Software Engineering

Analyst If I could find out what you do at present. What kind of _____ do you have at the moment?

Hotel owner Well, we introduced erm a computerised system about five years ago but I'm not very happy with it. What we've got is erm, just a system that allows us to enter bookings as they come in.

A So is everything computerised or ... ?

H No, it's only the reservations system.

A So what features would you like to add to this?

H Well, there are a number of things. I would like a more _____ system that would allow me to link reservations and invoicing. I'd like the system to handle invoices also.

A OK. Now the output. What kind of output are you looking for from this?

H Erm, well there are a number of things I'd like. One is of course the total invoice, a bill for the guests. I'd like it also to display room bookings so that if someone phones up it's easy for the reception staff to identify quickly which rooms are occupied and which are available.

A Is that on the screen?

H Yes, I would like it to be on the screen if possible. A sort of room chart on the screen.

A And the invoices, is it pre-printed forms you use?

H Would pre-printed forms be useful?

A Well, if you have a coloured logo, it's better to have the forms pre-printed.

H Yes, I'd like that. And of course I want the invoice to have details of all expenditure so if the guest has a drink at the bar, extra meals at the restaurant, anything of that nature, it's all _____. I'd also like the system to generate lists of previous guests so I can send them news of special offers.

A Has the system to print out addressed envelopes?

H If it could, that would be very useful.

A Now, who's going to be inputting the information?

H Right, the main users would be the reception staff. They would be dealing with bookings, largely by phone but some by fax or letter. The accountant, of course, would be using the system to create bills. And, erm, bar and restaurant staff would have to enter sales.

A Are the staff experienced in using computers or would they need a lot of training?

H Reception staff are quite experienced, however, our accountant would need some training as she's used to a paper system.

A What about the bar and restaurant staff?

H Well, I suppose they would be entering only very restricted information on sales.

A Hm. What computer hardware do you have at the moment?

H Er, we've got one PC at reception and one in the office. What would I need?

A One for the accountant, one in the bar and restaurant. And they would have to be networked.

H If they're _____ together, that doesn't mean that people can get into the accounts, does it?

A No, it would be password-protected. And the printers?

H I don't want anything too noisy.

A Laser printers tend to be quieter. Now, it would be useful to talk to the receptionist to get details of the input for the guest records and to the accountant to find out what she needs.

H Great, I'll set up meetings for you. What's the next step?

A I'll come back to you with a plan and we'll check through to make sure it has all the _____ you want. Then we'll create a program and try it out. We'll have to keep adapting it depending how well it works. And once you're happy with it, we'll put it into service and I'll fix some training for the staff.

H Thanks very much.