

# **Baby Hut**

## **Baby equipment Sales and Rental Chain**

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# Baby Hut

## Introduction

Baby Hut is a growing baby equipment sales and rental chain. The original store was opened several years ago by three young entrepreneurs Peter Hamill, James George and Angel White. While Peter and Angel were very knowledgeable about baby equipment, James was particularly interested in a business opportunity and filling a market niche. The niche he perceived was that while the major baby equipment hire chains provide the latest and more popular baby equipment, Baby Hut could provide extra services to customers such as pickup and delivery, personal assistance to customers about their selections and to provide a far more extensive selection of baby equipment for hire or sale from around the world, as well as the opportunity to purchase baby equipment.

More recently James has been investigating opportunities that involve the use of online and mobile technologies to enhance the offering of the company.

The stores have been far more successful than the owners could have imagined. The company now has five stores in Melbourne, and can see opportunities to expand the chain into other cities and states. Each store has a manager with suitable casual staff. As well as finding their niche, success has come about through careful selection of locations and of committed and knowledgeable managers to run each store. So far the three owners have been able to manage and support store managers effectively by regular personal contacts. However, it is clear that if they are to expand this will become more difficult and there must be an improvement in the information systems to monitor performance and provide support.

Currently, each store has its own software to manage the hire and sale of baby equipment but these are not directly linked. The current software is limited to applications offered in the MS Office suite of applications. For management purposes each store prepares its own individual reports, summary reports are sent to head office where James then consolidates them for the company as a whole. Each store has a list of titles available through the company but not what is held in other stores and the customer relies entirely on the expertise of the store manager and staff to provide advice about baby equipment that are available and obtaining them.

To supervise and plan the development of a new information system, the owners of Baby Hut have hired the services of the IS Consulting Organisation [ISCO].

## Security and Possible Search Facility

It was agreed between Baby Hut management and ISCO's analyst that, for privacy and security reasons, each store would be responsible for and be able to access only its own data. However, an exception to this that was thought useful was to allow limited access [e.g. read only] between stores to data such as the availability of baby equipment at other stores.

## Functionality

The information system at each store would clearly have to perform the basic functions. A few of the more important ones are described below.

## ***Customer Maintenance***

Customers will register with Baby Hut by giving their name, address, home telephone number, work telephone number, mobile number, email address and drivers licence number. If the customer does not have a driver licence, a Medicare Number or passport number may be used as a substitute.

The customer must produce 3 forms of current identification, one of which must include a photograph. At least one of the forms of identification must include the current address of the client. A photograph of the customer will be taken at the store and recorded as a visual check on the customer should he not have his card for any reason.

The information will be captured online and a contract printed for the customer to sign. A laminated borrowing card will be produced enabling the customer to commence borrowing immediately.

## ***Process a loan for Baby equipment***

1. This involves recording the customer identification number and baby equipment identification number, date and time of loan and period of the loan.
2. The customer is checked to ensure that their membership is current, whether they have any overdue loans or fines that might bar them from taking out a loan.
3. Sometimes there might be other reasons why a customer is not allowed to take out a loan so there is a provision to flag such a person and a reason why they are not allowed to take out a loan at this time.
4. The manager [or an authorised assistant] can override the system and issue a loan even they exceed the borrowing limits or if there are outstanding payments or the customer is flagged for some reason.
5. The customer will present the required baby equipment to the attendant together with their membership card.
6. The bar code on the card will be scanned and the system will check to see if there are any outstanding loans or fines for late return.
7. Loans can still be issued without a card but the attendant at the time is required to verify the customer is who they say they are by matching the customer with the photograph recorded in the system.
8. The attendant will scan the titles and the system will calculate the amount payable.
9. The system must be capable of automatically taking into account promotional offers when calculating the amount payable eg rent one new release and get one free.
10. The titles will then be flagged as being unavailable together with the due date for their return.
11. Any payments and the baby equipment borrowed by the customer will be recorded.

