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Turning Rainy Days Into Revenue: How Hotels Can Weather Summer Demand Volatility

By [Colin Tessier](#) - June 8, 2026



Summer is often a peak season for the hospitality industry; kids are out of school, so families plan various trips, and hotels are a key part of these journeys. This summer in particular brings plenty of promise, as the FIFA World Cup and America250 will fuel even more travel. However, while owners and operators can plan for months in advance, the volatility of weather constantly threatens to reduce performance in this context by leading travelers to postpone or even cancel their trips. John Schultzel, chief growth officer of [Olympia Hospitality](#), recently discussed this dynamic with *LODGING* and shared strategies for success.

Schultzel highlighted how the summer is a stressful period, particularly for Olympia Hospitality, because the company has a strong New England footprint and it relies on this travel season. He noted that analysts and others in the hospitality industry could argue whether this summer will be a boom or bust, but “to be honest, we don’t really know, and it comes down to discretionary travel and decisions people are making on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday for the coming weekend.” Schultzel explained that no number of forecasts or plans can fully prepare companies for the reality that “something as fickle as a storm front coming through on a Thursday” can effectively neutralize the anticipated boost of a major weekend, like the Fourth of July. As a result, a hotel’s performance—and that of a larger portfolio—can be significantly lower than expected, and the only culprit is the weather. No matter how effective a hotel’s marketing or messaging may be, guests may cancel their travel plans at a moment’s notice if it starts to rain or the weather otherwise changes unexpectedly. In this environment, hotels can respond by having “rigid” cancellation policies or try to lean on short-term business, but as Schultzel pointed out, “Sometimes, you’re just at the whim of Mother Nature.”

When dealing with the unpredictable nature of weather, Schultzel emphasized the importance of having a backup plan in place for guests. If a family plans a trip that includes outdoor excursions, only to find that the elements prevent those activities, hotels set themselves up for success by providing alternatives. Schultzel offered a few examples, ranging from movies to indoor pools. “If you have a hotel that has a movie night indoors, or you’ve got some great local resources for indoor dining, food and beverage, events, it’s important to make sure that the traveler understands the full menu of opportunities if they’re not going to be out on the lake or dipping their toes in the sea,” he said. He also underlined the need to pivot the property’s messaging as needed; ahead of a rainy day, a hotel could change its messaging to show guests “cozying up by a fireplace or having an indoor movie night” in the event space. Alternatively, properties can highlight their indoor pools and encourage guests to use them when the weather prevents their outdoor plans. Schultzel reiterated that hotels need to adapt accordingly: “Part of it is being able to pivot your messaging and redirect your marketing funds to channels that allow you to get that message out more quickly.” Likewise, Schultzel named “leaning on your prior guests” with marketing efforts when the situation called for it. “You don’t want to over-message our travelers because they get a little bit email-weary,” he said, “but if you have something really special to convey, getting it out there in short order ... you can be really quick with that.”

As hotels head into what could be a strong summer travel season, success may depend less on predicting demand and more on responding quickly when conditions change. While weather remains one of the few factors operators cannot control, hotels can lessen its impact through flexible marketing, creative programming, and a clear focus on the guest experience. By highlighting indoor amenities, promoting alternative activities, and communicating effectively with travelers, properties can turn potential disappointments into memorable stays. In an industry where a single storm system can alter weekend demand, adaptability may prove to be one of hospitality’s most valuable assets.