

Remote Co-Hosting and Digital Host–Guest Communication in Short-Term Rental Operations: A Cost-Effective Global Model

Usama Afzal¹

¹ BBA Undergraduate Researcher, Superior College Sahiwal (Affiliated with Gomal University), Pakistan. **ORCID ID:** <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-2848-2383> **Email:** uafzak2@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70670/sra.v3i3.1571>

Abstract

The rapid growth of short-term rental platforms has increased the demand for continuous host–guest communication across multiple digital channels. To manage this workload, many property owners rely on remote service providers, particularly from developing countries. This study examines the role of Pakistani remote co-hosting agents in managing guest communication and operational tasks for properties listed on Airbnb, Booking.com, VRBO, and direct booking websites.

Using a quantitative survey of guests and co-hosting agents, combined with practitioner-based operational evidence, this study evaluates communication timeliness, clarity, responsiveness, and their impact on guest satisfaction and repeat booking intentions. Findings show high levels of guest satisfaction with remote communication services, demonstrating that geographically distant teams can effectively deliver high-quality customer support. Survey results indicate that over 88% of guests evaluated communication timeliness positively, with 91% expressing willingness to rebook.

The study also discusses global labor cost differences in customer service roles, highlighting how remote outsourcing allows property owners to maintain 24-hour operations at significantly lower costs while providing stable employment opportunities for skilled workers in emerging economies. The paper contributes to short-term rental and service management literature by linking digital communication quality, remote workforce organization, and economic efficiency. Practical implications are provided for property owners, platform managers, and remote service professionals.

Keywords: Short-Term Rentals; Remote Co-Hosting; Host–Guest Communication; Service Outsourcing; Guest Satisfaction; Digital Hospitality

1. Introduction

The short-term rental industry has expanded rapidly, supported by digital platforms such as Airbnb, Booking.com, VRBO, and direct booking websites. Unlike traditional hotels, short-term rental properties often operate without on-site staff, making digital host–guest communication a critical service component. Guests rely heavily on online messaging for check-in instructions, issue resolution, and support during their stay.

As property portfolios grow and bookings occur across multiple platforms, communication workloads increase significantly. To manage this complexity, property owners outsource customer service and

operational coordination to remote co-hosting teams. These teams respond to guest inquiries, coordinate cleaning and maintenance, manage reviews, perform specific tasks as per property owner's requirements and optimize listings.

Pakistan has emerged as a key provider of remote co-hosting labor and freelancers. Pakistani freelancers often possess strong English skills, experience with hospitality platforms, and the ability to work across international time zones. Despite performing comparable tasks to customer service staff in developed countries, these workers typically operate under different wage structures and working conditions.

This study examines how remote teams contribute to service quality, operational efficiency, and long-term sustainability in short-term rental businesses, focusing on cost, workflow, and practical implications for property owners.

Research Question

How does remote host–guest communication delivered by Pakistani co-hosting agents influence guest satisfaction and operational efficiency in multi-platform short-term rental operations?

Objectives

1. Examine key communication factors affecting guest satisfaction in short-term rentals
2. Analyze the organization of remote co-hosting workflows
3. Discuss global cost differences in customer service outsourcing and their implications
4. Provide practical guidance for ethical and effective remote co-hosting arrangements

2. Literature Review

2.1 Host–Guest Communication in Short-Term Rentals

Host–guest communication is a major determinant of satisfaction in peer-to-peer accommodations. Timely responses, clear instructions, and supportive interactions reduce uncertainty and enhance perceived service quality, particularly in the absence of on-site staff. Digital communication also influences trust formation, review ratings, and repurchase intentions.

2.2 Remote Service Work and Outsourcing in Hospitality

Remote service outsourcing is common for customer support, reservations, and digital operations. Remote teams allow 24-hour service while reducing labor costs. Worker motivation, training, and workload design strongly influence service outcomes.

2.3 Trust, Motivation, and Service Quality

Fair compensation, reasonable working hours, and job stability contribute to higher motivation, improving service performance. Motivated remote workers can deliver service experiences comparable to on-site staff when supported by proper systems and workflows.

However, limited empirical research examines how *remote co-hosting labor from developing economies* directly influences guest communication quality and operational efficiency in multi-platform short-term rental environments.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional research design using structured survey questionnaires.

3.2 Sample and Data Collection

Data were collected via Google Forms from 69 respondents (50 guests and 19 Pakistani remote co-hosting agents). Convenience sampling was used due to the dispersed, digital nature of the population.

