SMOOBU

Annual Report

Actionable insights from top hosts and strategies for 2025

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Purpose of the report

Since 2014, hosts worldwide have trusted Smoobu to automate and streamline their short-term and vacation rental management in order to grow their businesses. Over this past decade, we have worked diligently to provide everyone with practical solutions and comprehensive resources.

To celebrate our 10th anniversary, we've created this report using anonymised internal data from 500 top-performing Smoobu hosts with the highest bookings per unit and third-party insights.*

Learn from 2024's top performers, discover key trends for 2025, and uncover applicable strategies that will help you become a more successful host and short-term rental owner!



*For further information, go to slide 36.

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Paving the way for success in 2025



Jannik Abraham

Managing Director
Smoobu

Dear hosts,

At Smoobu, our primary goal is to provide the tools and insights that simplify the hosting experience and help your business thrive. Our first-ever annual report, which has been thoroughly researched, highlights our top-performing hosts, key trends, and strategies.

Within our report, we have combined data and actionable insights that you can use as inspiration for the year ahead. Our focus is always on what matters most to us: your success. Thus, in keeping with Smoobu's general approach to vacation rental management, we have ensured this report is concise yet impactful.

Thank you for being part of the Smoobu community.
Let's make 2025 your best year yet!

Warm regards,
Jannik Abraham

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01

Lessons from 2024

What we have learned from the past year

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2024: Tourism industry trends

In 2024, guests began to value the unique experiences and tailored amenities offered by personalised stays. The significant momentum gained by eco-friendly travel, with properties adopting sustainable practices to attract conscious travelers, is a promising sign for the industry's future. However, one of the most important factors shaping the travel industry was the rise of remote work.

This shift in work dynamics drove demand for rentals equipped with home-office features. Travelers increasingly sought authentic local experiences to engage with local cultures. Additionally, there was a notable and informative shift towards alternative lodging options, with a 10% decrease* in hotel preference and a rise in vacation rentals, bed and breakfasts, agritourism, and camping.



*Based on data from Envisionit's Top 10 summer 2024 consumer travel trends.

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2024: Challenges and opportunities



- **Increased competition:** More listings made it harder to stand out.
- **Fluctuating bookings:** Unpredictable trends and last-minute reservations.
- **Higher guest expectations:** Demands for better experiences and amenities.
- **Operational complexity:** Managing multiple platforms and pricing.
- **Economic uncertainty:** Budget-conscious decisions due to inflation and restrictions.



- **Tech adoption:** Automation and AI streamlined operations for hosts.
- **Revenue growth:** Dynamic pricing and multi-channel strategies boosted profits.
- **Guest loyalty:** Personalised stays encouraged repeat bookings.
- **Sustainability focus:** Eco-friendly practices attracted eco-conscious travelers.
- **Unique stays:** Local experiences and alternative accommodations gained popularity.

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2024: What we have learnt

In 2024, Smoobu's hosts provided valuable insights into what worked and what did not. While using a channel manager to synchronise bookings across multiple channels allowed them to broaden their market reach, a more complex landscape posed new operational needs.

Many Smoobu hosts have adopted automation, such as our Automated Messaging function and Dynamic Pricing, to improve efficiency and profitability. Dynamic Pricing allow hosts to adjust prices according to demand and often unpredictable market trends.

As our analysis in this report suggests, personalising the guest experience through local recommendations or unique services often leads to higher guest satisfaction and more repeat bookings. On the other hand, as our OTA partners emphasised in our recent webinars, neglecting timely and personal communication with guests is one of the leading causes of negative reviews.

