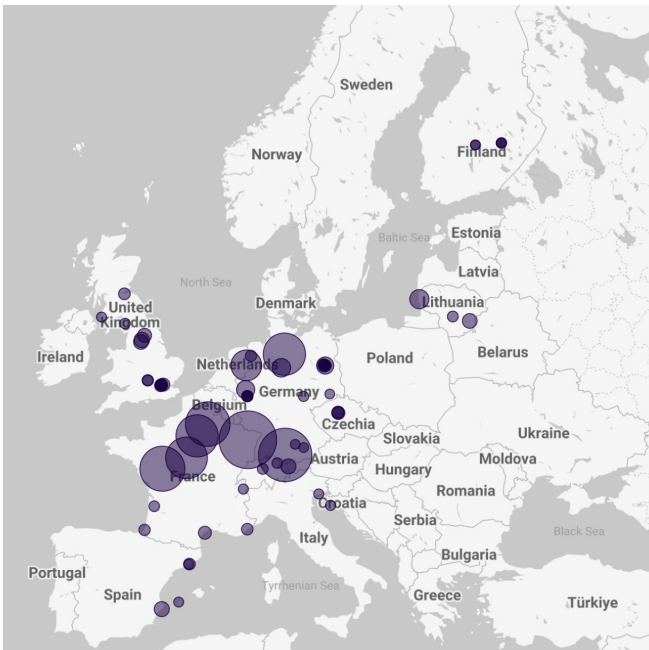
4,301 Holiday Parks

43.0% of conversations

67 Hostels

0.7% of conversations

1,000+ Properties Across Europe



Data Collection Channels: WhatsApp, Email, SMS, OTA Inboxes, Webchat

Period: March 2025 – February 2026 | Languages: Dutch, German, French, English, Spanish, Italian, Czech, Lithuanian

Note: Categories consolidated. All guest quotes anonymized. Property names redacted.

03

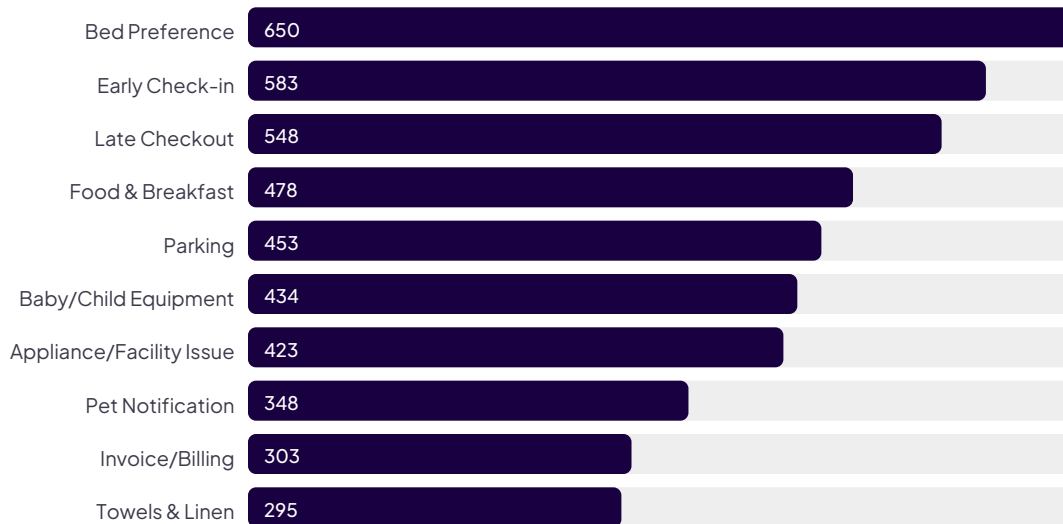
Top Guest Requests

What guests ask for most, by property type

We analyzed 10,000 guest conversations and discovered a few clear priorities: flexibility with arrival and departure times, food, and logistical needs like parking and invoicing. The picture differs significantly by property type — hotel guests are transactional and billing-conscious, while holiday park guests want hands-on operational support throughout their stay. Regardless of property type, all guests expect timely, personalized assistance from on-site staff.

Note: Categories have been consolidated to account for conversational variations in phrasing.

All Properties



Timing Flexibility is King

Combined early check-in and late checkout requests account for over a quarter of conversations.

