FREE SOFTWARE FOR SMALL HOSPITALITY BUSINESS

Donca Gheorghe*

*University of Oradea, Faculty of Environmental Protection, 26 Gen. Magheru St., 410048 Oradea, Romania, e-mail: donca.gheorghe@gmail.com

Abstract
In the current economic crisis, reducing costs is a primary goal. One widely used method today is to replace proprietary software with free or open source software. In this paper I refer primarily to the open source software's because they can be tailored to specific needs of each user. A report by the Standish Group states that adoption of open source software models has resulted in savings of about $60 billion per year to consumers.

Key words: agritourism, farm lodge, open source software.

INTRODUCTION

The most important category of free software is open source software.

Open source software is computer software that is available in source code form: the source code and certain other rights normally reserved to copyright holders are provided under an open-source license that permits users to study, change, improve and also to distribute the software. Open source software is the most prominent example of open-source development and often compared to (technically defined) user-generated content or (legally defined) open content movements. Unlike proprietary off-the-shelf software, which comes with restrictive copyright licenses, open source software can be given away for no charge. This means that its creators cannot require each user to pay a license fee to fund development. The top four reasons individuals or organizations choose open source software are: 1 - lower cost, 2 - security, 3 - no vendor 'lock in' and 4 - better quality. Many open source software projects have begun as research projects within universities, as personal projects of students or professors, or as tools to aid scientific research. From this work were excluded general purpose software that can be adapted for hospitality but are not specifically designed for this (such as Adempiere or Weberp).

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The first stage consisted of searching for open source or free software on the Internet. If the software had an online version published, that version was tested. Otherwise, the program was installed on a PC with Intel i5 processor, 8GB RAM and Windows 7 - 64 bit operating system.

RESULTS AND DISSCUSIONS

The first software founded, OTA Hotel Management, are based on the HotelMIS project, but rebuilt to have support for the Open Travel Alliance (OTA) hotel xml specification and the e-Novate Pte Ltd e-Bridge product. This software is language independent and the system requirments are Windows+Apache+MySql+Php or Linux+Apache+MySql+Php.
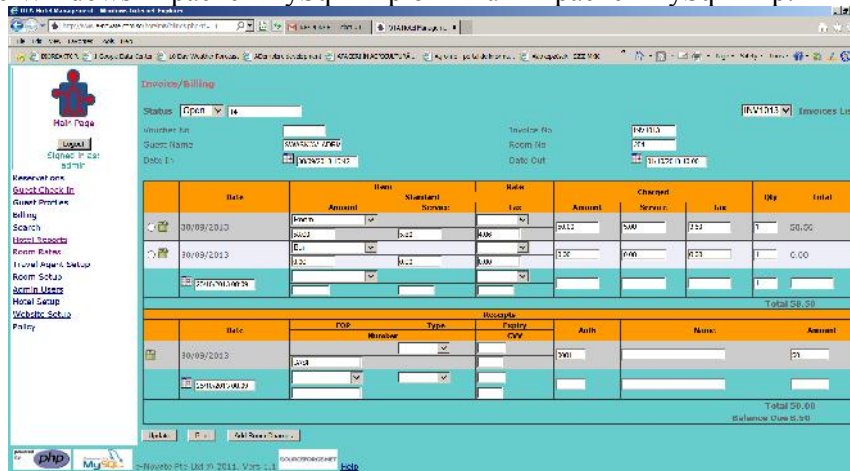

Fig. 1. OTA Hotel Management – Billing module

CultDesk is a free of charge hotel data management application for your desktop provided by Cultuzz Digital Media GmbH. Available for all operating systems it offers the hotelier an easy way to create a booking engine for the own website. CultDesk lets you connect your hotel with a online booking engine – CultBooking which is open source.

Fig. 2. CultDesk interface

CultBooking Hotel Booking System can be used via hotel website or via distributor's website. CultBooking is based on CultSwitch, which is a web service for automate business data administration inside hotel guides, reservation systems, on-line indexes and print media.

KWHotel Free is a free property management software dedicated to small and medium accommodation facilities. Managing reservations, customers and room base with intuitive interface, combined with professional technical support via Skype, phone, email and TeamViewer alongside with access to all updates is very attractive. This software have a „big brother" – KWHotel Pro with more option but is not free of charge.