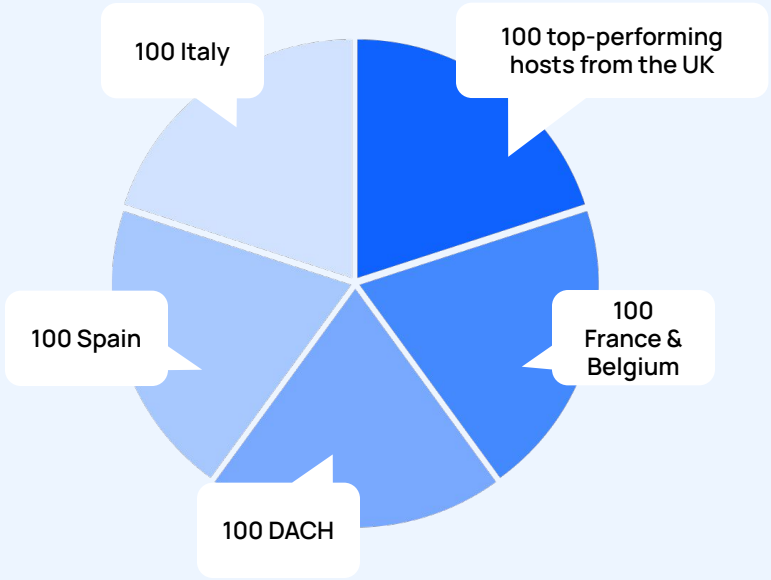
Looking ahead to 2025, we predict that the key to success lies in leveraging technology, personalising guest experiences, and maintaining flexibility. By refining communication strategies and staying adaptable to changing market demands, hosts will be better positioned to thrive in a competitive landscape.

02

Smoobu’s top hosts

Who are they and what strategies do they employ?

Smoobu top-performing hosts
Who are they?



This Annual Report analyses Smoobu's top 500 hosts. We define top hosts as those with the highest number of bookings per unit*. These are short-term rental hosts from 19 countries, with 1,233 managed units—an average of 2.5 units per host.

Furthermore, we analysed the top 100 hosts from the UK to gain a better understanding of the market. What do these hosts look like?

- Our top 100 UK-based hosts:
  - Located throughout the UK (East Anglia, Northern Ireland, Edinburgh, and beyond).
  - 265 total units.
  - 106 bookings per unit per year.

*For further information, go to page 36.

Booking portals

Major OTAs managed with Smoobu

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97.6%
Top-performing hosts list on Airbnb



97.6%
Top-performing hosts list on Booking.com

Please note: The share of bookings can vary significantly among users, as no platform inherently performs better or worse. Several factors influence this, including the type of accommodation. For example, vacation rentals often see higher booking volumes on Airbnb, while B&Bs tend to perform better on Booking.com. Promoting properties across multiple OTAs and a direct booking website is a proven strategy for maximising online visibility and reaching diverse audiences.



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Airbnb & Booking.com: Market comparison

	UK Market	Other core markets*
Airbnb average rating	4.76	4.79
Booking.com average rating	8.7	8.8
Booking Genius programme	30%	30%
Price per night	161	139
Pets allowed	30%	22%

*Core markets refer to Italy, France, Belgium, Spain, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

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Airbnb: High response rate and quality photos

Listing on Airbnb is essential to becoming a successful host, but it's vital to implement strategies to stand out from the platform's 8 million active listings. Smoobu's top hosts have:

- 96% - Average response rate
- 50% - Superhost
- 50% - Guest favourite
- 100% - Optimised their listings with quality pictures, complete descriptions, and a comprehensive list of amenities.





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Booking.com: Detailed amenities and good reviews