## ***Maintenance***

When baby equipment are to be purchased the details will be entered into the system which will then generate a purchase order each of which is identified by a unique number generated by the system. The purchase order will then be sent to the supplier. The supplier will then despatch the ordered titles together with an invoice. New stock is sent to head office, recorded and sent to the stores as required.

When new baby equipment [or additional new copies of currently held baby equipment] are received which have been ordered for rental, these will be classified and placed on appropriate shelves.

Depending on demand, baby equipment change categories from overnight to 3 day or weekly. This will necessitate changing the baby equipment loan criteria i.e. overnight, 3 day or weekly and changing the shelf position. Also as demand for a piece of baby equipment falls some of the baby equipment are removed from the rental shelves and placed on sale at a discount to the new price.

### ***Baby Equipment Sales through Website***

A customer may purchase a piece of baby equipment which was previously a rental in which case the baby equipment identification number is recorded together with the purchase price and date of purchase. A new piece of baby equipment will not have baby equipment identification number in which case the bar code for the baby equipment is scanned and recorded. If a member decides to purchase a piece of baby equipment the sale will be recorded for warranty purposes and possibly marketing purposes against the member's identification number. Sometimes customers who are not members may buy a piece of baby equipment but in that case no customer information is recorded and the customer must retain their receipt in case there are any problems with the baby equipment.

Sales of new baby equipment should be monitored so that appropriate stock levels can be maintained both at each store and at the central site which acts as a sort of warehouse by keeping a reserve supply. Baby equipment can be sent as required from the central site to the store requiring the baby equipment or even from other stores if necessary.

### ***Overdue Loans***

When a title is more than one day overdue a list of overdue baby equipment together with customer name and contact details [phone numbers] will be generated so that the store can contact the customer to let them know their baby equipment is overdue. Also if the customer has an email account, a notification can be automatically generated and sent.

### ***Return a Loan***

The baby equipment id and the date and time of return of the baby equipment is required. Fines are imposed for late returns depending on the baby equipment category and how late the baby equipment was returned. Fines are calculated based on the standard rental charge worked out on a per day basis [e.g. a 3 day baby equipment hired at \$30 would be charged \$10 per day late]. If a piece of baby equipment is reserved then the system should flag this so that the baby equipment can be put aside for the customer requesting the baby equipment.

### ***Reservations***

A person can reserve a piece of baby equipment if none are available at the time. When the baby equipment arrives the customer should be contacted by phone or eMail. At the moment, reservations are handled manually. When a customer requests a piece of baby equipment that it is not available, the customer's name and contact number is recorded [e.g. on a sticky note or in note pad] and when the baby equipment returns the customer is contacted. This is rather informal and some stores handle this better than others.

### ***Renewals***

A piece of baby equipment can be renewed provided that there are no unfilled reservations. Renewals are made at the normal amount charged and loan period. The amount charged can be overridden if special deals apply at the time of renewal. A renewal is essentially the same as taking out the baby equipment again except that you don't have to return it and record the loan.

### ***Delivery and Pickup Service***

For approved customers in the local area, Baby Hut will provide a delivery and pickup service for baby equipment. Currently, for delivery there is a \$60 charge for delivery and this applies for any number of baby equipment. The customer provides details regarding the baby equipment required and the loan is recorded in the usual way together with the delivery charge. The courier delivers the baby equipment and takes the money at the time of delivery. Similarly, there is a pickup service for \$10.

### **Requested Reports**

These reports should be able to be generated by store managers for their own store. If generated at head office, the same report can be run on a consolidated basis [i.e. for all stores together] but the store number may also be included so that, for example, figures can be compared store by store if required.

#### ***Member Transaction History***

This lists members, their baby equipment rentals over the requested period of time [usually quarterly or annually]. The baby equipment borrowed, date of borrowing, scheduled return date should be provided. This report will help in analysing the current market and develop customer mailing lists. One such mailing list for example would be for members who have not borrowed a piece of baby equipment for a specified period to make a special offer to them as an incentive to rent another baby equipment.

