

School of International Hotel Management
BA International Hotel Management
Hospitality & Guest Services: Report
'Hotel standards, reputation management and service culture'
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Executive Summary

The significance of hotel standards, service culture, and reputation management in the fiercely competitive hospitality sector are examined in this research. The significance of service culture in the hotel sector is examined, along with the need for brand consistency requirements, effective reputation management, and other topics. Aside from discussing market trends and challenges faced by certain enterprises, the paper offers recommendations for hotels. A thorough grasp of these crucial areas is provided by the findings, which are reinforced by examples and case studies from the hotel and hospitality sector.

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1.0 Introduction

The hotel sector is extremely competitive, so businesses must stay up to date on market developments and provide top-notch customer service. Hotels must put a focus on service culture, sustain ambitious standards, and efficiently manage their reputation to do this. Service culture is defined as the common beliefs and practises that help create a customer-focused culture within an organisation. For continuous quality in operations, facilities, and service delivery, hotel standards serve as benchmarks. Reputation management entails actively influencing a hotel's image and responding to reviews (Barrows & Powers, 2008). The goal of brand consistency requirements, successful reputation management techniques, and the significance of a good service culture are all examined in this research. This research analyses hotel industry instances to offer useful insights and suggestions for adjusting to market shifts and overcoming obstacles.

2.0 Main Findings

2.1 Service Culture:

Since it incorporates the beliefs, attitudes, and actions that characterise a company's service-oriented mindset, service culture is essential to the success of hotels. A strong service culture not only distinguishes hotels from their rivals but also helps to produce exceptional visitor experiences. The concept and relevance of service culture are examined in this part, along with the distinctions between service culture and corporate culture and the significance of service culture in the hotel sector.

Definition and Importance of Service Culture:

According to Enz (2009), service culture is the set of shared values, customs, and procedures that staff must follow to continuously provide visitors with great service. It emphasises on exceeding guests' expectations, foreseeing their needs, and establishing a positive emotional connection rather than just offering a basic level of service. As it increases guest happiness, encourages customer loyalty, and results in a competitive advantage, service culture is crucial for hotels (Kusluvan, 2003). When staff members adopt a service culture, it permeates all aspect of their relationships, giving guests personalised and memorable experiences.

Differences between Service Culture and Corporate Culture:

While service culture is a subset of corporate culture, it varies in that it places a greater premium on providing excellent customer service. According to Tesone (2008), corporate culture is comprised of the common values, beliefs, and behaviours that direct an organization's overall operations. It consists of things like organisational structure, communication styles, and leadership style. The delivery of great service and guest pleasure, on the other hand, are the focus of service culture, which pays particular attention to the organization's customer-facing areas. The service culture within the hotel is what promotes customer-focused behaviours and service standards, whilst the corporate culture lays the groundwork for the broader organisational environment.

Significance of Service Culture in the Hotel Industry:

The importance of service culture in the hotel sector is underscored by the fact that it has a direct bearing on patron satisfaction and loyalty. Throughout their stay, guests want outstanding service and individualised attention in addition to a comfortable room. To provide guests with a satisfying and memorable experience, a strong service culture empowers staff to anticipate and meet those demands. According to research, hotels with a strong service culture typically perform better financially and in terms of customer satisfaction than their rivals (Janes & Wisnom, 2003). Hotels can boost their profitability by establishing a service culture that earns them a reputation for providing great customer service, which in turn increases client loyalty and generates favourable word-of-mouth recommendations.

2.2 Hotel Standards:

In all facets of a hotel's operations, hotel standards serve as rules and benchmarks for the constant provision of high-quality services and guest experiences. This section looks at the goal of brand consistency requirements and investigates how different hotels have different criteria.

Purpose of Brand Consistency Standards:

Regardless of the location or property within a hotel chain, customers should have a consistent experience thanks to brand consistency guidelines in the hospitality industry. The expected level of service, amenities, and overall guest experience are outlined in brand consistency criteria, which are specific to each hotel brand. These requirements

cover a wide range of things, such as food options, cleanliness, customer service, and the standard of the rooms. Hotels may develop a strong brand identity and image, encourage client loyalty, and set themselves apart from rivals by upholding brand consistency (Barrows & Powers, 2008).

Variation in Standards among Hotels:

While brand consistency standards offer a framework for uniformity, standards might differ among hotels, even those that belong to the same brand. These variances may occur because of elements like the hotel's positioning, target market, and geographic location. Hotels in various areas or nations may modify their standards to conform to regional preferences, cultural norms, and legal needs. Additionally, hotels that cater to certain target audiences, such as luxury, mid-scale, or budget travellers, may alter their standards to match their requirements (Dittmer & Gryphon, 1993).