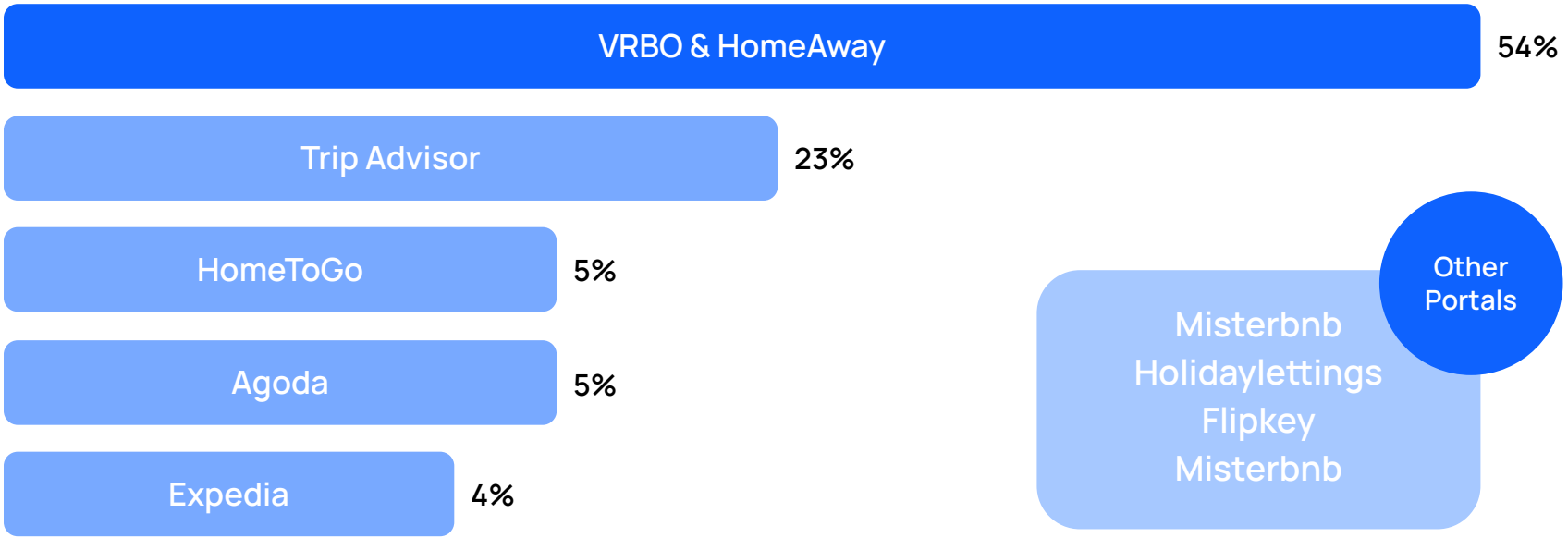
Booking.com continues to become increasingly valuable for Smoobu users. Between 2023 and 2024, bookings on the site increased by 34%.* How do these successful hosts perform?

- A comprehensive series of amenities is a must.
  - 75% - security features (cameras/lockboxes)
  - 75% - parking facilities
  - 60% - cribs/travel cribs/children's amenities
  - 60% - dedicated workspace
- 70% of top hosts are not affected by seasonality trends.
- 30% are part of the Genius discount programme.

*Total number of nights booked for Booking.com listings linked to Smoobu.

Booking portals

Other portals our top UK & Ireland hosts use

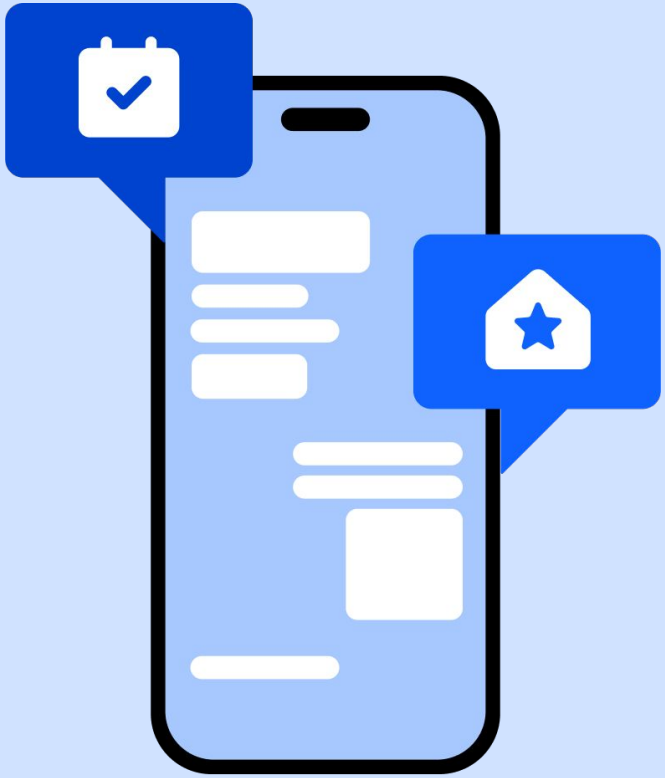


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Top 3 non-core features that our hosts use the most



The three features above are the most used by our top-performing hosts, besides our core functions: the Channel Manager for booking synchronisation and PMS for centralised management.



