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Reservations

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1. The Service Concept

As an employee handling reservations, you serve as an Ambassador of the Hotel, and represent everything the hotel has to offer. The task of taking a reservation is extremely important to our guests experience, and the overall success of the Hotel.

It is therefore essential, that at all times, you:

- Have a cheerful manner on the telephone (put a smile in your voice)
- Be polite and courteous under even the most difficult circumstances
- Be consistent and accurate when taking reservation details
- Know your product thoroughly.

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2. Pre-requisites for effective reservations

COMPETITION

1. MAJOR COMPETITORS
2. LOCATION AND FACILITIES
3. TYPES AND RATES
4. RESTAURANTS
5. MEETING SPACES

ATTITUDE

- HAVE A CHEERFUL MANNER OVER THE PHONE
- BE CONSISTENT
- ENSURE INFORMATION IS ACCURATE
- LISTEN TO THE CLIENT

RESERVATIONS

CITY INFORMATION

- LOCATION OF HOTEL
- DISTANCES FROM BUSINESS / SHOPPING DISTRICTS
- TOURIST SITES
- NEAREST DEPARTURE POINT AIRPORT / BUS / RAILWAY
- LOCAL EVENTS

HOTEL INFORMATION

- RESTAURANTS AND BARS
- ENTERTAINMENT
- BANQUET AND MEETING SPACE
- BUSINESS CENTRE
- HEALTH CLUB
- SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE HOTEL

GUEST ROOMS

- TYPES OF ROOMS AND SUITES
- RATES FOR ALL
- DOLLAR AND DINAR RATE
- DECOR AND FURNISHINGS
- FLOOR LAYOUT AND ROOM LOCATION
- VIEW FROM THE ROOM
- IN-ROOM FACILITIES, AMENITIES AND SERVICES

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3. Taking a reservation on the telephone

To be consistent and accurate you should follow a standard routine. Using a pleasant and cheerful manner:

- Answer the phone promptly. Identify your Department and the property immediately, followed by your name and “May I assist you ?”
- Establish caller’s name as clearly as possible
- Establish arrival and departure dates of visit
- Check the availability on those dates
- Determine the number of people in the party and type of room/ rooms required
- Check the correct spelling of the guest name
- Ask the guest is par of a group or conference (optional).
- Ask for the guest’s company address, telephone and fax numbers
- Get precise billing instructions
- While on the telephone, check the computer for the guest history and use the information to personalize the reservation
- Determine the guest’s anticipated arrival and flight details
- Sell the limousine service
- Suggest a guaranteed reservation and obtain credit card information. Explain to the guest that it assures a room will be available, regardless of time of arrival (this also assures the hotel that the room will be paid even if the guest does not arrive)
- If the reservation is made by a person other than the guest, get his or her name, address and fax numbers
- Double check your information for accuracy – e.g. repeat the reservation details back to the client
- Provide the guest with a confirmation number. All guests should be answered both within 24 hours
- Remember to say “Thank you” and to use the guest’s or caller’s name
- Enter reservations into the computer the same day

Note: Follow the same format for reservations received via fax or email

- Courteous – make the contact with the hotel pleasant for the caller
- Efficient – keep the caller brief, but don’t forget to ask all relevant questions
- Effective – make a real difference for the guest and the hotel
- Follow up is essential if details are incomplete

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4. Rates Explained

i. Rack rates

- This rate which is equivalent to the quoted tariff of the hotel, is given to anyone that comes directly to the hotel or via a travel agent and does not belong to a company or group that has a special rate negotiated with the hotel
- The market segments which fall within this category are GCR-other discounts

ii. Free Individual Traveller (FIT) through travel agent

- These rates normally have a 10% to 15% discount on the Rack Rate due to the large volume of room-nights generated through these consortia and travel agents
- These rates are also subject to commission which is paid to the consortia or wholesaler on materialization of the booking
- In most cases commissions are 10%

iii. Guaranteed Corporate Rates (GCR)

- Reservations that are made by a guest through a consortia or wholesaler for example American Express and Abercrombie and Kent, Trust International, respectively are classified under GCR
- The rate is applicable to companies that have applied to the hotel for a corporate rate and have qualified. Corporate rates are discounted from the rack rate and are based on the volume of business the individual company can offer. The greater the volume of business the higher the discount.
- All hotels must ensure that there is a positive correlation between the discount percentage and the volume of business received from the company
- Hotels should try and minimize the number of discount slabs offered within the GCR structure and also attempt to reduce discounts overall
- For the rate to be applicable the company must book directly with the hotel not routing the reservation through a travel agent

iv. Corporate rates

1. Special rates given to companies
2. For the rate to be applicable the company must book directly with the hotel, not routing the reservation through a travel agent

