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What is a Hotel Property Management System?

Contents

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Introduction

We understand that running an accommodation business is both challenging and rewarding.

Alongside the day-to-day operations, you also need to wear many hats, like host, salesperson, entertainer, marketer and finance manager. The second biggest challenge is finding the time to manage all of these roles.

You want to be able to focus on creating new experiences and improving guest satisfaction. But you've learnt that running a successful business takes much more than just doing what you love.

Evenings are often spent completing piles of admin, your time is scarce and everything is demanding your attention...

Regardless of whether you're running a hotel, motel, villa or another type of accommodation, chances are you're looking at ways to make the most out of your limited time.

To help you get back to doing more of what you love, we explore all the different ways that a PMS can save you time and make your life that much easier.

Property Management System

- Booking Reservations
- Guest check-in / check-out
- Room Management
- Billing
- Reporting & Analytics
- Guest Database
- Channel Management
- Rates & Commissions

What is PMS?

PMS stands for Property Management System. Traditionally, it's accommodation software that helps you manage the front-desk components of your business. This typically includes reservations, room rates, guest information, check-in/outs, billing and more.

PMS software replaces laborious paper and spreadsheet-based processes. Instead, a good PMS will take a lot of the manual processes off your hands and speed up admin among the many other benefits that we'll take you through.

It's easy to see how a PMS can save you a lot of time. For example, billing and creating invoices is as simple as pushing a few buttons. PMS software also ensures that information such as bookings, occupancy rates and billing information is updated in real-time and staff are notified as required. Thus, simplifying communication and eliminating spreadsheets!

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What is the difference between a PMS and POS?

PMS manages bookings before guests arrive, operational tasks during their stay and admin tasks after they've gone. Point-of-sale software manages the guest experience after they checked-in and before they check-out. For example, POS handles restaurant and room orders while PMS manages invoices and tells you when rooms need to be cleaned.

Any good PMS software should integrate with your POS to create a seamless connection between the guest experience and running the business.

What does a PMS do?

Property Management Systems are usually accessed by front-office staff and hotel managers on desktop computers or tablets. Before guests arrive, it's used to book rooms using different online travel agency (OTA) rates. As they arrive in the foyer, it's used to check-in and add extras such valet parking to their profile. According to Criton, 56% of guests think that it is acceptable to wait 2-5 minutes to check-in at reception. A good PMS will zip through check-ins even faster.

While guests are enjoying your hospitality, the PMS is working hard to manage your other bookings, room occupancy and front-desk requirements. Someone cancels late? No worries, you can see your available rooms in real-time and adjust accordingly.

As you say your parting goodbyes at check-out, your PMS generates an invoice including any extra charges that then pushes a copy back to your accounting system.

No more late nights fighting spreadsheets as reporting, billing and invoicing is all managed through your PMS.

What about channel managers?

'Manual booking processes' can quickly become a nightmare when you consider you're managing reservations across multiple OTAs, late cancellations and ever-changing agent commissions. Increasing admin, booking double-ups and incorrect pricing are just some of the challenges of manual booking systems. You just can't do it all by yourself any longer.

PMS integrated with channel managers such as STAAH and Siteminder gives you access to over 700 OTAs globally. Armed with both a cloud-based PMS and a channel manager, you'll be able to use more booking channels without having to worry about updating them. For example, when someone books accommodation on an OTA such as Expedia, it is automatically updated in your PMS and across every booking channel that you use. Likewise, the PMS sends real-time room rates and availability to your OTAs so you can maximise online revenue opportunities without having to worry about pricing or double-bookings.

 Channel managers work best when integrated with a PMS. This takes the manual admin out of managing your online presence with availability, rates and bookings synced across all platforms. Connected together, they form a powerful partnership to increase your revenue without increasing admin.

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Simplifies running your business

Saves you time

Integrates with the systems you already use

Access your business from anywhere

Cost-effective & scalable

Improves without expensive updates

Top benefits of a PMS

Cloud-based property management systems provide a central platform to run your business from anywhere. Rather than using multiple systems and slow manual processes, A PMS connects your front and back office to make your job that much easier. A good PMS will save you time, money and automatically ensure your systems are always working and up-to-date.

