

Student Name: Shah Mashuk Miah Student ID: 1911285

Programme: Ba International Hotel Management

Module: Hospitality and Guest Service

Module code: BMIH4003

Lecturer: Muhammad Cassamo

Assignment title

Hotel standards,Reputation Management

Building and Retaining Customer Loyalty

Executive Summary

The hotel and hospitality sector is a fiercely competitive market where businesses must adjust to shifting consumer demands, market trends, and industry challenges. For hotels to remain competitive in the market, this discussion offers insights and recommendations on a variety of topics related to the hotel and hospitality industries, including brand consistency standards, reputation management, and customer loyalty programs. The main takeaways are that hotels must concentrate on fostering customer trust and loyalty, enhancing their reputation, embracing new technologies, and providing alternatives to traditional lodging options to remain competitive in the market. Additionally, hotels must be aware of potential challenges and devise innovative solutions to deal with them.

Table of Contents

Title Page.....	1
Executive Summary.....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Main Findings.....	5
Conclusion.....	7
Recommendations.....	7

Introduction

The hotel and hospitality sector is a fiercely competitive and dynamic market that necessitates constant business adaptation to shifting consumer demands, market trends, and industry challenges. To help hotels remain competitive in the market, this discussion will examine several aspects of the hotel and hospitality sector, including brand consistency standards, reputation management, and customer loyalty programs. Some recommendations will also be provided on how hotels can improve their services.

Main Findings

The author researched Hotel standards, reputation management, and customer loyalty. The following discussion is based on the findings of the research, followed by recommendations on improving the quality of hotel standards, reputation, and customer loyalty.

Brand Consistency

Brand consistency standards are an important aspect of any business especially hotel or hospitality. These standards establish and maintain a consistent brand image and reputation which is important in any industry where customers have many options and high expectations. For hotels to be successful and differentiate from competitors, they need to create trust and loyalty among customers through brand consistency (Connell, 1992). All the hotels do not have the same standards for brand consistency. The luxury hotels such as Ritz Carlton have high standards of customer service (Enz and Singuaw, 2000). While budget hotels such as Motel 6 have basic standards (Su et al, 2015). Luxury hotels have more focus on consistency and standardization rather than budget (Cetins and Walls, 2016).

The intercontinental hotel's group has a strict set of guidelines for their specific standards which includes room design and service. This ensures that all the guests have the same experience irrespective of the location. According to their website, they have a quality assurance program that includes regular inspections of their hotels to meet high standards of excellence (IHG, 2023).

Mariott International also have comprehensive guidelines for their hotels. They have a strong focus on guest service, sustainability, and those practices that are eco-friendly. They have sustainability programs and create a consistent brand experience that aligns with the values of their company and differentiates them from the market (Carcano, 2013).

Brand consistency standards play an important role to ensure a positive and consistent customer experience. This can be achieved by ensuring protocols and having strict guidelines that hotels have to follow. Some of the examples discussed have been discussed. It is important that the level of consistency changes with the type of hotel brand and the market that the hotel aims to target and it plays an important role in maintaining and gaining new customers.

Reputation Management

For hotels to manage their reputation comprehensively and gain a competitive advantage over other competitors, the monitoring of guest reviews, responding to feedback, and implementing improvements in the hotels is essential which should be based upon that feedback and reviews. Guest reviews play an important role in the management of the hotel and its reputation online which can affect the booking decisions of the customers. According to (Mccarthy et al, 2010) travelers read online reviews of a hotel before making a booking and thus these reviews affect their decision-making. The negative thoughts affect the hotel's reputation and its booking rate very badly (Wang and Chaudhary, 2018), however, the positive reviews increase their bookings as well as their revenue. Moreover, positive reviews provide customers with a sense of trust in the hotel management (Sparks and Browning, 2011). Thus, hotels need to maintain their positive reputation in the market to maintain and gain customers.

One of the hotels that effectively manage guest reviews and improve their services is the Hilton Hotels and Resorts. They monitor their customer reviews from various platforms and respond to them professionally and timely. They strengthen the sense of trust with their customers and their loyalty towards the industry. The company uses the feedback to

eradicate the issues customers are facing, and improve the guest experience and overall reputation of the hotels (Russel, 2010).

The Hyatt Hotels corporation uses advanced management systems and technology to gather the feedback of the guests in real-time. This allows them the opportunity to quickly respond, and address the issue efficiently. They monitor all customer feedback and improve their services. They try to satisfy their internal customers to gain the satisfaction of external customers (Davis, 1992).

Effective guest review management is the hotel for hotels to identify their weak areas, improve their services and enhance the experience of the customers. Negative reviews impact the hotel's reputation and booking rates, while positive reviews increase sales and revenue. The Hotels can manage their reputation by implementing a reputation management strategy that includes monitoring guest reviews, responding to feedback, and implementing improvement in the concerned areas. In this way, hotels can gain a competitive advantage over other competitors.

Customer Loyalty

The loyalty programs help the hotels to build and retain customer loyalty. These programs are developed to offer not only benefits and rewards to the customers, but also increase their revenue, as it encourages repeat business and long-term relationships with the customers. The loyalty programs are of many times which include points, tiered, or membership.

