

Front Office Ops Part 2

By Yalina Keith

Main Duties of Front Desk Registration and Check-in Procedures

Most hotels allow their guests to check-in at 2 p.m. or after.

The registration procedures performed by receptionists should be efficient and accurate.

These contribute to a positive first impression to guests upon their arrival.

The following are the check-in steps, which will be explained in more detail:

- Greet the guest
- Verify guests identity
- Present the registration form
- Confirm method of payment
- Update the guests account
- Issue room key
- Escort guest to room



Greet the guest

- Receptionists should always be attentive to the presence of guests at the front door and lobby areas. They should give warm greetings to the guests when they approach the front desk.

Verify

Verify the Guest's Identity

Ask if the guest would like to check-in. Verify the guest's identity by checking his/her passport, booking voucher and confirmation number.



Present

Present the Registration Form to the Guest

Confirm the booking information printed in the registration form with the guest. For example, room type, room rate, length of stay and special requests if any. Finally, ask the guest to complete and sign the registration form.



Confirm

Confirm the Method of Payment

If a credit card is used, check the guest's name, the card's validity and its date of expiry. For guests who prefer paying cash, make sure they have paid in advance with cash deposit. Guests should also be reminded that they will not be allowed to post any charges to their guest accounts if no credit card is provided at the time of checking-in.



Update

Update the Guest's Information

Check if any mail, message or article is received before the guest's arrival. Select and assign a suitable room to the guest according to his/her booking information.



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Issue

Issue Room Key and Give Further Information

While issuing the room key and giving directions to the guest, staff should also take the chance to provide more information on the hotel. For example, the breakfast arrangements; the operation hours of the hotel's outlets and facilities.



Escort

Escort Guest to the Room

Ask if the guest needs assistance from the baggage attendant who can take the guest's baggage and escort the guest to their room.



Variations of registration

The registration procedures of group guests (e.g. tours and event attendees) are different from the general procedures of checking-in an individual guest.

In order to speed up the service process and prevent guests from waiting too long in the lobby, the following procedures are usually performed by staff at the hotel reception desk.

Pre - registration

Some preparation works can be performed by receptionists before group guests' arrivals, including the confirmation of room numbers and number of rooms available for groups.

Key cards are always prepared by receptionists in advance according to the room lists provided by travel agents or event organizers.

Group registration

Some hotels have group check-in counters which specifically serve group guests. Tour escorts or event organizers check-in at the group check-in counter without the need of checking-in each guest individually.

Some hotels would also set up a tour assembly point for large groups by using meeting rooms if necessary. Such a practice can control the traffic of hotel lobby and enhance the comfort of guests upon their arrivals.

Activity

Up-selling During the Check-in Process

By examining the check-in procedures of a front desk receptionist, please discuss and answer the following questions:

- At which stage should reception staff conduct up-selling during the check-in process?
- What kinds of products or services can be recommended by reception staff in an up-selling task?
- In which situations should reception staff forego up-selling?

Activity

Mr Christie, a walk-in guest, will stay in your hotel for one night only and will be fully responsible for all charges incurred.

As a front desk clerk, how would you explain to the guest that you have to collect one night room rate plus a 10% service charge from him as the deposit for a check-in?




Check out procedures

The standard hotel check-out time is usually set at 12 p.m. or before, although this can vary by hotel and location. The check-out procedures are as important as the procedures for check-in. Important issues that the reception staff should put into focus are payment collection, customer assistance and to create a positive parting impression to guests.



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The standard check-out procedures that should be followed by reception staff at the front desk, include the following:



Greet the Guest

Same as the check-in procedure, through greeting, reception staff can take the chance to ask the guest for his/her comments on their stay.



Guest Details

It is important to check guest's details, e.g. the guest's name and room number. Double check with the guest so to make sure satisfactory services were provided to the guest during their stay. Also ask the guest to return the room key.

Check-out Charges

Normally, hotels would request their guests to check-out before 12pm. Receptionists should follow the hotel's policy for handling the cases of late check-out. Some hotels would charge 50% of the daily room rate for those who check-out before 6pm and a full rate is charged after 6pm.



