MODULE-1

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN FRONT OFFICE OPERATIONS

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Computers are used for different purposes in hotels.

- The first use is at the from desk, where computers are equipped with an intricate software called the property management system (PMS) to do all check-ins, guest accounting, check-outs, etc. In a restaurant, lounge, or bar of a hotel,
- The second type of computer system, called a point of sale (POS) system, is used. This system collaborates with a PMS to generate bills for meals and drinks consumed by guests, but it can also be used as a cash register.
- The third use of the computer is in the sales office, which has a booking terminal.
- A PMS is a computer-based management system. In the hospitality industry, it is a computerized system used to manage guest bookings, online reservations, points of sale, telephone, and other amenities.
- A hotel PMS may interface with central reservation systems (CRS) and revenue or yield management systems, front office, back office, and POS systems. There are many types of PMS-it is up to a hotel to choose the one that best fits its needs.

There are different modules of PMS to manage individual departments of a hotel, such as front office module, housekeeping module, restaurant management system, and back office module. These modules are supplied by a large number of vendors, who modify PMS solutions. meet the requirements of the hotel.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM APPLICATION FOR FRONT OFFICE

The PMS application for the front office has different modules for the efficient functioning of the entire department. Some of the common modules used in the front office PMS are reservations module, front desk module, rooms module, cashier module, night audit module, set up module, report generation module, and back office module.

1. Reservations Module

The reservations module is used to create and manage guest reservations, both for individuals as well as groups. The reservations module includes the following features:

- It can provide room status records when the date of arrival, date of departure, and the type of guest room are entered in the system.
- It can colour code the room status by using different colours for, for example, sold out days and days on which particular room types are sold out.
- It can check the reservation status of a guest quickly as it can search by guest name, company name, group ID, confirmation number, or arrival and departure dates.
- It can display room availability status (of up to 14 days at a time) by simply selecting date.
- It can attach guest messages to relevant reservations, to be delivered to the guest upon arrival
- It can automatically calculate rates based on the room type, the rate code, arrival and departure dates, and the number of adults and children.
- It can create group blocks and rooming lists for standard groups, tour series, and allotments.
- It can create special group rates.
- It can use the rooming list feature for rapid reservation pick-up.
- It can pre-assign rooms to guests when making a reservation or at any time using a graphical tape chart.
- It can define a 'share with' reservation in group bookings.
- It can automatically transmit confirmation of a reservation through e-mail or fax
- It can enter 'remarks', which are visible upon reservation retrieval. It can reserve and track the availability of service items such as rollaway beds, cribs, and refrigerators.
- It can post an advance deposit on a room.

2. Front Desk Module

The front desk module manages the registration of guests. The features/ functions are included in the front desk module are as follows:

- It accesses guest information easily and quickly for viewing, modification, or check-in procedures.

- It displays a graphical room layout with the room status information, which exact location of rooms.
- It tracks the entire guest activity for the length of their stay.
- It prints registration cards.
- It attaches individual, group, company, or travel agent information to each guest folio.
- It automatically transfers guest accounts to the city ledger when the guest checks out.
- It creates an incidental folio.
- It updates the system in case of a guest room change.

3. Rooms Module

The rooms module allows the staff to manage the hotel's rooms and floor plans. The following are some of the functions performed by this module:

- It displays the entire layout of a hotel, showing a single floor/wing at a time. One can easily go to another floor/wing by using the scroll buttons, and enlarge or reduce the size of floor plans by using the zoom buttons.
- It facilitates change in the display of the floor plan to show housekeeping, front desk, or specific room status.
- It provides latest room status information to both housekeeping and front office departments.
- It schedules the maintenance work for rooms.
- It automatically adjusts room inventory
- It schedules linen change in long-term stayovers.
- It tracks discrepancies in the room status.

4. Cashier Module

The cashier module is used to manage guest folios, raise bills, and perform check-out procedures the following are some of the functions that can be performed with the cashier module:

- It adds incidental folios and move charges between folios with one click.
- It locates any account by entering the room number or name.
- It manages all aspects of the guest folio, including debits, credits, adjustments, transfers, and voids.
- It allows the viewing or printing of folio details and summary information.

- It consolidates all transactions and produces an accurate bill quickly, enabling a speedy check-out.
- It allows the attachment of unlimited folios to each guest account. • It carries out the transfer of charges from folio to folio, from one room to another, in amounts or by percentage.

5. Night Audit Module

The night audit module is used to balance the day's activity and complete the hotel's accounting functions for the day. The following are some of the features/functions of the night audit modules:

- It performs routine tasks of posting room charges, changing non-guaranteed room reservations to no-shows, and changing the status of guaranteed no-shows with one to occupied.
- It takes an automatic backup of data to optical disk. It possesses the ability to rebuild room availability afresh in case there is a system failure.
- It possesses direct access to the reports module.
- It allows the auditor to view a scrolled display of various processing steps.
- It automatically posts service charges such as garage fees and crib fees.
- It automatically posts finance and recurring charges,
- It automatically changes the room status to out of order if a room is scheduled for maintenance work.
- It automatically sets the housekeeping status of occupied rooms to 'dirty".
- It facilitates batch printing of registration cards.
- It processes no-shows with deposit payments.
- It automatically prints customized reports.

