

## **HSIA Proposal Outline**

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This outline is a companion piece to the article "Cooking Up HSIA" (pg. 138, Spring 2004). It is intended to provide a guide for hoteliers to use when evaluating the scope and completeness of a proposal for high-speed Internet access. This guide is not intended to assist in evaluating the merits of such proposals, but merely to suggest the scope and depth of a full and complete proposal with sufficient detail to enable the recipient to fairly evaluate the proposed system in all its aspects.

# HSIA Proposal Outline

## Table of Contents

(Contents are clickable and linked to item descriptions, which follow)

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 General Hardware Description
  - Wired and wireless equipment
  - In-room equipment
  - Security features
- 3.0 Internet Requirements
  - Supported circuit types
  - Bandwidth estimate and requirements
  - ISP recommendations
- 4.0 Features and Functionality
  - Plug and play IP configuration
  - Static/public IP, port-mapping
  - Customized VLANs
  - SMTP proxy, outgoing SPAM control
  - Wireless roaming partners
  - Branded signage and in-room help materials
  - Loaner/rental equipment
  - Billing Options
  - Sign-in, Portal and Walled Garden
  - Meeting room management
  - Usage and revenue reporting
  - Screenshots
- 5.0 Security
  - Port-to-port security
  - Hotel-to-guest security
  - Secured login
  - Private VLANs
  - Secured network administration
  - Spam and virus control
  - VPN Support
  - Intrusion detection and response
  - Software patches and upgrades
- 6.0 Hotel Specific Designs
  - Equipment list
  - Network Diagrams
  - Describe recommended and optional solutions
- 7.0 Maintenance and Warrantee
  - Included warrantee period
  - Monthly or yearly maintenance and warrantee fees
  - Network monitoring and proactive repair
  - Fault reporting
  - Emergency Conditions and Response Time

## 8.0 Technical Support

- Guest Tier 1 scope
- Guest support escalation policy and procedures
- Hotel support and escalation
- Account and support hierarchy and contact information

## 9.0 Installation and Training

- Installation checklist and procedures
- Installation timeline
- Third-party installation tasks
- Role-specific training outline
- Training sessions

## 10.0 Pricing and Contract

- Itemized equipment cost list
- Estimated and itemized labor, travel and other costs
- Monthly support, maintenance and warrantee costs
- Estimated or actual monthly Internet charges
- Professional services
- Length of contract

## 11.0 Financing and Revenue

- Leasing options
- Vendor financing
- Revenue sharing/commissions

## 12.0 Standard Legal

- Service level agreements
- Sales contract
- Maintenance and warrantee contract
- Guest acceptable usage policies
- Terms and conditions
- Statement of inherent risk

## 1.0 Introduction

This section should include a brief summary of the hotel's need including any special requirements. The vendor can briefly present a company background, philosophy, customer success stories and marketing claims. A high level overview of the proposed system might also be included, with special mention of the vendor's particular strengths.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 2.0 General Hardware Description

This section should provide a general description of the hardware product lines used in typical solutions. Equipment should be detailed as to manufacturer specifications, unique hardware, software or other design features, the range of equipment options available. This section might be limited to only the equipment recommended for the hotel, or preferably would describe all hardware offered by the vendor, deferring the specific recommended equipment for Section 6. This section might also be integrated with the hotel-specific Section 6.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Wired and wireless equipment**

Available wired and wireless equipment and solutions should be covered.

- **In-room equipment**

Any required or optional in-room equipment should be detailed. For example, DSL modems, in-room wireless access points, wireless bridges, network switches or anything similar.

- **Security features**

General security features, designs and methodologies should be briefly described saving specific Security details for section 5. This section might also be integrated with the more detailed Section 5.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 3.0 Internet Requirements

To assist a hotel with identifying its best option for an ISP and Internet connection, any requirements or recommendations should be listed. If the vendor provides a circuit either mandatory or optional, it should be detailed.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Supported circuit types**

e.g. SDSL, T-1, PRI, other

- **Bandwidth estimate and requirements**

Vendor should estimate the amount of bandwidth (circuit speed) needed for the solution. If there are minimum or maximum bandwidth requirements, they should be stated.

- **ISP recommendations**

A vendor might optionally provide several ISP circuit options and pricing specific for the hotel, with ISP contact information.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 4.0 **Features and Functionality**

This section should list all the feature and functionality offered by the vendor. Vendor should clearly note what is included with their proposed system and what functionality is offered additionally or optionally. If any guest action is necessary to access a feature, that should be described. For example, if a guest needs to call the support line to request a public IP address, or if they need to select that option when they sign on to the system, those actions should be detailed.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Plug and play IP configuration**

This refers to the system's ability to conform to any guest computer IP settings. Guests should be able to connect to the system with zero changes to their own equipment, provided they have the correct physical connection capability (wired or wireless Ethernet).

