## Sengamala Thayaar Educational Trust Women’s College

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 **Sundarakkottai, Mannargudi-614 016.**

**Thiruvarur (Dt.), Tamil Nadu, India.**

**FRONT OFFICE MANAGEMENT**

## R.VIJAYALAKSHMI

##  ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

**DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS**

**Front Office Department Introduction, Operations and Key Functions**

**Introductions To The Hotel Front Office Department**

[Front Desk](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/front-office-department.html) is a very important department in the [hotel](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/hotel.html), making direct contact with [guests](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/guest.html). The main function of this department is [Reservation](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/reservation.html), Guest service, [Check-in](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/check-in.html), [Check-out](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/check-out.html), Telephone, Finance & Cashiering, Foreign Exchange, Room Assignment, [Inquiry](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/inquiry.html) etc.

The [Front Office](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/front-office-department.html) is also called the nerve centre of a hotel. It can be defined as a front of the housing department located around the foyer and the [lobby](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/lobby.html) area of a [hospitality](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/hospitality.html) property. As this department is located around the foyer area of the hotel and is visible to the guests, patrons and visitors, they are collectively called “Front Office”.

Should guests have any problems or require to appreciate or comment, they would normally go directly to the Front Office, because it is convenient to contact and converse with other departments. Therefore, this department is the direct delegate to link the work and report the consequence to other departments.

This department is one of the major operational and revenue-producing departments of the hotel which generates two-thirds of the revenue earned by a hotel from the sale of the guest rooms. It involves in providing valuable services to the guests during the entire [guest cycle](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/guest-cycle.html) consisting of Pre-[arrival](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/arrival.html), Arrival, [Occupancy](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/occupancy.html) and [Departure](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/departure.html).

**Importance of Front Office Department:**

Traditional Front Office functions include reservation, [registration](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/registration.html), room and rate assignment, guest services, [room status](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/room-status.html), maintenance and settlement of the guest account, and creation of [guest history](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/guest-history-file.html) records.

The Front Office develops and maintains a comprehensive database of guest information, coordinates guest services, and ensures guest satisfaction. These functions are accomplished by personal in diverse areas of [Front Office Department](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/front-office-department.html).

The front office is also known as the face of the hotel. It is the first guest contact area and also the nerve centre of the hotel. All the activities and areas of the front office are geared towards supporting guest transaction and services.

**The operational function of the Front Office Department:**

**Guest Registration:** Does all guest registration-related activities like Check-in, room assignment, welcoming, [room rate](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/room-rate.html) etc.

**Guest Service:** Fulfils any Guest Services related activities.

**Guest History and records:** Creates and maintains a [guest profile](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/guest-profile.html), history, likes and dislikes, collect feedback etc.

**Guest Database:** Develops & maintains a Comprehensive Database of Guest Information

**Updates Room**[**Status**](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/room-status.html)**:** responsible to update the correct room status like CI, CO, [DNCO](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/dnco.html), [DND](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/dnd.html) etc.

**Reservation:** This section is responsible in registering the room reservation from various sources, with recordings, filing of reservation records, and revise on the appropriate time to make sure that guests would have their rooms upon entering the hotel.

**Postage and Parcels:** This section is to facilitate guests pertaining to the posting of letters, telegrams, and parcels.

**Telephone:** This section is to facilitate guests pertaining to the telephone both internally and externally, and to wake guests up in the morning upon request.

**Finance and Foreign Exchange:** This section relates with the Accounting Department, through the collection from guests through their services, and also give the foreign exchange service.

**Inquiry:** This section is to answer questions and inquiries of guests. Therefore, this section would have to be alert with all the movements of the hotel.

[**Bell Desk**](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/bell-desk.html)**and**[**Concierge**](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/concierge.html)**:** Provide all services related to Bell desk and Concierge.

**Staffing the Front Office Department:**

In order to carry out its mission, goals and objectives, every company shall build a formal structure depicting different hierarchy of management, supervision, and employee (staff) levels. This very structure is referred to as an [organisation chart](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/organisational-hierarchy.html%22%20%5Co%20%22%3Cp%3EThe%20structure%20which%20determines%20who%20reports%20to%20whom.%3C/p%3E).

