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Should you move to the Cloud?

The top six benefits of a Cloud-based PMS

by **Rehan Jaddi** 

A property management system based in the Cloud offers hotels a number of advantages compared to the conventional property-based alternatives. Rehan Jaddi of Agilysys walks us through the key differences.

Are you ready for a Cloud-based PMS? Although many hotels use traditional premise-based property management systems, which require on-property servers and other hardware, an increasing number are making the shift to Cloud solutions, which provide a network of hardware and software resources over the Internet. The software and the property's data are located on a server in the vendor's data center.

Cloud-based technology has opened up a new world of property management system possibilities to hotels of all sizes. Moreover, as the hospitality industry moves toward the Cloud, vendors are offering increasingly advanced Cloud-based solutions, many of which have features and functionality once found only in more expensive legacy systems. In fact, almost every aspect of a hotel's property management business can be hosted on the Cloud, including front desk operations, housekeeping, reservations and channel management, and much more.

If you've been thinking about purchasing a new PMS, a Cloud-based solution is worth considering. Here, we take a look at the top six benefits of Cloud-based property management systems.

No. 1: Reduced costs

One of the biggest advantages of a Cloud-based property management system is a reduction in costs. A premise-based PMS can be a major capital expenditure, typically requiring a dedicated PMS server; and, depending on the size of the

property, an additional server to manage reservations or handle other needs. Then, there are the software licensing fees, installation and training expenses, and ongoing maintenance costs. With a Cloud-based system, little hardware — and its three-to-five-year refresh cycle — is needed. As for technical maintenance, it's provided by the PMS vendor. The pricing structure of a Cloud-based system, which is based on a subscription model, can be an attractive feature because it enables hotels to treat the PMS as an operational expense aligned with the property's utilization of the system rather than as a large up-front investment.

No. 2: Increased flexibility

Another benefit of a Cloud-based property management system is flexibility. Cloud-based systems can be accessed from any workstation without the need for software installation. Premise-based property management systems, on the other hand, require hotels to purchase additional software licenses with each new workstation they add. Moreover, Cloud-based systems manage resources dynamically as the property's circumstances change. For example, if the hotel sees a surge in new reservation business due to a promotion, the system automatically increases the resources available, adapting to the hotel's needs rather than the hotel having to adapt to the property management system.

No. 3: Easy accessibility

A Cloud-based property management system also offers easy accessibility. Because the PMS uses the Internet to



About Agilysys

Agilysys is a leading technology company that provides innovative point-of-sale, property management, inventory and procurement, workforce management, analytics, document management and mobile and wireless solutions and services to the hospitality industry. The company's solutions and services allow property managers to better connect, interact and transact with their customers by streamlining operations, improving efficiency, increasing guest recruitment and wallet share, and enhancing the guest experience. Agilysys serves four major market sectors: Gaming, both corporate and tribal; Hotels, Resorts and Cruise; Foodservice Management; and Restaurants, Universities, Stadia and Healthcare. A significant portion of the company's consolidated revenue is derived from contract support, maintenance and subscription services. Agilysys operates throughout North America, Europe and Asia, with corporate services located in Alpharetta, GA, and offices in Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

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store information, hotel staff — including those employees who may not be tech-savvy — can access data from any computer, smartphone or tablet. This is particularly appealing to property managers who want the convenience of off-site access to the system. And, as more vendors develop versions of their software for tablets and other mobile devices, accessibility will only continue to increase.

No. 4: Immediate updates

Cloud-based property management systems simplify the upgrade process and enable hotels to stay current with the latest features and services the vendor provides. The hotel no longer has to schedule upgrades based on the availability of its IT staff. Instead, the property can take advantage of enhancements and new features as soon as they become available. And, because a Cloud-based system provides new functionality frequently, the hotel can stay ahead of the marketing trends that provide opportunities for increased revenue.

No. 5: Enhanced security

Guest data security is paramount; yet, an overworked IT staff may not always be up-to-date on the latest security techniques. And, in smaller properties that don't have an IT department, security may take a back seat to other pressing technology concerns. A Cloud-based PMS helps ensure the integrity of guest and property data and enables hotels of all sizes to take advantage of vendor experts who stay current on security and compliance practices, so that data isn't compromised.

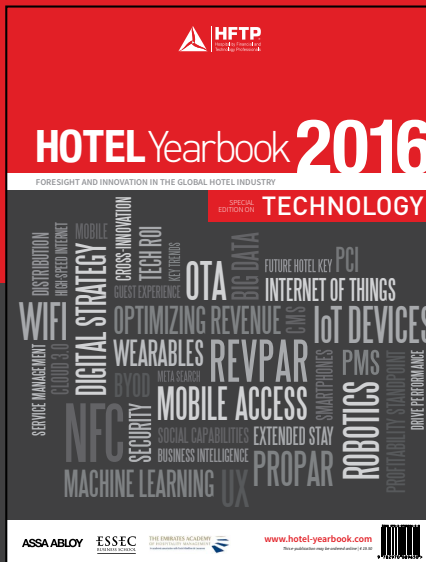
No. 6: Improved guest service

Finally, guests increasingly expect to use their own tablets and smartphones to request hotel services. This is difficult with premise-based property management systems, due to security requirements and other complexities. With a Cloud-based solution, guests and staff can interact with the system, even when they are not in the hotel. This increased interactivity enables new integrated experiences where guests can leverage their social networks to share experiences and recommendations with friends and family. Hotels in turn can use this social media buzz to engage with guests, enhance loyalty, improve brand exposure and drive traffic to their websites.

If you've dismissed Cloud-based property management systems, you may be missing out on technology that can offer significant advantages for your property. Cloud computing is becoming increasingly popular in the hospitality sector, enabling hotels to save time and money, enjoy increased flexibility, stay current with upgrades and offer enhanced guest service. Perhaps it's time your property considered the Cloud.

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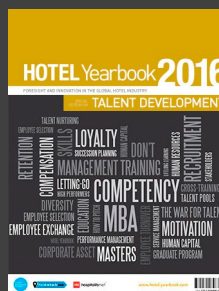
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- This edition will be available from February 2016



HYB Special Edition – Talent Development 2016

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- This edition will be available from March 2016