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v. Special rates

- Special rates are rates that are given to companies or individuals that do not fall within the rate structure. An example of this might be a guest who lives in the hotel on a permanent basis from a company who has a GCR rate. As he resides in the hotel, he might be given a special rate over and above the rate offered to the company. This rate would be classified as a Special Rate.
- Special rates are also given to companies with very large volume of room nights for example World Bank and Public Sector Companies
- Rates with value add-ons such as breakfast, car transfers from the airport, etc. also fall within this category
- Special rates are classified into Dollar and Rupee categories

vi. Other Discounts

- Rates offered to individual from travel agents, airlines, press and other hotel companies fall within this segment
- Please refer to the Sales & Marketing note in the Appendix for further information on this segment

vii. Crew rates

- These rates are negotiated with individual airlines for their airline crew
- As airlines are normally very price sensitive and given the large volume of room-nights they generate, discounts tend to be high in this segment

viii. Group rates

- This rate applies to volume leisure groups and incentives that we want to attract to the hotel during the low and shoulder season in our commercial hotels, but forms the core of our business for hotels located in leisure destinations
- This rate booked through a tour operator or travel agent is commissionable
- These rates are discounted by 15% to 25% on the hotel's rack rate
- Group rates are only classified into Dollar categories and net

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ix. Conference rates

- This rate applies to volume business received from a company or agency for which a special discounted rate is offered due to a booking in the banqueting department
- Group rates are classified into Dollar and Local Currency categories
- If this booking is received through a company which is on the GCR or Core List, the room-nights materialization must be credited to the companies productivity

Reservation correspondence

Booking forms, amendment or cancellation forms are files that are made for each reservations received. Incoming fax, letters or email form part of the correspondence including replies made. Filing should be systematic and in date order. It should be clearly marked and indexed. Each group booking shall have its separated file folder

Arrival report

- An arrival list is prepared on a daily basis. All expected reservations arriving for a particular day is printed from the host computer. This report can generate a lot of information that is confidential. Distribution and care of the document is a matter of concern that has to be addressed periodically

Departure report

- An anticipated check-out list is printed on a daily basis and extracted from the Front Office host computer. It gives information as to who are the guests checking out and their time of departure. This assists various departments to plan their activity to anticipate cleaning of the room, preparing of the bill, arranging for baggage collection and airport transfers and others. A separate report may or may not be required for a VIP guest checking out provided that this is reflected in the master Department Report list.

Room availability / status report

- This report provides a daily room booking situation by room type and date. This is an important document as it helps determine when to declare closed out periods. It is an aid in making a forecast of occupancy and revenue and can be a sales yardstick

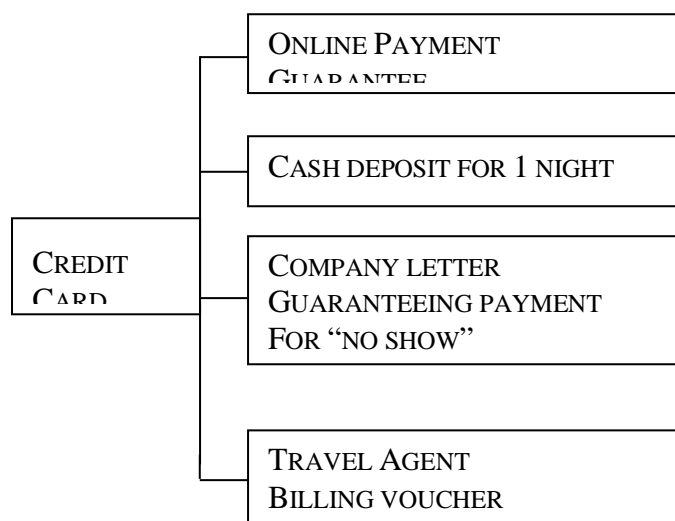
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5. Guaranteed Reservations

In an environment where occupancies are high, it is essential to ensure that “no shows” are minimized and revenue potential is maximized

To ensure this happens you must request the booking source to “guarantee the reservation”, explaining to them that should the guest fail to arrive and provided no cancellation is received, the booking source will be liable and billed for the first night’s stay

Rooms for all guaranteed reservations must be held till 12:00 p.m. the following day. Rooms for reservations which are not guaranteed may be released after 6:00 p.m. if the guest has still not checked into the hotel