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Automated Messaging: Open lines of communication

A good response time is essential for ranking well on booking sites. But what tricks do Smoobu top hosts use?

- Booking confirmation, check-in information, and check-out details are always sent at the right time. By doing this once, you reduce workload.
- Templates of answers to common questions are ready on Smoobu and will be sent when needed.
- Personalised goodbye email templates with a request for a review and a link to a direct booking website are ready to be sent to guests who had a positive experience.
- Communication with housekeepers is automated on Smoobu.

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Online Check-In: Provide guests with flexibility

Offering guests the option to check-in online in advance of their arrival provides them with increased flexibility. Likewise, you remove an additional worry when it comes to arrival times. Our top hosts offer:

- Luggage drop off (50%)
- Automated messages, including check-in info (50%)
- Self check-in listed as an amenity (50%)

Pro tip: Combining online check-in with integrations such as smart locks and automated communications regarding check-in details will help make the process clear and reliable for you and your guests.





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Direct Booking Website: How to use it well

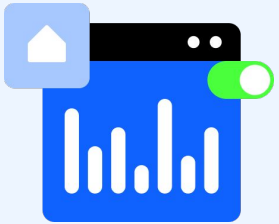
Compared to total bookings, the percentage of direct bookings stands at 9.8% among Smoobu's top 100 UK hosts. There are several reasons why some hosts receive more direct bookings than others:

- A great host experience results in regular guests.
- Hosts promote their website in their Guest Guide, goodbye email, and on social channels.
- Special discounts and offers increase direct bookings.

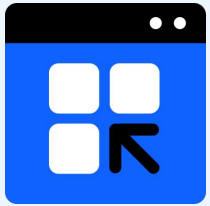
Improving your direct booking site will allow you to secure commission-free bookings, generating revenue independent from OTAs.

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The most popular integrations among our top hosts



Dynamic Pricing



Payment Solutions



Smart Locks

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Dynamic Pricing: Leverage new travel trends

The influence of seasonality and the rising trend of event-related travel profoundly affect the pricing strategies of vacation rental hosts. Smoobu's top-performing hosts in the UK who use dynamic pricing have an occupancy rate of 68%, up from the average of 59%.*

Many top Smoobu hosts have leveraged dynamic pricing tools to stay competitive and maximise their profits. These tools offer more flexibility and enable hosts to predict demand more accurately, enhancing their business performance.

Our upcoming Dynamic Pricing tool was our hosts' most eagerly awaited and requested feature in 2024. Stay tuned to learn more.



*Read more about how the data were collected on page 36.



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Payment Solutions: Adapting to guests' needs

Top-performing hosts understand that flexible and secure payment options are crucial to meeting traveller expectations. In 2024, the UK was forecasted to welcome approximately 38.7 million inbound visits, each bringing diverse payment preferences.*

Adapting to your guests' needs is key to creating a comfortable host experience. By integrating advanced payment solutions, you can allow guests to pay in a chosen currency and when they desire (upfront, in instalments, or upon arrival).

This adaptability ensures a smooth, comfortable journey from booking to departure. Simplify the payment process, build trust, and show your guests that you are responsive to their needs, making their stay more enjoyable.

*To learn more, check out this study by Visit Britain.

