

# Ultimate Guide to Transitioning to a HOTEL LAUNDRY SERVICE



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## Ultimate Guide to Transitioning to a HOTEL LAUNDRY SERVICE

As reported in [Hotel Management](#), hotels are built for hospitality – not for laundry. In the last 20 years more and more hotels are shutting down their on-property laundry (OPL) operations and bringing on a partner to take over, saving time, money, resources and space.

It's a major change, but it can be done effectively and efficiently. Here we look at the reasons for transitioning to a hotel laundry service and how Crown Linen “checks all the boxes” when it comes to cost, convenience and quality.

### Why make the switch?

**Cost.** The main reason properties have for shutting down their OPL and working with a hotel laundry service is cost. It's also one of the most common objections from managers and operators who haven't done the math on what their laundry room is actually costing them.

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To address this, it can help to have a clear idea of your current total laundry cost, including both direct and indirect expenses. This [OPL Cost Calculator](#) offers a comprehensive quote with many of the categories people commonly overlook, including:

- Labor
- Chemical supplies
- Utilities
- Maintenance payroll
- Taxes
- Garbage
- Equipment depreciation of washers, extractors, boilers, dryers, air compressors, ironers, folders, bins and tables

There are also costs associated with taxes and required licenses and permits.



**Convenience.** Another factor is that converting to the right commercial laundry service makes it possible to go from having a series of disparate costs that you may or may not be able to track, to having one bill for the majority of your laundry-related expenses. Switching results in having to spend less time juggling laundry costs and getting more time to focus on other aspects of the guest experience.

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**Quality.** A large-scale eco-friendly laundry service has state-of-the-art equipment that dwarfs your hotel machines in size and ability to handle loads with less water and energy. In addition, commercial machines are tough on stains but gentle on [hotel linen](#), lengthening the life of your luxury hotel bedding and specially selected towels.

Other reasons to make the switch to a hotel laundry service include space. The square footage required for onsite laundry facilities can impede operation and expansion goals. By giving up valuable laundry space, hotel owners and managers can make room for spas, offices, conference rooms and coffee shops.

Also, outsourcing laundry service can reduce your carbon footprint. You'll save on energy costs. You'll also be able to choose a laundry service that has high-efficiency systems and uses biodegradable, non-toxic chemicals. You'll be able to share this information with guests who are becoming more and more environmentally conscious.

## Evaluating hotel laundry services

While cost is a big factor when it comes to outsourcing laundry, there are plenty of others that go into selecting the right vendor, including their staff, overall customer service and overall approach to handling laundry.

One company's cost may come in lower only because they charge extra for delivery, sorting or fees. When evaluating services, be sure to have each vendor explain exactly what their estimate for you includes – and what it doesn't.

You can also learn a lot by taking a tour of each laundry plant. Take along the members of your team who know laundry operations best and will know what to look for.

Questions to ask include the following:

**What procedures do they have to track linens by weight and client?** A quality hotel laundry service will provide properly calibrated scales to determine exactly how much laundry will be picked up and delivered every time.

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**Do they accurately charge?** Wet linens, bath mats and towels weigh more when they leave your property than when they come back. A quality vendor will be sure they're not charging based on the weight of the soiled items.

**Is their equipment high quality?** Commercial laundry equipment used by a hotel laundry service will be able to handle bigger loads, while using less water, fuel, time and labor. They also employ methods that protect linens and lengthen their lifecycle.



**Can they help with transition planning?** While doing so makes sense on many levels, actually transitioning to a hotel laundry service can raise questions surrounding protocols, timing, personnel and operations. A quality laundry facility will guide you through the process of onboarding to make the transition seamless.

**Are they equipped to take good care?** You have likely invested in premium sheets, towels and robes, and you want to protect that investment from damage and loss. A laundry outsourcing provider will have laundry equipment and practices in place to safeguard luxury linens from wear and tear, adding to the amount of time they can be in circulation.

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**Does the sorting seem thorough?** A sound process should be in place to ensure linens from different properties don't commingle. In addition, machines and processes should be efficient with a well-organized flow.

Additional questions to ask include:

- Is the equipment well-maintained?
- Is the company as green as they say?
- What does the contract entail? Does the service cover everything needed, or are there extra charges for services such as delivery and sorting?

Keeping a scorecard for each company will simplify the decision. You can minus points for non-transparent pricing and add bonus points for having multiple plants that can provide backup in an emergency.

## Choosing Crown Linen

An effective way to ensure all these questions are well answered and you're making a smart, strategic choice is to go with Crown Linen. Hotels and resorts throughout the southeast have chosen Crown Linen based on our equipment, environmental policies, full-service solutions, and our mature processes.

### **Jensen equipment.**

One of the main features that sets Crown Linen apart is our optimal-performance, ultra high-capacity Jensen products. This equipment was researched and chosen expressly for its reliable and cost-effective performance and its capacity to powerfully and effectively wash, dry and sanitize.