Additionally, factors including the age and condition of the property, the amount of investment made in amenities and infrastructure, and the hotel's general positioning within the market can all have an impact on variances in standards. While upholding brand consistency is crucial, allowing for some standard flexibility can help hotels adjust to local market situations, cater to the demands of their visitors, and stand out in their various markets (Minazzi, 2010).

2.3 Reputation Management:

Managing a hotel's reputation is important for its operations since it has a big impact on how guests perceive it, how many reservations it gets, and how successful it is in general. The influence of unfavourable evaluations on a hotel's reputation is covered in this section, along with successful reputation management techniques and the significance of managing guest reviews.

- **Effective Reputation Management Strategies:** Monitoring, forming, and maintaining a positive perception of a hotel in the eyes of its visitors and the public are all part of proactive reputation management strategies. The following are effective methods for managing reputation in the hospitality sector:
- **Monitoring Online Presence:** Hotels are responsible for actively managing and monitoring their online presence throughout all social media channels, review

sites, and online travel agents. This enables lodging establishments to interact with visitors, respond to any critical criticism quickly, and preserve a favourable internet reputation (Melián-González et al., 2013).

- **Providing Exceptional Service:** A important tactic for reputation management is to continuously deliver exemplary service. Hotels can generate favourable word-of-mouth recommendations and establish a solid reputation by exceeding guests' expectations and providing memorable experiences (Enz, 2009).
- **Responding to Guest comments:** A hotel's dedication to guest satisfaction is demonstrated by its prompt response to all reviews and comments from guests, favourable and bad. Hotels can improve their reputation and convey to guests that they appreciate their opinions by responding to complaints, showing appreciation for positive feedback, and providing solutions (Zhao et al., 2015).

Importance of visitor Reviews Management:

Online reviews have a big impact on how potential guests choose hotels, thus it's important to manage your visitor reviews. Effective management of customer reviews is essential for maintaining a business's good reputation because positive evaluations can draw in more visitors while unfavourable ones might turn away potential consumers. Hotels can gather insightful information, pinpoint areas for improvement, and respond to criticism in a suitable manner by actively monitoring and promoting customer reviews (Janes & Wisnom, 2003).

Effect of Negative Hotel Reviews on Reputation:

A hotel's reputation and financial performance may suffer significantly because of unfavourable evaluations. They can reduce the number of reservations made by potential customers, lower revenue, and harm the hotel's reputation. Negative reviews could draw attention to problems with the hotel's facilities, cleanliness, or level of customer service. Negative reviews should always be swiftly responded to and resolved by hotels, since failing to do so might further harm their reputation (Tesone, 2012).

3.0 Conclusion

The report emphasises how important service culture, hotel standards, and reputation management are to the hospitality sector. It emphasises how important it is to uphold brand consistency standards to improve consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Furthermore,

sustaining a positive reputation in the fiercely competitive market requires excellent reputation management and guest review management.

4.0 Recommendations

Hotel Recommendations in Relation to Market Trends:

- **Embrace Technology:** Hotels should keep up with the most recent developments in technology related to the hospitality sector. This entails implementing cutting-edge technologies like smartphone check-ins, intelligent room controls, and data analytics-based personalised guest experiences. Hotel operations become more efficient, guests are happier, and hotels remain competitive by embracing technology (Samara et al., 2020).
- **Focus on sustainability:** Employing energy-efficient technologies, minimising water use, and implementing eco-friendly activities entices eco-aware visitors and enhances brand perception. Hotels ought to prioritise sustainable practises because they can save expenses (Chen et al., 2010).
- **Enhance Personalization:** Hotels may learn about each guest's preferences and offer tailored services by investing in guest profiling and data analytics. Each visitor has a unique and memorable stay thanks to customised room amenities, tailored recommendations, and focused marketing initiatives (Barrows & Powers, 2008).

Addressing Obstacles Faced by Businesses in the Hospitality Industry:

- **Employment Development** To attract and keep talented workers, hotels should put an emphasis on comprehensive training programmes, career growth possibilities, and attractive compensation packages. Improvements in service quality and customer satisfaction follow investments in employee happiness and development (Kusluvan, 2003).
- **To draw visitors during off-peak seasons,** hotels might expand their target audiences, devise inventive advertising techniques, and investigate partnering with nearby attractions. According to Dittmer and Gryphon (1993), offering special deals and experiences tailored to each season can assist boost occupancy rates.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Hotels should collect customer feedback, evaluate their performance on a regular basis, and compare it to industry benchmarks. Enhancing service delivery and exceeding customer expectations requires

investing in personnel training programmes, quality management systems, and process optimisation (Enz, 2009).

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