

# Management information system



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Management Information Systems: Case 2. The Queen Mary 2 and Partner Ship The Ship Partner information system provides the passengers of the The Queen Mary 2 with all-integrated entertainment and communication network. Not only does it allow accessing the variety of movies and interactive TV-programs, and perhaps also music and radio, gives an opportunity to browse a web and send e-mails to friends, but also makes planning and making the necessary arrangements much easier. With the help of the Ship Partner there is no need to communicate to the cruise ship personnel concerning the reservations - it can be done conveniently and fast through the network.

Another function of the system allows tracing the customers' purchases and generating accumulated bills afterwards, facilitating in this way the purchasing and making regular payments. The variety of services offered to the passengers may be extended to include, for instance, communication between the cabins, GPS service, gambling etc. The system may also provide the customization of the offerings, by finding the stored information about the choices made during the previous trip and suggesting to a passenger his or her favorite dish or wine.

On the other hand, for the ship managers and personnel the Ship Partner provides enormous benefits as well. By maintaining an extensive real-time database, allowing easy extraction of the information in the form of reports needed and facilitating the communication process with the passengers, the Ship Partner allows the managers to focus more on the core competencies. If there is no need to devote a lot of time to conducting these activities, the management can concentrate on providing a better customer service and inventing ways to improve cruise ship's current operational activities.

In general, such an information system and communication network, customized to the needs of particular business sphere, would prove to be of use in the sectors for which reliable and up-to-date clients' information and provision of a high-level services to the customers are important. That includes, but is not limited to, casino and restaurant services, hotel chains, resorts management.

Taking into account all the benefits the Ship Partner provides with regard to the every-day operations of The Queen Mary 2, it is highly important for both the information database and the network to have a back-up which will allow it to carry on its functions if the primary system fails. It has been said in the case that " the ship's massive data network brings order where there once was chaos". However, if the system fails, then the resulting chaos would be even greater than the one that has been experienced ever before.

One can only imagine the confusion resulting from all the data concerning the upcoming meals for up to 1, 000 persons and planned events, quantity of passengers on board and those who went to the shore, the entire billing information etc. being lost. It would be necessary to establish manual procedures to process such data and, in the meantime, to restore enormous amount of information that had been collected for weeks or months, stored in the memory and eventually lost. It may even happen, if the personal plastic bar-coded cards will not get accepted because of the information system malfunctioning, that the passengers will be limited in their ability to move freely on the ship. Therefore, assuring the safety of the information and backing-up the system is of high importance.