

Facing Adversity: Step-by-Step PMS Checklist for a Temporary Hotel Closure

BY JACK WANG

Always be prepared. It's a motto that hoteliers live by.

Often, contingency plans are not given the consideration they deserve because they are not needed right away. However, when the unexpected happens — for example, an urgent need to temporarily shut down business — it is essential to act in an orderly, efficient fashion to maintain guest service standards and protect your brand reputation.

If a closure is required, here is a checklist of top tips to help with the process — and ensure a smooth ramp up when your doors open again.

- 1. Update your website:** Leave a succinct message for customers, explaining the reason for the closure and plans for reopening. If the latter is unknown, commit to posting updates and make sure to follow through.
- 2. Review rate management:** Ensure your hotel is closed for new bookings with stay dates during the anticipated close period. Check the following:
 - Review rate restrictions to adjust availability easily.
 - Audit all booking channels to ensure the desired effect takes place (e.g., hotel website, CRS, OTAs, GDS).
 - Keep rates open for new bookings arriving after the anticipated close period.
- 3. Review blocks and events business for rescheduling or cancellations/refunds.**
 - Use reports, simple reports, or exports to extract guests who have been affected and their contact details.
 - Ensure that any vendors providing goods and services are aware of any changes.
- 4. Review individual reservations for rescheduling or cancellations/refunds.**
 - Look for guest reservations where deposits were collected. Take any action in accordance with your business policies.
 - Use reports, simple reports, or exports to extract contact details for reservations holders during your close period. Make best efforts to communicate with these guests; it is likely they are encountering impacts to other areas of their travel plans.



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- 5. Ensure that all in-house guests have checked out.**
- 6. Audit credit card settlements and make sure they all have been completed and reconciled.**
- 7. Run commissions process for any outstanding payments due to travel agents during the anticipated close period.**
- 8. Run Accounts Receivables cycles.**
(AR statements and reminders) to keep up with aging and reconciliation.
- 9. Produce downtime reports and ensure your management teams have a copy for planning purposes.** Schedule reports to be emailed from PMS on preset intervals — this can help you stay updated with changes and bookings, even without direct PMS access.
- 10. Run end-of-day and night audit procedures daily (if possible) to keep the system on the current business date.** This also ensures that actions taken in PMS are reflected on the correct date, including new bookings and deposit activity.
- 11. Remind staff to set/update answers to their security questions.** This ensures that users can reset their credentials as needed when the property reopens. Have your PMS administrator test their own access, in case users require further assistance.
- 12. Confirm that your local network PCs are shut down correctly, including interface machines, if applicable.**

Amid the challenging circumstances, strive to see “the big picture” and seek opportunities that otherwise may not have been available. For example, the closure may serve as a great time to winterize the property, conduct a deep cleaning, or execute preventive maintenance.

For OPERA Cloud customers, please test if you can access your PMS from home. If you are premise based, it will be necessary to secure remote access. Franchisees should consult with their brand contacts to receive guidance for central and distribution connections.

We hope this checklist is useful as a starting point in your processes, and please remember that we're here to help. Always.

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