

Communication Convenience: A Change from Manual Messages to Modern Technology

Dr. Stephan Alex Almeida

H.O.D-Front Office

Anjuman-I-Islam's Institute of Hospitality Management, Mumbai, India

Abstract: *Hotels and inns employed paper messages in the past to inform visitors of important communications while the hosts were abroad. These paper slips enhanced the sense of being truly welcomed by not only conveying sentiments but also announcing the arrival of priceless goods and loving letters. Hotels and resorts have further adopted this custom by posting manual signs in common areas to advise visitors of announcements.*

The retirement of the analog copper-wire phone lines, which represents a significant transition in the hospitality industry, accelerates the decline of PBX systems in favor of more contemporary options, particularly mobile networks and VoIP. Innovating and adapting to these technological breakthroughs, hotels continue to do what they have always done: improve the visitor experience.

Keywords: Communication Convenience.

I. INTRODUCTION

Imagine a period when hotels and inns would alert visitors to any vital communications while they were away with the elegant simplicity of a paper message. Bell Desk workers would neatly fold a message and slip it under the door, if a visitor wasn't in their room. The letter would provide important information and was frequently carefully written by the person like receptionist or a telephone operator who had taken the call.

These paper notes provided more than simply a practical service; they also elevated and customized the communication process. The tactile nature of the paper and the skillfully written language gave every visitor the impression that their comfort and well-being were of the utmost priority in an era before the widespread use of digital screens and automated communications. It was more than just a statement; it was a thoughtful gesture that improved the general guest experience.

These paper slips were used to convey messages as well as to inform visitors of arriving shipments, letters, or packages. It is impossible to overstate the delight of returning to one's room and seeing a beautifully penned note announcing the delivery of a treasured package or a heartfelt letter from a loved one. It was like getting a personalized invitation; it made attendees feel genuinely welcome.

The usage of manual placards by the bell boys in public areas like restaurants and lounges was expanded by hotels and resorts. These well created and strategically positioned posters added to the atmosphere and tone of the restaurant while also informing guests of messages. Such notifications as "Mr. Smith, you have a visitor waiting at the front desk" or "Your dinner reservation at 8 PM has been confirmed" enhanced the gastronomic experience.

Although the old phone system, also known as the private branch exchange, has served its purpose well, these networks are actually in decline. Many hotel PBXs are over 25 years old, which is pretty old. That is outdated in the technological sphere. If you haven't given it much thought lately, now is the moment. Let's talk about how modern communications systems differ from classic PBX systems.

Traditional PBXs continue to function very much the same as they have since the 1990s. This indicates that those systems are unable to benefit from the improvements made in the sector over the last 30 years. The PBX used to be a source of income for hotels. Then the cell phone arrived, and everything changed as it quickly replaced all other forms of communication. There was a decline in revenue for the sector as guests ceased utilizing hotel phones for phone calls. The Federal Communications Commission announced in 2019 that the Public Switched Telephone Network, also known as analog copper-wire phone lines or plain old telephone service, is approaching retirement age after a very long

run that started in 1876. This change is more significant and will affect older properties. It is not surprising that alternative technologies—primarily mobile networks and voice over internet protocol phone services—have replaced POTS infrastructure after almost 150 years. (Alexander J. Perovich, 2022)

It's nothing new for the hospitality sector to innovate and adapt. The area of guest communication has undergone a tremendous alteration as hotels have changed throughout time in a variety of ways. The principal methods of guest communication, the traditional PBX room telephones and paging/messaging systems, have gradually been replaced by the mobility and effectiveness of mobile technology and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services.

Objectives:

- To understand the old message and mail systems in hotel.
- The study the technology influence on message and mail system in hotels.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A hotel may receive a variety of mail, including mail for visitors as well as mail for hotel management and personnel. Additionally, the mail could be regular mail, registered mail, recorded mail, etc.

It is required to date and time stamp all incoming mail. The mail is divided into three primary categories—hotel mail, staff mail, and guest mail—after being date- and time-marked. Guest mail is handled in accordance with whether it is from a previous guest who has already checked out, a current guest, or a guest who has not yet arrived.(Hmhub)

In the past, customers had little choice but to use the in-room phone and complain about the expense, according to hospitality improvement magazine. This time period is over. With few exceptions, the majority of hotels have suffered a decline in telephone income of between 15% and 25% over the previous five years. Guest preference is the main cause of this decline. The visitor now has many options for communication, including fax over the Internet, e-mail, cell phones, calling cards, and now even Internet-based phones. All of these options provide less expensive communication options than utilizing the standard hotel guestroom phone and other services like fax.(Griswold, 2003)

According to a blog post on Matrix Telecom, good communication has long taken care of a hotel's basic needs with ease. Reservations, a smooth check-in process, responding to customer requests and complaints, and eventually a check-out that is more than satisfying are some of these essentials. As time went on, the advent of services allowed clients to fully reinvent their experiences, to the point where the hospitality industry is now classified as a rejuvenation category. All of this has been made possible in part by constantly changing telecommunications services.(Telecom, 2023)

According to the authors, the hotel only needs to text a guest's phone to inquire if they want to start the check-in/check-out process, and the hotel will carry it out right away. Additionally, the availability of a check-in/check-out system in room division can lower the cost of paper and lower the hotel's staff needs. This is all because of Hotel's information and communication technology. (Azdel Abdul Aziz, 2012)