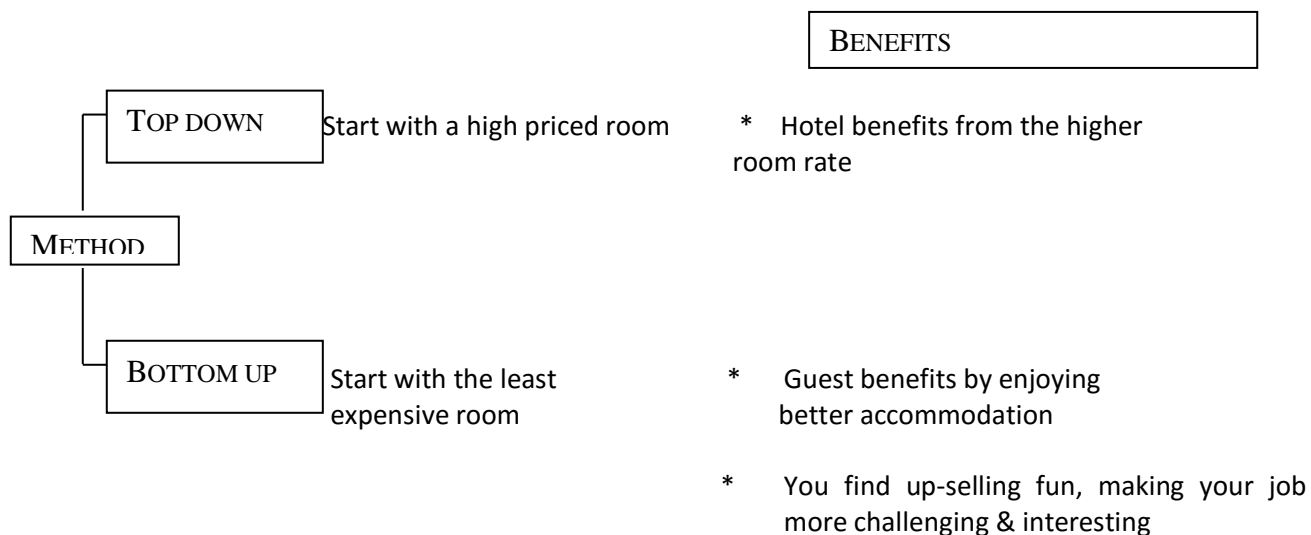
For all guaranteed reservations the hotel must hold the room for the expected guest until check-out time the following day.

GUARANTEEING A RESERVATION
ENSURES THE GUEST HAS A ROOM
EVEN IF HE/ SHE ARRIVES
AFTER 6:00 P.M.

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6. Up-selling

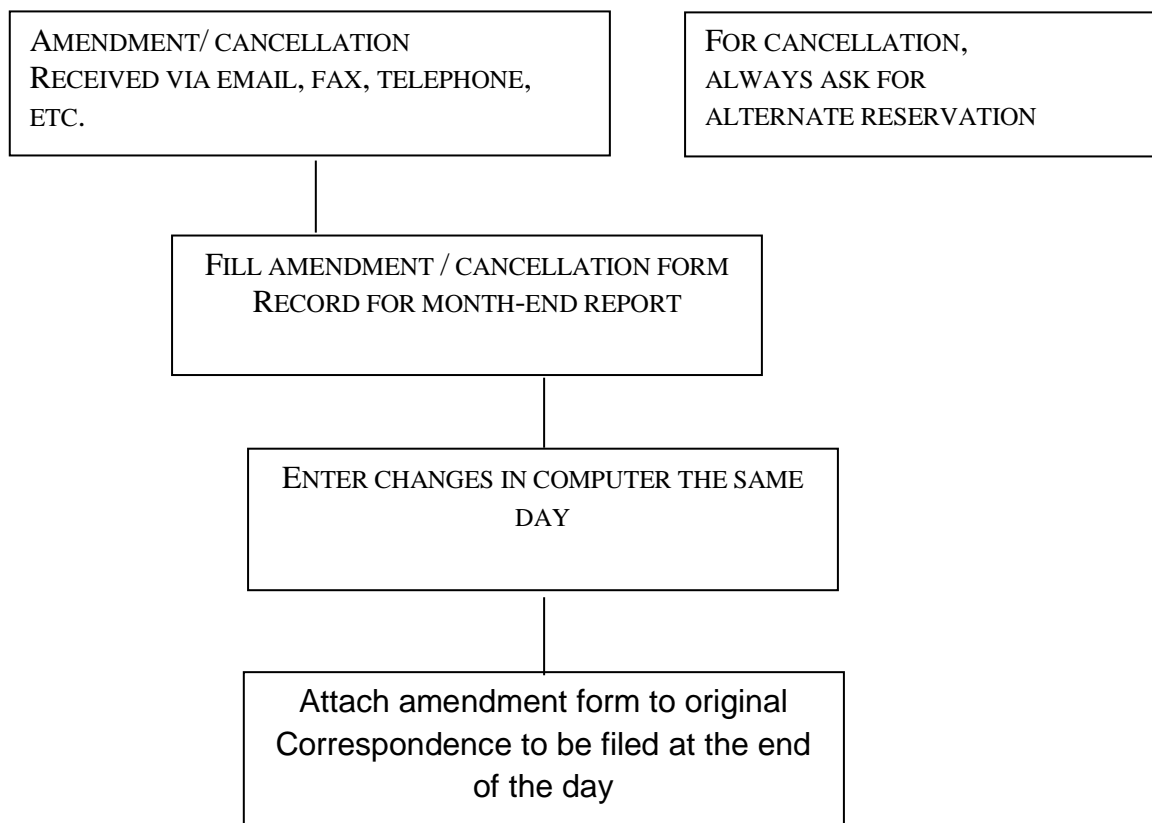
As a Reservation Agent, guest relations and selling are a part of your job. Travelers would like to have a most memorable experience and sometimes do not mind spending a little more for it. This is where up-selling comes in, and involves guiding a guest to reserve a higher quality room than he would without your help. However, ensure you do not intimidate a guest into paying more than he/she is comfortable with



