Maestro IDs Five Things to Look for When Sourcing Out a New Cloud PMS

Leader in hotel property-management systems for independent hotels says not all Web browser-based PMSs are alike, and not all need to reside in the cloud

MARKHAM, ONTARIO, CANADA, April 19, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today's hotel operators are on the move more than ever and many are challenged with not enough time or staff to manage operations in this new landscape. Maestro, the preferred browser based cloud and on-premises property-management system for independent hotels, luxury resorts, conference centers, vacation rentals, and multi-property groups, said hoteliers are telling them they need more mobility for remote staff, on-the-go users, and guest self-serve environments, which is why more properties are taking command of their property using Web browser-based systems.

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"These platforms give operators the freedom to control their properties from anywhere and use a variety of devices, something that has become a necessity due to limitations on available labor and the growing need for operational flexibility," said Maestro President Warren Dehan.

With limited time to research the capabilities offered by Web browser-based property systems — and more specifically the property-management system (PMS) — and even less time to implement, configure, and train staff in the transition, Maestro has identified five things to look for when considering adopting this technology:

1. Seek Out the Right Suite of Tools

Every hotel operator is looking for new ways to improve efficiency and agility, so it is important that the tools reflected in the hotel's PMS are sufficient to do the job they are designed to do. This is a particularly crucial step for independent hoteliers due to the vast differentiation of requirements that exist within these property groups. While smaller or less complex hotels and resorts may be satisfied with a PMS that offers a moderate level of pricing controls, simpler module or integration choices, a larger and full service or mixed use and complex property may desire ability for interdepartmental and cross property staff communications capabilities, guest instant and self-serve tools, advanced rate and yield management and reputation management, as well as an all-in-one multi-module approach to manage all facets of the operation in a single, centralized system.

Once hoteliers identify the key elements desired in a PMS, it is important to make sure those elements are available in today's Web browser-based technology. If not, it is possible the vendor system may have a shorter shelf life due to increased IT management overhead and restrictive interoperability and integration features. Additionally, not all applications are supported by every browser, which can be a concern for hotels with browsers specifically mandated by brands; generally independent operators have much more room for variation with respect to their browser choices.

2. Determine Availability
Web browser-based hotel operations systems are commonly associated with cloud computing, but this is not always the case. On premises systems can also offer browser-based functionality. This strategy is valuable for hotels located in remote destinations with limited internet connectivity, for smaller hotels wanting to deploy on their own on property managed server, or for a property group that has its own infrastructure to manage their own private cloud but wants the best of both worlds.

Hotels that commit to installing on premises or self-hosted implementations are not missing out on any additional features either, as these browser-based systems with flexible deployment options offer all the same capabilities and operations controls as vendor cloud hosted systems, and in some cases even more. However, not every PMS provider offers this functionality with the industry's shift toward cloud computing. Consult with your PMS provider to see if [on premises or self-hosted access](#) to Web browser-based PMS controls is available for your property and how they can be implemented in the most efficient manner to meet your needs company wide.

3. Direct Assistance Through Onboarding, No Hidden Fees, Confidence in Deployment

Sourcing out a Provider that takes control of the on-boarding process with you and walks you through each step to meet milestones is essential. Transitioning to a new PMS is exciting and a welcome change, but not for the faint of heart. Being able to rely on your vendor to collaborate closely with your team on each undertaking, including taking charge to deliver best practice recommendations and custom configurations of the entire on property system, is needed for optimum results. Most top-tier vendors will handle all of this with addition of many other

services including data entry management, design of guest facing forms, preparing staff teams for the transition, and providing client services in all areas of the project including third-party interface coordination, web booking engine turnkey setup and hosting, and live training if desired. These services should be identified as part of the initial investment to avoid "unknown variables" that may be missed in the purchase.

4. Single Sign On & Support Two-Factor Authentication

If hoteliers are going to be controlling operations through browser-based systems, it is important to prioritize a seamless environment both for staff users and IT teams, as well as security to ensure only hotel employees have access to the system.

Single sign on allows access to relevant modules within the solution from a secure user login, minimizing need for exiting and entering different modules to perform property tasks and keeping user network identity easy for IT staff to manage. On the security side, two-factor authentication, whereby a secondary authentication method such as an email account or a mobile phone authenticates users, is one of the most reliable methods for securing remote access to bona-fide users to connect to the PMS.

In rare situations where two-factor authentication is not adequate, hotels can also consider restricting the PMS to a dedicated IP address. This would prevent users from accessing a hotel PMS remotely, but such a strategy also blocks hotel operators from using browser-based controls unless they in the properties network. This method is so restrictive that it can be challenging to provide access beyond these permissions, and as such is only recommended for operators who do not require accessing the hotel PMS while off property. The mid-tier option is to put the browser-based application behind a virtual private network (VPN), allowing users to login remotely to use the browser based applications, yet through a secure network access setup for an additional layer as dictated by the property group.

5. Investigate Version Update Schedule

Hoteliers should also investigate how often a PMS provider applies updates to its product, as well as how substantial each addition is. Most updates include necessary security patches designed to protect your hotel and its guests. It is hoteliers' responsibility to consistently update any on-property systems — including all web browsers. Failing to apply available updates to your web browser is akin to securing a bank vault full of your guests' data and leaving the door unlocked.

Hoteliers who can maintain a consistent update schedule will create a security environment that is often discouraging for data thieves who will quickly move on to easier targets upon meeting resistance. However, just as it is the hotel's job to install updates to its browser and PMS, it is the technology provider's job to supply operators with detailed notes so they are aware of what capabilities are available to them with each update. This is important to help operators understand the value of each new addition to the PMS, and if updates are addressing core business drivers as well as quality-of-work concerns. Aside from operational features added to

address market demands, sometimes these could include smaller user experience features such as dark mode or single-sign-on options for hotel employees.

"Most members of the hospitality workforce are well versed in using mobile devices and adding digital capabilities to the hotel's operations to improve operations and stay competitive," Dehan said. "With the flexibility to deploy Web browser solutions in innovative ways, the goal to meet guest expectations, address staff retention and ease of training, and even address the bottom line is a reality for all hoteliers whether they desire a cloud solution or to stay on premise. Ensuring the technology these users have access to remains secure, efficient, and futureproof will help operators remain successful in delivering exceptional guest experiences and offset the pressures impacting the business today."

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About Maestro
Maestro is the preferred Web Browser based cloud and on-premises PMS solution for independent hotels, luxury resorts, conference centers, condo vacation rentals, and multi-property groups. Maestro's PCI certified and EMV ready enterprise system offers a Web browser version (or Windows) complete with 20+ integrated modules on a true single database, including mobile and contactless apps to support a digitalized guest and staff journey from booking to checkout and everything in between. Maestro's sophisticated solutions, with a collection of open APIs to 100s of 3rd party systems, empower operators to increase profitability, drive direct bookings, centralize operations, and engage guests with a personalized experience. For over 40 years Maestro's Diamond Plus Service has provided unparalleled 24/7 North American based Live support and education services to keep hospitality groups productive and competitive. Click here for more information on Maestro. Click here to get your free PMS Buying guide.

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