1,131 total timing requests

Parks: More Reactive Service

Holiday park guests generate significantly more in-stay maintenance contacts than hotel guests.

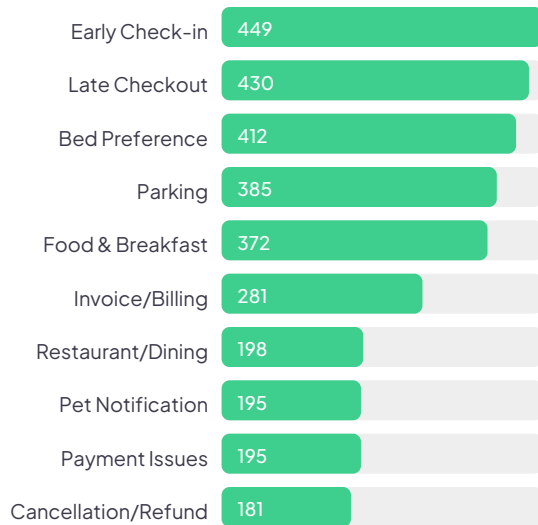
341 appliance/facility issues

Breakfast: A Missed Upsell Moment

12% of conversations mention adding or confirming breakfast — largely a hotel phenomenon.

478 food/breakfast mentions

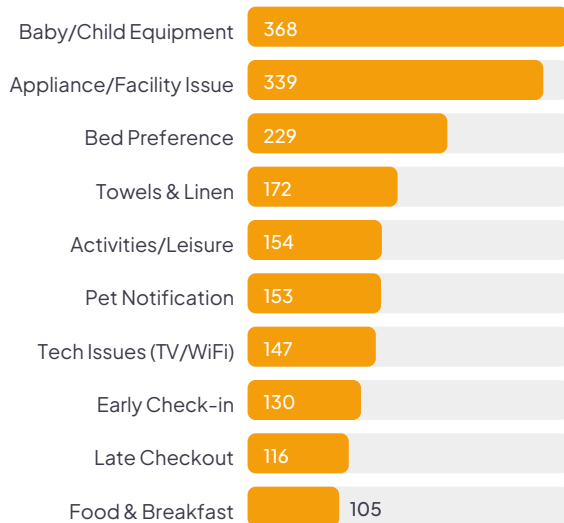
Hotels



Hotel Insight

Flexibility is the #1 hotel guest priority. Early check-in and late checkout together represent ~16% of all hotel requests. Parking and breakfast add-ons round out the top five, suggesting strong appetite for pre-arrival upsells.

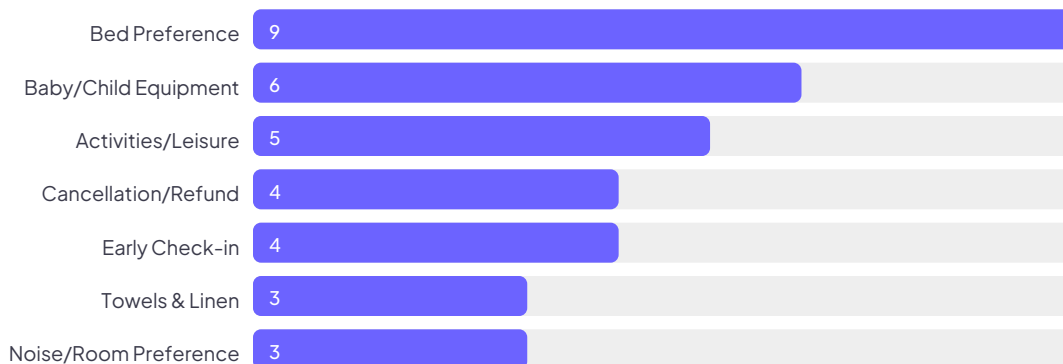
Holiday Parks



Holiday Park Insight

Operational issues dominate. Broken appliances, missing towel packages, and equipment requests account for over 500 contacts — indicating that cottage readiness and in-stay service quality are the primary drivers of guest friction.

Hostels



04

Biggest Guest Pain Points

Common guest complaints

We analyzed 1,000 conversations around guest complaints. The top complaint themes are dominated by digital friction — broken payment flows, missed confirmation emails, and confusing check-in processes — rather than physical issues with the property itself.

All Properties

1

Payment & Billing Friction

92 mentions

Credit card failures, missing payment links, deposit confusion.

