**1. Horizontal vs. Vertical Application**

The type of application used for the new reservation and booking system at Sandy Shores Time Shares would be a vertical application. This is because vertical software is designed to meet the specific needs of a particular industry or business operation, rather than offering broad functionality that applies across many types of businesses. The reservation and booking system is tailored to the hospitality and vacation rental industry, focusing on specific processes like booking accommodations, managing reservations, and coordinating with property owners.

**2. Software Development and Acquisition Strategies**

Sandy Shores should consider the following strategies for software development and acquisition:

Custom Development: Building a custom software solution that precisely fits the unique needs and workflows of Sandy Shores. This approach offers maximum flexibility but can be the most expensive and time-consuming.

Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS): Purchasing and implementing an existing software product. This strategy can be cost-effective and quicker to deploy but might require compromises on functionality and flexibility.

Software as a Service (SaaS): Subscribing to a cloud-based reservation and booking service. SaaS offers ease of access, scalability, and ongoing support, with payments typically structured as monthly or annual fees.

**3. Online Reservation Systems, Software, and Services**

BookingSync: A SaaS offering that provides a comprehensive booking and management system tailored for vacation rentals. It includes features like automated booking, integrated payment processing, and synchronization with major rental platforms. BookingSync Website

Escapia: A widely-used vertical application for vacation rental management, offering tools for reservations, accounting, property management, and marketing. Escapia is a great example of a COTS product specifically designed for vacation rental businesses. Escapia Website

Airbnb for Hosts: While primarily a marketplace, Airbnb offers tools and services for managing listings, reservations, and guest communications, representing a specialized service within the vacation rental industry. Airbnb Hosts

**4. Role of a Systems Analyst**

As a systems analyst for Sandy Shores, your role would involve:

Requirement Gathering: Identifying and documenting the specific needs and workflows of Sandy Shores to ensure the chosen system meets these requirements.

System Evaluation and Selection: Researching and evaluating potential systems, software, or services to find the best fit based on functionality, cost, scalability, and support.

Implementation Support: Assisting with the system setup, customization, data migration, and integration with existing processes or software.

Training and Change Management: Developing training programs for staff and managing the transition to the new system to minimize disruptions.

The acquisition strategy (custom development, COTS, or SaaS) would indeed affect your role. For custom development, your focus might be more on the design and development phases, working closely with developers. For COTS or SaaS, your role might lean more towards vendor selection, negotiation, and ensuring the software aligns with business needs through customization and integration.