6. Set-up Module

The set-up module is used to define system settings. These settings allow for customization. The following are some of the key features/functions of this module:

- It specifies mandatory fields for required information and add custom information and forms.
- It customizes according to the market, source and rate codes, and can also define text for field selections

- It generates and customizes colour codes.
- It allows the employees to access their function areas in the system using unique user IDs and passwords.
- It specifies rate codes, room rates, and rate availability along with the restriction of rate availability by date range, days of the week, or minimum stay.
- It creates and maintains profiles of individuals, groups, companies, agents and travel
- It defines the phone extension for each room, including multiple phone extensions for a single room.
- It displays all message prompts and screen text in the local language. • It creates a list of all room features available throughout the hotel and generates the display of attachments to specific room types and rooms.
- It customizes the reservations calendar with user-defined text for holidays, special events, and reminders.

7. Reporting Module

The reporting module has various reporting formats, which allow the management to retrieve operating or financial information at any point of time. With this module, the management can quickly access information such as the availability of rooms on a particular day, the number of guests arriving on a specific day, listing of guests' folio balances, and outstanding balance reports. The access to reports can be customized through the use of filters.

8. Back Office Module

The back office module provides an integrated system for managing the hotel's financial and statistical information. It simplifies accounting processes such as posting of accounts payable, transfer of accounts receivables, compilation of the payroll, budget preparation, and the production of the hotel's profit-and-loss statement and balance sheet. The financial information entered on a terminal in back office updates all accounting records. The back office module is also linked with the night audit module, which helps in streamlining the accounting process.

Importance of PMS for Hotel Operations

The right property management system (PMS) is a key factor in hotel success. Having a system that makes front-desk workflows easy, will create a seamless guest experience. With the abundance of new technology in the property management systems industry, there is no time like the present to upgrade your PMS.

- **Guest's first impression**

Upon arrival, a guest's first impression is created as they walk through the doors and interact with the first point of contact, your front desk. A property management system should easily display arrivals for the day and have any important information about stay preferences attached to a guest's booking. This will ensure you make a good and memorable first impression.

- **Streamlined check-in and check-out**

There is nothing more frustrating than waiting a long time to be checked in or out, these processes should be fast and easy to provide a seamless guest experience. Having a streamlined and easy check-in and check-out process is important for both the guest experience and hotel efficiency. A property management system will help you perform these tasks with ease, increasing productivity and delivering that exceptional guest experience.

- **Clear communication**

Having clear lines of communication between all departments of your property and with the guest is integral to a successful accommodation. With a property management system, you can facilitate easy communication, and ensure that all departments are operating effectively and efficiently.

- **No double bookings**

A PMS that connects to a channel manager means all your availability is constantly being updated. This means no double bookings, saving you and your team time by eliminating double bookings. When the guest arrives there won't be any complications with their room or booking, making for a pleasant guest experience.

- **Focus on your guests**

The guest experience is such an important aspect of your accommodation and is the key to returning guests. Using a streamlined and intuitive PMS will save you time on your day-to-day processes. So you'll have more time and opportunities to interact with your guest and offer them a truly personalized experience.

A PMS is at the heart of hotel operations, helping with efficiency and guest experience, it is an indispensable hotel tool.

IMPORTANCE OF USING COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN FRONT OFFICE

- Reduces paper work
- Environment friendly
- Saves time
- Increases efficiency
- Reduces error
- Increases speed and guest satisfaction
- Improves co-ordination among different hotel departments

DIFFERENT PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

There are several companies that provide the PMS software to hotels, with their own unique features to suit the different requirements of various hotels. Some of the companies providing PMS software are Micros, Amadeus, IDS Fortune, and Shaw Man.

AMADEUS

Amadeus property management system can be integrated with Front Office, sales and marketing, and financial management functions. It allows the user to move faster in all core aspects of guest experience management.

- *FRONT OFFICE MODULE:* This module offers full availability, reservation, billing, and yield functionalities, which in turn generate useful performance statistics. It provides data on performance indicators such as sales, accounts, source, and segment activity, which is monitored to analyze business efficiency and used to generate management reports.

- *SALES AND MARKETING MODULE:* This module aids the sales and marketing professions to target potential guests and effectively manage customer relationships.

- *CONFERENCE AND BANQUETING MODULE:* Event planning is a feature that helps generate revenue for hotels. The key features of the conference management system include real time conference/ meeting room availability and equipment management.

- *FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:* It is designed for liquidity planning and control along with comprehensive accounting, financial reporting and analysis

FIDELIO

Fidelio hotel management software is a completely integrated system package. Fidelio headquarter is in Munich, Germany. This EMS maximizes the efficiency of the hotel. It is a highly flexible system. Its uniform and user friendly programme means that the hotel employees can learn this system quickly. Fidelio has pulled down menus which help and assist the user at every step and only short term training to staff is required.

- Fidelio promotes smooth functioning of all the departments.
- It reduces paper work and helps in saving money on extra stationery.
- It eliminates communication gap between departments.
- It helps in providing quality service to the guest thereby, up-keeping the hotel's goodwill.
- It is a highly flexible programme and has facilities like screen painter, report generator, user definable report menus and night audit etc.
- It has the ability to create extensive guest history.
- It has extensive modules for various hotel management operations like reservation module, front desk module, cashier module, night audit module, material management system etc.

One disadvantage of Fidelio may be that it is very expensive and any under utilization will be expensive. Its maintenance is also costly compared to other systems. Another disadvantage may that during night audit terminals are shut down, thus check-ins and check-outs during the period cannot be taken during the period.

INTELLECT DATA SYSTEM (IDS)

This software was established in the year 1987 with its headquarters in Bangalore, with operations running in almost 18 countries across the world.

- It offers software solution for the need of hospitality industry
- through a range of fortune products.
- it is one of the top five CRS vendors in the world.
- It has concurrent alliance with IBM and Microsoft that operate in India with local support infrastructure in all its major markets such as India, Egypt and Singapore.