Equipment includes:

- Futurail Automated Laundry Handling Solutions for soiled and clean linen
- Jenfold Tematic Pro for fully automatic folding, sorting and stacking of towels
- Senking Universal, the versatile continuous batch washer that reuses energy and water internally
- Jenfeed Logic 2000 high-production, large piece feeder with multiple feeding stations

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- Jensen Jet Folder, the extremely simple and versatile folding machine
- Jenroll EXPG, providing optimal energy efficiency through self-contained oil-gas heating
- Jenfold Classic S high-speed combination folder
- Jenstack Drape & Store with high capacity for small linen

### **Earth-friendly policies.**

Another reason hotels and resorts choose Crown Linen is sustainability. Our Green Initiative is environment-focused throughout every step of the laundry process.



Our washers can handle up to 5,000 pounds of laundry per hour using four times less water than a conventional machine. Specifically, our [tunnel washer technology](#) can process linens using less water, energy and manpower than hotel machines. To prevent over-drying that can waste energy and damage fibers, our commercial dryers have built-in sensors.

In addition, internal recycling systems are used so water can be used again. We also use non-toxic detergents by [Ecolab](#) that are 100% biodegradable and don't release harmful chemicals into the air or water. In addition, we use precision detergent pumps that reduce waste and prevent buildup.

### **Full-service solutions.**

Crown Linen customers also benefit from a no-worries, turn-key approach to linen handling. Crown Linen can handle all aspects of the process, including pick up, washing, drying, ironing,

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packaging and delivery. Laundry plans are customized for your facility, and we regularly perform quality control inspections.

Linens are tracked and protected and reclaim services are in place. Crown Linen can also handle all forms of linen required for upscale hotels, resorts and spas, from sheets, to shower curtains to napkins and slipcovers.

### **Mature systems.**

Finally, Crown Linen has mature, efficient processes to ensure your linens are handled properly and professionally, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

A key component is the training of your hotel staff at the beginning of the onboarding process. This training involves how best to sort linens, prepare for pickup, and weigh laundry correctly before it leaves your facility.

Then a schedule is created to ensure your linens are picked up at an agreed-upon time. In general, clean linens are delivered back to your facility within 24 hours. After linens arrive at Crown Linen they're weighed, and that weight – along with their property of origin – is recorded and bar code tracked in a central computer system at various points throughout the process. Crown Linen has frequent and transparent weigh-ins built into our process to ensure accountability.

Crown Linen has hands-on and high-tech methods of avoiding linen mingling such as Batch Integrity tunnels. This allows for a single hotel's linens to be sent through the laundry process at a time. This process also ensures that non-linen items that can end up in the laundry are separated and returned to your facility. Finally, after being washed, dried, ironed, and folded, linens are weighed onsite one last time before they're loaded onto trucks for delivery.

Damaged or stained materials that need a special wash are bagged and weighed separately. The entire plant follows the batch process, from linen arrival to departure. At any given time, workers can tell the location of your linens in the process. This ensures that your linens are the ones that return to you, and that they never comingle with linens from other properties.

## **Keys to success**

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Once you have made the transition to a hotel laundry service, it is best practice to take additional steps to ensure you're providing guests the best and cleanest linens possible and that there are enough of them.

Invest in the right kinds and amounts of linens. [Hospitality Lawyer](#) advises that next to personnel, linen costs are the highest expense in the housekeeping department, and thus careful policies are needed to control the hotel's inventory. This involves establishing the proper par number of linens. One par of linens equals the total number of each type of linen needed to outfit all guest rooms one time.

The recommended par number is four: one clean in the guestroom, one dirty leaving the room, one in storage, and one on its way to be laundered.

In addition, while commercial equipment is generally gentler on linens, it does involve high temperatures, and not every kind of linen can take the heat. If you're in a situation to purchase new linens, it is best practice to select brands and blends that are recommended by your vendor to withstand the rigors of [hotel laundry services](#).

Review your bill. Go over your bill regularly and make sure it makes sense. You should see somewhat stable costs based on the weight of your linens. If a bill seems large, it may be because the vendor is not returning damaged or soiled items. Getting everything back, and in a separate bag for damaged items, can help you keep track of costs.

In addition, if your invoice includes charges you don't recognize or understand, confirm you're not being extra for things like sorting, delivery or fees.

Make regular visits. Finally, do not just set up the outsourcing relationship and walk away. Stay in touch with our housekeeping and maintenance staff and be aware of any potential problems. Visit the laundry facility to make sure things continue to be performed based on your contract and expectations.

## Next steps to transition

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Shutting down an OPL and outsourcing hotel laundry is a move more properties are taking as they realize the benefits of having a professional partner. As with any transition, things will go smoother if you're well-informed and well-prepared.



Outsourcing hotel laundry is a big change, but with the right provider, the transition can be one that makes life easier on your staff and your linens and even better for your guests. Learn more here about [how to transition to a hotel laundry service](#). And for more information about on-property laundry versus outsourcing costs and benefits for hotel and resorts, download our [free comparison guide](#).



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COSTS & BENEFITS FOR HOTELS & RESORTS

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