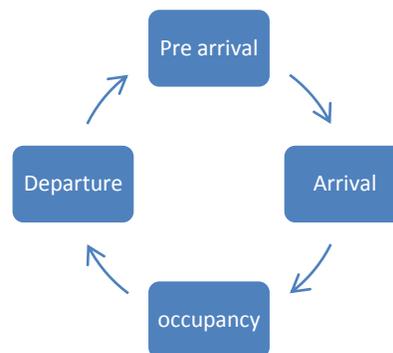


Front office- Guest Cycle

The guest cycle

The financial transactions of the guest makes while staying in the hotel determine the flow of business through the property. Traditionally flow of cycle can be divided into a four-stage guest cycle.

GUEST CYCLE



PRE ARRIVAL

The guest chooses a hotel during the pre arrival stage of the guest cycle. The guests choice can be affected by many factors, including previous experiences with the hotel: advertisements, company travel policy, recommendations from travel agents, friends, or business associates, the hotels location or reputation, frequent traveler programmes, preconceptions based upon the hotel's name or chain affiliation. The guest's decision may also be influenced by the ease of making reservations and how the reservations agent describes the hotel and its facilities, room rates and amenities. The reservation department employees should be "sales oriented" and present a positive strong image of the hotel. The attitude, efficiency, and knowledge of the front office staff may influence a caller's decision to stay at a particular hotel.

A reservations agent must be able to respond quickly and accurately to request for future accommodations. The proper handling of reservation information can be critical to the success of lodging property. Efficient procedures will also allow more time for the reservations agent to capture needed information and to market hotel services.

If a reservation can be accepted as requested, the reservations agent creates a reservation record .the creation of reservation record initiates the hotel guest cycle. The record enables the hotel to personalize guest service and appropriately schedule needed staff and facilities. By confirming reservation the hotel verifies a guest's room request and personal information, and assures the guest that his or her needs will be addressed. Using the information collected during the reservation process, a hotel may also be able to complete pre registration activities. Such activities include assigning a specific room and rate to guests who have not yet registered and preparing a guest folio. A guest folio is a record of the charges incurred and credits acquired by the guest during occupancy.

An effective reservation system helps maximize room sales by accurately monitoring room availabilities and forecasting room revenue. By analyzing reservation information, front office management can develop an understanding of the hotel's reservation patterns. Data collected during reservation process becomes useful in subsequent front office functions. The most important outcome of an effective reservations process is having a room available when the guest arrives.

ARRIVAL

The arrival stage of the guest cycle includes registration and rooming functions. After the guest arrives, he or she establishes a business relationship with the hotel through the front office. It is front office staff's responsibility to clarify the nature of the guest-hotel relationship and to monitor the financial transactions between the hotel and the guest.

The front desk agent should determine the guest's reservation status before beginning the registration process. Guests with reservation may have already undergone pre-registration activities. Guests without reservations, termed walk-in guests, present an opportunity for front desk agents to sell guest rooms. To sell successfully, the front desk agent must be very familiar with the hotel's room types, rates, and guest services and be able to describe them in a positive manner. A guest is not likely to register if he or she is not convinced of the value of renting particular room.

A registration record completed either as a part of registration activity or at the time of check in, is essential to efficient front office operation. A registration record should include information about the guests intended method of payment, the planned length of stay, and any special guest needs such as a rollaway bed, crib or a preferred guest location. It should also include the guest's billing address, telephone number and signature.

Gathering all requisite information at the time of registration enhances the front office's ability to satisfy special guest needs, forecast room occupancies, and settle guest accounts properly. At check out the guest registration card is the primary source for guest history records.

The front desk agent uses the registration information to assign a room type and a room rate for each guest. It also depends on reservation information. The housekeeping should update the room status as soon as the rooms are ready for sale for efficient operation.

When assigning the guest rooms the front office assistant must also be aware of all the guest room characteristics for each room type. Hotel room types may vary from standard room to the luxury suite. Furnishings, amenities and location within the property will tend to differentiate rooms within the same room type.

Once the guest decides to rent a room the front desk agents turns his or her attention to identifying the method of payment. Registration is complete once the method of payment and the guest's departure date has been established. The guest room key may be issued. When the guest arrives at the room, the occupancy stage of the guest cycle begins.

OCCUPANCY

As the center of the hotel activity, the front desk is responsible for coordinating guest services; among many services the front desk provides the guest with information. They should respond to

guest's request in time and accurate to ensure guest satisfaction. A concierge may also be provided to provide special guest services.

Sound guest relations are essential for repeat visits. The front desk agents should carefully attend to guests' concerns and try to seek a satisfactory resolution as quickly as possible. Security is another primary concern. Procedures for hotel and guest key control, property surveillance, safe deposit boxes, guest's personal property, and emergencies are also important. Another important job is to maintain guest folio. It has to be ensured that house limit is taken care.

DEPARTURE

The final element of guest service is processing the check out and creating a guest history record. The final element of guest accounting is settlement of guest's account.

During the checkout the front office staff should determine whether the guest was satisfied with their stay and encourage the guest to return to the same hotel and or of same chain.

The purpose of account settlement is to collect money due to the hotel prior to guest departure. Depending on the guest's credit arrangements, guests will pay. Account balances should be verified and errors corrected before the guest leaves the hotel. Once the guest has checked out the front office analyze data related to guest's stay. Front office reports can be used to review operations, isolate problem area, indicate where corrective action may be needed, and highlight business trends. Daily reports typically contain information about cash, and charge sales, accounts receivables and front office statistics. Operational analysis can help managers establish a standard of performance, which can be used to evaluate front office performance.

ya so serious?

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