

The Role of Experiential Marketing in Retaining the Customers of the Hospitality Industry in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this study is to determine “whether the customers of hotel sector in Sri Lanka will be retained with the experiential marketing and customer satisfaction”. This is a study with quantitative research design and data obtained through, people who recently visited the 3- star, 4- star and 5- star hotels in Sri Lanka. Convenience sampling method was used to select the sample of this study and 205 respondents were selected as the sample. Through conducting an online survey, data was gathered with a structured questionnaire. The results state that experiential marketing influence customer satisfaction and customer satisfaction influence customer retention which indicates that hospitality industry should concentrate on all aspects of experiential marketing for satisfying customers. The study contributes to the literature of hospitality industry which is significant for a country’s economic growth.*

KEYWORDS: *Experiential Marketing, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Retention, Sri Lankan Hospitality Industry*

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The hospitality industry is one of the most dynamic sectors in the world: It places its customers at the heart of its operations and works to deliver the best experience possible. In present with such intense competition it is crucial for hotel industry to focus heavily on the customer satisfaction and customer retention management in order to compete in the market while achieving long-term goals such as creating a loyalty customer base. So, experience marketing is a new, innovative and creative approach to marketing and business. Thus, is going to be a major growth area in next years. To be competitive in the market, the necessity of usage of experiential marketing has been raised in the hotel industry. Schmitt (1999) has argued that experiential marketing can have five different basic experiences for customers. Those are sense, feel, think, act and relate. Schmitt suggests that companies offer experience because customers are so important for the success of the company. Creating an unforgettable experience is important for retaining customers and attracting new ones. One of the main trends in the hotel industry is that people are coming to the hotels not only for having a meal, but also to spend their time extraordinary and gain unexpected excitement. People are searching for meaning, happiness, sensations, new forms of fulfillment and core values, which they often find in market offerings (Fortezza & Pencarelli, 2011). Regardless of the product or service being sold, a marketer needs to provide an unforgettable experience for customers because it is the one that is highly valued (Zikmund, McLeod, & Gilbert, 2009). Tourism industry is struggling not only to present the functional dimension of the product to consumers but also to enrich it with the experiential dimension of the tourism product. In this context, businesses are conceiving a competitive advantage, focusing on the fields of “Dream Society”, “Entertainment Economy”, “Attention Economy” and “Experience Economy” that the era brings with time (Luan, 2017). Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to determine the influence of experiential marketing on customer satisfaction & customer retention of the hotel industry in Sri Lanka.

1.2. Research Problem

Sri Lanka is one of the well-known holiday destinations for its remarkable natural tourism resources. In 2018, the Ministry of Tourism said that “Sri Lanka will need over a 100,000 new staff with the expected number of star class hotels that are to come up as the country has projected over \$2.8 billion over the next couple of years”. Further, specifies that “Sri Lanka’s rapidly growing tourism industry will see the addition of nearly 17,000 industry standard rooms in the next 3 years” (DailyFT, 2019). With this growth, the competition among the star class hotels in Sri Lanka has become very intensive. Both new comers & existing competitors in the

market have to find creative marketing strategies to sell their product and services to the customers and to survive in the market through customer attraction & customer retention. For that makes customer satisfaction is very important nowadays. There is probably no other industry that relies on customer satisfaction as much as the hospitality industry. So, every companies now want to increase the customer satisfaction while enhancing guest experience to compete in the market because the guests are expecting more things than the expected product now. It means the hotels should meet the customer's desires (Augmented level) beyond expectations (Expected level) to face to this competition. The Augmented level is the game changer. This level requires to offer something that is exclusive and cannot be easily imitated by the nearest competitors (Bloomsbury business, 2016). So, the holistic customer experiential marketing concept has become a pivotal role in Sri Lanka's hotel industry with this competition. If companies use experiential marketing dimensions which are sense, feel, think, act and relate they will be able to face for the competition while making their customers surprising& satisfying. Therefore, the problem of this study is to determine "whether the customers of hotel sector in Sri Lanka will be retained with the experiential marketing and customer satisfaction".

1.3. Research Objectives

The research problem addressed under this study is to determine "whether the customers of hotel sector in Sri Lanka will be retained with the experiential marketing and customer satisfaction". In here customer satisfaction is used as the mediator variable. Therefore, the general objective of the study is to identify & investigate the relationship between the experiential marketing and customer retention in the hotel industry Sri Lanka with the mediating effect of customer satisfaction.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Hotels and Hospitality Industry of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is positioned in the Indian Ocean and has the potential to attract tourists due to its geographical diversity and the culture. The contribution for the gross domestic product is 5.1% whilst, it is estimated that this contribution will continue to grow up to 6.6% by 2027. However the East Asian countries is giving a considerable completion to the island with attractive destinations which is an increasing threat (myassigmet, 2019). Ukwatte (2017) stated that, there are 22,000 start class hotels in Sri Lanka with an expectation to rise by 6500 in the upcoming years. The total investment in the country is about US\$ 3 billion and it is forecasted to increase by US\$ 1.5 billion by 2020. This value reported was the highest investment reported by a single sector in the country (THASL, 2014).