3.3 Variables

Survey variables included:

- Timeliness of communication
- Clarity of instructions
- Responsiveness to issues
- Overall guest satisfaction
- Willingness to rebook

3.4 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics summarized response patterns and satisfaction levels.

4. Comparative Analysis: South Korea vs Pakistan Freelance Workforce

4.1 Cost Comparison of Customer Service Freelancers

Country	Monthly Salary (USD)	Weekly Off	Paid Leaves	Experience Requirement
Pakistan	\$200–\$300	1 day	Few	6–12 months
South Korea	\$1,000–\$1,500	2 days	Standard	6–12 months
Other Developed Countries	\$1,200–\$1,800	2 days	Several weeks	6–12 months

Pakistani freelancers provide cost-effective labor without compromising service quality.

4.2 Optimized Workflow for Vacation Rental Operations

Shift	Team Size	Responsibilities
6:00 am – 2:00 pm	2	Guest inquiries, bookings, cleaning, maintenance
2:00 pm – 10:00 pm	2	Guest inquiries, bookings, cleaning, maintenance
10:00 pm – 6:00 am	1	Night inquiries, listing optimization, reviews

Total Team Cost: \$1,500/month for 70–90 properties

4.3 Advantages for Property Owners

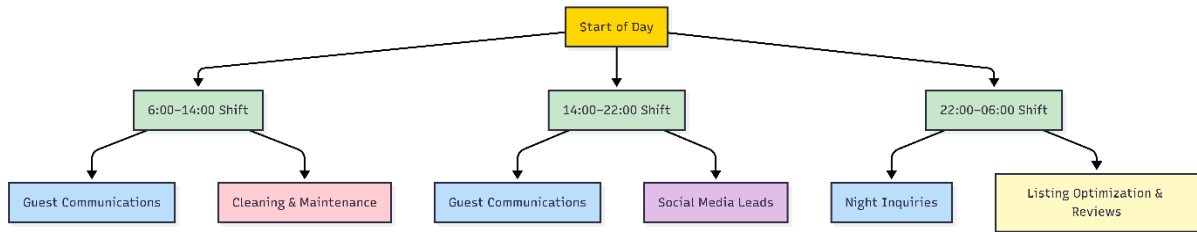
- Cost-efficient staffing
- Round-the-clock service
- Flexible operations
- Long-term worker loyalty

4.4 Recommended Platforms and Tools

Platform/Tool	Use Case
Airbnb	Listings & guest management
Booking.com	Listings & bookings
VRBO	Vacation rental bookings
OwnerRez	Multi-channel management
Hostaway	Automation & workflow coordination

Hospitable	Team collaboration & task tracking
Hostfully	Channel & operations management
WhatsApp/Instagram/Facebook	Leads & guest inquiries

4.5 Example 24-Hour Remote Co-Hosting Shift Structure of 70–90 Listings/Properties



4.6 Results

Table 1: Guest Evaluation of Communication Quality

Communication Factor	Positive Response (%)
Timely communication	88.6%
Clear instructions	82.9%
Helpful support	85.7%
Willingness to rebook	91.4%
Overall satisfaction	89.3%

