

Bed & Breakfast or Boutique Hotel Operations — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into the operating system for your property. Each section maps to a course module and moves you from understanding the economics to running a profitable, well-reviewed lodging business. Work through the exercises, worksheets, and checklists in order, and use the templates to manage rates, channels, housekeeping, and guest experience with professional discipline.

The Economics of a Small Lodging Property

Calculate your core metrics, define your concept and comp set, and find the break-even occupancy that determines whether your model works.

Exercise: Run Your RevPAR Trade-Off

Practice the single most important calculation in lodging so you price from numbers, not from a desire to be full. Use your own property if you have one, or the six-room example from the course.

- Calculate occupancy, ADR, and RevPAR for last month (or a sample month): rooms sold, room revenue, and rooms available.

- Recalculate RevPAR at three different combinations of occupancy and ADR to see how they trade off. Which combination produces the highest RevPAR?

- Estimate your variable cost per occupied room (housekeeping, laundry, breakfast, amenities, commission). What does serving one more guest actually cost you?

- At which point would a lower rate to fill the house actually reduce your profit, even though occupancy rises?

Worksheet: Concept and Comp-Set Worksheet

Define exactly what kind of property you run and the competitors you benchmark against. Fill in every field before you set a single rate.

Property model (B&B, boutique hotel, or short-term rental) and number of rooms

One-sentence positioning (what makes a guest choose you over a chain)

Primary guest type and trip purpose (leisure, business, events, niche)

Comp-set property 1: name, room count, peak-weekend rate, review score

Comp-set property 2: name, room count, peak-weekend rate, review score

Comp-set property 3: name, room count, peak-weekend rate, review score

Comp-set property 4: name, room count, peak-weekend rate, review score

Comp-set property 5: name, room count, peak-weekend rate, review score

The review score you are targeting to beat across the comp set

Worksheet: Break-Even Occupancy Calculator

Compute the occupancy you must hit to cover all costs. If the result is above 70 percent, your model is fragile and you must move a lever.

Total fixed monthly costs (mortgage/rent, taxes, insurance, base utilities, software, salaried staff)

Your average ADR (best estimate or actual)

Variable cost per occupied room

Contribution margin per room (ADR minus variable cost)

Total available room-nights per month (rooms x days)

Break-even room-nights (fixed costs / contribution margin)

Break-even occupancy percentage (break-even room-nights / available room-nights)

If above 70 percent, the lever you will move first (raise ADR, cut fixed cost, or add revenue per room)

Checklist: Economic Foundation Checklist

- Calculate occupancy, ADR, and RevPAR and commit the formulas to memory
- Write your one-sentence positioning that is not based on price
- Identify five to eight comp-set properties and record their rates and review scores
- List all fixed costs and estimate variable cost per occupied room
- Calculate your break-even occupancy and judge it across the whole seasonal year
- Identify which profit lever (ADR, shoulder occupancy, channel mix, labor) you will focus on first
- Set up a daily pickup habit: rooms sold, ADR, and RevPAR versus last year

Distribution: OTAs, Channel Management, and Rate Parity

Choose your channels and technology stack, know your true commission cost, and steer your channel mix toward profit without breaking parity rules.

Exercise: Calculate Your True Cost Per Channel

Treat OTA commission as an acquisition cost you can measure. Work out what each channel actually costs you per booking and in total.

- List every channel you use and its commission rate (e.g., Booking.com 15 percent, Expedia, Airbnb host fee).

- For each channel, calculate the dollar commission on one typical booking at your ADR.

- Calculate your blended commission percentage: total commission paid divided by total room revenue last month.
- Which channels are bringing you guests you could never reach otherwise, and which are charging you commission on guests who would book direct?

Worksheet: Technology Stack Selection Worksheet

Choose the connected PMS, channel manager, and booking engine that will be your single source of truth. Book demos before committing. PMS shortlist (e.g., Cloudbeds, Little Hotelier, Mews, innRoad) and monthly cost of each

Does each PMS bundle a channel manager? (yes/no per option)

Does each include a commission-free booking engine for your own site? (yes/no)

OTAs you require connection to (Booking.com, Expedia, Airbnb, others)

Integrated payment processing available? (yes/no)

Connects to Google Hotel Ads / metasearch? (yes/no)

Demo booked and completed (platform and date)

Final platform chosen and reason

Checklist: Distribution and Parity Checklist

- Connect a single PMS as the source of truth, linked to a channel manager that syncs in real time
- Verify availability decrements across all channels when a booking arrives, to prevent double-booking
- Record each channel's commission rate and your blended commission percentage
- List all rooms on all channels (full availability) unless a date is genuinely capacity-constrained
- Design one parity-safe direct incentive (member rate or value-add) rather than undercutting the OTA public rate
- Check your local rate-parity rules, since some jurisdictions have weakened or banned parity clauses
- Set a target to grow your direct booking share and watch blended commission fall

Revenue Management and Direct Bookings

Build a seasonal and dynamic rate calendar, construct the commission-free direct-booking engine, and turn past guests into repeat bookings.

Exercise: Build Your Seasonal Rate Logic

Practice pricing that moves with demand. Use last year's occupancy by week if you have it, or estimate from your market.

- Divide the year into demand bands (peak, high, shoulder, low) and set a base rate (BAR) for each.
- What weekend uplift and event-date surcharges will you add on top of the seasonal base?
- Set a minimum-length-of-stay rule for your top three peak weekends to avoid orphaned single nights.