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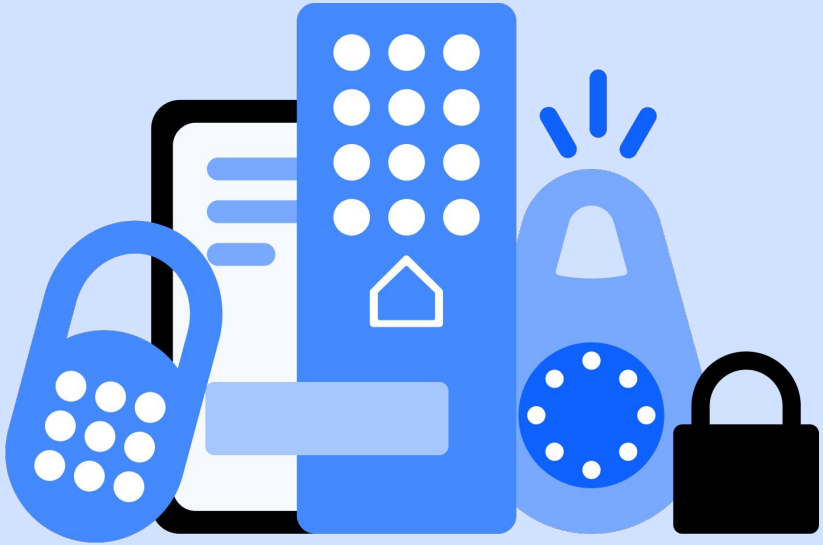
Smart Locks: Flexibility and technology

Across Europe, self-check-in has become a crucial feature of the booking process. The technology has vast potential in the UK, and hosts may leverage it to improve guest relations and the experience.

In the DACH region,* for example, 40% of top-performing hosts utilise a smart lock system. Hosts highlight this service in their listing descriptions.

Self-check-in instructions can be sent through a variety of mediums. Among the most widely used are:

- Personalised automated emails are scheduled for the day before check-in.
- Detailed explanations with photos can be shared in a Guest Guide.



*DACH refers to the region of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

03

2025 industry trends

Must-knows to get ready for 2025

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Recommended by influencers

In 2025, Generation Z, born and raised with smartphones and social media, will continue transforming the travel landscape. Social media, particularly platforms like TikTok and Instagram, is becoming increasingly crucial for travel inspiration. In fact, 17% of travellers cite TikTok as their primary source of inspiration when choosing destinations, while 27% prioritise Instagram.*

Property owners take note. Social media is not just a tool but a powerful ally in your quest to attract a younger audience. Collaborations with influencers who can showcase your property or promote local products and experiences can be the key to unlocking a new level of visibility and growth.



*Based on data from Globetrender's Gen Z/Y 'travel intent' trends revealed.



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Technology's growing role

The travel industry witnessed a significant shift away from traditional seasonality, primarily influenced by rising temperatures in certain regions.* This climate change has made summer travel less advisable, prompting travellers to seek more astonishing destinations during peak months. Simultaneously, central music and sports events have demonstrated their capacity to mobilise millions across cities and countries, further decoupling travel patterns from conventional seasonal peaks.

This shift underscores the importance of technology in helping short-term rental hosts stay competitive. Tools like dynamic pricing enable hosts to adapt to fluctuating demand, while intuitive management platforms make accommodating travellers' changing preferences easier. Embracing technology is not just beneficial—it's a necessity for thriving in a more dynamic travel landscape.

*In-depth analysis from the World Economic Forum.

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Seeking tailored experiences

Today's travellers want more than a place to stay—they want experiences tailored to their needs and desires. Hosts play a crucial role in this, whether a peaceful beach retreat, a cosy mountain guesthouse, or a luxurious chalet with Northern Lights views. They are the ones who create these unique, high-quality stays that cater to guests' lifestyles, making them feel valued and integral.

Hosts are empowered with the right tools to deliver personalised experiences that meet these demands. Technology, such as automated messaging and digital guest guides, helps create memorable stays that delight guests and streamline operations, driving repeat bookings and positive reviews.

*Learn more about these travel trends in our article.



04

Your 2025 success toolkit

Actionable insights to help you succeed

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Maximum visibility: Optimise your listings

Grow your presence and drive more bookings with these actionable tips:

1. **Listings on booking sites**: To increase your visibility and attract more guests, optimise your property descriptions, photos, and titles.

