

Front Office Operations

Front Office Operations – Overview & Key Concepts

1. Definition & Scope

- **Front Office** – The customer-facing part of a business that handles all direct interactions with guests, clients, or patients.
 - **Core Functions** – Reservations, reception, check-in/check-out, guest services, concierge, billing, and communication with other departments (housekeeping, engineering, sales, etc.).
 - **Industries** – Hospitality (hotels, resorts), healthcare (reception & patient intake), finance (client relations), travel (airlines, tour operators).
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2. Organizational Structure

Level	Typical Title	Primary Responsibilities
Executive	Director of Front Office / Front Office Manager	Sets policies, budgets, performance targets; liaises with senior management.
Supervisory	Assistant Front Office Manager, Shift Supervisor	Oversees daily shift operations, staff scheduling, problem resolution.
Operational	Receptionist, Concierge, Guest Service Agent, Bellhop	Direct guest interaction, check-in/out, handling requests, providing information.
Support	Reservations Agent, Night Auditor, Telephone Operator	Manage bookings, perform end-of-day accounting, maintain communication channels.

3. Core Processes

3.1 Reservations & Booking Management

1. **Inquiry Reception** – Phone, email, OTA (Online Travel Agency), GDS (Global Distribution System).
2. **Availability Check** – Real-time inventory via Property Management System (PMS).
3. **Rate Confirmation** – Apply appropriate rate plan (corporate, group, promotional).
4. **Booking Confirmation** – Send confirmation number, deposit details, cancellation policy.

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5. **Pre-arrival Communication** – Reminder emails, upsell opportunities (room upgrades, packages).

3.2 Check-In Procedure

1. **Guest Identification** – Verify ID, reservation number, credit card.
2. **Registration Card** – Capture personal data, signature, preferences.
3. **Room Assignment** – Allocate based on availability, loyalty status, special requests.
4. **Key Issuance** – Physical key card or mobile key activation.
5. **Welcome Brief** – Provide property information, amenities, and any relevant policies.

3.3 Guest Services During Stay

- **Concierge** – Local attractions, transportation, dining reservations.
- **Room Service & Housekeeping Coordination** – Log requests, monitor fulfillment time.
- **Issue Resolution** – Prompt handling of complaints, maintenance problems, billing disputes.

3.4 Check-Out & Billing

1. **Account Review** – Present folio, verify charges (room, minibar, incidentals).
2. **Payment Processing** – Credit card, cash, electronic transfer; apply pre-authorizations.
3. **Receipt Issuance** – Email or printed receipt, loyalty point accrual.
4. **Room Release** – Update PMS, trigger housekeeping for cleaning.

3.5 Night Audit (End-of-Day)

- Reconcile all financial transactions.
- Generate daily reports (occupancy, revenue, ADR – Average Daily Rate, RevPAR).
- Post-close PMS to lock the day's data.

4. Technology & Tools

Tool	Function	Typical Vendors
Property Management System (PMS)	Central reservation, guest profile, billing, reporting	OPERA, Maestro, Protel

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Tool	Function	Typical Vendors
Channel Manager	Syncs inventory & rates across OTAs, GDS	SiteMinder, Cloudbeds
**Customer Relationship Management (		