



How InterContinental Hotels Group Manages Global Programs



The Smartsheet work execution platform helped IHG address the company's biggest challenges during a period of organizational transformation, including co-leading a program to track hotel accreditations worldwide.

Industry

Travel & Hospitality

Organization Size

Enterprise (10,000+ employees)

Region

Worldwide

Use Cases

Employee Onboarding



I use Smartsheet in so many ways for business and in my personal life. It has everything that I need and everything that my team needs.



— Monica Harper, Associate Manager, Guest Experience Design

When Monica Harper of IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group) first started using Smartsheet in 2014, it was one of her key performance objectives. "My VP told me to get Smartsheet, learn it, and then teach it," she recalls. Fast forward to 2018: Smartsheet is no longer part of Harper's job scope, but she continues to rely on the powerful work execution platform, trains colleagues to become proficient, and calls it "my unpaid side hustle, because once people see how Smartsheet has worked for me, they want to know how it can work for them."

An enthusiastic Smartsheet evangelist, Harper shares her experience and knowledge through team and individual training sessions and by creating sheets that address pressing needs—both within and outside her department. "This week alone, I had two one-to-one sessions," she says, noting that she's trained more than 100 people throughout IHG, which operates over 5,500 InterContinental, Regent, Kimpton, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn and other leading hotel brands around the world.

Currently an associate brand manager in the hospitality company's loyalty department, Harper remains committed to Smartsheet: "It's a tool that I choose to use and I still continue to work with people because I like the product so much and I think it's a great solution for so many things."

Known for her organizational skills, Harper recently used Smartsheet to develop a team portal to onboard new people and retain institutional knowledge. "I created a Smartsheet that basically had information like your phone number, your likes, T-shirt size, calendar, emergency contacts—just everything," to help people become acquainted, make connections, and get things done, she explains. "It's a one-stop shop for our team," which grew rapidly from 12 to 60 people.

With IHG recently undergoing a companywide transformation, other organizations heard about Harper's team sheet and she created four more to support groups undergoing similar changes. "I've documented a lot of my work in Smartsheet," says Harper, who is responsible for 305 sheets. "I was able to transition someone in one day in one of the processes—all of that was in one sheet."

Smartsheet helped Harper address one of her biggest challenges: co-leading a program to track hotel accreditations worldwide. While the global leads were "stuck" on their existing cloud storage service, Harper overcame resistance by showing how Smartsheet could track all the various forms, correspondence, and history of changes. "I was able to get them to move over to Smartsheet once I showed them the different reports, the different dashboards that we could create," she says. "They still are using that tracker."

Harper has had corresponding success in her Smartsheet training. "Once you can get someone to actually go into Smartsheet and start clicking around, it's very easy to use, it's very intuitive," she says. "I don't try to force the solution; I like to present it and say, 'this is what it can do.' It's so flexible and the tracker, the calendar, the Gantt chart, the swim lanes, the current view—it touches on so many different capabilities."

In addition to describing multiple Smartsheet projects that have improved efficiency, transparency, speed, collaboration, communication, and productivity across IHG, Harper shares examples from outside work, such as tracking home improvement projects, taxes, career development, and more. The bottom line for Harper: "I use Smartsheet in so many ways for business and in my personal life," she says. "It has everything that I need and everything that my team needs."