The authors claim that by offering clients tailored services, the Internet of Things significantly enhances the guest experience. Pre-booking, registration, user-preferred payment methods, automated check-in and check-out, and other self-service features are a few other elements that are improving the visitor experience. In this study, the application of IoT in the hotel industry has been examined, and the function of IoT in the hotel industry is considered for enhancing the guest experience and offering the tailored services.(Gupta, 2021)

The author claims that integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology into Private Branch Exchange (PBX) has significantly improved the customer experience and has the power to bring employees of any firm together. The usage of an autonomous PBX integrated with a Virtual Assistant (VA), which communicates with the PBX directly by speech and in many languages without the need for keyboards, is one technological application used to improve the customer experience in a call centre. When a customer calls, the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) module connects them to an operator or facilitates automatic processing. With the aid of this technology, organizations can efficiently handle hundreds of calls each day and launch customer care campaigns that swiftly reach a large number of users.(Nguyen, 2023)

A Wireless EPABX is a variation of a PBX (Private Branch Exchange), a private telephone network used within a business or organization, according to the article. It enables free internal calls between users and provides numerous

lines for contact with the outside world. GSM SIMs provide connectivity by connecting it to the closest mobile base station. It is a flexible platform that may be used to build value-added services like Interactive Voice Response (IVR).(Services, 2022)

On the mitel website, an article describes PBX. A Private Branch eXchange, sometimes known as a PBX, is a hardware device that manages call switching and routing between a business site and the telephone network. The word "PBX" comes from how switchboard operators interact with the public switched telephone network (PSTN); it was originally not a physical object but rather a person.

Even though they can connect to the PSTN, the term "private" indicates that they are apart from it. "Branch" indicates how a PBX integrates into a PSTN: end points that connect to it and handle smaller amounts of traffic are known as branches, and the primary communication circuits are referred to as trunk lines. The term "exchange" describes how connections are passed back and forth across a switching system, allowing more calls to be routed through fewer lines.(Mitel)

The characteristics of both IP-PBX functionality and other types of Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) phones are thoroughly examined in this paper, and features like call hold and its retrieval, call group, find me, music on hold, call transfer, call park and its retrieval, among others, are successfully analyzed with various SIP phone features. The majority of the services illustrated in this paper illustrate common features that are most likely to be used with SIP IP telephony in a corporate setting. The following typical telecommunication services are implemented using SIP samples in this document, which also includes a study of the common VoIP protocol.(Kumar, 2011)

III. METHODOLOGY

Academic publications, industry reports, social media, internet review sites and databases pertaining to the hotel and travel industries were employed in the study's secondary data gathering.

IV. CONCLUSION

In summary, the hotel industry's progression of guest communication from the elegant simplicity of paper letters to the incorporation of contemporary technology is a monument to the sector's versatility and dedication to enhancing the visitor experience. Traditional techniques like handwritten notes and handmade placards individualized visitor interactions left a long-lasting impression of consideration and care.

The traditional PBX phone systems are gradually becoming outdated as technology develops. A new era of comfort, customization, and effectiveness has arrived with the advent of mobile technology and VoIP services. The discontinuation of analogue phone lines further supports this shift. The industry's willingness to adopt these advances shows its commitment to staying modern and raising customer happiness.

In a world where technological advancement is unrelenting, the hospitality industry is always evolving to make sure that visitors have smooth, customized, and memorable experiences in the current digital era.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Alexander J. Perovich, T. S. (2022, June 9). Retrieved from <https://www.hotelmanagement.net/tech/why-hotels-have-move-beyond-traditional-phone-systems>
- [2]. Azdel Abdul Aziz, M. F. (2012, August). INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY APPLICATION'S USAGE IN HOTEL INDUSTRY. *Journal of Tourism Hospitality and culinary arts*, 4(2).
- [3]. Griswold, G. (2003, Mar 1). *Hospitality Upgrade*. Retrieved from https://www.hospitalityupgrade.com/_magazine/magazine_Detail.asp?ID=483
- [4]. Gupta, U. S. (2021, March). Analyzing the applications of internet of things in hotel industry. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 26-27.
- [5]. Hmhuh. (n.d.). *Hmhuh*. Retrieved from Hmhuh: <https://hnhuh.in/message-and-mail-handling/>
- [6]. Kumar, J. K. (2011, April). Analysis of SIP and realization of advanced IP-PBX features. *2011 3rd International Conference on Electronics Computer Technology*.
- [7]. *Mitel*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Mitel: <https://www.mitel.com/articles/whats-the-meaning-of-pbx>

- [8]. Nguyen, H. N. (2023, Mar 23). Design and implementation of a VoIP PBX integrated Vietnamese virtual assistant: a case study. *Journal of Information and Telecommunication*, 201-226.
- [9]. Services, T. T. (2022, Jan 9). Retrieved from <https://www.tatatelebusiness.com/articles/make-the-most-of-the-wireless-epabx-with-call-management-services/>
- [10]. Telecom, M. (2023, May 23). *Matrix Telecom Securities*. Retrieved from <https://www.matrixtelesol.com/blog/hospitality-communication-exploring-the-synergy-between-telecommunication-and-guest-experience/>