The online portal won't allow credit card payment. Can we pay on-site instead?

Hotel guest — Germany

2

Check-in & Digital Access Issues

75 mentions

Broken online check-in links, access codes not working.

I'm trying to click the check-in link from the email and it won't let me.

Hotel guest — UK

3

Missing Booking Confirmations

65 mentions

No confirmation email received, generating anxiety and follow-up contacts.

I just made a reservation but haven't received any confirmation. Did the booking go through?

Hotel guest — Netherlands

4

Broken/Malfunctioning Equipment

58 mentions

Dishwashers, TVs, heating failures. Overwhelmingly a holiday park phenomenon.

The dishwasher won't start. Could someone come by? House 622.

Holiday park guest — Germany

5

Cancellation & Rebooking Difficulties

30 mentions

Guests struggling to cancel or modify, frustrated by rigid policies.

I need assistance cancelling and rebooking. I booked today but meant to book for a different time frame.

Hotel guest — international

6 Missing Towels & Linen

20 mentions

Towel packages and bed linen not present on arrival despite being ordered.

We booked 4 towel packages but only received 2. The missing packages should be delivered to our cottage.
Holiday park guest

Key Takeaway

The majority of these complaints relate to digital friction and on-site practicalities. Invest in tools to enable reliable and self-serve digital interactions on-site. This will lead to better guest experiences and higher guest satisfaction ratings.

Hotel Complaints

1 Payment & Billing Friction

Primary theme

Credit card verification failures, missing payment links, confusion about deposit charges.

2 Online Check-in Issues

High volume

Broken links, failed digital key delivery, confusion about whether check-in processed.

3 Invoice & Receipt Problems

High volume

Business travellers following up about invoices missing company details.

Holiday Park Complaints

1 Broken/Malfunctioning Equipment

Primary theme

Dishwashers, TVs, heating, saunas. Leading source of negative sentiment.

2 Missing Supplies on Arrival

High volume

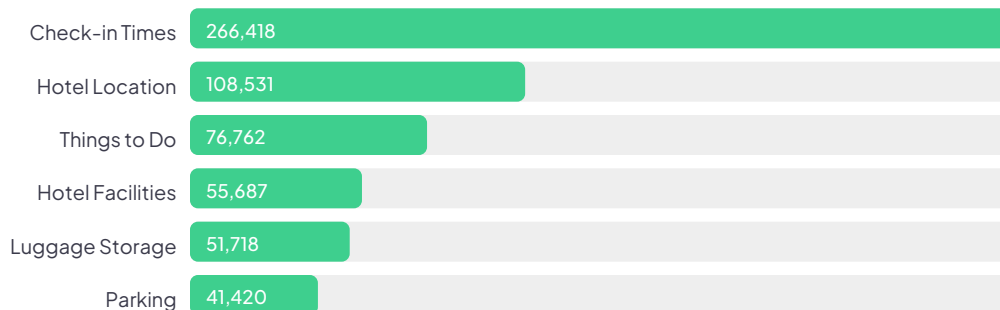
Towel packages, kitchen items, high chairs, linen not present on check-in.

A key feature of our AI-powered chat toolkit is a set of responsive buttons that allow guests to quickly set preferences, make requests and provide feedback without a back-and-forth conversation. In the past year we've collected 1.23 million of these button clicks. These clicks provide a glimpse into the information and amenities that most interest guests today.

Most-Clicked Chatbot Buttons

Button	12-Month Total	% Share
Check-in Times	266,418	21.6%
Enrich Your Stay	150,386	12.2%
Checkout Times	115,595	9.4%
Hotel Location	108,531	8.8%
Check-in Procedure	95,148	7.7%
Things to Do	76,762	6.2%
Hotel Facilities	55,687	4.5%
Luggage Storage	51,718	4.2%
Parking	41,420	3.4%
Give Us Feedback	36,449	3.0%

