RED TEAM

Hotel Management Software Development Project

[Deliverable 2: Business domain/environment, & client questionnaire]

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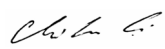
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I. Executive Overview

Our client, Manoir Ramezay – Hotel, Restaurant and Spa, is a small hotel that provides short term or long term stay for guests. They also provide accommodations for guests that are attending special events, such as weddings, work functions, leisure events, conferences, or similar events in the surrounding area. They primarily provide what is referred to as standard rooms. They are known to offer an average price for a 3-star hotel with decent rooms.

Manoir Ramezay is in Marieville. Since Marieville is a small city with less population, Manoir Ramezay is the only hotel in this area. Manoir Ramezay has three floors including the basement, where is restaurant located. The hotel has their own website. This website has common functions like hotel introduction, making a reservation, services offering, and contact information.

The owners of Manoir Ramezay are a couple, who bought it around four years ago. Since the couple are the new managers of the hotel, they haven't changed the previous management methods. They use the same website, the same sales strategies. Regarding their computer skills, the owners have the basic knowledge of the Microsoft office.

The hotel doesn't have any systems in place to keep room availability updated on their website. The operator needs to update manually when one room is booked on third party booking platforms, these being Booking.com, Expedia, and AirBnB. The operator must change this room unavailable on their own website avoiding duplicated booking. The other problem is lack of a database to save the guests' information, no matter which method they make the reservation.

To further our understanding of how their business functions, we needed a few more questions answered to get a full and complete understanding of the business before we start building anything for them. For example, we want to know the entire process of how the Manoir Ramezay does their bookings. This kind of information is important because it will determine whether we are going to build a database application for a single user such as the boss or the manager or build it for multiple users so every employee can update the bookings on their own.

II. Description of the Business Domain

Manoir Ramezay – Hotel, Restaurant and Spa, operates within the hospitality industry, more specifically within the hotel industry. The hotel industry is a service-oriented domain, that deals primarily with guest accommodation or lodgings, but also often intersects with food and drink services, events, and the tourism industry more broadly. The services provided to guests can vary quite drastically from one hotel to another, and hotel owners generally aim to attract a particular type of customer through their pricing model and marketing strategy, or via the range of services they offer. Manoir Ramezey is a small hotel aiming to provide a short-term or long-term stay for guests. They also provide accommodations for guests that are attending special events, such as weddings, work functions, leisure events, conferences, or similar events in the surrounding area.

There are a variety of hotel types that typically can be categorized by size, function, services, amenities, and cost. Hotels may fall into various categories. There are chain hotels, boutique hotels, all-inclusive resorts, motels, bed and breakfasts, hostels, hotels that specialize in meeting and conference spaces or events, and a vast number of other speciality lodging establishments. Manoir Ramezay falls somewhere along the lines of a traditional full-service hotel and a bed and breakfast or auberge. The hotel offers overnight accommodations, meals, a spa and other relaxation and leisure services. They are mainly aimed at travellers or tourists, although locals may also use them. This category of hotel provides private rooms, and almost always have en-suite bathrooms. Room types also vary greatly depending on the type of hotel. There are single, double, triple, or greater occupancy rooms, apartment-style rooms, connection or joining rooms, among others. Manoir Ramezey primarily provides what is referred to as standard rooms, in addition to two suite-style rooms, which provides different choice for guests. A standard room typically includes 1 bed varying in size for single or double occupancy.

Within the hotel industry, star ratings are used to provide a measure of the quality and amenities of hotels. Hotels can receive a rating of 1 to 5 stars, with 1 being the most basic and 5 being the most extravagant. Choosing a hotel stay can be challenging and confusing when there exists so many options to choose from, however, clients typically choose features in function of the purpose of their stay. Once travelers select a particular hotel they are interested in, the next step is navigating the hotel ratings, reviews, and comments. Within the hotel industry, star ratings are used to provide a measure of the quality of hotels. Although there is no international standard for defining exactly what star ratings mean in every case, visitors often narrow down their search using the hotel star system. Although word of mouth and feedback from other customers is important, star rating can carry extra weight, because many customers take the time to research hotels before making a reservation. Keeping or moving up a star rating can help hotels to generate more revenue and bookings, while moving down can have the exact opposite effect. Manoir Ramezey offers an average price for a 3-star hotel with decent rooms.

It is essential for hotel owners to keep pace with the latest hotel trends because one of the most important abilities is to meet customer expectations. The outbreak of COVID-19 has greatly affected the industry, and how visitors choose hotels moving forward. Visitors pay much closer attention to safety, hygiene, and contactless services. For example, breakfast at Manoir Ramezey is presently suspended due to COVID-19. The owner realizes that guests prefer to order food to home deliveries instead of going to the restaurant at hotel. There are hand-sanitizing stations at the front desk and in the common areas. Guests are more than happy to look elsewhere when safety standards are not satisfactory.