The report would provide member identification number, member name, member address, total amount spent by the member on rentals over the specified period, baby equipment identification number, baby equipment title, baby equipment rental price, rental transaction number, and date.

#### ***Overdue List***

This is provided so that members can be contacted about overdue loans. The report would provide the member identification number, member name, telephone numbers, and baby equipment identification numbers, baby equipment titles that are overdue with their corresponding due date.

#### ***Baby equipment Rentals Report***

This provides the status of all baby equipment currently available for loan. The report provides the baby equipment identification number, the store where the baby equipment was rented, member identification number, date loaned and the date due back. This report is used to determine rental frequency [the number of times a piece of baby equipment was rented], as well as how many times the baby equipment was out of stock when requested. The report also provides the rental rate which calculated by dividing the number of days a piece of baby equipment was rented by the number of days since the baby equipment was first purchased.

#### ***Out of Stock Report***

This lists all the baby equipment that were out of stock when requested by a member. The report provides the baby equipment identification number and the frequency of the baby equipment being out of stock over a specified period.

#### ***Baby equipment Vendor List***

Itemises all baby equipment purchased over a specified period. The report includes baby equipment identification number, vendor, baby equipment category, cost of the baby equipment and baby equipment title. The report also summarises the total dollar volume of all baby equipment purchased from the vendor.

### ***Rent Analysis Report***

This lists all baby equipment in stock including rental and sale price, and the number of times a piece of baby equipment was out of stock when requested by a customer. This report is used to analyse rental revenues.

### ***Sales Analysis Report***

This relates to sales of baby equipment including exchange and return data. The data on exchanged items includes the reason for the exchange [exchanges are usually gifts or the baby equipment was defective in some way]. If a piece of baby equipment is exchanged, its value is recorded at the standard price rather than a special price which may apply at the time of exchange.

### ***Catalogue of Baby equipment***

This lists all important data for each piece of baby equipment, the category of the baby equipment [e.g. play, safety, restraints, etc], rental and sale price, sale and rental frequency, and quantity on hand.

## Baby Hut Further Requirements

The following are some further requirements from the business owner regarding their website after a meeting with ISCO.

- The owners possess basic IT skills, they want to a website that is easy to be maintained and upgraded. For example, the website is uncomplicated at the back end (e.g., not too many overriding plug-ins).
- Easy navigation throughout the website is also desirable.
- The owners have highlighted that mobile compatibility (iPhone and Android) is a must. Users should be able to access the website from multiple devices such as computers, mobiles and tablets.
- It is essential that Google Analytics is used to track visitor traffic including where customers come from and how long they stay on the website.
- They also want the website that high security so that they can prevent the attacks from hacker.
- Finally, the owners would like to have search engine optimization so the search results in search engine show the name of their company at the top of the list.



## Baby Hut Baby equipment Sample Data

The data in these reports provides some sample rows of data for each of the required reports. It is not in any way complete but is intended to be internally consistent so that, for example, the sample customers and baby equipment for Burwood Branch of Baby Hut appear also in the other reports for Burwood Branch. However, there is no guarantee that some errors haven't crept in. Please view the data in that light.

### *Sample Member List – Burwood Branch*

Reporting Period: June 30

Member	Name	Address	Home Phone	Mobile
101	Tyler Alterio	727 Willow Bank St. Burwood	9346 1782	0409123712
102	Tim B Ballenger	2830 Linden St Boalsburg	9352 7615	
103	Richard W Bishop	1279 Zion Rd Burwood	9346 9103	
104	Wilson Decker	#2 Box 410-0 Burwood	9346 7781	0414234567
105	Wilma Flagstone	65 Quarry Rd Elkhorn	9355 4732	
106	Gene McCray	9/11 Green Ave Burwood	9346 0479	
107	Jenny Smith	45 West End Rd Elkhorn	9355 1957	0409040149
108	Betty Richardson	67 Quarry Rd Elkhorn	9355 1634	
109	Boris Roberson	13 /16 Charles St Maryville	9370 3369	
110	Jane Watson	777 Fox Blvd Apt 445 Maryville	9370 4281	0416501223
111	Franklin T Wellard	350 West Hunter Ave Boalsburg	9352 0146	
112	Prescott Wilson	222 Ocean View Dr Elkhorn	9355 1257	0416013915

