



# Today's PMS Systems And Our Dreams For The Future

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*By Estella Hale*

Here's our discussion question of the week:

***Why isn't there one hospitality system that handles everything you need to***

## ***run your hotel?***

How many different systems does *your* hotel use?

I know the answer: “Too many.”

You probably have a PMS along with a CRS, CRM, and many other acronym-integrations. Some work in the cloud, and some don't. Some are easy to integrate, and others aren't.

*Why is it all so complicated?*

At HITEC 2019 in Minneapolis, **Colette Barss**, Revenue Manager of the Portola Hotel & Spa, sat down with Glenn Hausman and me to discuss this topic. You can listen to the whole podcast episode, **Breaking Down the Challenges and Opportunities with Your Hotel's PMS**, for more of our conversation.

In the meantime, here's some of what we covered:

Back in the day, when PMS systems were first a thing, they were sold as something that was going to become *the* central system to manage your hotel.

But over the years, there's been *so much innovation in technology*, and everything's become way more complicated. PMS systems have turned into in-house systems we mostly use to check guests in and out. **They have become siloed.**

Therefore, hotels end up with a myriad of software that integrates with their PMS and lets them keep everything consolidated, communicating, and working together.

Those integrations keep your inventory and rates up-to-date with channels, through your central reservation system (CRS). But they also need systems to manage in-house operations, self-check-in apps, electronic locking systems, digital marketing software, online reputation management, guest information, and all the rest.

**It's a lot!**

***Colette's wish list is for a property management system where everything works together, lives in the cloud, and can be used on mobile devices. It would let hotel workers:***

- Access the total database on a mobile device as they move around the hotel
- Mark a room “out of order” from their phone
- Quickly (no plugin necessary) check the status of a room
- See guest profile information and guest history without having to extract it into a cluttered Excel spreadsheet
- Quickly merge duplicate guest profiles into one with only a couple clicks.
- Know what motivated a guest to book with your hotel (was it a particular amenity, a response to digital marketing, or something else?)

It's frustrating that a lot of this valuable profile information—gleaned by interacting with guests from the start of their journey, throughout it, and after—already lives in PMS. And while profile information has been a part of the PMS from the get-go, it's just not easy to access.

So you have to add a customer relationship management (CRM) system to gather information about sales, marketing, and customer service. Without a CRM, you'd have to extract raw data from the PMS and corral it into spreadsheets. And nobody has time for that.

Colette says she'd also like to see way better reporting features, which eliminate the need for an external company to extract data. Her perfect, all-in-one system would spit out beautiful reports as a matter of course.

**This dream system would also provide a great user experience and offer incredible customer support.**

It's a big decision for a hotel with legacy systems to transition from one (or many) ways of doing something to a brand-new one. There are a lot of great PMS vendors out there, and we agree they need to keep looking at their technology's usability.

Everyone wants better-integrated systems and the industry is demanding more. We look forward to seeing how all this changes over the next few years.

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