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7. Amendments and Cancellations

When an amendment or cancellation is received, the Reservationist should take down the full details to either amend or cancel the reservation, including the name, telephone and contact number of the person making the amendment.



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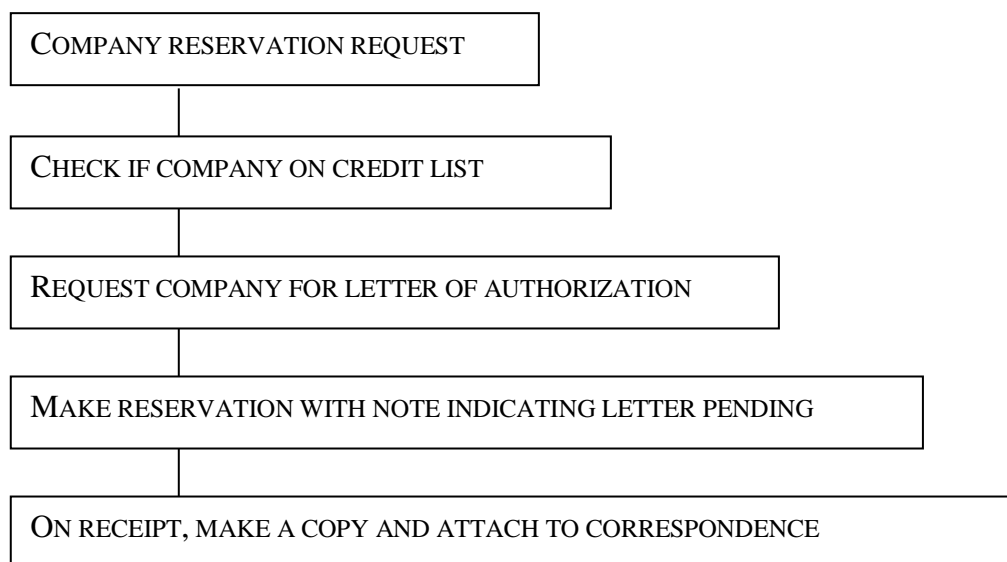
8. Bill to Company Procedure

Only companies on the hotel's credit list can avail of this facility. In all other cases, approval is required from the GM, EAM, RDM, FOM, Director Sales, Sales Executive

All companies, government agencies and individuals making reservations and requesting that the bill be sent to them should be advised that a letter of authorization on their stationery is necessary.

The reservation should be taken and confirmed subject to the billing letter being received. A notation must be made on the correspondence and computer indicating that the billing letter is being sent.

All reservations are to be checked the day prior to the arrival. The Reservations Supervisor/ FOM should check to ensure the billing letter has been received. If not, he should follow-up with the company ensuring the letter is sent prior to the guest arrival.

