

Unique Global Identifier (UGI) For the Hospitality Industry

Introduction

A world wide identification standardization project has been initiated to develop and deploy a public domain solution for the hospitality industry. The Unique Global Identifier, (UGI) enables identification of operational units by unique number. By attaching this number to elements of a transaction (such as ,sell/stay, content, financial, etc), the industry could seamlessly follow a transaction throughout its life cycle.

The UGI will support free exchange of information within the hospitality industry and will add value through facilitating an increased flow of trade and revenue on a global basis.

This is something that is lacking within our industry today. The hospitality industry is dependant upon single company or agency solutions UGIs are critical to facilitate the flow of information that supports the demand-supply equation through the entire life-cycle of transactions within the hospitality industry.

HEDNA has formed a project committee that proposes to implement an open standard numbering and registration system, including the solution to manage and exchange these registrations in a manner that supports all sides of the reservation flow.

Our goal is to increase trade, revenue and harmonization of first the reservation processing transaction and then to continually expand these transactions and eventually become the identification standard for the industry.

What is a UGI?

A Unique Global Identifier (UGI) is a unique reference number to identify and provide information about operational units within the hospitably industry.

Every operational unit in the industry can freely register and use UGIs to leave footprints and identify each other in the multitude of transactions and exchanges of information that encompass our organizations today. Self-governance of UGIs makes this numbering system unique from current solutions in place today.

In technical terms a UGI is a unique random code that manages attributes and links. Attributes and Links are informational, they can change over the life of the operational unit. UGIs remain the same. Once in place each Operational Unit will want to ensure that their Attributes and Links are always current so the processing a transaction is pulling the most current UGI information to be applied to that specific transaction. Historic information is also important and during the design phase will be addressed as to the depth of historic records necessary.

Examples of Attributes

- Legal Name
- Local Address
- Mailing Address
- Commercial Name
- Telephone number
- Email

Example of Links

- Hotel with Franchise Chain
- Hotel with Representation Company
- Travel Agent with Franchiser
- Hotel with outsourced central reservation system

Who gets a UGI? Who would benefit from a UGI?

Any operational unit who belongs to the hospitably industry can register for an UGI identifier. Eventually everyone in the hospitality industry who struggles because they are unable to properly identify and link transactions within the reservation life cycle and other transactions will want to register. Interestingly enough organizations within the industry will also benefit from UGI footprints. The list below identifies organizations that have already acknowledged the financial and operational benefits of implementing UGIs:

- Central Reservation Systems ,powered by GDSs, Travel Web Sites, Hotels, etc
- Commission and Reconciliation Services
- In-house Reservation Systems
- Group Management Companies
- Property Management Systems
- Travel Agents
- Wholesalers
- Travel Agent Web Sites
- Content Management Services
- Travel Agent Franchisors
- Credit Card Companies
- Travel Agent Consortiums
- GDSs
- Online Travel Agents

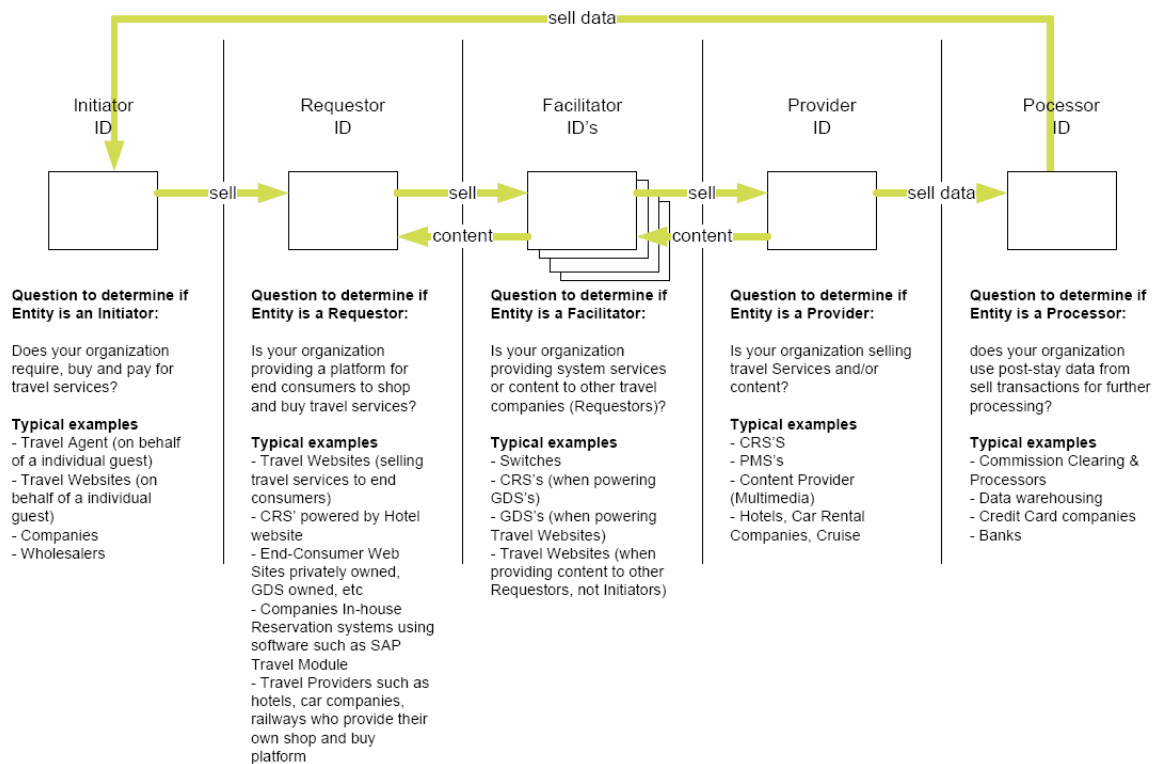
When the solution is built to support UGI registration all operational units in this industry will be encouraged to become involved and register to obtain an UGI.

The sell/stay transaction has been selected as the basis of the design as it is the most visible and crosses many different roles within the industry in immediate need of this solution. It is acknowledged that in the long term all travel related operational units will be identified and can be provided UGIs. Refer to the diagram on the next page of how the UGIs will be used when Operational Units apply their UGI to the different functional roles they service.

The UGI Footprint

Once an operational unit has a UGI they can freely use it to leave footprints on the multitude of transactions and exchange of information that encompasses our organization.

Anyone with a UGI can access the UGI database and search/pull information about other UGIs and their corresponding attributes and links.



Will UGIs replace GDS systems Hotel identifiers, IATA, ARC and other numbering mechanisms currently used today?

No, these numbers will run in parallel, but unlike the mentioned numbering systems above the UGI identifier is public and available for all entities within the hospitality industry. As the UGI database becomes populated we foresee that some technology solutions using the above numbers systems and current numbering schemas may migrate to use UGI standards.

Why not put some intelligence behind the UGI so at a quick glance one could associate what the number represents such as hotel, travel agent etc?

This was the original plan however after research it became clear that there are no clear boundaries any more in the hospitality industry. What is being proposed is a flexible framework so that any UGI can have a multitude of attributes and link their relationships with any other UGI. For example.

- o A Hotel can have a relationship with both its Hotel Chain and a Representation Company.
- o A Travel Agent can have a relationship with its Franchiser
- o A Hotel can have a relationship with its outsourced central reservation system.

What about transparency and the fact that UGI and its attributes are visible to everyone?

In general it is believed that industry relationships (UGI Links) nor Operational Unit information (UGI Attributes) are industry secrets. We understand that by publicly and freely giving access to this data there may be abuses. However the benefits clearly outweigh any potential misuse.