

Front Office Instantly View Minibar Charges Using Minibarmaster Essential

Overview

Since the launch of Minibarmaster Essential we have been asked many times how does Minibarmaster allow front office cashiers to view minibar charges, and how long does it take for them to do so?

How Minibarmaster Essential Operates

Minibarmaster Essential incorporates wireless handheld PDAs, staff use to record minibar sales as they check rooms. The sales are wirelessly sent to the back end Minibarmaster system, thus allowing front office cashiers to view the charges and manually post to guest accounts before the guest checks out.

The system makes the charges visible to front office virtually instantly after the room is checked, thus eliminating extended delays front office normally experience before they see the charges.

The handhelds are smartphone PDAs and use the mobile phone network, thus they can be used in any hotel. Minibarmaster Essential does not require the hotel to have an in-house wireless network to operate.

How Do Front Office Cashiers View Charges?

The conventional procedure when a guest is checking out, is for front office cashiers to check the Minibarmaster Essential system for minibar charges for the guest room. They do this by entering the required room number into Minibarmaster Essential from their front office terminals. The system shows them if the room was checked or not checked and displays all the items, quantities and the monetary totals of the consumption. They verbally verify with the guest the consumption is correct, and manually post a single minibar charge into the guest account.

The screen shot shows the Windows screen they use to view this information. If the room couldn't be checked, it shows whether this was as a result of it being DND'd, or simply the minibar staff haven't reached the room yet. It also shows who checked the room and at what time (if it was checked or DND'd).

The speed with which the charges are sent from the handheld and hence are available for viewing by front office is programmable. We usually set it to 60 seconds to allow minibar staff to correct mistakes. This guarantees that 60 seconds after a room is checked, front office cashiers will be able to see all the details of the minibar consumption in the room.

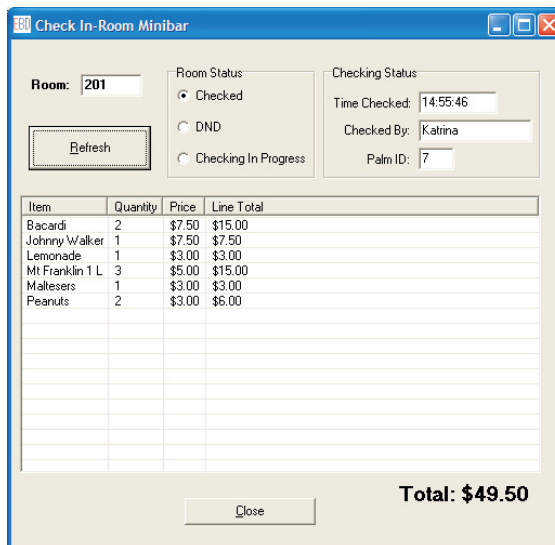
Since the system uses smartphones operating on the mobile phone network, the handhelds are in fact a mobile phone. Consequently minibar staff can be contacted for other tasks such as to further query charges or quickly

check cash rooms, before the guest checks out.

Benefits

The most significant benefit is the ability to reduce denials as rooms can be checked quickly and charges instantly made visible to front office cashiers, far more quickly than a manual system. In addition front office can post the charges throughout the day during quiet periods as rooms are checked, rather than taking a cashier from front desk for an hour at a time to do the charging into guest accounts

Other benefits include labour savings by reducing paperwork and processing, improved recording accuracy resulting in less guest disputes. The system also includes extensive reporting and staff productivity management. It also records, reports and manages expired products.



What Is Minibarmaster Premium?

Minibarmaster Premium is a specialised minibar solution using handheld PDAs for hotel staff to record minibar sales as they check rooms. The charges are recorded on the PDA and automatically posted wirelessly to the guest accounts in the PMS from the floors virtually instantly. In addition, because the system uses the mobile phone network as the wireless medium the hotel does not need to invest in any wireless infrastructure. The system will 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 Premium was fully developed locally for the Australian and New Zealand market places.

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