- **Static/public IP, port-mapping**

This refers to the system's ability to assign a dedicated private or public (Internet accessible) IP address to a guest for the duration of his stay. Port-mapping refers to the system's ability to allow someone on the Internet to access an application on the guest's computer such as a video conferencing software application.

- **Customized VLANs**

This refers to the system's ability to selectively remove security blocking between rooms or ports to create a private network for a group of guests or meeting users.

- **SMTP proxy, outgoing SPAM control**

This refers to the system's ability to accept and deliver outgoing e-mail messages. Guests should be able to send e-mail with zero changes to their own equipment, provided their e-mail software sends standard Internet based e-mail messages. The system should prevent guests from sending unreasonably large e-mail messages, messages to too many recipients, or an unreasonable number of e-mail messages to guard against the system being used to deliver spam.

- **Wireless roaming partners**

If the system allows subscribers of any 'partner' third-party network providers to access the system such rules should be detailed, including the ability for a hotel to opt out of such agreements. For example, if "HospNet" HSIA vendor allows subscribers to "BestCell" cellular and Internet service to use the system, this should be disclosed, with any rules and limitations.

- **Branded signage and in-room help materials**

Examples of typical materials should be included, along with any options including branding.

- **Loaner/rental equipment**

If the vendor can provide additional equipment to the hotel for the purpose of facilitating guest use, such equipment and recommendations should be detailed. Examples include wireless adapters, Ethernet network cards, network switches and extra patch cables.

- **Billing Options**

The proposed system should include a PMS interface and an option for credit card billing. Guests and meeting users should be able to choose from customizable price/duration options, as well as a la cart service options such as static or public IP address and possibly various bandwidth (speed) choices.

- **Sign-in, Portal and Walled Garden**

The proposed system should include description of the sign-in screen that users will see in their web-browser upon attempting to connect to the Internet, as well as the "portal" screen containing hotel information, links, search and other functions, and a "walled garden" of links to free Web sites (no charge to guest to access).

- **Meeting room management**

Any specific features or modules to specifically facilitate sales, service and management of HSIA in meeting rooms and ballrooms should be detailed, including screenshots and possibly an online demo.

- **Usage and revenue reporting**

Any reporting options should be detailed including sample reports. The vendor should differentiate between standard reports and anything that is additional or optional.

- **Screenshots**

The vendor should provide ample screenshots of typical screens that users and hotel staff will interact with when using and maintaining the system.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 5.0 **Security**

This section should include very specific and detailed security information. The information should not be overly technical, but should clearly describe specific prohibited and allowed access and usages. Regardless of whether security information is separated into a specific section or integrated into another proposal section, such as Section 2, general descriptions of basic security features are not solely adequate.

Adequate HSIA security may include many other concepts and features not listed here. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but to provide some examples of mandatory features as of this writing.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Port-to-port security**

This refers to the system's ability to restrict access from one hotel room to another, and between any other kind of port.

- **Hotel-to-guest security**

This refers to the system's ability to restrict access between guest ports (guestrooms, meeting rooms, public wireless access) and hotel back office networks and systems (if connected).

- **Secured login**

The methods of securing guest logins and initial access to the system should be described and detailed.

- **Private VLANs**

This refers to the system's ability to create and isolate private networks among ports such as guestrooms and meeting rooms.

- **Secured network administration**

This refers to the system's ability to prevent unauthorized access to the system equipment itself, while allowing the vendor's technical staff to have secure access for administrative and maintenance purposes.

- **Spam and virus control**

This refers to the system's ability to block in and/or outbound e-mail spam and computer viruses.

- **VPN Support**

This refers to the system's ability to allow outbound Virtual Private Network connections, commonly used by business travelers to connect to corporate systems. Inbound VPN support is also possible allowing a guest to temporarily setup a protected Internet server. There are many types of VPN connections and software. The vendor should be specific as to which ones have been tested and are supported.

- **Intrusion detection and response**

This describes the system's ability to detect and respond to unauthorized access attempts.

- **Software patches and upgrades**

The vendor should detail their policy and typical procedures for updating any software and hardware in use. Providing an example log of the frequency and type of updates at another customer's site would be ideal.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 6.0 **Hotel Specific Designs**

The vendor's specific wired and wireless designs for the hotel should be detailed and diagrammed.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Equipment list**

If the available hardware is detailed in Section 2 then a concise equipment list with quantity and pricing is all that is required.

- **Network Diagrams**

Visual diagrams illustrating how the equipment is to be deployed and interconnected should be provided.

