

Property Management System Implementation

Creating Optimal Hotel Operations to Maximize Productivity and Realize Financial Success

The Challenge

The Blackstone Group acquired Homestead Villages LLC, an owner and operator of 132 Extended Stay Homestead Studio Suite hotels in multiple states. Shortly thereafter, Blackstone acquired Extended Stay America (ESA), the leading provider of extended stay lodging in North America. ESA owned and operated three brands of extended stay lodging hotels, totaling 425 properties in forty-two states.

Since Homestead and ESA had different Property Management Systems, both of which were outdated and difficult to maintain, it was not possible to efficiently collect data from each property to create standardized operational reporting. In addition, there were significant manual processes required to integrate property data with standard back office operations. Blackstone's primary goal was to migrate all hotel chains to a common operating platform, including Property Management Systems, as rapidly as possible to reduce operating expenses and increase efficiencies while minimizing changes to core business processes.

The Solution

Blackstone selected Edgewater Technology to provide project management services to design and build the new Extended Stay Hotels operating platform, and manage the migrations of both Homestead and ESA to the platform.

Edgewater needed to complete both large scale deployments rapidly and efficiently to meet the aggressive timelines required by Blackstone in order for the benefits of the acquisitions to be realized.

The Results

- All deployments were completed within project timelines;
- Migrated 668 properties to NiteVision 2.1, averaging 18 properties each day;
- Managed two additional migration projects to the ESH operating platform: Sierra Suites and Wellesley Inns; and
- Developed standard migration project plans to support additional Project Management Systems migrations.

Success Factors

- Detailed design and project management of Property Management System deployment activities at the corporate and property levels;
- Active daily communication and clear, concise communication between all parties involved in the migrations; and
- Detailed change management tools enabled Edgewater to drive streamlined Property Management System deployments.

Edgewater worked closely with the vendor and Extended Stay's management and property staff to define the Property Management Systems migration strategy and related tasks for a rapid deployment across multiple locations. Edgewater deployed Property Management Systems in four stages, by hotel brand, using newly-developed deployment management tools.

Working with Extended Stay's management, Edgewater:

- Identified a data transformation strategy for each Property Management Systems deployment stage, including:
 - Pinpoint the data needed to transfer to a new system;
 - Grouped data by subject areas;
 - Gathered data transfer and retention requirements, and identified the data transfer scope for each subject area;
 - Worked with the legacy system subject matter experts to define data mapping and transformation rules;
 - Facilitated and managed data transformation definition sessions, defining transformed data deliverables, and communicated them to vendors; and
 - Defined and developed the data load to a target system process, including data validation and data audit.
- Defined interim operational procedures;
- Managed and executed data transfer from the legacy to the target system for each property;
- Built a Property Management System migration script, consisting of clear deployment instructions;
- Streamlined Property Management System deployment processes and procedures and defined all deployment processes to eliminate virtually all points of failure;
- Established a central location for all project-related activities to ensure complete and accurate Property Management System deployment status tracking;
- Determined emergency contingency plans for each Property Management System deployment;
- Managed PC hardware updates and T1 circuit installation projects that ran parallel to Property Management System migration; and
- Conducted status meetings; managed and coordinated cross-functional resources for deployment to over six hundred properties.