III. Description of the Business Environment

Manoir Ramezay is a 3-star hotel located in Marieville. Marieville is a city in the Canadian province of Quebec, located in the Montérégie region about 30 kilometres (east of Montreal. with a population of 11,332. Most citizens in Marieville speaks French.

Since Marieville is a small city with less population, Manoir Ramezay is the only hotel in this area. Fortunately, they don't have any competitors in this area. Moreover, there is a public park across the street. During the summer, several events will be held in the park in the evening. Guests could enjoy the event during their stay at hotel. Besides, CHSLD Sainte-Croix is only 5-minute walking from the hotel, which bring many visitors each year. The visitors who want to visit their old relative staying in CHSLD Sainte-Croix will choose to stay at Manoir Ramezay, which is convenient for them to go the CHSLD. Moreover, grocery stores, pharmacy and restaurants are walking distance from the hotel which offers more choices for guests. These are the main reasons bringing more bookings.

Manoir Ramezay has three floor including the basement, where is restaurant located. The hotel is equipped with an elevator, which is out of date but works properly. The hotel provides a free parking for guests. The parking lot is behind the hotel, which has a large space to park around 16 cars at the same time. Guests can also enter the hotel from back door at the parking lot.

The hotel has their own website. Like other hotels' websites, it has common functions like hotel introduction, making a reservation, services offering, contact information. In the booking page, each type of room has a brief introduction, such as facility, pictures. People can check the room availability and rate with choosing the check in and check out date. Meanwhile, it will tell you how many rooms left on the date you choose. It also has introduction, restaurant, spa pages on their website. The restaurant is in the basement with a large space and bar separately. Due to limitation of staff and time, the restaurant is open to rent. The breakfast service is suspended because of the COVID, which is indicated on their website. The same situation of SPA service. Instead of SPA service, the hotel provides a hot tub in terrace which guests can go as they wish. Guests will feel like having a hot spring when they use hot tub in the winter. The other feature of the hotel is that it provides one suite with sauna and one suite with open kitchen, which two suites have the access directly to the terrace.

IV. Description of the Client

The owners of Manoir Ramezay are a couple, who bought it around four years ago. They are a new immigration family with two children. Their mother language is Chinese. They can speak English, but their French is not very well. They can speak very basic French which is a problem to communicate when some guests don't speak English. However, during the four-year operating the hotel, their French is improved. They don't use any database to maintain the guests' information. Meanwhile, the booking system on their website is from the third part.

Since the couple are new manager of the hotel, they don't change the previous management method. They use the same website, the same selling method. However, with the business grows, the old operating method should be changed to keep the pace with the trends. They want to improve their management system.

Regarding their computer skills, the owners have the basic knowledge of the Microsoft office. The hostess has the knowledge of accounting software, such as QuickBooks. If there is a new system to operate the hotel better, they are more than happy to learn how to use and maintain it.

V. Description of the Business Problem

The hotel doesn't have any system to keep room availability updated on their website. The operator needs to update manually when one room is booked on third party booking platforms, these being Booking.com, Expedia, and AirBnB. The operator must change this room unavailable on their own website avoiding duplicated booking. Although it's not heavy work to mortify the room availability on the website because it's only 14-room hotel, it's a different story during the summer. The hotel is usually fully booked. The front desk is always busy with taking the phone or helping guests to check out. He can not change the room availability on hotel website in time when the room is booked from third part. Meanwhile, another guest book the same room on the hotel website, which results the same room booked twice. After that, both guests will be unhappy and complain to the hotel. The hotel will not only lose the guest but also reputation.

The other problem is lack of a database to save the guests' information, no matter which method they make the reservation. Writing down all guests' information on paper is such a huge workload and waste time. The operator needs to check the guests' information day to day from all websites and compare with information already has. For those people make the reservation from telephone, the front desk must write down all information. If the same guests call next time, the front desk has to ask the same information again or search the guest's information from paper which will take a lot of time. All of these are not efficient and outdated.

VI. Open Questions

Manoir Ramezay, is a Hotel, Restaurant & Spa that has been in business for over 12 years in Marieville, Quebec. To further our understanding of how their business functions, we had an interview with one of the many owners. However, we needed a few more questions answered to get a full and complete understanding of the business before we start building anything for them. For example, we want to know the entire process of how the Manoir Ramezay does their bookings. How do they update their records? Which staff member modifies the room availabilities? Is there a way to view users' profiles? How do they check if a room is available? Does the price of the room change? Can booking records be changed and how?