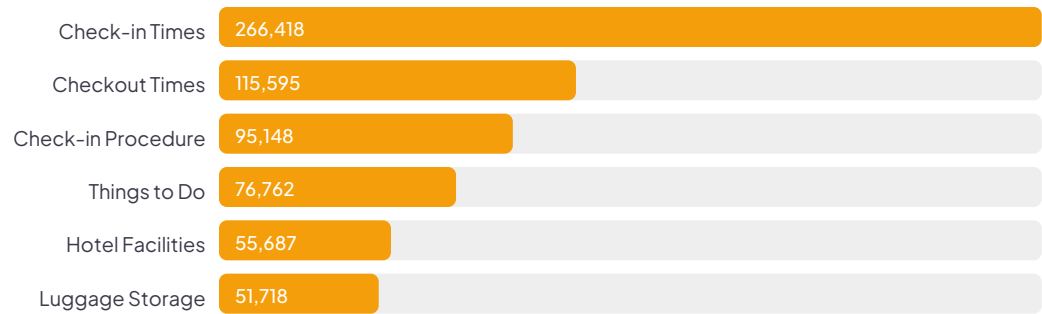
Hotels: Amenity Interest



Hotel Guests Crave Logistical Details

Hotel guests often ask about hotel location, transport links. This is especially important for urban hotels where transit may be more difficult to navigate. Luggage storage is also notably popular, reflecting demand for flexible arrival/departure day experiences.

Holiday Parks: Amenity Interest



Holiday Park Guests Crave Entertainment

Things to do is a dominant enquiry in parks, driven by families planning activities during their stay. Guests also show high interest in on-park facilities and restaurant reservations.

Location Remains Key

Roughly 9% of clicks relate to location – opportunity to share local guides.

108,531 location clicks

Activities Drive Engagement

"Things to do" generated ~6% of clicks, the highest amenity-specific category.

76,762 activity clicks

Luggage Storage Demand

~4% of clicks, suggesting guests want to check out and keep exploring.

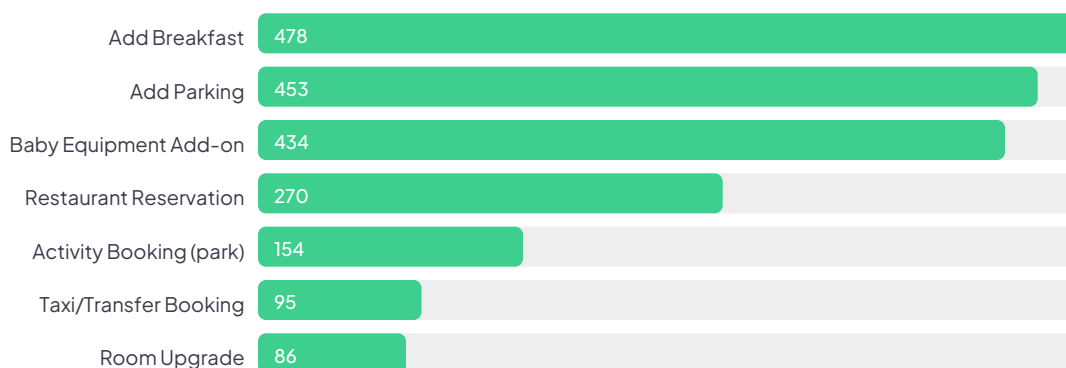
51,718 luggage clicks

Our data shows that upsell offers are in high demand regardless of property type. Roughly 12% of guests click the “Enrich Your Stay” button in Runnr.ai chats — from breakfast add-ons and parking reservations to room upgrades and activity bookings. Many of these requests arrive after initial booking, highlighting a significant revenue opportunity during the pre-arrival messaging window.

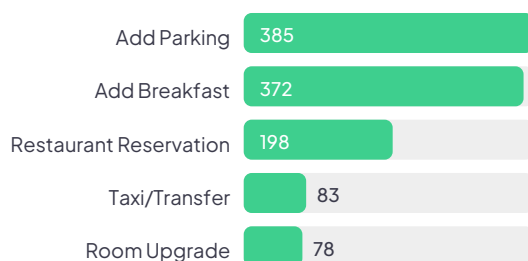
“Enrich Your Stay”: 150,386 Clicks

Runnr.ai’s upsell menu button received 150,386 clicks over the last 12 months, the second-most tapped button in the dataset. Guests are actively open to post-booking upsell offers when shown at the right moment.