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- Define your rate floor (variable cost plus margin) below which no discount may drop, and your ceiling.
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Worksheet: Direct-Booking Engine Audit

Score your website against the elements that convert direct bookings. Mark each as done, weak, or missing, then fix the gaps.

Professional photography on the site (done / weak / missing)

Booking widget visible on every page and powered by the PMS booking engine (done / weak / missing)

Fast mobile performance (done / weak / missing)

A clear, stated reason to book direct (member rate or value-add)

Direct-only incentive defined (free breakfast, upgrade, early check-in, flexible cancellation)

Connected to Google Hotel Ads / metasearch (done / weak / missing)

Google Business Profile claimed and optimized (done / weak / missing)

Brand-search campaign so you appear when guests type your property name (done / weak / missing)

Worksheet: Guest Email and Repeat-Booking Plan

Plan how you will ethically capture guest data and turn past guests into commission-free repeat bookings. Email platform chosen (Mailchimp, Brevo, or PMS-integrated tool)

Where and how you capture guest email with explicit consent (check-in, app, post-stay)

Consent and compliance approach (GDPR / CASL opt-in confirmed)

Post-stay thank-you email: timing and rebook offer

Low-season fill-the-gaps campaign: target dates and the direct-only offer

Anniversary or come-back outreach (yes/no and timing)

Referral perk for guest and referred friend

Loyalty metrics tracked: repeat-guest rate and direct-rebooking rate

Checklist: Revenue and Direct-Channel Checklist

- Build a 12-month seasonal rate calendar with demand bands and weekend uplifts
- Add event-date surcharges and minimum-length-of-stay rules for peak weekends
- Set rate floors and ceilings so no automated or manual change breaks margin
- Consider a revenue-management tool (PriceLabs, Beyond, Wheelhouse) once you have several rooms
- Embed the PMS booking engine on a mobile-fast website with professional photos
- Define one clear direct-booking incentive and state it on the booking page
- Connect the booking engine to Google Hotel Ads and optimize your Google Business Profile
- Set up a permission-based email list and launch the post-stay and low-season campaigns

Operations, Housekeeping, and Guest Experience

Stand up housekeeping systems, design a review-winning guest journey, and run the property on a tight operating dashboard.

Exercise: Design Your Housekeeping System

Build the par stocks and workflow that keep rooms guest-ready without waste or last-minute crises.

- Define your room-status workflow (vacant-dirty, vacant-clean, inspected, occupied-stayover, out-of-order) and where you track it.

- Set linen par at three sets per bed (in use, in wash, on shelf) and list every linen and amenity item with its par level.

- What time standard will you set per room type, and how does that drive your staffing against arrivals?

- What high-touch points will your pre-release inspection always check (bathroom, under the bed, glassware, switches, smell)?

Worksheet: Guest Journey Map

Map every touchpoint and decide how you will elevate the high-leverage moments where small properties win.

Booking and confirmation: what the guest receives and when

Pre-arrival message: timing, content, and the personalization question you ask

Arrival and check-in: staffed or self-check-in, and how the guest is greeted

In-room first impression: cleanliness, Wi-Fi, climate, outlets, welcome amenity

The stay and breakfast: what makes it memorable and how dietary needs are handled

Problem recovery: how a complaint is handled and who is empowered to fix it

Check-out and post-stay: review ask, thank-you, and rebook invitation

Where guest preferences are stored for next time (PMS profile field)

Worksheet: Operating Dashboard Setup

Define the one-page set of numbers you will review on a set cadence so the property runs on data, not instinct.

Occupancy, ADR, and RevPAR review cadence (e.g., daily versus last year)

Channel mix and blended commission percentage review cadence (monthly)

Target review score on each major platform (aim for 9-plus)

Repeat-guest rate and direct-rebooking rate targets

Housekeeping cost per occupied room and average turnover time

Pace and pickup review for upcoming peak dates

Who owns the dashboard and when it is reviewed

Checklist: Operations and Reputation Checklist

- Track room status for every room, prioritizing vacant-dirty rooms with arriving guests
- Set linen and amenity par stocks at three pars and a reorder trigger for supplies
- Write a step-by-step room-cleaning checklist with a per-room-type time standard
- Run a pre-release inspection of high-touch points before any room is marked ready
- Map the full guest journey and elevate two high-leverage moments first
- Store guest preferences in the PMS so personalization is systematic
- Ask for a review at peak satisfaction and respond to every review, good and bad
- Review the one-page operating dashboard on a set cadence and act on the trends

Your Action Plan

1. Calculate your occupancy, ADR, RevPAR, and break-even occupancy, and fix any model where break-even exceeds 70 percent
2. Write your one-sentence positioning and build a five-to-eight property comp set with live rates and review scores
3. Select and set up a connected PMS, channel manager, and commission-free booking engine as your single source of truth
4. List your rooms on Booking.com, Expedia, and Airbnb and record each channel's commission and your blended commission percentage
5. Build a 12-month seasonal rate calendar with demand bands, weekend uplifts, event surcharges, and rate floors
6. Optimize your website for direct bookings, define one parity-safe direct incentive, and connect Google Hotel Ads and your Google Business Profile
7. Stand up a permission-based guest email list and launch a post-stay rebook campaign and a low-season fill-the-gaps campaign
8. Build your housekeeping system: room-status workflow, three-par linen stocks, a cleaning checklist, and a pre-release inspection
9. Map the guest journey and elevate the pre-arrival message, check-in, and in-room first impression
10. Stand up a one-page operating dashboard and review RevPAR, channel mix, review score,

and pace on a set cadence

