Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. Discuss the roles played by the sales and marketing department in both the hotel and the community.
2. Describe segmentation of the sales and marketing department by product sold, market, and distribution network.
3. Define marketing and sales and distinguish activities between marketing and sales efforts.
4. Describe the tools used to evaluate the sales and marketing department's internal and external efforts.
5. Explain how advanced technology has changed sales and marketing department operations.
6. Explain important key tasks and responsibilities of the front office.
7. Describe the key features and functions of the hotel's property management system (PMS).
8. Describe how to manage guest services stages from pre-arrival to departure and address the importance of protecting guests' rights to privacy.
9. Discuss the tools and procedures of front office accounting systems for guests.
10. Describe the hotel's data management systems that assist in management decision-making.

Written Lecture

Chapter 7 addresses the importance of the sales and marketing (SM) department upon which the economic health of a hotel depends. To be successful, a hotel must capture the amount of the business it should and the role of the sales and marketing department ensures that the hotel gets its fair share of the business.

The GM must interact positively with the SM department and provide extensive assistance to them as part of their daily/weekly responsibilities. How well the GM works with the SM department often determines their own success since attracting, maintaining, and expanding a strong customer base is the job of the sales and marketing department. This, too, determines the overall economic success of the hotel.

GMs must understand and use the tools available to properly and impartially evaluate the SM department's internal and external efforts. Chapter content describes these tools and explains effective strategies.

Understanding of economic and market factors affecting his/her hotel is critical to the GM. How technology has changed and the way SM departments operate are discussed.
The GM is responsible for staying abreast of technological advances affecting how the hotel is marketed so that it can be financially successful. Continuous quality improvements are necessary and a part of the change process.

Chapter 8 explains how the front office works and helps meet guest service and profitability goals. The front office performs varied functions for the hotel to work smoothly; these functions are analyzed in detail.

Because the rooms sold by a hotel are extremely “perishable,” it is important that hotels do the best job possible in matching guest room availability with guest room demand. A key responsibility of the front office is the sale of rooms at a rate that management will maximize revenue overall. An aggressively managed, competent front office will do this well.

Making reservations is but one task for the front office: assigning guest rooms and responding to special guest needs are others. The overall responsibility of the front office is to make the guest's stay as comfortable and as pleasant as possible.

Collecting revenue is another major responsibility of the front office: this responsibility includes collecting revenue from rooms, restaurant services, telephone calls, and other assorted services. The front office manager, working with the GM and controller, must devise and administer revenue management systems that ensure guests are properly charged for the services they use and that the hotel fully collects all monies it has earned. Because of the large amount of data collected, stored, analyzed, and used daily, the importance of technological advances and computer systems is a must. A well-managed and fully staffed front desk aids a GM in performing his/her duties effectively.