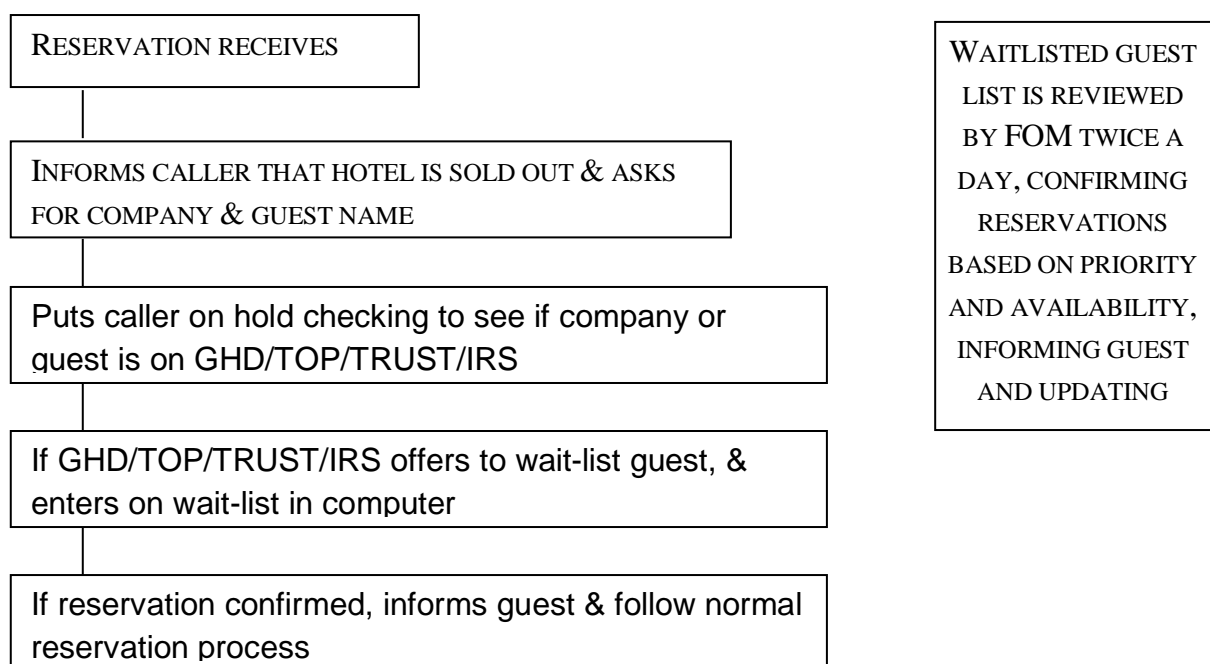


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9. Wait listing Process

It is the endeavor of the hotel to try and accommodate key companies and guests who form the TOP/TRUST/IRS/GHD even during the periods when the hotel is fully occupied. When the hotel is sold out you will not be in a position to confirm this priority unless when cancellations takes place and the room position improves.