Double-Check the Hotel Charges

The receptionist should print and present the bill to the guest for his/her checking before settlement.

It is the responsibility of the receptionist to explain the charges to the guest and if he/she has any queries, make corrections if necessary.

SunShine Beach Biên nhận chỉ có giá trị lưu hành nội bộ

RECEIPT

Name of Guest _____
Room No. **207** CODE: 1114207
Date **26/11/2008 10:08 PM** Voucher No.:

No (Stt)	Service (Dịch vụ)	Rate (Giá)	Quantity (Số Lượng)	Amount (VND)
01	Room (Phòng)	715,000	13	9,295,000
02	Total Food and Beverage Receipt (Tổng HĐ Ăn uống)			1,499,000
03	Laundry (Giặt ủi)			
04	Minibar			41,000
05	Transportation (Vận chuyển)			1,613,000
06	Telephone (Điện thoại)			
07	Extra person			-
Exchange Rate: VND 16,500				
Signature			BY:	TOTAL (VND): 12,443,000
				DEPOSIT 3,003,000
				GRAND TOTAL (VND) 9,445,000
				(USD) 572.42

PAID
26 NOV 2008

Thank you for staying in the SunShine Beach Resort and hope to see you again !
Phiếu này không có giá trị thay thế hoá đơn tài chính

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Payment

Re-confirm the method of payment. Some guests, especially business travelers and tours would like to split their bill into two different bills:

- **Master bills** include room and breakfast charges only.
- **Incidental bills** contain personal expenses

Assistance

Ask if the guest needs any assistance, some may request the front desk keep their baggage for a certain period before their departure.

Staff should also take the chance to help guests in making future reservations upon request.



Update Room and Guest History Record

After checking out the guest, make sure to update the room status to facilitate room cleaning and make the room available for sale as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Activity

Errors in Billing

The call accounting system has recorded a long-distance call made from Room 608. However, the guest said he has not made any calls during his stay.

Think about how reception staff should respond to the guest in this case. How may the following affect your decision?

- Number of people staying in the same room
- Guest type, e.g. VIP, frequent traveler or corporate business traveler
- Room type and rate
- Guest history record
- Duration of the call



Guest Cycle

The operation of the front office department is mainly determined by the type and number of guest transactions which take place during the four different phases of the guest cycle.

The four different phases of the guest cycle are:

- **Pre-arrival** - The stage where the guest makes a reservation.
- **Arrival** - The point when the guest arrives at the hotel.
- **Occupancy** - The period during which the guest stays in the hotel.
- **Departure** - The guest checks out and leaves the hotel.

Revenue and Sales Indicator

Room sales normally contribute to the majority of a hotel's revenue, followed by sales in the food & beverage sections.

Variations on revenue contribution of different units occur in different types of hotels.

Small-scaled hotels with no restaurant outlets mainly depend on their revenue in room sales for survival.

Example:

The revenue of casino hotels are mainly from the gambling units, while charges in rooms and catering services are relatively cheap or even subsidized in order to attract more guests. Convention hotels and those which target events would also have higher income from banqueting and meeting facilities when compared with other hotels.



Occupancy Rate

The Occupancy rate is a common sales indicator which tells how well the hotel has fully utilized the room resources to maximize profit. It is always the objective of hotels to achieve full-house, i.e. 100% occupancy, when all the rooms are sold out for the night.

The formula for occupancy rate is shown below:

Occupancy Rate = Number of Rooms Sold ÷ Total Number of Rooms in a Hotel x 100%

Guests per occupied room

This gives the ratio between guests staying in the hotel and the quantity of occupied rooms. Regardless of the room types available in the hotel, it gives a general idea of how many guests are being staying in each room. The information is useful for different departments, e.g. housekeeping can refer to the guest ratio to estimate the consumption rate of guest supplies.

The formula of guest per occupied room is shown as below:

Guests Per Occupied Room = Number of Guests Staying in a Hotel ÷ Number of Rooms Occupied