The points-based loyalty program is implemented as Starwood Preferred Guest (SPG) by Marriott International. In this program, the guests earn points for every stay, when the customer has enough points they can redeem them for free nights, room upgrades, and other benefits in all their hotels worldwide (Linton et al, 2019). This program makes customer feels valued by giving them exclusive rates and other perks.

The Hilton Honors Program also rewards points for staying at Hilton Hotels. They have three membership levels, and each level has its benefits, such as a free night, free lunch, room upgrades, and others (Hantuli, 2016). As members earn more and more points, they move to the next tier and earn more rewards.

The Accor hotels offer the Le Club AccorHotels program which is based upon membership. This program is free to join and offers people free wifi, priority check-in, and good rates. The members also earn points which can be redeemed later. Accor hotels use Strategic branding to gain and retain its customers through these programs (Demirçiftçi, 2016).

Loyalty programs are one of the most effective ways for hotels to build and retain their customer's loyalty. These programs offer rewards to those guests and customers who frequently stay at the hotel, it encourages repeat business and long-term relationships with the customers. Many hotel companies have used these programs to achieve their goal as explained in the examples above. For loyalty programs to be successful they must fit with the hotel's target market and align with its values and culture.

Conclusion

The hotel industry is facing many challenges and evolving constantly. Brand consistency is implemented to ensure that standards are consistent across all departments, so the guests have the best experiences in every way. Reputation management plays an important role, the customer feedback and especially online reviews can significantly affect the decisions of the customers. The hotels can offer loyalty programs to give awards and benefits to their regular and recurring customers. To stay competitive in the market, hotels need to adapt to the changing demand of the customers. They also need to be aware of all the obstacles and make strategic decisions to overcome them.

Recommendations

Hotels can stay competitive in the market by keeping up with the trends and adapting to changing needs of the customers. The hotels should focus on emphasizing sustainability as more and more people are moving towards sustainability initiatives (Berezan et al, 2013). It will reduce the carbon footprint and promote their efforts to reduce waste. The Hotels should invest in technology to improve the experience of the guest and improve competitive advantage (Lee et al, 2013). The hotels should promote exclusivity for their loyal customers to make them feel valued and use guest feedback for improvements.

The hotels face many obstacles which include changing customer preferences and increased competition in the market. Digital platforms have provided customers with a lot of options which has increased their expectations of the customers. The customers now focus on more unique and personalized experiences in the hotel. Another obstacle is the alternative accommodation options which include rental and sharing platforms. This has caused a decline in occupancy for hotels and they offer flexibility and lower prices (Zervas et al, 2017). To overcome these obstacles the hotels must adapt to the changes and make strategic investments in technology to enhance the experience of their customers. Hotels can also partner with alternative accommodation services to expand their business. In this way, the hotels can improve the customer experience, loyalty, and also their revenue.

References

- Berezan, O., Raab, C., Yoo, M. and Love, C., 2013. Sustainable hotel practices and nationality: The impact on guest satisfaction and guest intention to return. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 34, pp.227-233.
- Carcano, L., 2013. Strategic management and sustainability in luxury companies: The IWC case. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, (52), pp.36-54.
- Cetin, G. and Walls, A., 2016. Understanding the customer experiences from the perspective of guests and hotel managers: Empirical findings from luxury hotels in Istanbul, Turkey. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 25(4), pp.395-424.

- Connell, J., 1992. Branding hotel portfolios. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*.
- Davis, T.R., 1992. Part I: Satisfying internal customers: The link to external customer satisfaction. *Planning Review*.
- Demirçiftçi, T. and KIZILIRMAK, İ., 2016. Strategic branding in hospitality: Case of Accor Hotels. *Journal of Tourismology*, 2(1), pp.50-64.
- Enz, C.A. and Siguaw, J.A., 2000. Best practices in service quality. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 41(5), pp.20-29.
- Hantuli, L., 2016. An Analysis of Hotel Loyalty Programs: A Case Study of the Hilton HHonors Loyalty Program.
- IHG. (2023). *Our Brand*. Retrieved from <https://www.ihg.com/hotels/us/en/reservation>
- Lee, H.A., Denizci Guillet, B. and Law, R., 2013. An examination of the relationship between online travel agents and hotels: A case study of Choice Hotels International and Expedia. com. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 54(1), pp.95-107.
- Linton, H., Okumus, F. and Kizildag, M., 2019. Marriott acquiring Starwood: Challenges and opportunities ahead. *Strategic management for hospitality and tourism*, pp.289-296.
- McCarthy, L., Stock, D. and Verma, R., 2010. How travelers use online and social media channels to make hotel-choice decisions.
- Russell, J., 2010. Evaluate the effectiveness of social media marketing on hotels. *Hospitality Management Review Student Journal at Sheffield Hallam University*, 1.
- Sparks, B.A. and Browning, V., 2011. The impact of online reviews on hotel booking intentions and perception of trust. *Tourism Management*, 32(6), pp.1310-1323.
- Su, N., Reynolds, D. and Sun, B., 2015. How to make your Facebook posts attractive: A case study of a leading budget hotel brand fan page. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*.
- Wang, Y. and Chaudhry, A., 2018. When and how managers' responses to online reviews affect subsequent reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 55(2), pp.163-177.
- Zervas, G., Proserpio, D. and Byers, J.W., 2017. The rise of the sharing economy: Estimating the impact of Airbnb on the hotel industry. *Journal of marketing research*, 54(5), pp.687-705.