



From BNPL to Artificial Intelligence: The Keys to the New Tourism According to the Keytel Spain Convention 2025

Madrid, October 16, 2025. – The 2025 Keytel Spain Annual Convention, held at the Claridge Hotel in Madrid, brought together more than one hundred professionals from the hotel sector to analyze the main challenges and trends in independent tourism.

Among the highlighted topics were the evolution of the Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) system, the impact of artificial intelligence on bookings, experiential loyalty programs, and human-centered leadership in hospitality.

BNPL, a Key Lever for Driving Direct Hotel Bookings

According to Beatriz Giménez, General Manager of PayPal Iberia, BNPL will benefit the hotel direct channel. The use of the “Buy Now Pay Later” payment system, which allows users to apply credit to their purchases, grew by 11% in Spain during 2025. The trend is expected to continue rising, consolidating itself as a key tool for conversion and traveler loyalty by offering more flexible and personalized payment experiences.

The convention also featured Antonio Espasa, Chief Economist Europe at Banco Santander, who emphasized that despite the expected economic slowdown in 2026, tourism remains resilient and strategic—especially in Spain, where investment, employment, and tourism consumption continue to rise. “Tourism not only resists, but leads the recovery in services and is key to the evolution of GDP in the coming years,” he stated.

Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Bookings

Matías Undurraga, Enterprise Technologist at Amazon Web Services (AWS), explained how AI is transforming the entire travel cycle. The trend is for travelers to soon be able to book and pay directly through conversational artificial intelligence platforms such as ChatGPT or Perplexity, reducing dependency on traditional search engines.

“Hotels must optimize their presence on AI platforms to attract customers and personalize the experience from the first contact,” Undurraga affirmed, noting that direct booking through assistants like ChatGPT, Perplexity or Gemini will soon become a reality.

Juanfran Castuera, Corporate Vice President at American Express, highlighted that loyalty is no longer based on points, but on authentic experiences, exclusive access, and emotional connection with customers. “What’s exclusive is no longer luxury; it’s authenticity. Experience is the new product,” he stated.

Human Leadership in Hospitality

The convention featured a MasterClass by Sowon Kim, professor at the École Hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL), a prestigious institution with which Keytel has recently established a strategic alliance to promote training and excellence among its associated hotels.

Kim emphasized that true hospitality is rooted in human connection and the co-creation of purpose, even in a world of algorithms: “What makes the difference is the ability to see, care for, and walk alongside the guest,” she said.



Amancio López, President of Grupo Hotusa, closed the sessions by reminding attendees of the importance of teams and the role of independent hotels in the industry. He underlined that their capacity for innovation and competitiveness strengthens the entire Spanish tourism ecosystem.

The convention reaffirmed independent tourism as a strategic economic driver, with clear trends: BNPL and digital payments, artificial intelligence, experiential loyalty, and human leadership as the keys to a competitive, sustainable, and connected sector in the new era of hospitality.

About Keytel

Keytel is the world's largest alliance of independent hotels, with a portfolio of more than 3,800 properties in 92 countries. The company defines itself as the first organization specialized in accelerating hotel transformation processes—a model that combines consulting, a wide range of services, and technological tools to increase the speed of growth and transformation of its associated hotels.

About Grupo Hotusa

Grupo Hotusa is a dynamic organization made up of a significant number of companies linked to various areas of the tourism sector. With more than 45 years of history, Grupo Hotusa operates in over 130 countries, employs 6,000 people, and recorded revenues of more than 1.4 billion euros in 2023.

The company is structured into three business units: the hotel services division, operating under the **Keytel** umbrella, which is the world's largest consortium of independent hotels; the distribution division, operating as **Restel** and marketing more than 125,000 establishments worldwide; and the hotel management division, **Eurostars Hotel Company**, which has a portfolio of more than 260 properties in 19 countries.

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