IreckonU

Back in control

*IT plays a prominent role*

whitepaper

IreckonU

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IT plays an increasingly prominent role in the hotel industry. In fact, modern hotels wouldn’t be able to operate if it weren’t for IT solutions. At present, multiple systems are used alongside one another to manage a wide range of aspects: booking and payment modules, mini bar data, entertainment systems, online guest reactions, etc. Although each of these systems may perform well individually, they would be far more powerful and easier to manage if they could communicate with one another. The right software now puts this within reach.

The various software systems currently used by hotels operate independently of each other. There is no ‘consultation’ between the different systems to link up the data generated. So what’s the result? The hotel industry cannot effectively respond to the demands of its guests or make the most of its systems. Furthermore, a situation in which systems operate alongside one another is far from cost-efficient.

Most of these systems are primarily designed to support business processes. This leaves plenty of room for improvement and greater efficiency. The ireckonU software solution can seamlessly integrate your various systems. The system is centred around guests and the overall visitor experience. Its underlying technological solutions ensure a uniform system that enables hotels to optimally serve their guests. For example, the system will ensure a properly functioning and clean room for all hotel guests. In the event that the entertainment system or climate control system are malfunctioning or the room hasn’t been cleaned before arrival, the underlying system will be aware of this information and will not generate a room key before the problems have been resolved.

The benefits are twofold: in addition to ensuring a more pleasant guest experience, the system will also ensure higher room occupancy and allow the hotel to demonstrate its edge on the competition. This can help hotels to distinguish themselves in an overcrowded market.
Software solution

So, what about the potential applications? The term 'customer profile' is key in the modern hospitality industry. Accurate profiles help hotels figure out what their guests really want, thus increasing the chances of return visits. Without realising it hotels are already gathering a lot of information about their guests and the various processes taking place inside the organisation. Creating such guest profiles will require effectively harmonised hotel information systems. However, all these different flows of information are leading a life of their own.

The hotel software program ireckonU offers a solution that does in fact enable the existing software programs from a range of suppliers that hotels are already using to communicate with one another. The result is a system that elevates the guest experience which, in turn, increases loyalty towards the hotel. And that ultimately is the crux of the matter: a satisfied customer who will come back. This will help hotels generate a substantially greater amount of turnover from their guests. It is crucial to this growth, linking the various systems together and facilitating a user-friendly experience for hotel staff. Information can be processed more quickly and efficiently.

The software operates at various levels. Not only do hotel guests benefit, staff can see right away in which rooms the air conditioning or television is not working. These rooms will then be 'blocked'. A guest will not be allocated this room when checking in. Furthermore, the software was developed in such a way that hotel staff will be able to use it in no time. The software is highly intuitive and user-friendly.

IreckonU is the world's most powerful hospitality software solution and draws its strength from focusing on three different pillars or building blocks: optimising the guest experience, managing unnecessary issues in the hotel (nothing is more abhorrent to guests than entering a room that has not been cleaned properly) and keeping costs in check.

Automatically inform your guest about flight changes
The three building blocks

- **Optimising guest experience:** these days, guests want a personal approach whereby the hotel clearly devotes attention to their individual wishes. Hotels can respond by connecting and analysing the data in their CMR and PMS systems. The solution offered by ireckonU is unlike other existing solutions. The software solution offers the hotel industry the possibility of responding directly to guests’ needs. Based on guests' previous visits the system composes guest profiles that inform hoteliers which guests like listening to jazz music or rock music. The profile shows what a guest likes to drink so that bar staff can respond directly to the guest’s preferences.

- **Manage unnecessary issues:** naturally, guests hate going into a hotel room that hasn’t been cleaned properly. In the top 10 irritating factors about hotels, this tops the list. The same clearly applies to the equipment in the room. It simply should work. The ireckonU software will notify staff if anything is wrong, so that immediate action can be taken.

- **Keeping costs in check:** in addition to ensuring satisfied guests, the solution can also directly contribute to increasing hotel turnover. Because all the information is collated in a single database, ireckonU provides not only an intelligent guest system that enables marketing and sales to respond promptly, but also enables the hotel to operate more efficiently because the system provides direct insight into housekeeping and maintenance operations. The most important areas in the hotel are incorporated in the system: the food and beverage perpetual inventory, room cleaning and laundry management.

Technological solution

The ireckonU system is based around a scalable basic system known as U:Base, which is rooted in Windows Azure. U:Base consists of a service bus and middleware containing business specific logic. This service bus can be seen as a power strip. All hotel systems — from booking modules on the website to the data from the minibar of the entertainment system in the hotel room — plug in to this power strip. The service bus ensures that systems communicate easily and effectively with each other. This allows the system to isolate functionality and puts the IT manager in control of the system and the services. The system spans the local hotel and the cloud allowing for maximum scalability and connectivity.

An example of the ireckonU U:service Bus and different systems connecting to it
The existing systems and services are linked through connectors to the U:Base system. The existing systems and services are rewired to make your system future proof. Since only one connector needs to be changed, replacing or upgrading an existing system is easy.

The U:Base solution consists of a number of standard building blocks such as:

- **U:Guest profile**
  This is the database for collecting and storing all guest data. This data is traditionally fragmented across systems and services. The data is captured in one database that is supported by a SQL Server. This solution allows for unique and intelligent guest services.

- **U:Dashboard**
  The Dashboard is developed for your employees. It gives them a personalized view on information relevant to their roles in the hotel. Typical views are marketing and sales, IT and Business performance data. The actual dashboards are custom implementations.

- **U:Logic**
  In this part the middleware building blocks are found. They are aimed at optimizing different components like the focus on the customer, the reservation systems, payment services and room status. This custom implemented component is highly adjustable.

- **U:Connectors**
  A number of standard connectors is available from different systems and services. The list of supported platforms is continuously expanded. If a platform of choice is not listed but preferred by a hotel, custom connector services to build connectors are available.
  Some examples of these connectors include PMS, payment, OTA (booking.com), VOIP, in room television system (Guest-tek) and room controls.

The ireckonU IT management system also offers plenty of 'behind the scenes' benefits. First off, the system is scalable. New hotel modules can be linked up at any moment. As a result, the IT manager will retain full control over the various systems at all times. In many cases, you won’t even have to replace your systems: most existing systems can already be used with U:Base or require a few minor adjustments to do so. Finally, the ireckonU system will help reduce the need for maintenance work and support. The software will manage all these aspects for you.