5. Remote Co-Hosting Workflow Structure

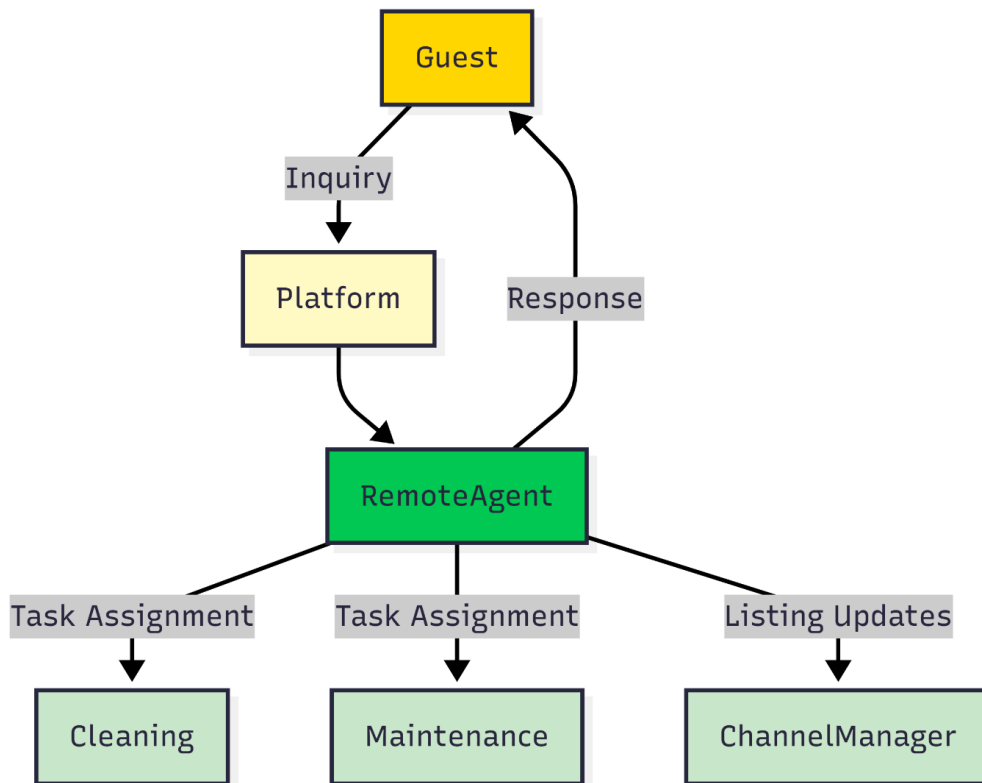


Table 2: Example 24-Hour Remote Co-Hosting Shift Structure of 70–90 Listings/Properties

Time Slot	Team Size	Primary Tasks
6 AM – 2 PM	2 agents	Guest messaging, operations
2 PM – 10 PM	2 agents	High-volume inquiries
10 PM – 6 AM	1 agent	Monitoring, optimization

6. Practical Implications

6.1 Cost-Effective Staffing

One full team of 5 Pakistani freelancers can manage 70–90 listings across multiple platforms for **\$1,500/month**, compared to **\$5,000+** in developed countries.

6.2 Shift-Based Workflow

Three-shift system ensures continuous guest support and operational efficiency.

6.3 Direct Hiring vs Agency Use

Direct hiring improves motivation, reduces costs, and fosters long-term collaboration.

6.4 Platform Integration

Freelancers can manage multiple channels efficiently using Airbnb, Booking.com, VRBO, OwnerRez, Hostaway, Hospitable and Hostfully.

6.5 Motivation and Productivity

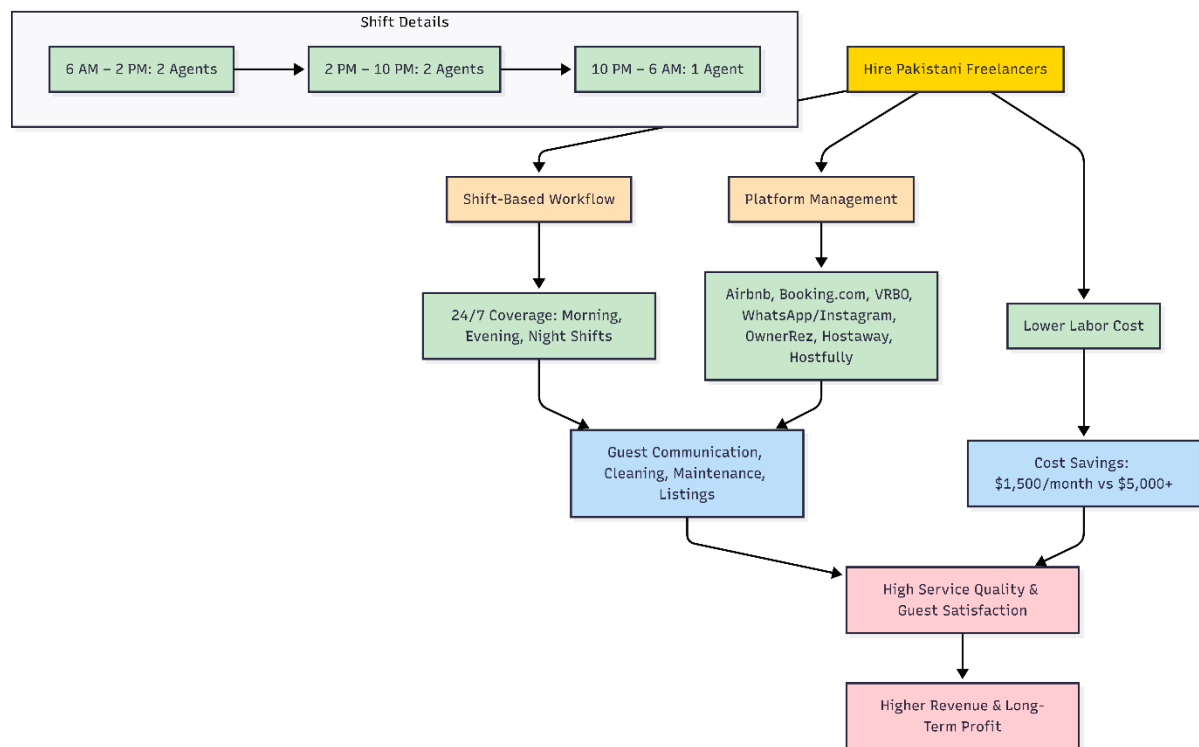
Fair compensation and structured workflow improve motivation, productivity, and guest satisfaction.