Here are top features of a cloud PMS:

- A central view of all of your bookings and room occupancy that is easily adjustable

- Integrations with all the systems you're already using such as channel managers and POS

- Front-desk guest management connected to back office accounting systems for accurate and speedy billing

- Customer database for keeping up-to-date records and creating personalised guest experiences

- Visual reports and dashboards that make it easy to analyse performance and make improvements across the business

- Housekeeping and maintenance management to schedule room cleans, manage inventory, communicate with staff and more

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Common myths about PMS

Myth 1: Cloud-based systems are confusing and complicated

Traditional PMS systems force you to learn and use multiple systems that all need to be maintained, updated and eventually replaced. With cloud-based PMS everything is in the same place, set-up takes minutes and you get access to upgrades and new features automatically.

Myth 2: Business and guest data stored in the cloud is insecure

All data stored in the cloud is protected by encryption, authentication and backed-up in case of an emergency. Not only that, not having your data stored on-site means that you don't have to worry about bugs or viruses and your data is protected regardless of the state of your computers. For example, should an inevitable incident (flood, theft or fire) impact your hotel then none of your data will be lost.

Myth 3: Hotel PMS is too expensive and only for big hotel chains

Traditional property management systems are notorious for locking unsuspecting hoteliers into long, inflexible contracts with hidden costs and other such nightmares. Cloud PMS offers subscription-based pricing that scales with your business and means you only pay for the features that you need.

Myth 4: Cloud PMS only works for individual properties

Cloud PMS is far easier to manage multiple properties and scale as you grow in size. Simply select the size of your property, number of rooms and the plan that best suits your needs. Managing multiple properties is as simple as switching portals. In addition, without sunk equipment costs and ongoing maintenance fees, cloud PMS often works out to be considerably cheaper than legacy alternatives.

Myth 5: Moving data to the cloud means I lose control and ownership

Many cloud-based PMS systems give you complete control over who has access to what. For example, you can create a user role for someone to manage bookings but not billing. In addition, PMS such as Preno makes it easy to import or export your data for complete peace of mind.

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What hoteliers want from a PMS

Based on a survey of executives and technology managers from 110 hotel chains around the world, hoteliers identified their top 5 requirements for choosing a new PMS system:

1. High-level of support and consulting services available（91%）
2. Seamless integrations between one or more companies（90%）
3. Ease of use & minimal training required（87%）
4. Availability of open APIs（86%）
5. CRM integration capabilities／options（85%）

Does your accommodation business need a cloud-based PMS platform?

Choosing a hotel PMS is an important decision and shouldn't be taken lightly. We've put together a list of questions to help:

1. Have you outgrown your current systems?
2. What critical features do you need in a PMS?
3. How will the PMS integrate with your existing systems?
4. What kind of PMS do you need?
5. How quick and easy will it be to implement and train staff?