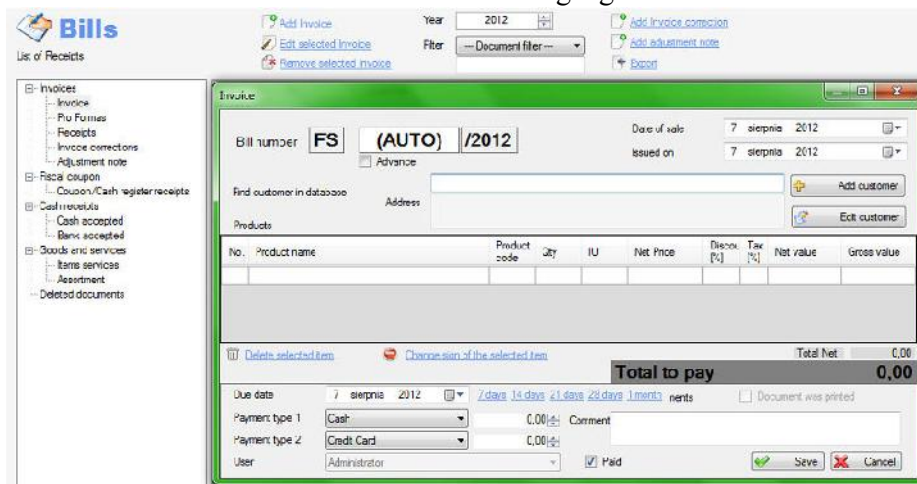KWHotel is translated into several languages but not in romanian.

Fig. 3. KWHotel - Billings module

One of the most attractive modules in terms of management, the statistics module.

Fig. 4. KWHotel - Statistics module

In statistics module there are four types of view:
- graphs and charts - where can set the graph breakdown for particular period of time, by different rooms, by days or by months;
- statistics overview - which additionally contains "Total Cash Inflow" divided by different types of payment and it is possible to check on the cashier's name;

- sales - record by document type;
- shift reports - contain information about proceedings that take place during a specific shift. It enhances communication between different shifts so that each shift can assess work that was completed and determine how to proceed.
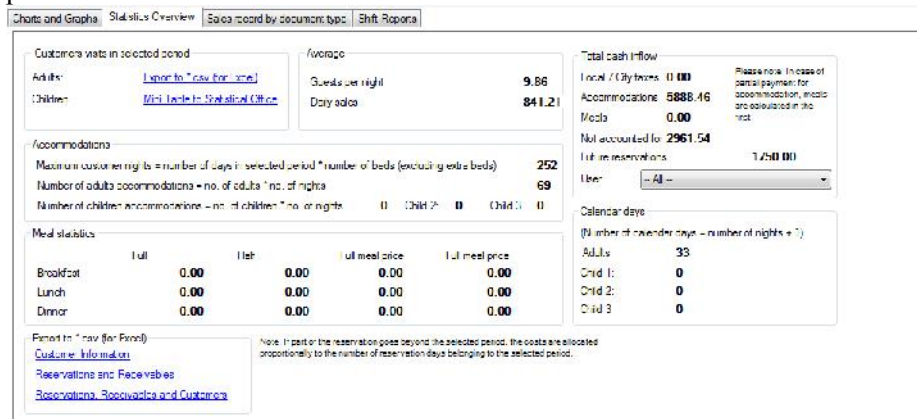

Fig. 5. KWHotel - Statistics overview

CONCLUSIONS

Hotel and hospitality management software performs essential financial and organizational functions for hotels, motels, resorts, and bed & breakfasts, as well as condos and other forms of lodging. These functions include reservations, employee scheduling, accounting, customer relationship management, property and maintenance management. This software's made by leaders in the field are priced too high for small business.Unfortunately, are very few free and open source application designed specifically for small hospitality business. Before buying it is better to test these programs to gain experience. Experience will help establish the necessary functionality for software. Necessary functionality and manufacturers brand determines the size of the investment required

REFERENCES
 1. Sanjay Chib, France Cheong, 2011, Demonstration web-portal for tourism enterprises,
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, Vol. 2 Iss: 3, pp.176 - 187
 2. http://www.e-novate.com.sg/hotelmis
 3. https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/page/osor.eu
 4. http://sourceforge.net/projects/cultbooking/
 5. http://www.cultuzz.com
 6. http://www.kwhotel.com/en/
 7. http://softwaresolution.informer.com/Free-Hotel-Management-Software/
 8. http://www.opentravel.org
 9. http://www.ezeefrontdesk.com
10. http://www.innquest.com