### ***Sample Baby equipment Rentals Report***

Reporting Period: June 1 - June 30

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Member ID</b>	<b>Baby equipment ID</b>	<b>Date of loan</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Hawthorn	346	3205	2018/6/01	2018/6/04
Hawthorn	481	3205	2018/6/02	2018/6/05
Hawthorn	104	1034	2018/6/02	2018/6/09
Hawthorn	106	2113	2018/6/02	2018/6/05
Hawthorn	101	2929	2018/6/04	2018/6/05
Hawthorn	230	3004	2018/6/04	2018/6/05
Yarra	067	3160	2018/6/04	2018/6/07
Yarra	119	2958	2018/6/04	2018/6/05
Yarra	043	2958	2018/6/10	2018/6/11
Yarra	119	1189	2018/6/04	2018/6/05
Yarra	119	0834	2018/6/04	2018/6/05
Caine	119	2998	2018/6/04	2018/6/08
Caine	201	2958	2018/6/08	2018/6/09
Caine	012	2958	2018/6/10	2018/6/11
Caine	294	2987	2018/6/20	2018/6/23
Burwood	106	3004	2018/6/01	2018/6/02
Burwood	110	3004	2018/6/04	2018/6/05
Burwood	112	3004	2018/6/04	2018/6/05

Burwood	102	3004	2018/6/05	2018/6/06
Burwood	106	3160	2018/6/07	2018/6/10
Burwood	101	2958	2018/6/12	2018/6/13
Burwood	101	3160	2018/6/20	2018/6/23
Burwood	102	2987	2018/6/25	2018/6/28

***Sample Overdue List – Burwood Branch***

Reporting Period: June 30

<b>Member</b>	<b>Member ID</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Mobile</b>	<b>Baby equipment Title</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
101	Tyler Alterio	9346 1781	0409 123 712	Booster Child Restraint	2018/6/28
103	Richard Bishop	9346 9103	0400 145 345	Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	2018/6/29
108	Betty Richardson	9355 1634	--	Aviation Cares Belt	2018/6/29
112	Prescott Wilson	9355 1257	0416 013 915	Bath & Stand	2018/6/28

***Sample Member Transaction History – Burwood Branch***

Reporting Period: April 1 to June 30

<b>Member ID</b>	<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Member Address</b>	<b>Baby equipment Title</b>	<b>Transaction Number</b>	<b>Date of Loan</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Period Total</b>
101	Tyler Alterio	727 Willow Bank St. Burwood	Booster Child Restraint	145689	2018/4/01	13.00	
			Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	148107	2018/4/04	15.00	
			Aviation Cares Belt	155115	2018/4/28	12.00	
			Bath & Stand	158966	2018/5/20	13.00	
			Booster Child Restraint	162363	2018/6/12	15.00	
			Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	163001	2018/6/20	33.00	21.00
102	Tim B Ballenger	2830 Linden St Boalsburg	Aviation Cares Belt	145865	2018/4/02	13.00	
			Bath & Stand	156887	2018/5/08	15.00	
			Booster Child Restraint	161185	2018/6/05	15.00	
			Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	164122	2018/6/25	13.00	16.00

103	Richard W Bishop	1279 Zion Rd Burwood	Aviation Cares Belt	146889	2018/4/02	12.00	
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***Sample Catalogue of Baby equipment – All Branches***