2. **Smoobu apps**: These tools allow you to stay responsive and manage your bookings effortlessly from anywhere. You can increase your property's visibility and attract more guests by improving your response rate and guest satisfaction.

3. **Airbnb's automated review function**: Set up computerised reviews to streamline the process and encourage more guest reviews. This will boost your credibility and rankings and give you confidence in your property's reputation.





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Efficient management: Leverage Smoobu features

Harness our intuitive features to streamline your operations:

1. **Website Builder:** To boost visibility and attract direct bookings, create your branded website in minutes.

2. **Automated Messages:** Free up your time and improve guest communication by setting up personalised messages that are sent automatically.

3. **Dynamic Pricing:** Maximise your revenue potential by adjusting rates for off-season tourism and fluctuating demand.

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Memorable stays: Create tailored experiences

Implement strategies that make your guests feel special and encourage them to return.

1. **Digital Guest Guide:** Share helpful information, such as tips and local recommendations, and leverage tailored upselling opportunities.

2. **Customisable amenities:** To inspire lasting memories, offer unique touches like welcome gifts, special requests, or flexible check-in/check-out times that will motivate your guests to return.

3. **Guest feedback:** Encourage guest reviews and use their feedback to enhance your offerings continuously. This will make your guests feel valued and integral to the improvement process.





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Stay ahead of the trends: Keep yourself curious

Align with the latest industry trends and attract more guests.

1. **Work and travel-friendly**: Given the increasing demand for work-and-travel stays, providing remote-work amenities is crucial. These include workspaces, high-speed internet, comfortable seating, and quiet environments.

2. **Flexible policies**: By offering free cancellation and adjustable check-in/check-out times, you are reassuring your guests that their needs are your priority, making their travel experience more convenient and enjoyable.

3. **The influence of influencers**: It's no secret that social media and influencers heavily influence travel decisions. You can tap into this trend and attract more guests by collaborating with influencers.

05

Thank you from Smoobu

Empowering hosts for 2025 and beyond

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To another successful year together



Your Smoobu team

Thank you to our incredible Smoobu community for your hard work and contributions throughout 2024. Your passion, adaptability, and creativity have made this year a success, and we're grateful to be part of your journey.

As we look to 2025, we encourage you to apply the insights and strategies from this report to your hosting practices. Set ambitious goals, embrace new trends, and make the most of Smoobu's powerful tools. With the right mindset and resources, there's no limit to what you can achieve.

Let's make 2025 a year of growth, innovation, and success for your short-term rental business!

The Smoobu Vacation Rental Software

Our main features

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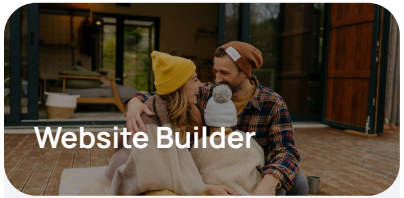
Eliminate double bookings



Get an executive summary



Improve guest communication



Reach more guests



Grow direct bookings
and revenue



Enhance the guest experience

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Some legal requirements before we go

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*The information reported in our *Smoobu Annual Report* was collected anonymously from a sample of 500 top-performing users. We define top-performers as Smoobu hosts with the highest number of bookings divided by units from January 1 to November 1, 2024. The number of bookings in the time period calculated does not reflect the length of bookings as per number of days. Specifically, we analysed 100 short-term rental hosts for each core market: EN (England, Ireland and Scotland), DACH region, FR (France and Belgium), IT (Italy and Switzerland) and ES (Spain). This report bases its statements, data and insights on the analysis of the top 500 Smoobu hosts across our core markets and top 100 UK hosts. In some specific cases, such as in the in-depth analysis of guest guides, the most popular integrations, and the use of the automatic messaging function, we have relied on data extracted from the 10 top UK hosts out of the 100. Each user's right to privacy was respected in the process.

To learn more about the report, contact: info@smoobu.com

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