2.2. Customer Retention

In today's competitive business world and challenging economy, retaining their customer base is critical for every organization success. If the company doesn't give their customer some good reason to stay, competitors of the organization will give the customers a reason to leave. Customer retention and customer satisfaction drive profits. It's far less expensive to cultivate organization existing customer base and sell more service to the customer than it to seek new customers. Customer retention depends on service quality and customer satisfaction (U. Sindhu, 2012). Gerpott, Rams and Schinder stated that "customer retention is the continuity of the business relations between the customer and company" (Gerpott, Rams, & Schinder, 2001). Hundre & Kumar argued that customer retention is such activity in an organization that reduces customer defections (Hundre & Kumar, 2013).

2.3. Customer Satisfaction

Nowadays customer satisfaction has been one of the top tools for a successful business. Customer satisfaction is defined as an overall evaluation of the total purchase and consumption experience with the good or service over time (Johnson, Fornell, & Anderson, 1996). However, the product and its features, functions, reliability, sales activity and customer support are the most important topics required to meet or exceed the satisfaction of the customers. Satisfied customers usually rebound and buy more. Besides buying more they also work as a network to reach other potential customers by sharing experiences (Hague, 2016). In a service sector, customer satisfaction is often determined by the difference between service expectations and an experience (Trasorras, Weinstein, & Abratt, 2009).

2.4. Experiential Marketing

Experiential marketing is a marketing concept which attempts to communicate marketed products by drawing consumers' attention, touching their hearts to give impression about the marketed products into their hearts and minds (Schmitt, 1999). Environments, atmospheres and various layouts are usually created by businesses in order to provide experiences to customers (Yuan, Y. H., & Wu, 2008). Giving the experiences for customers is becoming more popular in a service sector due to the gain of a competitive advantage over

competitors (Ismail, et al., 2011). Pine and Gilmore declare that the commodities can be replaced with any other item, goods can be touched only, and services are intangible in nature but the experiences are memorable (Pine, Gilmore, & J. H., 1998).

Experiential marketing is widely used in the service industry and companies from various industries refused the traditional marketing with “features and benefits” and approached marketing with experiences creation. Differently from traditional marketing approach, “experiential marketers view consumers as rational and emotional human beings who are concerned about achieving pleasurable experiences” (Schmitt, 1999). “Experiential marketing is the process of identifying and satisfying customer needs and aspirations profitably, engaging them through two-way communications that bring brand personalities to life and add value to the target audience” (Smilansky, 2009). Experiential marketing do not trust quality but attempts to strengthen and stimulate emotions and the sensory organs of the customers. Furthermore, customers engaged with experiential marketing take more positive and faster purchasing decisions. Thus, the main aim of experiential marketing is related with customers on multiple levels (Maghnati, Ling, & Nasermodeli, 2012). Based on the strategic framework for managing experiences, Schmitt (1999) categorized experimental marketing into five types. Managers could provide their customers with alternative types of customer experiences, which were suggested by Schmitt (1999): sensory experiences (SENSE), affective experiences (FEEL), creative cognitive experiences (THINK), physical experiences, behaviors and lifestyles (ACT), and social-identity experiences while relating to a reference group or culture (RELATE).

III. CONCEPTUALISATION & OPERATIONALIZATION

3.1. Operational Definitions

3.1.1. Experiential Marketing

Experiential marketing is a marketing strategy that uses the whole experience of the sense, feel, think, act and relate to create a meaningful connection between a brand and its customers. This definition was modified using the terms and definitions based on Schmitt (1999) study & Single Grain (2020).

3.1.2. Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is defined as an overall evaluation of the total purchase and consumption experience with the good or service over time (Fornell, Johnson, & Anderson, 1996).

3.1.3. Customer Retention

The customer retention definition in marketing is the process of engaging existing customers to continue buying products or services from your business (The daily egg, 2019).

3.2. Hypothesis Development

Based on the formulation of the problem, research objectives, and literature review, following 4 hypotheses are developed in this research.