We've also created a list of **things to avoid when choosing a PMS** （and what to do instead）.
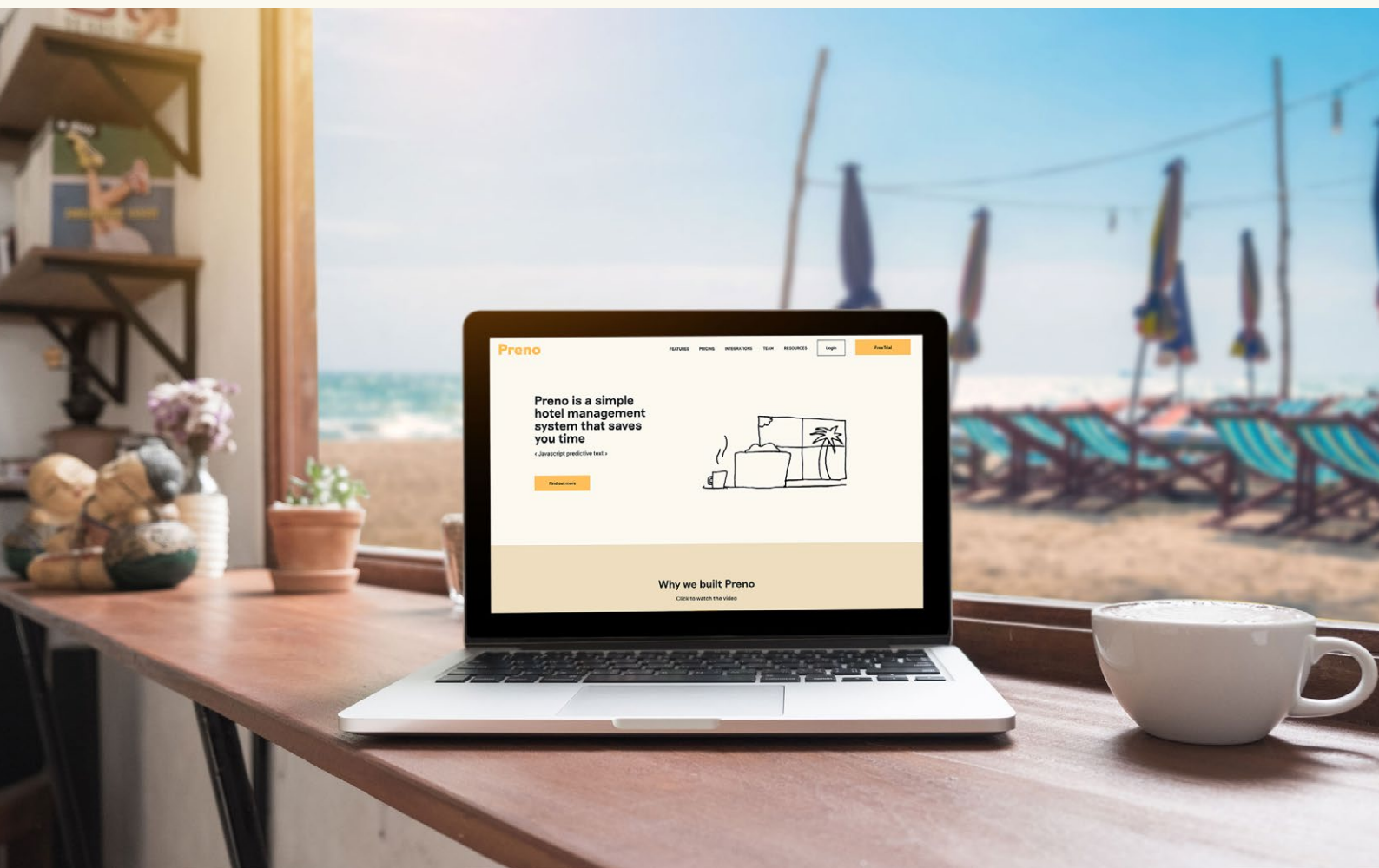
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Final Thoughts

A simple cloud-based hotel system such as Preno will get you back to doing more of what you love. It will save you time, money and let you focus on creating exceptional experiences for your guests. PMS simplifies bookings management, billing, reporting and more with a central platform accessible from anywhere.

It will free you up to spend more time improving your business and less time doing admin.

Other benefits of Preno include:

- 24/7 accessibility & support
- Ease of use with minimal training required
- Payment flexibility that doesn't lock you into long-term contracts
- Open API to make it simple to interface with the systems you already use
- World-class integrations including Xero, Kounta, Siteminder and STAAH

Find out the top **5 reasons why people prefer Preno.**

About Preno

Simple Accommodation Software

Global software company in over 24 countries

Preno is a simple, powerful property management system for accommodation providers. It saves you valuable time on admin, simplifies bookings and billing, and integrates seamlessly with the tools you already use. It's a secure, intuitive cloud-based platform that makes your operating systems accessible from anywhere. It's your front desk assistant that can be accessed 24/7, at no extra cost.

Find out more at: **PrenoHQ.com**

Try Preno for free

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5 mistakes to avoid when choosing a hotel pms

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STAAH

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