

Hotel standards, reputation management and service culture report

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Word count: 1515

Executive summary

This report highlights the importance of hotel standards, reputation management, and service culture in the hospitality industry. Hotel brand consistency standards ensure a consistent guest experience and uphold the brand's reputation, while independent hotels have the freedom to set their own unique standards. Reputation management involves actively monitoring guest feedback, effectively managing reviews, and addressing negative feedback promptly. Service culture focuses on guest-centricity, service excellence, and employee empowerment, leading to exceptional guest experiences and long-term success. Prominent hotel brands like Hilton and Marriott prioritize service culture to create exceptional guest experiences.

To navigate market trends effectively, hotels should embrace comprehensive marketing strategies, including digital marketing, personalized guest experiences, sustainability practices, and direct booking strategies. Overcoming obstacles such as intense competition, economic fluctuations, and operational challenges requires strategic planning, innovation, and a focus on delivering exceptional guest experiences.

By implementing these recommendations and prioritizing service culture and reputation management, hotels can enhance their brand reputation, attract more guests, and achieve long-term success in the dynamic hospitality industry.

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Introduction

In the hospitality industry, businesses must maintain high standards and promote a positive service culture to enhance their reputation and remain competitive. This report will outline the purpose of hotel standards, how hotels manage their reputation and why having a positive service culture is important in the industry. The report will also explore whether all hotels have the same standards, the impact of guest reviews on a hotel's reputation and how service culture differs from corporate culture. Finally, recommendations will be made to hotels regarding current market trends.

Main Findings

Hotel standards

Hotel brand consistency standards serve the purpose of ensuring a uniform and consistent experience for guests across all properties within a brand. They establish and reinforce the brand's identity, manage guest expectations, maintain quality, optimize operations, foster guest loyalty, and facilitate brand expansion. By adhering to these standards, hotels can deliver a recognizable and trusted experience to guests while upholding the brand's reputation and competitiveness in the industry (Atilgan et al, 2003).

While hotel brands often have their own set of consistency standards that all properties within the brand must follow, independent hotels or smaller hotel chains may have their own unique standards or guidelines.

Hotel brands typically establish consistency standards to ensure a uniform experience and uphold their brand identity across their properties. These standards cover various aspects such as service quality, design elements, amenities, operational procedures, and more. They are designed to provide a consistent guest experience and maintain the brand's reputation (Sparks and Browning, 2010).

On the other hand, independent hotels have the freedom to set their own standards based on their unique positioning, target market, and desired guest experience. They

may develop their own guidelines and standards specific to their property or adopt industry best practices to ensure consistency.

It's important to note that even within hotel brands, there can be different tiers or categories of properties with varying standards. For example, a luxury brand may have different standards for their upscale properties compared to their more affordable or budget-friendly options (Jang et al, 2017).

Marriott International emphasizes brand consistency and standardized operations across its diverse portfolio of brands, ensuring a familiar and reliable experience for guests worldwide. They have comprehensive standards that cover service, amenities, and design elements (Dunn, 2014). In contrast, The Standard Hotels prioritize individuality, unique design, and a vibrant social atmosphere that reflects the local culture. Each property embodies its own personality and caters to its specific market, fostering a dynamic and engaging environment (The Standard Hotels, n.d.). While Marriott focuses on global reach and guest expectations, The Standard Hotels offer a distinctive experience in urban locations with a strong emphasis on creativity and social spaces.

Reputation management

To effectively manage their reputation, hotels should focus on exceptional service, actively monitor guest feedback and reviews, conduct guest satisfaction surveys, maintain a strong online presence, invest in staff training and empowerment, have a crisis management plan, engage with the community and practice sustainability, recognize and reward staff, and prioritize guest satisfaction and continuous improvement. These strategies help hotels build a positive reputation, enhance guest experiences, and establish themselves as trusted and preferred destinations (Chen and Chen, 2010).

Effective guest reviews management is crucial for hotels to maintain a positive reputation, improve the guest experience, make informed decisions, increase guest trust and bookings, optimize search engine visibility, gain a competitive advantage, and foster customer retention and loyalty. It involves monitoring and responding to guest feedback, addressing concerns, and utilizing reviews as valuable insights for continuous improvement. By actively managing reviews, hotels can enhance their

reputation, attract more guests, and build long-term relationships with customers (Xie et al, 2017).

