

Minibarmaster Wins Design Excellence Award

Minibarmaster recently won “most commended” in the Electronics Design News (EDN) Innovation Awards under the category of “best microprocessor application”. The award recognises the innovative features of Minibarmaster particularly the use of Palm handhelds with GPRS to implement wireless capability and the smart interface which calculates and posts denials automatically, thus eliminating the requirement for front office to do so.

EDN Innovation Awards evaluate a product’s merits from all aspects, including hardware design, software design and performance. The awards are held annually and entries must be Australian designed. Below is a photograph of Ef Misoyannis accepting the award. EBD is proud to receive this award as it recognises the effort invested developing Minibarmaster into the premier minibar solution for the Australian and New Zealand markets. Further information can be obtained by visiting www.electronicsnews.com.au/articles/Night-of-the-living-awards_z135222.htm.

Software Enhancements

We are currently completing a range of software enhancements to Minibarmaster. There are over 20 changes including the ability to display the guest name on the handheld, the ability to reverse charges to a room account from the handheld should the minibar team member make a mistake. Other changes include enhanced reporting and improved ease of use. It is EBD’s policy to continually evolve Minibarmaster by enhancing features and ease of use, ultimately improving ROI for our clients.

New Rollouts

Minibarmaster continues to expand it’s property portfolio with IHG. The system is operating in 15 IHG hotels including the Holiday Inn and InterContinental hotels at Burswood Entertainment Complex. These properties went live in September 2007.

New hotel group rollouts also include Accor through Manly Pacific Sydney-Managed By Novotel and the Stamford group through Stamford Sydney Airport in addition to existing properties in the Chieffy brand.

Minibar Tip

Most hotels check and replenish rooms simultaneously. There are some properties however which will split their minibar operations into two phases. Phase 1 is a sweep through the hotel to check all rooms occupied last night and record sales on the Minibarmaster handhelds. Phase 2 requires staff to use

the reports from Minibarmaster to load the trolley with exactly the items and quantities required and return to the floors to restock the rooms. Remember, not every room checked will require restocking. Usually only one room out of every two or three requires restocking so not every room needs to be re-entered.

This methodology challenges existing conventions in minibar operations but can result in significant savings. Firstly room checking is faster because there is no restocking to slow it down hence postings reach the guest accounts sooner thus reducing denials. Secondly Minibarmaster knows what stock has been used, and provides a report with exactly the items and quantities required to load on the trolley, hence the trolley is much lighter and quicker to push around thus saving time. Thirdly, splitting the task into two phases allows each phase to be more streamlined (less stop and start) and thus much quicker.

What Is Minibarmaster?

Minibarmaster it is a specialised minibar solution using handheld PDAs for hotel staff to record minibar sales as they check rooms. The charges are posted wirelessly to the guest accounts in the PMS from the floors and take less than 60 seconds from the time they are entered in the PDA to the time they reach the guest accounts. In addition, because the system uses the mobile phone network as the wireless mechanism, the hotel does not need to invest in any wireless infrastructure. The system can also calculate denials, and includes reports for finding expired products in rooms, calculating staff productivity, DNDs, sales and other reports. It eliminates the need for pen and paper based recording and dramatically improves speed of checking and the speed of posting thus resulting in savings in wages and reduced denials. In addition Minibarmaster was fully developed locally for the Australian and New Zealand market places.



Electronics By Design

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 Minibarmaster News Issue: 2007.1