That kind of information is important because it will determine whether we are going to build a database application for a single user such as the boss or the manager or build it for multiple users so every employee can update the bookings on their own. Speaking of employees, do they speak and read French and English, or do they only understand Chinese? And besides the reception, does the Hotel operate any other kind of business software? If so, what are they and who uses them? This will help our team assess how skilled employees are with computers which will help us design a user-friendly application. Also have they ever overbooked a room? If so, what are the processes that lead to that? With that information, we can put design a limit on certain items in the database application.

To dive deeper some other questions come to mind. Can users register to the hotel and view or modify their personal profile? Can users book a room on any specific date? Can the users view their entire booking history at the hotel? Can the users change the booking time before the arrival time, if yes what is the cutoff time for that? Can users check for room availability before they book a room?

Next, we would like to know about Manoir Ramezay's regular clients. How clients can Manoir Ramezay accommodate, do they book by phone or online? If the number of clients that Manoir Ramezay deals with is above 100, they could benefit from a database application since it could prevent the hotel from being overbooked.

Finally, we want to have general information about the major challenges that Manoir Ramezay face currently. Is their restaurant where they serve clients profitable enough and do they serve customers from the general public? If it isn't, what are their plans to make it more profitable? Do they feel that the competition is hurting their business?

Once we know in what ways their competitors have an advantage, for example if their competitor offers cheaper price for the same service than Manoir Ramezay, then in that example we could add a feature to our database application to identify what services are in demand and

which aren't. Then the owners investigate why that particular service isn't selling and make adjustments either in price or other ways to change that trend.

VII. Questionnaires

<u>General Questions</u>
1. Do you place any advertisements? (Li Yu add)
~~Do you have any skills in using computers?~~
~~How computer dependent is your business?~~
~~What software systems are being used in the business?~~
~~Does your company have any publicity on the internet?~~
2. How do customers find your business?
3. Do you receive many phone calls every day? (Li Yu add)
~~3. What percent of those customers discover you on the internet?~~
~~Do you have a website in place?~~
4. How often is this website updated?
5. Are users allowed to give feedback on your site?
~~Does Manoir Ramezey operate any other kind of business software? If so, what are they and who uses them?~~
~~What is your target audience?~~
~~In what areas of the business are problems occurring?~~
~~We want to know what other services or elements that competitors offer that our client's store doesn't, and what our client can do to match their competitors.~~
6. Do these problems greatly affect or not the business?
7. How long have these issues been occurring for?
8. What adjustments has the company made to overcome these problems?
~~How is your business organized?~~
~~What is the business main goals (What do you want to accomplish)?~~
~~What are the major challenges of the hotel?~~
~~What are the major challenges of the restaurant?~~
~~What are the major challenges of the spa?~~
9. How often are employees replaced?
~~How long would it take for an employee to become effective?~~
10. What skills do your employees need to have?
~~What are the different tasks they do?~~
~~What are the most challenging parts of your job?~~
~~How many customers do you get per day?~~
~~How many clients do you get per month?~~
~~What differentiates your business from competitors?~~
~~Do you plan on expanding?~~
~~Where will your business be in 5 years?~~
~~Are your profits inclining by the year?~~
11. What are the times of the year that you get the most customers?
~~Do you have a stable business plan?~~

Gerry

~~Who in your Hotel handle the day-to-day interactions with the Hotel owners and what is their experience level?~~

12. What kind of reports do you provide and how often? (Financial/Tax, Availability, Day/Week/Monthly etc.)

~~Do you have any strategic annual plan to expand your business? (Realistic???)~~

13. How do you hire staff and what is the requirements that need to have? (Critical issue these days.)

~~How do you collect the client's information and you do follow up after?~~

14. What are some recent improvements at your Hotel?

15. Who do you purchase the inventory, do you have a database for that?

Li Yu

<u>Database Questions</u>

16. What other functions do you want in database?

17. Are all employees allow to have the access to the database?

18. Do you want to have different roles to access the database, like admin, regular users?

19. What information needs to be saved for guests?
   - Last name
   - First name
   - Gender
   - Telephone number
   - Birth date
   - Language
   - Address
   - Payment method
   - Cards info
   - Check in date
   - Check out date
   - Or anything else

20. Do you need the function to export guests' information from database?

21. Do you need a logo for your database software?

22. If you need a logo, what kind of style do you like? Could you share some designs you like?

23. What's language do you want to have for the database?

24. Are you willing to host your own server for a database?

25. Do you want any output (printable invoices, etc.) to be generated from the database?

<u>Software Questions</u>

26. Apart from the third part booking website, what specific commercial software are the employees using, if any?

27. How are your employee's computer skills?

28. Are your employees trained to use the software systems in place?

29. Do your employees have full access to the third platforms?

30. Do you consider hiring IT team to upgrade your system?

VIII. **Reference**

https://www.revfine.com/hotel-industry/