Negative reviews can have a significant impact on hotels, damaging their reputation, decreasing bookings, affecting customer perception and trust, and leading to guest dissatisfaction. Addressing negative reviews promptly and professionally is crucial for reputation management and mitigating the potential consequences. Negative reviews can also impact staff morale and provide a competitive advantage to other properties with more positive feedback. Hotels must actively work to improve their performance and guest experience to minimize the impact of negative reviews (Fong and Sparks, 2018).

Service

culture

Service culture in the hotel industry refers to the shared values, attitudes, and behaviors that shape the service-oriented environment within a hotel. It emphasizes a guest-centric focus, service excellence, employee empowerment, continuous training and development, teamwork and collaboration, positive attitude and professionalism, continuous guest feedback and improvement, and effective service recovery. By fostering a strong service culture, hotels aim to create exceptional guest experiences, differentiate themselves from competitors, build guest loyalty, and achieve long-term success (Schneider et al, 2005).

Service culture is specific to the service-oriented environment within the hotel industry, focusing on guest-centricity, service excellence, and guest satisfaction. It guides employees on delivering exceptional service and creating memorable guest experiences. Corporate culture, on the other hand, encompasses the broader organizational values, behaviours, and practices that extend beyond the service aspect. It includes aspects such as leadership style, decision-making processes, and employee relations (Cameron and Quinn, 2011). While service culture is industry-specific and guest-centric, corporate culture has a wider scope in shaping the overall organizational environment and employee experiences.

Service culture is crucial in the hotel industry as it ensures guest satisfaction, differentiates hotels from competitors, enhances brand reputation, fosters guest loyalty, engages employees, drives revenue growth, influences online reviews, and

contributes to sustainable business success. By focusing on delivering exceptional service, hotels can create memorable guest experiences, build customer loyalty, and achieve long-term profitability in a highly competitive market.

Hilton and Marriott are two prominent hotel brands that prioritize service culture to create exceptional guest experiences. Hilton focuses on warm and genuine hospitality, personalized service, and employee empowerment. They emphasize guest-centricity and provide extensive training and development opportunities for their staff (Hilton, n.d.). Marriott, on the other hand, emphasizes putting people first, pursuing excellence, and creating a "home away from home" atmosphere. They also prioritize employee engagement and empowerment and offer personalized benefits through their loyalty program (Marriott, n.d.). While both brands share a strong service culture, there may be slight variations in their approaches and execution, which can also vary among individual hotels within each brand.

Conclusion

Hotel brands establish consistency standards to ensure a uniform and trusted experience for guests, while independent hotels set their own unique standards. Marriott International prioritizes brand consistency and standardized operations, while The Standard Hotels emphasize individuality and local culture. Effective reputation management involves exceptional service, monitoring feedback, and engaging with the community. Managing guest reviews is crucial for maintaining a positive reputation and attracting more guests. Negative reviews can impact reputation and staff morale. Service culture in the hotel industry focuses on guest-centricity, service excellence, and employee empowerment. Hilton and Marriott exemplify strong service cultures. Service culture is vital for guest satisfaction, differentiation, loyalty, and business success.

Recommendations

To navigate market trends effectively, hotels should adopt a comprehensive marketing approach. This includes embracing digital marketing strategies such as optimizing websites and leveraging social media platforms to engage with potential guests (Wöber and Fritz, 2017). Collaborating with influencers can help generate buzz and reach new audiences (Zhang and Ye, 2019). Personalizing the guest experience through tailored marketing messages and offers based on customer data enhances guest satisfaction and drives bookings (Buhalis and Sinarta, 2019). Emphasizing sustainability practices appeals to environmentally conscious travellers and reinforces a positive brand image (Ayuso and Ariño, 2019). Enhancing direct booking strategies, leveraging user-generated content and reviews, staying updated with technology trends, and monitoring the market and competitors all contribute to a well-rounded marketing strategy (Liu and Mattila, 2019). By implementing these recommendations, hotels can attract guests, drive bookings, and stay competitive in the dynamic hospitality industry.

The hotel industry faces obstacles such as intense competition, economic fluctuations, seasonality, evolving consumer preferences, online travel agencies, rising operational costs, workforce management challenges, regulatory compliance, technological advancements, and reputation management. Overcoming these hurdles requires strategic planning, adaptability, innovation, effective marketing, operational efficiency, and a focus on delivering exceptional guest experiences.

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