

The *guest cycle* epitomizes the intricate journey a guest embarks upon within a hotel, where different departments collaboratively orchestrate to deliver an aweinspiring experience.

To unravel this concept, let's delve into an illustrative example. Imagine you are planning a family vacation with unique requirements—a place that accommodates both your adventurous kids and elderly parents. You navigate a path of decision-making, encountering various touchpoints and services that compose the *guest cycle*.

Your journey begins with scouting options—a process mirrored in the pre-arrival stage of the *guest cycle*. This phase witnesses a synergy among sales, marketing, and revenue teams. Sales reach out to corporates, marketing strategically employs social media and traditional channels, while revenue collaborates with online travel agencies. Just as your colleague introduced you to *'Voyage D'aventure,'* these efforts ensure potential guests become acquainted with the hotel's offerings before their arrival.

Upon choosing the hotel, you seek specific room arrangements—a glimpse into the arrival stage of the cycle. Initiating contact, you connect with the operator, who directs your inquiry to reservations. The reservations team communicates courteously, confirming interconnecting rooms for your kids. Your request journeys through the front office, guest relations, and housekeeping teams, ensuring meticulous attention to your needs.

Your check-in unveils the next stage—the occupancy phase. Here, you are greeted by an event poster, sparking interest in tonight's music band performance. You engage with hotel services, like the SPA, and access personalized offerings such as the upcoming comedy show. As you embark on planned activities, the hotel coordinates these experiences seamlessly.

Subsequently, the guest cycle progresses to the departure stage. On check-out day, you settle bills efficiently, demonstrating the significance of the operational teams, such as front desk and housekeeping. This phase culminates with a survey link, encouraging feedback and reviews—a gesture to reinforce customer-centricity.

The interactions within these stages underscore the guest cycle's dynamic nature. Crucially, it accentuates the synergy between operational and non-operational

teams, seamlessly blending roles for a cohesive experience. Operational departments—front office, food and beverage, housekeeping, and food production—ensure guests' physical needs are met. Simultaneously, non-operational facets like IT, Finance, HR, Maintenance, Security, and Sales & Marketing harmonize the backdrop for a remarkable stay.

In the broader scope of hotel management, the guest cycle's pulse resonates. This cyclic journey starts anew as one guest departs and another arrives, reflecting the perpetuity of hospitality. As teams synergize, they align to create an exceptional guest experience, embodying the essence of service excellence.

2.1 A DUAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1.1 Guest's Point of View

- Pre-stay experience: As a guest, my journey begins with the anticipation of a
 memorable stay. I research various options through online platforms,
 reviews, and recommendations. The hotel's online presence, user-friendly
 website, and captivating visuals influence my decision. Efficient booking
 procedures, personalized offers, and transparent pricing create a positive prestay experience.
- Arrival and check-in: Upon arrival, I seek a seamless check-in process. Courteous staff, clear directions, and a welcoming atmosphere set the tone. I appreciate quick access to my room and a thorough understanding of the available amenities. Engaging guest services, like valet parking and luggage assistance, elevate my initial impression.
- *In-stay comfort*: During my stay, I expect a blend of comfort and convenience. Clean and well-maintained rooms with thoughtful amenities enhance my experience. Access to in-room dining, housekeeping services, and concierge assistance contributes to my relaxation. Engaging activities, dining options, and entertainment keep me entertained within the hotel.
- Check-out and farewell: As my stay concludes, a smooth check-out process matter. Transparent billing, express check-out options, and warm farewells create a lasting memory. I value feedback opportunities to express my satisfaction or suggestions. A seamless transition out of the hotel enhances the overall experience.

2.1.2 Hotel's Perspective

- *Pre-stay preparation*: From the hotel's viewpoint, the guest cycle initiates with meticulous preparation. The sales team collaborates with marketing and revenue to reach potential guests through multiple channels. Strategic partnerships with online travel agencies and local businesses are fostered. Non-operational departments like finance and IT ensure seamless payment gateways and a user-friendly website.
- Arrival and welcome: Upon a guest's arrival, the front office orchestrates a warm welcome. Operational departments like housekeeping, food and

- beverage, and guest relations collaborate to ensure rooms are ready, dining arrangements are made, and personalized services are available. The hotel's ambiance and staff demeanor align to create a welcoming atmosphere.
- *Impeccable in-stay experience*: During the stay, operational departments shine. Housekeeping maintains rooms, and food and beverage teams cater to culinary preferences. The front office handles requests, while the guest relations team ensures guest comfort and satisfaction. Non-operational departments, such as maintenance and security, operate behind the scenes to ensure a safe and functional environment.
- Seamless check-out and beyond: As guests check out, the front desk ensures
 efficient settlement of bills. Non-operational departments like finance manage
 financial aspects, while the operational team manages smooth departures.
 The hotel encourages guest feedback, enhancing future experiences. Nonoperational departments like marketing analyze guest data to tailor offerings.

Figure 2.1 shows the guest cycle with starting of guest's arrival to departure.

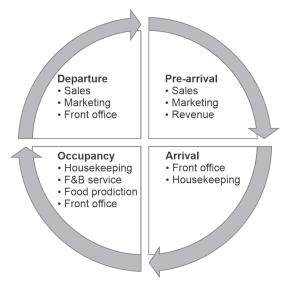


Fig. 2.1: Guest cycle

Below are some useful insights on operational and non-operational departments.

2.1.3 Operational Departments

- *Front Office*: Responsible for guest check-in, check-out, and responding to requests.
- Housekeeping: Ensures clean and comfortable rooms, maintaining guest satisfaction.
- Food and Beverage: Manages dining experiences, room service, and culinary offerings.
- Guest Relations: Focuses on guest engagement, satisfaction, and personalized services.

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2.1.4 Non-operational Departments

- *Finance:* Handles billing, payments, and financial management.
- *IT (Information Technology):* Ensures smooth online booking, secure payments, and guest technological needs.
- *Maintenance/Engineering:* Maintains facilities, ensuring safety and functionality.
- Security/Loss Prevention: Ensures guest safety and security during their stay.
- Sales and Marketing: Attracts guests through strategic promotions, collaborations, and campaigns.
- Human Resource: Manages staff training, engagement, and service quality.

The guest cycle is a harmonious dance between operational and non-operational departments, where seamless collaboration generates exceptional guest experiences. This journey is orchestrated with meticulous planning, constant refinement, and unwavering dedication to ensure that each guest's stay exceeds their expectations.