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# Modernizing the Hotel Access Management System

A guide to acquiring a security  
access solution designed for the  
future

A guide from Vingcard



## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this guide, we look into what you should expect when investing in a new access management solution that is designed to meet your hotel's latest security, data protection, operational and guest needs.

Modernizing your security access infrastructure and operational abilities involves so much more than simply «going cloud». Alternatives to on premise server-based platforms have been in the market for years. Now is the time to go further and exploit operations data to be able to enhance the guest experience and increase your revenue.

By acquiring up-to-date insight on newly emerging technologies by reading this guide, hoteliers can investigate and determine in far greater detail what kind of solution is ideal for the latest industry challenges and opportunities. They can further identify what criteria is essential in implementing a system that fits their specific and unique needs.

Finally, the guide provides hoteliers with a checklist to help identify which stage their hotel is at today and to what degree an upgrade is needed to ensure effective security, guest satisfaction and the ability to remain competitive within today's market..



## 2. WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE ACCESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

When considering an upgrade, be sure to invest in a solution that is built for the future. This might sound like a sales pitch. However, it is not, because future trends are increasingly becoming a reality and are already shaping how the industry will operate and what it will offer. This is especially true when it comes to leveraging operational data and how to make it more useful towards enhancing your business, with the possibilities growing day by day.

Therefore, a new access management solution should be future proof - prepared and able to make use of new services and functions yet to be developed. Moreover, the capacity should be scalable, depending on the varying needs of your hotel through varying seasons, property requirements and budget conditions.

The core objective of an access management system is to lock doors, keep track of who has access to specific areas and otherwise maximize property-wide security abilities. However, such platforms are able to offer so much more: enhancing both guest satisfaction and staff efficiency while at the same time providing hotels with monetary ROI.

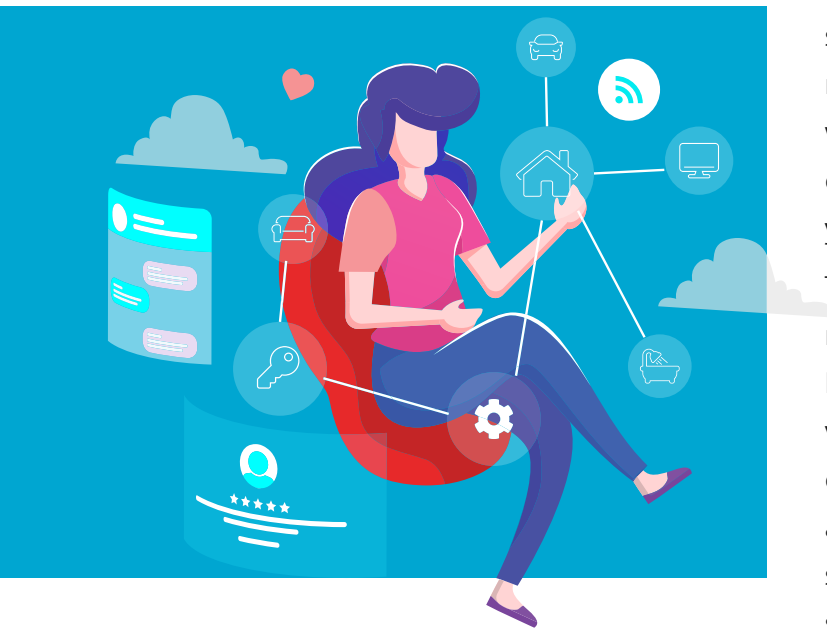
- High traffic by the outdoor pool? Increase revenue by ordering food trucks on premise at lunchtime.
- Is the gym too crowded in the morning? Offer some kind of benefit or discount for guests who choose to postpone their exercise.

The above examples involve the usage of multiple sources of data, including the analysis of guest indoor locations using a guest's mobile device. When considering the implementation of such abilities, hoteliers are certainly correct when concerned over privacy and data protection compliance. The solution must therefore take these types of considerations into account. This should include using anonymous data when possible and using the minimal amount of personal data. More importantly, any processing of personal data such as analyzing indoor location using WiFi needs to be transparent to guests and explain the benefits. It is also important to allow the guests to choose how they like to customize their preferences. A loyalty app can provide the opportunity to get consent when offering such services using an opt-in and opt-out option.