Moreover, the organisation chart shows reporting relationships, the span of management, and staff/line functions. The organisation chart for the front office department differs as per the size of the hotel.

**Typical Staff positions under the Rooms Division Department:**

[**Front Desk Agent**](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/front-desk-agent.html)**:** Registers guests, and maintains room availability information.

[**Cashier**](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/billing-clerk.html)**:** Maintains and settles guest [folios](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/folio.html), and properly checks out guests.

**Night Auditor:** Controls the job of the Accounts Receivable Clerk, and prepares daily reports to management (ex: [Occupancy Report](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/occupancy-report.html) and [Revenue Report](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/dbr.html)).

**Mail & Information Clerk:** Takes [Messages](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/health-club.html), provides Directions to Guests, and maintains Mail.

**Telephone Operator:** Manages the Switchboard and coordinates [Wake-up](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/wake-call.html) Calls.

**Reservation Agent:** Responds to Reservation Requests and creates Reservation Records.

[**Uniformed Service**](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/uniformed-service.html)**Agent:** Handles Guest Luggage, [escorts](https://setupmyhotel.com/homepage/hotel-management-glossary/escort.html) Guests to their Rooms, and assists guests for any bit of information requested.

## Main Objectives of using Hotel Software (PMS) or Front Office System

The main objective of a front-office system for a hotel, motel or resort is to maximise the revenue, streamline operations and also reduce manual workload. For this reason, most hotel Software systems are sales-revenue-oriented rather than cost-control-oriented and are based on reservation, registration, and guest accounting needs of the property.

They can also be interfaced or linked to multiple third-party systems like food and beverage POS system, Door Lock, PABX, Wifi, [GREMS - Guest Room Management systems 4](https://hoteltalk.app/t/what-is-grms-guest-room-management-system/1495) etc. However, front-office systems can provide cost control in certain areas.

Front-office computers can be linked to the telephone system to monitor and bill guests’ accounts for charges of local and long-distance calls to preclude the hotel from paying for telephone costs not recovered through charges on guest accounts.

The front-office system can also provide constantly updated information to other departments such as housekeeping, food, and beverage areas relating to room occupancy and guest counts, so that adequate staffing can be arranged, thereby precluding departments from being overstaffed.

Finally, front-office computers can prepare and print room department operating ratios such as occupancy and double-occupancy percentages, average daily rates, and the daily yield statistic.

In this latter regard, front-office computer systems can be immensely useful in maximising yield by providing information to form a database of guest history and reservation patterns by type of guest for yield management.

More recently, front-office systems have been keyed to security control. The Software can be programmed to allow certain keys to open doors during limited periods each day.

This may mean that housekeeping staff will have access to rooms only during the room makeup period. The system can also issue “keys cards” to guests, which are simply plastic cards a little smaller than a credit card that has data encoded on them on magnetic strips or Radio Frequency RF cards.

The guest room door has a device that reads the card and allows the door to be opened. As guests register, the computer issues new guests a key card with a unique code on it for each guest and for each specific room. At the same time, the computer erases the old code for that room in the device on the guest room door.

This procedure ensures a departed guest’s card will not function and creates a new code corresponding to the arriving guest’s card. Departing guests do not have to turn in their keys; on checkout, they can be discarded. In cases of emergency, a conventional key may be used by authorised hotel personnel to override a card reader device. There are many [advantages of using key cards in the hotel 1](https://hoteltalk.app/t/manual-keys-vs-key-cards-pros-and-cons/820) over manual keys.

The self check-in kiosk is now available that can be located at the front office to be operated by an arriving guest. Such KIOSK linked with the PMS (Property Management System) can accept specified credit cards and automatically charges the rate for a specific room to the credit card, prints a paid invoice for the guest, and issues a key card coded to the door of the assigned room. An all-night employee no longer is required to register late-arriving or early-checkout guests.