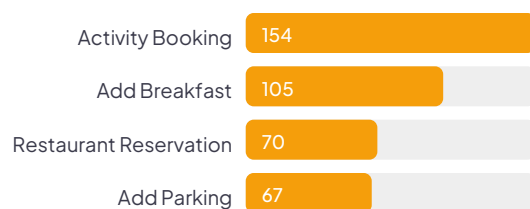
All Properties: Upsell Requests



Hotels



Holiday Parks



Breakfast Add-Ons in High Demand

33% of upsell-interested guests click to learn about breakfast. A proactive pre-arrival offer could dramatically increase uptake.

478 breakfast requests

Hotel Guests Want Room Upgrades

~7% of upsell-interested guests request upgrades. Pre-arrival prompts 24–48hrs before check-in see strong conversion.

86 upgrade requests

Baby & Child Equipment: A Proactive Upsell

Baby cots, high chairs, child beds — most requested at holiday parks. Runnr.ai can automate these offers when children are on the reservation.

434 family equipment requests

Restaurant Reservations, Fully Automated

Almost 19% of upsell requests. Runnr.ai offers chat-to-table bookings with Zenchef and Guestplan.

270 restaurant requests

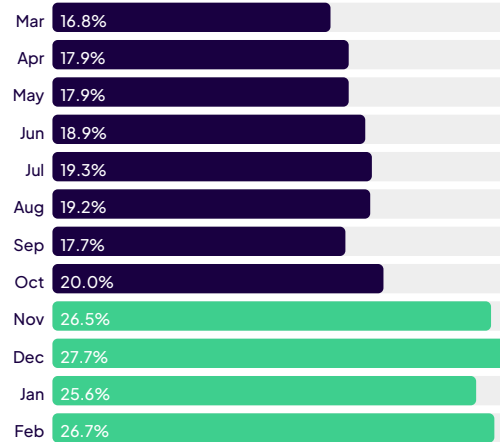
07

More Trends for 2026

Additional findings from the data

Check-in Flexibility Most Important in Winter Months

With 266,418 clicks (21.6% of all interactions), “Check-in Times” is the most-tapped chatbot menu item. Clicks rise from ~17% in spring to over 27% in winter (Nov–Feb), suggesting flexible arrivals matter more during holiday travel.



The Multilingual Guest Reality

Allowing guests to communicate in their own language is part of the magic of hospitality chatbots like Runnr.ai. Our properties experience a high density of Dutch, German, French and English, but Runnr.ai communicates in any language, even when on-site staff takes over.

Note: Runnr.ai has a high density of customer properties in Benelux. Dutch speakers account for a large portion of the data set.

Dutch High Dominant in parks	German High Hotels & parks	French High Strong in parks	English High All segments	Spanish Med Hotels	Italian Med Hotels	Czech Low Parks	Lithuanian Low Parks
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Pet-Friendly Travel

Pet-related requests appeared in 348 conversations. Pet-friendly properties should consider proactive communications around their pet policies.

“We'll be bringing our border collie — she's very well trained. Can you confirm the cottage is pet-friendly?”

Holiday park guest (anonymized)

Family Travel Is On the Rise

Baby cots, high chairs, and child equipment appear in 434 conversations. Heavily concentrated in holiday parks (368 vs 60 hotels). Missing baby equipment is a major source of first-night dissatisfaction.

“We urgently need the high chair and baby cot delivered to cottage 510 — we have two small children and mealtime is approaching.”

Holiday park guest (anonymized)

08

About Runnr.ai

Europe's #1 automated guest communication platform

Runnr.ai helps hotels, holiday parks, hostels, and campsites across Europe automate guest communication — from pre-arrival to post-checkout. Our AI-powered platform handles WhatsApp, SMS, email, OTA inboxes, and webchat conversations in any language, enabling hospitality teams to deliver instant, personalised responses at scale while freeing staff to focus on what matters most: creating exceptional guest experiences.

Trusted by over 1,000 properties across Europe, Runnr.ai integrates with your PMS, booking engine, and operational tools to turn every guest conversation into an opportunity — whether that's resolving a request, capturing an upsell, or earning a five-star review.

95%

of guest communication,
fully automated

94%

of guests say Runnr.ai
enhances their stay

65%

of guests ask more
than one question

TRUSTED BY THOUSANDS OF HOSPITALITY COMPANIES WORLDWIDE



And hundreds more across Europe

Ready to transform your guest communication?

See how Runnr.ai can automate guest messaging, boost upsell revenue, and improve satisfaction scores.

Scan to
Book a Demo

Or visit runnr.ai/book-a-demo