Process for wait-listing on sold out days



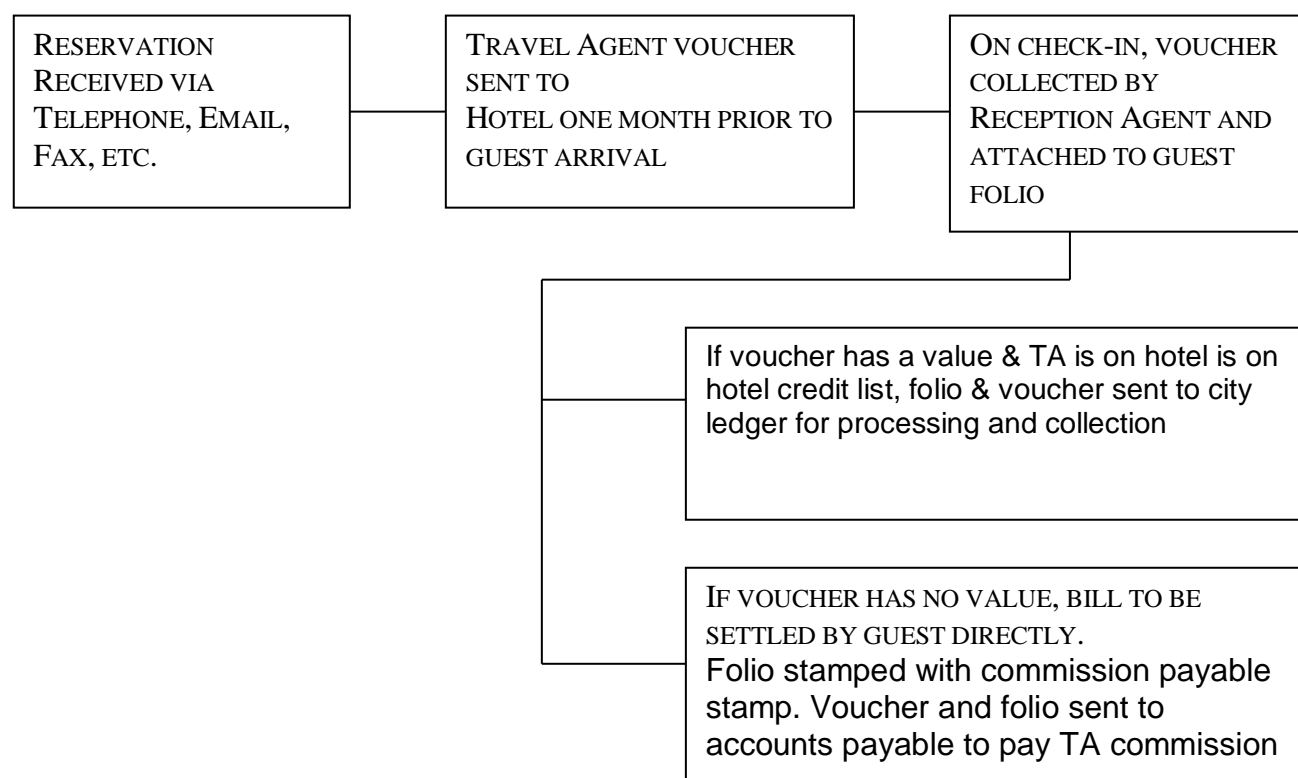
If waitlisted reservation cannot be confirmed, must inform guest and try and get alternate dates.

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13. Travel Agents Reservations

Travel Agents earn their income and profitability entirely from commissions received from business referred to hotels and airlines. It is therefore in our mutual interest to ensure that we carefully and promptly process their reservations, pay their commissions in a timely manner and give the best possible service to their client, thus ensuring continued business from the Travel Agent.

Reservation process



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Travel Agent Reservations

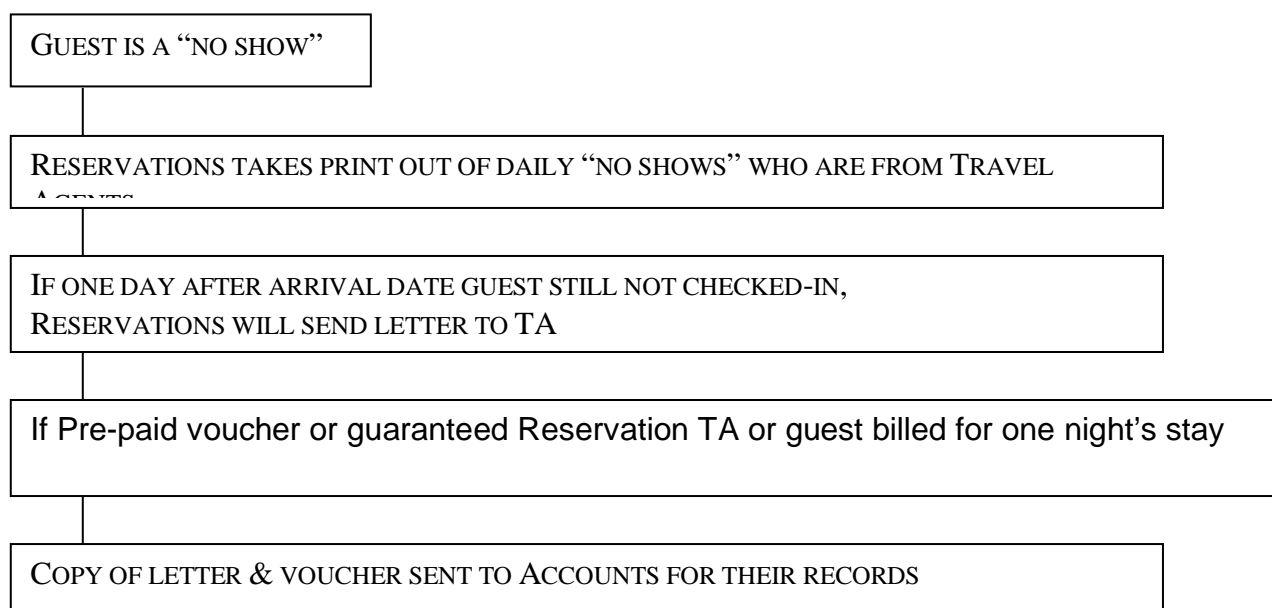
- When a person pays the Travel Agent in full for the room, the Agent issues a voucher with all necessary details such as arrival and departure date, types of accommodation, any meals, etc.
- When entering the reservation ensure that the correct voucher details, for example voucher number, length of stay etc., are fed into the computer.
- Carbon copy of voucher sent to hotel Reservations as confirmation of reservation.
- Original copy/ pre-paid voucher is given to the client to hand over to Reception on Check-in
- On check-in, Reception must check voucher to ensure dates, accommodation etc., are the same as the reservation.
- The voucher is attached to the reservation card by Reception. It is the responsibility of the Front Office to ensure that the voucher is not lost.
- Separate folios (billing marks) should be created based on the payment instructions mentioned on the voucher, for example when voucher covers the exact length of stay, 2 separate guest folios should be opened, one for accommodation and one for other expenses to be paid directly by the client.
- On check-out, the Cashier must collect the voucher and compare the length of stay indicated on the voucher with the actual length of stay. If a guest stays beyond the vouchers' dates, the guests must settle this amount directly.
- Should by guest check-out before the pre-paid length of stay, the hotel must refund the Travel Agent. It is not possible for the hotel to refund this amount to the guest.

