

Visa to Power Digital Tipping with eTip Partnership

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Digital tipping platform eTip is partnering with Visa to speed up the process and adoption of its tool, the company announced.

The platform enables guests at hotels and other service industry customers to tip housekeepers, bellhops, valet attendants and other staff with their digital wallet or credit card, including corporate cards. Guests can scan a QR code or NFC tag—or some hotels opt to send the tipping information via text—and can provide their payment information, eTip CEO Nicolas Cassis said.

With the new Visa collaboration, eTip can use the Visa rails so that the tip payments can go immediately into the employees' digital wallets, he said.

Visa Direct SVP Yanilsa Gonzalez-Ore in a statement said that Visa is “seeing an increase in market demand for a fast, reliable and fully digitized tipping experience for hotel guests and employees.”

Each tip comes back as a separate charge, and guests receive an emailed receipt, Cassis said. For expense reporting purposes, digital tips could give travel managers additional data and insight over employee tipping, and travelers accustomed to paying in cash will have a digital record of what they tipped.

On the hotel side, having the digital tipping option tends to increase the volume and amount of tips employees receive, which can improve morale, particularly as hotels are facing a battle to attract and retain talent, Cassis said. Tipping at hotels overall has been on the decline and travelers tend to carry less cash, but hotels using eTip have seen on average a 60 percent increase in tip sizes, a five-fold increase in tipping frequency and a boost in employee wages by almost 40 percent, he said.

Last month, Best Western parent company BWH Hotel Group announced it had chosen eTip as an endorsed solution and that it would be available at properties in the U.S. and Canada. Besides hotels, eTip also works with casinos, cruise lines, sports venues and health and beauty services, according to the company.

Cassis said the eTip soon will expand to include Mexico in its footprint, and it will follow with expansion to United Arab Emirates.

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