- **Describe recommended and optional solutions**

If there are different hardware selections or designs depending on selected options, these should all be described and diagrammed.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 7.0 Maintenance and Warrantee

This section should contain detailed maintenance and warrantee information for all included hardware and software. Any equipment, installation, labor or service proposed by the vendor should be backed with some kind of warrantee and able to be covered under a maintenance agreement.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Included warrantee period**

The included warrantee period for all provided equipment, installation, labor and services should be detailed. If items differ in included warrantee length and the warranting company (manufacturer or vendor) such differences should be documented.

- **Monthly or yearly maintenance and warrantee fees**

Any optional maintenance and warrantee fees beyond the initial included period should be listed by piece and totaled. Discounts for yearly payments should be detailed.

- **Network monitoring and proactive repair**

The vendor's procedures and guarantees for proactive fault monitoring and repair should be detailed.

- **Fault reporting**

The vendor's frequency and procedure for reporting faults and repair tickets to the hotel should be detailed.

- **Emergency Conditions and Response Time**

The vendor should include, often in a Service Level Agreement (Section 12), descriptions of what constitutes an "emergency" failure. Levels of failure should be defined with the target and guaranteed response time.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 8.0 Technical Support

This section should detail the vendor's technical support offerings for both the guest and hotel. If there are different levels of support with varying fees, these should all be clearly described.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Guest Tier 1 scope**

This refers to the scope of the guest 'help desk'. The range of troubleshooting and configuration abilities of the support reps should be listed. Any common support request outside the abilities of an initial support rep should be listed with the procedure to resolve.

- **Guest support escalation policy and procedures**

The vendor's policy and procedures on escalating an unresolved guest problem should be described.

- **Hotel support and escalation**

The vendor should detail the hotel's own support procedures including how to escalate a problem that goes unresolved.

- **Account and support hierarchy and contact information**

The vendor should provide a list of customer service, account and support contacts.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 9.0 **Installation and Training**

This section should include detail on typical installation and training. After a sales contract is signed, a vendor can provide specific procedures and checklists.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Installation checklist and procedures**

- **Installation timeline**

- **Third-party installation tasks**

Any installation items that require action by a third party (e.g. cabling or electrical work) should be specifically listed.

- **Role-specific training outline**

The vendor should list training items for specific hotel staff positions such as general manager, accounting, front desk, sales staff and engineering).

- **Training sessions**

The vendor should estimate the type, number, size and duration of training classes.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 10.0 **Pricing and Contract**

This section should detail all the pricing and contract requirements of the proposal. Any and all prices and fees both mandatory and optional should be listed. Pricing should be granular, listing subtotals for each category of costs and within a category listing individual cost items.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Itemized equipment cost list**

The vendor should reiterate the equipment list from Section 6 adding pricing, installation, labor and other costs. A consolidated equipment list combining pricing, maintenance and warranty costs may be provided, covering Sections 6, 7 and 10.

- **Estimated and itemized labor, travel and other costs**

- **Monthly support, maintenance and warranty costs**

- **Estimated or actual monthly Internet charges**

- **Professional services**

If there are any optional or a la carte professional services such as consulting, web development, meeting sales or advertising sales, these should be listed with hourly rates and other fees.

- **Length of contract**

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 11.0 **Financing and Revenue**

This section should detail any financing, revenue generating or revenue splitting offered or required by the vendor.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Leasing options**
- **Vendor financing**

If installation and up front costs may be paid monthly over the life of the contract, such options should be detailed.

- **Revenue sharing/commissions**

If the vendor offers or requires any revenues to be split between vendor and hotel, such options should be detailed. Revenues may come from usage fees for guest, meeting, public or business center access. Also from advertising sales and third-party subscriber commissions.

Third-party commissions may be available if the vendor allows subscribers of third-party networks such as other ISP's or cellular providers to use the system through a pre-existing subscription and account. Any such commissions or revenues earned by the vendor should be disclosed. Similarly, any commission opportunities that may exist for the hotel.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

## 12.0 **Standard Legal**

This section should include any standard, template or specific legal contracts that the hotel will be required to sign.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)

- **Service level agreements**

This agreement contains comprehensive performance and reliability parameters of the system with provisions for any failures.

- **Sales contract**
- **Maintenance and warrantee contract**
- **Guest acceptable usage policies**

This agreement must be acknowledged by anyone using the system, and should state the permitted and prohibited uses, any known security risks and absolve the hotel and vendor of any liability to users.

- **Terms and conditions**

This refers to any terms and conditions agreements required to be acknowledged by the hotel or users of the system.

- **Statement of inherent risk**

Some vendors may provide a specific security disclaimer required to be acknowledged by users of the system. Such a disclaimer may point out the inherent insecurity of the Internet and the HSIA system and require the user to accept all responsibility for the use of the system and any potential or actual resulting damages.

[\(Back to TOC\)](#)