What is Queue Management System

Before

After

Queue Management System is simply a customer flow management designed specially for managing queues is any service based organization like banks, post office, telephone companies etc.

The queue management system is designed such that people who needs serving do not have to be physically lined up as shown in the 'Before' picture; they can simply sit their waiting experience relaxed in a chair as shown in the 'After' picture.

But the purpose of QMS doesn't stop here…….

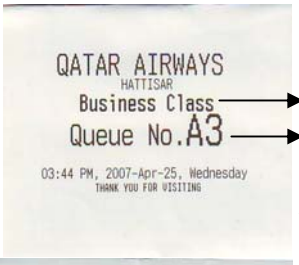
Here is how the system works

The ticket dispenser unit hold buttons that creates Queue receipts. Each button on the unit has a service assigned to it e.g. if the customer arriving needs to cash in then he presses the CASH button, if he is arriving for cheque deposit then he presses the button for the same service.

The Ticket Dispenser Unit

The printer prints the respective ticket according to the service as shown in the picture below. The ticket holds the information regarding the company and the date and also the person's assigned queue number and service.

This ticket number now represents the customer. The customer now has to wait for his number to be displayed in one of the display units. These numbers are issued consecutively so that the person can know when his turn will arrive. He can also know if he has missed his turn.



Service Name
Ticket Number

The ticket number has a prefix character as you can see in the picture: A3. The A represents the service. We can give the prefix for the service e.g. in this case the Business Class service has the prefix A and the queue number generated are in the series A1, A2 A3.....etc. If we choose the prefix C for CASH then the queue number generated for this service is in the series C1, C2, C3....etc.

Sample Ticket

The benefit of having separate series for different service is that we can assign these services to any of the counters. The counters can be adjusted to call customers according to their service. We can also set priorities to the service in each counter. If a counter has a high priority of serving CASH service it will only serve CASH service till there are people in queue for cash. If the cash queue is empty then it can also call other customer of different service. Thus making full utilization of the counter. This is called prioritizing a service.

How a customer gets served

Once a queue number has been issued to the customer he can wait his turn seated comfortably. All he has to do is look at the display for his number and then go to the respective counter where his number is displayed.

There are two types of displays to show the queue number:

Counter Display: These are mainly 3 to 4 digit display hung over a counter to show which customer is being served.

Diverter Display: These displays have 3 to 4 digit for displaying the ticket number and another 2 digit to display the counter number. These display guides the customer to which counter he should go.

The diverter display alone can be used for QMS but it can be inefficient when there are many counters. The diverter display is accessed by all counters so if any of the counters calls a customer the number in the display gets changed. If the service rate is fast and if there are many counters the diverter display alone cannot show all the changing numbers. The counter display always shows the number of the person being served so if a customer sees that the number next to him has already been called in the diverter display then he can look in counter display to see where he has been called.

The advantage of having both displays is that, it is easier for the customer to look at the diverter display to where he has to go instead of looking at all counter display. The counter display is always useful to show the number of the customer being served.

Special case: In most QMS the next customer is called only after the teller presses served. This can be inefficient when the teller has to service a long queue as his time is wasted while waiting for the next customer to arrive to the counter after being called. To remove this inefficiency the '**ONE MAN ON QUEUE**' concept was devised.

What the 'one man on queue' option does is that it calls the next customer to be served after some time which can be configured in the QMS settings while serving the current customer. So this gives the next customer plenty of time to figure out where he is suppose to go. Also the counter always has one man on queue so it is serving the customer efficiently one at a time without losing valuable seconds in between changing customers.

How the teller serves the customer

The teller first needs to install the counter software into the computer. This software enables the teller to call the next customer by clicking the 'served' button.

In cases where a computer is not used, a Teller control pad can be used.

The teller also has the option of 'Requeue'. This option is useful incase a customer has missed his turn. If the called individual doesn't show up for some time then the teller can simply Requeue. Incase the 'one man on queue' option is enabled then the teller can simply assume that the called person has missed the turn and simply press 'Requeue' right after the customer is served. The default time for requeuing is 5 mins i.e. the missed customer will be called again after 5 mins. The timings and the requeue count can be changed from the server settings of the QMS software.

How the QMS can be used in different modes

Single Service: The single service QMS is the simplest version of QMS. In this series only one queue is created i.e. the tokens are generated for only one service. The single service QMS is useful in areas where there is only one service or if all counters serve multiple service.

The customer is served according to their ticket number. Whichever counter is free the customer is called in that counter.

Although the single service system may look like it can manage queues it has some drawbacks. In most organization such as banks there are separate counters for different services e.g. some counters only deals in cash and some counters for remittance etc. in these cases the single service QMS loses its appeal and multi service QMS is used.

Multi Service: This version of QMS creates multiple queues i.e. a separate queue is created for each service. Each queue is given a name according to service e.g. CASH, REMITTANCE etc. The QMS settings can be adjusted so that the counters only serve the service they are meant for. You can also set the priorities to the service as mentioned earlier. Setting priority helps in increasing customer service.

A service based office may have many services but the queue for some services are longer than others e.g. people arriving in banks mainly come for cash service. If we have a separate counter for each service then the queues for other services like remittance or cheque deposit are served early while the cash counter are packed. So by setting the service priority we can make other counters like remittance take the responsibility of cash so that when there are no people for remittance the people in the cash queue can be served. This increases the efficiency of serving the customer.

The benefits of implementing a Queue Management System

Benefits to the customer:

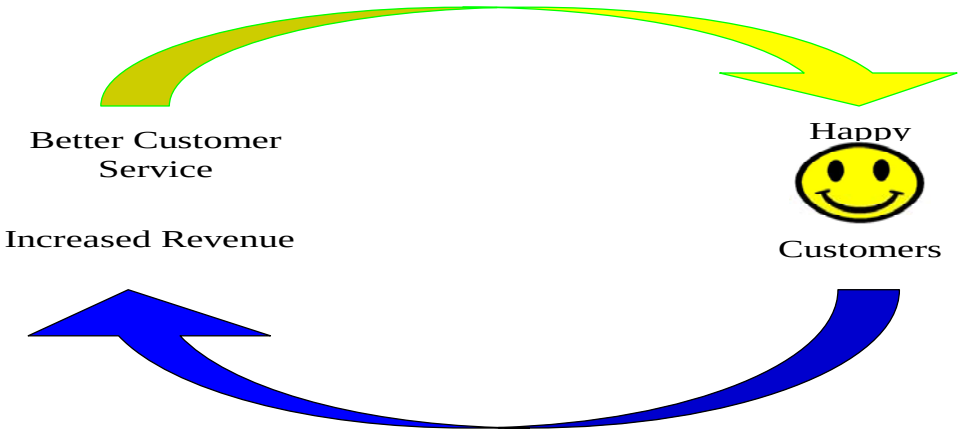
- The service seems more efficient and fair.
- Lets them sit comfortably in a chair.
- They can use their waiting time to gather more information of other products and services that the organization offers.
- It reduces stress.

Benefits to the Service Personnel:

- They experience less stress.
- They work better as a team.
- They experience a more positive customer contact.

Benefits to the Organization:

- The statistical data on customer flow provides proper feed back to the managers to decide on work load, working hours, number of tellers, efficiency of each teller etc.
- The customers waiting time can be used to expose them to the other products and services.
- Better customer service leads to happy customers that bring **increased revenue** to the organization.



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