It further demands that a system is equipped with digital authentication abilities. There can be a variety of solutions to address this need such as mobile key or facial recognition.



By opening up the potential for mapping movements and logging door traffic, access management systems integrated with guest-facing mobile apps can further enhance the ability to personalize experiences by providing guests with useful details on their immediate surroundings such as an ongoing promotion at the nearby bar or restaurant.



Guests using a hotel's app can also benefit from seamless self-service check-in, and they can operate the hotel door lock with their phone instead of a traditional keycard. In addition, extra services can be included in such an app, maximizing instant service and convenience even further. Examples include direct booking, room service and smart room-control for heating, remotely activating the in-room coffee machine and perhaps controlling the TV set.

Guests can even potentially retrieve their favorite playlists on Spotify or Tidal via the app and play songs on the guestroom television.

In summary, an access management system equipped to meet the industry's latest guest needs must be able to integrate and operate with the property management system, energy management system, housekeeping management system, revenue management systems and other critical systems that are needed to run a hotel.

Picture the hotel as a smartphone, and the different systems as applications to offer benefits and serving necessary functions. This requires a cloud solution, where vendors handle integrations, upgrades and security issues and they deliver what you need, when you need it in the relevant capacity.

The purpose of this sketch of the immediate future is not to make you feel uncomfortable or unprepared. It's just necessary to be aware of what's coming. Previously, 1 terabyte of storage space was an enormous capacity. Today – a commodity. Now we talk about artificial intelligence (AI) as a new feature in an early stage of development. In a few years, AI will be an unspoken part of virtually every digital service.

Most hotels gather data, but are not equipped to make use of it to its full potential. The solution to overcoming this challenge is to plan for modernization by acquiring a hotel access management system prepared for the future as described above. This includes being capable of collecting and processing data for improved and customized services, and able to integrate with a series of apps, the PMS and other critical systems.

By preparing for this development, a hotel can stand stronger, beating the competition by working smarter, cutting costs and increasing revenue – whether as a small or large business. Yet to leverage such opportunities, your new access management system should comply with a set of specific criteria discussed in the next section.



### 3. ESSENTIAL CRITERIA FOR A NEXT GENERATION HOTEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

An effective and future proof hotel management system capable of delivering a return on investment must meet certain criteria in order to provide the kind of results that guests and hoteliers alike now increasingly seek:

#### Truly cloud-based

While some facilities still have software installed within on-premise hardware, most hotel systems today run on some kind of server. However, not all of these are real cloud-based solutions. Look for a provider who delivers the system as a real cloud-based platform that is fully managed by a professional cloud service provider. A true cloud solution should be able to instantly and remotely provide automatic upgrades, making up-to-date software always available while eliminating the hassle of constant maintenance and management for hoteliers.

#### Scalability

When running the system from the cloud, scalability really goes without saying. A true cloud system is modular, so it fits the needs of any establishment regardless of type, size or location and can constantly adapt to changing requirements.

#### Integration

The access management system should be designed to integrate and function seamlessly with other relevant solutions, like the PMS, whether they are onsite or cloud-based. Open and secure interfaces will allow consistent communication with other cloud-based services.



## Mobile ready

The access management system should be able to provide access from anywhere, including from a smartphone or wearable device. This means staff can create a guest key in the lobby or can cancel staff access from home. Because of the integration possibilities, guests can further be provided with the ability to book a room on their phone, check in without queuing at the front desk and receive access to their room with a digital key in the app.

## 24/7 surveillance and support

Cloud monitoring and management tools ensure 24/7 availability, automated upgrades and secure backups. Gained effect: Always operational, always updated and always backed up. When a period of downtime occurs, the solution must have an offline fallback-function.



## Compliance / GDPR

The solution you choose should provide the functionality needed to meet data protection regulations and legal requirements, such as the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). However, It's not a catch-all fix that suddenly makes your business automatically compliant.