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No Show Travel Agent Reservations

Travel Agent reservation for guests who fail to arrive are not commissionable unless they are guaranteed, in which case a commission will be payable based on the guaranteed period (usually one night). In all such cases the hotel will send an individual letter to the agent informing them that the guest was a “no show”. The letter will ensure continuous good relations with the Travel Agent and prevents unnecessary commission request correspondence.

Process for “No shows”



Sample Correspondence

(Letter format on Hotel letterhead.)

Dear Sirs,

Thank you very much for recommending (Name of Hotel) to (Name of Guest). Unfortunately (Name of Guest), did not arrive on (Arrival date) as planned. We hope for another opportunity to serve you in the near future.

Yours sincerely,
THE HOTEL

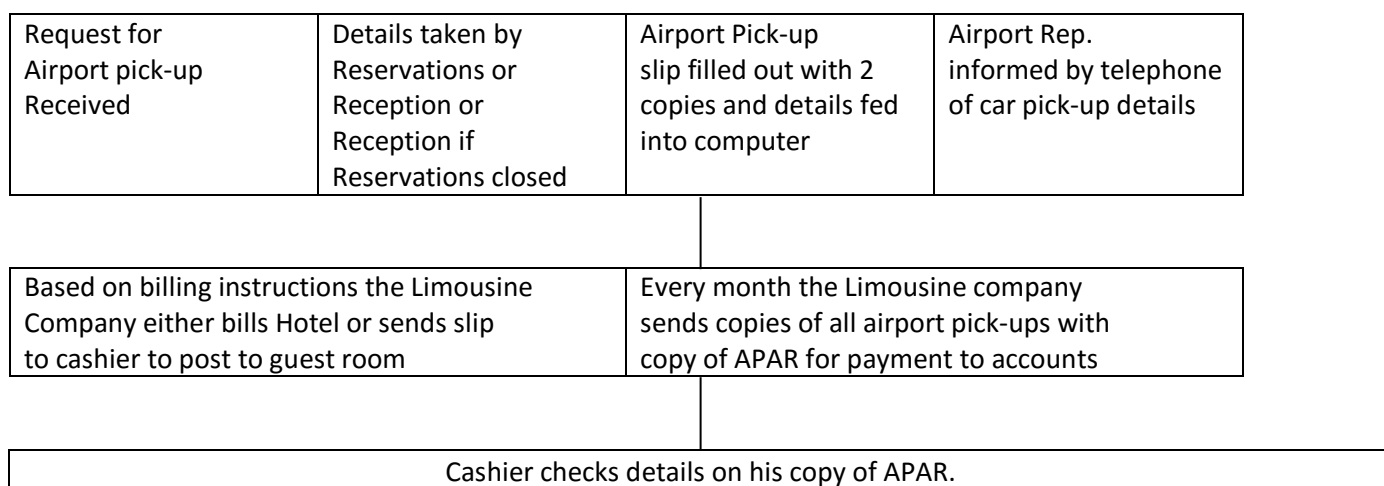
Front Office Manager/ Resident Manager

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14. Airport Pick-up process

The test of providing guests with a Limousine service of the highest standard is extremely important to his experience and the overall success of the hotel.