Reporting Period: June 1 to June 30

<b>Baby equipment ID</b>	<b>Baby equipment Title</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Rental Price</b>	<b>Rental Period</b>	<b>Rental Rate</b>	<b>Sale Price</b>	<b>Sale Frequency</b>	<b>QOH For Sale</b>
3591	Booster Child Restraint	Restraint	\$40.00	2 day	.5	\$179	0.1	1
3591	Booster Child Restraint	Restraint	\$50.00	7 day	1	\$179	0.2	3
3591	Booster Child Restraint	Restraint	\$70.00	1 month	8	\$179	1	1
3594	Bath & Stand	Safety	\$25.00	2 day	13	\$90	1	8
3594	Bath & Stand	Safety	\$35.00	7 day	10	\$90	2	2
3594	Bath & Stand	Safety	\$60.00	1 month	4	\$90	0.2	3
3592	Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	Play	\$65.00	1 month	12	\$249	1	0
3592	Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	Play	\$95.00	3 months	6	\$249	0.4	2
3592	Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	Play	\$175.00	6 months	40	\$249	3	10
3593	Aviation Cares Belt	Safety	25	2 days	13	\$115	1	1

3593	Aviation Cares Belt	Safety	35	7 days	10	\$115	1	8
3593	Aviation Cares Belt	Safety	55	1 month	4	\$115	2	2

***Sample Rental Analysis Report – Burwood Branch***

Reporting Period: June 13 to June 20

<b>Baby equipment ID</b>	<b>Baby equipment Title</b>	<b>Rental Price</b>	<b>Rental Frequency</b>	<b>Out of Stock</b>	<b>Sale Price</b>	<b>Sales</b>
3591	Booster Child Restraint	\$43.50	35	0	\$179	2
3592	Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	\$70.95	16	1	--	
3593	Aviation Cares Belt	\$32.50	3	2	--	
3594	Bath & Stand	\$24.95	5	0	--	

Note: sales figures relate to surplus rental baby equipment and not new baby equipment.

***Sample Out of Stock Report – Burwood Branch***

Reporting Period: June 13 to June 20

<b>Baby equipment ID</b>	<b>Baby equipment Title</b>	<b>Out of Stock</b>
3591	Booster Child Restraint	0
3592	Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	1
3593	Aviation Cares Belt	2
3594	Bath & Stand	0

***Sample Sales Analysis Report – Burwood Branch***

**Sales**

Reporting Period: June 1 to June 30

<b>Baby equipment ID</b>	<b>Baby equipment Title</b>	<b>Sale Price</b>	<b>Qty Sold</b>	<b>QoH</b>	<b>Requested</b>
3591	Booster Child Restraint	\$179	7	2	
3592	Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	\$249	5	1	
3593	Aviation Cares Belt	\$115	2	0	1
3594	Bath & Stand	\$90	0	1	

### Returns

Reporting Period: June 1 to June 30

<b>Baby equipment ID</b>	<b>Baby equipment</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Return Date</b>
3591	Booster Child Restraint	Faulty	2018/7/20
3592	Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	Exchange	2018/7/14
3593	Aviation Cares Belt	Exchange	2018/7/28



**Sample Baby equipment Vendor List – All Branches**

Reporting Period: August 1 to August 8

<b>Baby equipment ID</b>	<b>Baby equipment</b>	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Vendor</b>
3591	Booster Child Restraint	50	Restraints	\$160.50	Atlantis Baby equipment
3592	Cradle Swing – My Little Cloud	50	Play	\$230	Best Buy
3593	Aviation Cares Belt	30	Safety	\$110	Atlantis Baby equipment
3594	Bath & Stand	20	Safety	\$90	The Baby equipment Library

**Total Vendor Purchases**

Reporting Period: August 1 to August 8

<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Atlantis Baby equipment	\$12798.00
Best Buy	\$21247.50
The Baby equipment Library	\$21247.50
Colombia House	\$31223.00