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MOVIE TICKET BOOKING SYSTEM PROPOSAL

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MOVIE TICKET BOOKING SYSTEM

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter includes the, background of the problem, statement of the problem and purpose statements, research questions, and definitions of key terms examined in the research.

1.1 Background of the problem

This system is being built to simplify booking movie tickets in cinemas in Uganda.

Most cinephiles consider booking movie tickets for blockbusters showing in Ugandan cinemas tedious because it must be done personally rather than remotely, as most service providers in today's marketplace do.

1.2 problem statement

The majority of audiences find it problematic to book movie tickets for films screening in Ugandan cinema because they must be done in person rather than online, necessitating the development of a system to streamline the process and save time.

1.4 Significance of study

The main objective of the movie ticket booking system is to manage the details of Seats, Booking, Customers and Payments.

1.5 Project beneficiaries

The project beneficiaries will be people who like to watch movies in the cinemas, particularly those who watch blockbusters on the actual release date to avoid spoilers all over the internet.

1.6 Goal of the project

The major intention is to make it easier for cinephiles to book and purchase movie tickets remotely as opposed to actually booking from the cinemas in Uganda.

1.7 Project Mission

The main objective of the movie ticket booking system is to manage the details of Seats, Booking, Customers and Payments in order to provide a user-friendly interface to allow users to book movie tickets remotely.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter examines several texts in order to establish the fundamentals of a theatre booking system. Several features that used to be processed manually have been incorporated in the database design.

2.1 Traditional cinema booking system

Pre-electronic era box offices consisted of a theatre ticket sales point where a patron could purchase one or more tickets and have some preference of seat location. The box office treasurer would have a paper plan of the theatre for each performance, with a corresponding ticket book. The patron would have access to a diagram of the theatre to indicate preferred seats, but usually not be allowed to actually see the treasurer's plan, as part of the treasurer's job is to distribute the audience around the theatre for both increased comfort (not all patrons in the same corner while many other seats are vacant), and to give the impression of a well-attended performance (even if the theatre was not full) for publicity reasons (Reid 1983; Langley 1980). In the process, the treasurer would attempt to sell the premium (and most expensive) seats first (Langley 1980). Booking a seat and buying a ticket in this manner would be a face-to-face negotiation between the patron and treasurer. The treasurer was also expected to be knowledgeable about the performance in question, so that patron questions could be dealt with in a positive manner (Sweeting 1969). The patron would finally pay for the agreed seats, and receive tickets printed with the respective seat numbers. The treasurer would have to carefully mark off the seats on the theatre seating plan for every ticket sold, to avoid the possibility of the same seat being sold twice by mistake.

The theatre provides infrastructure and facilities for a performance to take place, while allowing an audience to enjoy this for a fee.

A booking system is used to ensure patrons can purchase tickets for a given performance well in advance, and avoid being turned away at the last minute.

Theatre management also prefer tickets to be sold as early as possible, both for financial reasons (Hillenbrand 2001), and to avoid a long queue at the entrance just before the performance is due to start. The theatre box office is the section where bookings are made, being the first point of contact between the theatre and the public (Schneider & Ford 1993; Grippo 2002; Hillenbrand 2001).

2.2 Contemporary Cinema booking systems

Although the fundamental principles of a booking system have remained unchanged over time, developments in communication and other technologies have had a phenomenal impact on their implementation. Sweeting (1969) speculated that perhaps theatres could benefit from computerized ticketing systems, similar to what airlines at the time had started to adopt. In the late 1960s, the personal computer did not exist. Computer systems were bulky, expensive industrial machines and would be set up to execute tasks specific to the organization in question, putting them beyond the economic reach of most, if not all theatres. Langley (1980) asserted that computer ticket systems were only feasible for large theatre operations. However, with today's comparatively low hardware cost, the computer has become standard equipment in virtually all offices. Even the smallest of theatres would opt for a computerized system, if only because the two-week mail-order negotiation described in the previous section can now be condensed to two minutes. Nevertheless, Hillenbrand (2001) cautions against a computer and software purchase for small operations, suggesting that a dedicated telephone answering machine be utilized. Reid (1983) observed that computers were replacing the traditional paper and pencil systems, allowing several telephonists to simultaneous access the same seating plan, thus avoiding a patron queue and improving on customer services, compared to a manual system. Hillenbrand (2001) proposes that theatres should match the conveniences provided by the numerous other service providers such as toll-free numbers, credit card processing, internet access to products and services, mail order, all of which

today's consumers have come to expect.

Modern day theatre managers still make use of the same types of reports that were sought decades ago, but have come to expect them instantly, and without error, due to widespread computer usage. A computerized reservation system has the potential to provide the precise type of information required with just a mouse click. Comparing manual and computerized booking systems, Collins (2003, p. 125) quotes a theatre manager describing them as 'labor intensive, bulky and hard to make changes' as opposed to 'fast, easy and sleek' respectively.

2.3 Conclusion.

The fundamental theatre booking principles have not changed over time but with the arrival of the electronic age there is pressure from patrons and society in general to modernize traditional systems, so that theatres are perceived to be providing conveniences on par with other entertainment and service providers. The next chapter discusses construction of the system making use of the Access database package.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The major requirements of a theatre booking system were reviewed in Chapter 2 and these have greatly influenced the discussions that follow about the design of the booking system. This chapter discusses how the database was set up in order to incorporate these features, as well as the difficulties encountered.

3.1 Choice of Database

In terms of convenience and speed, there is no doubt that a computer booking system is vastly superior to a manual one. However, some authors (Langley 1980; Hillenbrand 2001) discourage smaller theatres form using such a system due to their limited budgets. This booking system was designed with this constraint as a fundamental consideration, therefore it makes use of 'off the shelf' equipment, namely a PC running the almost standard Microsoft Office Professional suite (which includes Microsoft Access database). It is hoped that a small theatre which already owns a PC with Access installed would perceive this system as a cost-effective solution to enhancing productivity. Also, a windows-based interface with the system would prove to be less intimidating to patrons willing to take advantage of an eventual online booking facility.

Ease of use was also an important consideration. Unlike word processors which most computer users are familiar with, database programs are comparatively rarely used and would require the box office treasurer to undergo more intense training. In the hierarchy of databases, Kroenke (2006) rates Access as an entry level product while Mannino (2001) associates PC databases with low cost and limited capabilities. However, it has built in features that can be set up (eg forms, reports, etc.) designed to interface between the user and the database, such that the most common tasks can be executed with minimum effort by a non-expert user. This user-friendly aspect of Access is another reason why it was selected for system construction.

Access also permits construction of web pages which allow an internet user (without necessarily having Access on his/her computer) to make changes on the database. This is an ideal scenario whereby a patron can view performance information online and click a box to enter his/her booking into the system, without having to know anything about databases. This database was constructed using Access 2003, which by default saves files in Access 2000 format to enhance backward capability, enabling computers installed with the older version of the software to open and use the file.