Many Hotels use a third party to provide Limousine services to their guests. It is the Hotel's responsibility nevertheless to ensure that the cars are in excellent condition, the drivers have good communication skills, are well groomed with spotless uniforms and a cheerful and courteous manner.



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15. Group Reservations

Filing

- Separate group files should be maintained by Reservations for each month, and be chronologically arranged.

Follow-up

- A trace file should be used which allows for systematic follow-up of all group reservations. By ensuring proper follow-up reservations will be able to better assess "Firm" bookings & be able to reduce the number of last minute cancellation and "no shows".
- Reservations must also follow-up to ensure that voucher is received one month prior to the group arrival and the room list 15 days prior to arrival
- Once a week, a group status form must be prepared by Reservations to monitor the status of all groups and conferences for the following week. Copies should be sent to FOM, RDM, S&M and GM.
- The group information sheet should be filled out and circulated to all departments a week prior to the arrival date.

Blocking rooms

- Reception should block rooms based on the rooming list and any special requests, preferably the night before the group arrival date, thus ensuring a speedy check-in.
- During high occupancy periods, rooms should be blocked at least four hours before the groups expected arrival time.
- Rooming lists, key cards, keys, meal plans, coupons etc., should be kept ready and given to group members on check-in.

Meal arrangements

Reservations must keep the Food & Beverage department fully informed on all future group bookings and consult with the F&B Manager before making any meal arrangement commitments for the group.

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Reservations Policies

Early check-in Policy

- The published, standard check-in time of a hotel is 12:00 noon.
- All reservations made for the day will be held from 12:00 noon, are eligible to be charged the room rental for the earlier by FOM, Front Office Supervisor, Reservations Supervisor.
- Check-in after 07:00 hours – no room charge levied for previous night
- Check-in prior to 07:00 hours - retention charged.

Purpose:

- a) To generate the maximum possible revenue from saleable guest rooms
- b) Effective marketing tool
- c) It will reduce the load and pressure on the Housekeeping to enable them to turn out quality rooms

Process

At the time of accepting a room reservation, you must request flight details and estimated time of arrival.

- 1) In a situation where the guest time of arrival to the hotel is 07:00 hours and 12:00 hours, the person making the reservation booking must be informed that the standard check-in time is 12:00 noon and that the hotel will try to keep a room ready for the arrival, subject to the availability of rooms

If a guarantee is given, the room can be held the previous day (codes : PR.CH) – Pre. Registration and charge.

- 2) In the situation where a confirmed reservation guest arrives between 07:00 hours and 12:00 hours and no vacant rooms available, the guest must be informed of the duration of making up a room. All other assistance must be given to the guest and a record of delay must be made on the registration card. When the room is ready, the guest will be escorted by GRO/ALM.

Under no circumstances will a guest be kept waiting after 12:00 noon with a confirmed reservation.

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Late Check-out Policy

All guests staying beyond 12:00 noon on any day, are eligible to be charged the room rent for the day. Late check-out means a decision to allow the guest to stay beyond 12:00 hours to 15:00 hours, with no extra charge.

15:00hrs to 18:00hrs – Day rate charge being 25% of room rate.

18:00hrs to 22:00hrs – Day rate charged being 50% of room rate.

The above decision will be made by FOM or assistant only and the folio will be updated giving the time and rate, if any.

Purpose

To generate maximum amount of revenue and reduce pressure on the Housekeeping Department.

Authorization only for very special customers to ensure that regular arrival guests are not kept waiting on arrival.

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Guaranteed Reservations & No-Show Policy

Reservations received at the hotel can either be guaranteed or non-guaranteed in nature. Guaranteed reservations are those wherein the guest, or the person booking a room on a guest's behalf, assures the hotel that the reservation will materialize. If this does not happen, the hotel is within its right to charge the guest/ guarantor a one night retention fee.

A reservation that does not materialize into a check-in and has not been cancelled is called a "no-show".

A reservation can be guaranteed in 3 ways:

- 1) Cash deposit of one nights room charge
- 2) Signed credit card charge slip or fax/ letter which clearly states the card holder's name, card number, date of expiry and the card holder's signature with an acknowledgement that the card account can be billed, in case of a no-show.
- 3) A billing note from the company which is in the hotel's credit list. The letter must clearly state the Company guarantees this reservation and is liable to pay a one nights retention charge, in case of a no-show.

Related Forms: Sample Reservation Form
 Sample Cancellation Form