7. Conclusions

- **Cost Efficiency:** Pakistani freelancers provide a 70–80% cost reduction compared to local hires.
- **Workflow Optimization:** Shift-based coverage ensures 24/7 service.
- **Motivation & Productivity:** Direct hiring with training increases service quality.
- **Platform Management:** Multi-channel tools allow efficient management across platforms.
- **Strategic Advantage:** Directly hiring freelancers maximizes profitability and operational efficiency.

Limitations: Geographic focus, sample size, platform coverage, and freelancer experience levels.

Future Research: Long-term performance, advanced technology integration, and scalability for larger portfolios.



References

- Belk, R. (2014). You are what you can access: Sharing and collaborative consumption online. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(8), 1595–1600. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2013.10.001>
- Botsman, R., & Rogers, R. (2011). *What's mine is yours: How collaborative consumption is changing the way we live*. HarperCollins. https://books.google.com.pk/books/about/What_s_Mine_is_Yours.html?id=eDhsTbjyFlgC&redir_esc=y
- Guttentag, D. (2015). Airbnb: Disruptive innovation and the rise of an informal tourism accommodation sector. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 18(12), 1192–1217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2013.827159>
- Cheng, M. (2016). Sharing economy: A review and agenda for future research. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 57, 60–70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2016.06.003>
- Tussyadiah, I. P. (2016). Factors of satisfaction and intention to use peer-to-peer accommodation. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 55, 70–80. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2016.03.005>
- Cheng, M., & Jin, X. (2019). What do Airbnb users care about? An analysis of online review comments. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 76, 58–70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.04.004>

- Farmaki, A., & Stergiou, D. P. (2019). Escaping loneliness through Airbnb host–guest interactions. *Tourism Management*, 74, 331–333. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.04.006>
- Mody, M. A., Suess, C., & Lehto, X. (2017). The accommodation experiencescape: A comparative assessment of hotels and Airbnb. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 29(9), 2377–2404. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-09-2016-0501>
- Ert, E., Fleischer, A., & Magen, N. (2016). Trust and reputation in the sharing economy: The role of personal photos in Airbnb. *Tourism Management*, 55, 62–73. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2624181>
- Sparks, B. A., & Browning, V. (2011). The impact of online reviews on hotel booking intentions and perception of trust. *Tourism Management*, 32(6), 1310–1323. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2010.12.011>
- Liang, L. J., Choi, H. C., & Joppe, M. (2018). Exploring the relationship between satisfaction, trust and switching intention, repurchase intention in the context of Airbnb. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 69, 41–48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2017.10.015>
- Agag, G., & Eid, R. (2019). Examining the antecedents and consequences of trust in peer-to-peer accommodation. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 81, 180–192. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2019.04.021>
- Wang, Y., Xiang, D., Yang, Z., & Ma, S. S. (2019). Unraveling customer sustainable consumption behaviors in sharing economy. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 208, 869–879. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.10.139>
- Prayag, G., & Ozanne, L. K. (2018). A systematic review of peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation sharing research from 2010 to 2016: progress and prospects from the multi-level perspective. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 27(6), 649–678. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2018.1429977>
- Zervas, G., Proserpio, D., & Byers, J. W. (2017). The rise of the sharing economy: Estimating the impact of Airbnb on the hotel industry. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 54(5), 687–705. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.15.0204>
- Xiang, Z., Schwartz, Z., Gerdes, J. H., & Uysal, M. (2015). What can big data tell us about hotel guest experience and satisfaction? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 44, 120–130. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2014.10.013>
- Martin-Fuentes, E., Fernandez, C., Mateu, C., & Marine-Roig, E. (2018). Modelling a grading scheme for peer-to-peer accommodation. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 69, 75–83. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2017.10.016>