Though, with a strategy of compliance by design, and by default, the solution neither stores nor processes more personal data than strictly necessary to perform its tasks, can manage subject access rights and support the organization in its efforts to comply with regulations.

## Future proof

This concept surfaces frequently because it focuses on the potential lifetime of a chosen solution. The vendor must develop both software and hardware in pace with your needs, preferably using in-house R&D. This proves ownership of the solutions and a guarantee of the ability to continue delivering state-of-the-art tools for your hotel.

## IT security

Anxious about IT security when considering cloud services? Such a reaction can be understandable. Be sure that the solution and data are safeguarded with best practices using the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES), automatic backups and security patches. The vendor must be able to document routines for reviewing the system for vulnerabilities, protecting it against the latest online security threats.

## User friendly

With a smart and intuitive GUI, staff require less training to get started. Therefore, it also becomes easy to let new employees access the system, both when stand-alone or integrated with a PMS. Whether behind the front desk, in the back office or on the go, different users should be able to know exactly what to do and how to do it.

### Predictable costs

The right hotel access management system will improve the hotel's financial standing in the long run. Not only by its predictability, but also by reduced spend. With cloud-based software services, you pay a service license subscription, which makes the costs predictable. No upfront capital expenditures for on-premise infrastructure means lower costs.

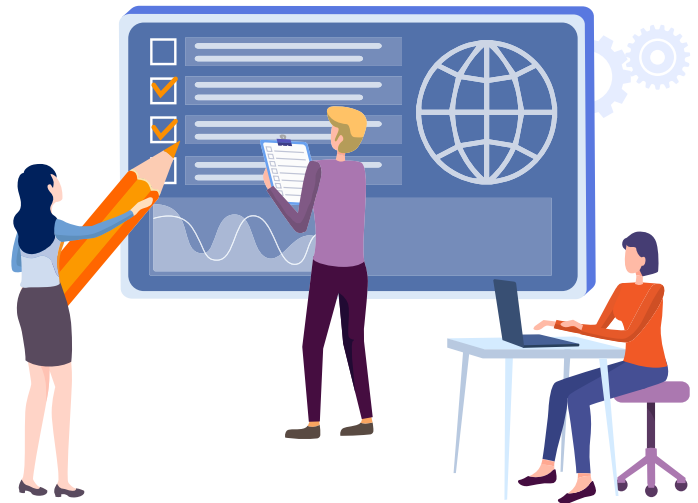
Our provider, AWS, lets you do your own calculations on possible savings, using [this calculator](#).

On the other hand, the IT industry specialist agency, [Gartner, tell us](#) to be aware of a possible increased spend during a transition period, due to migrating data and establishing new routines. Nonetheless, their conclusion is also reduced IT costs over time.

The exact savings varies from case to case, but don't be surprised to find percentages of up to 30 and even higher. In fact, the Gartner case shows savings at 55 percent after three years.

### Global vendor and local expertise

Finally, when it comes to choosing a vendor, look for a global player with a local presence. This way, you can ensure your ability to rely on an established provider who can offer the necessary expertise within the region where your hotel operates.



### Checklist - Signs that you need to update your access management system

Below are some obvious signs that tell you that the access management system at your hotel requires either too much attention – or a replacement.

- On-premise hardware
- Manual on-premise system support routines
- Legacy systems with limited or no integration possibilities
- Outdated GUI demanding extensive training of new staff members
- Outdated systems not able to adapt and use the latest technologies and services





## 7. THE NEXT STEP

Now you know a little more about what a next generation access management system ought to provide in addressing your guest and operational needs:

- It should reside in a real cloud environment, having the ability to scale in pace with your needs.
- Being delivered as a service, therefore eliminating the need for hoteliers having to spend energy and resources in maintaining it.
- A modern solution operates seamlessly when integrated with other critical systems, like the PMS.
- It is mobile ready and able to increase overall systems infrastructure intelligence and abilities to improve guest experiences and reduce costs.

Vostio Access Management from Vingcard meets all these requirements, designed for the future and able to address your latest hospitality needs, technological issues and privacy compliance standards.

[Get in touch](#)