3.2.1. Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Retention

Importance of customer satisfaction in today’s vibrant corporate environment is obvious as it prominently effects customers repurchase intentions whereas dissatisfaction has been seen as a primary factor for customer’s intention to switch (Faizan, 2011). It is therefore obvious for business organization to create and maintain favorable relationship with their customers in order to not only give room for repeat purchase but also create room for customer retention. When there is a favorable relationship between the organization and the customers, customers tend to repeat purchase and continue patronizing the organization, thereby telling their favorable experiences with other members of the society which can have positive effect on the organization (LaBarbera & Mazursky, 1983). Ibojo was of the view that, for an organization to continuously retain its numerous customers in this competitive global village, there is the need to strategically constantly satisfying the needs of the customers (Ibojo, 2013). Therefore, based on previous research, the hypothesis below is formulated.

H 1: Customer satisfaction has a significant positive impact on customer retention

3.2.2. Relationship between Experiential Marketing and Customer Satisfaction

Nysveen and Pedersen investigated the influence of co-creation on sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral and relational dimensions of brand experience, which were also used when the relationship with customer satisfaction was tested. The results showed positive influences of sensory, rational and behavioral experiences on satisfaction (Nysveen & Pedersen, 2014). Lee & Ming tested the relationship between experiential marketing and satisfaction as well, and found that the experiential marketing caused significantly

positive influence on customer satisfaction (Lee, Hsiao, & Yang, 2010). According to these findings of previous researches, following hypothesis is stated.

H 2: Experiential marketing use has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

3.2.3. Relationship between Experiential Marketing and Customer Retention

Experiential marketing is relatively new concept with little research conducted about it, however, there were several empirical studies performed in order to test the relationship between repurchase intentions and experiential marketing. Mary observed that financial service institutions like the banking sector are focusing on retaining their existing customers and in doing this, they work on the services provided, develop smarter use of technological use e.g. ATM etc. revisit processes to improve the customer experiences and ensures that the organizational culture supports retention (Odunlami, 2014). Yang explored different constructs of sense perception of experiential marketing, and discovered the correlations among variables of customer satisfaction and repurchase intention. As a result of this study, the sense perception of experiential marketing showed significant correlation with repurchase intention (Yang, 2009). Based on these findings hypothesis is proposed as the follows.

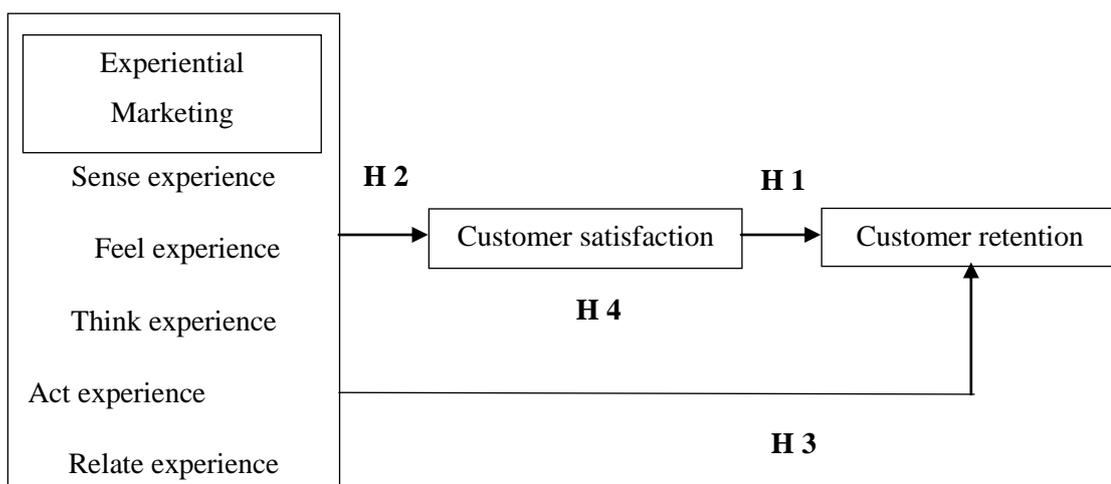
H 3: Experiential marketing use has a significant positive impact on customer retention

3.2.4. Relationship between Experiential Marketing and Customer Retention with the mediating effect of Customer Satisfaction

To retain customers in a business for a long-term is one of the main strategic management tasks, especially in a hotel industry. Therefore, experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and retention are closely related in terms of one same goal – they all should be positive and should help business to attract as much as possible new valuable customers, who bring profit to a firm. However, experiential marketing activities, as well as creation of satisfaction to customers are not usually easy to implement for businesses (Kanopaitè, 2015). Zena and Hadisumarto found the positive relationship between use of experiential marketing and customers’ satisfaction (Zena and Hadisumarto, 2012). Hellier was seeking to find several major factors, which might influence customer retention in services sector, and found that the relationships between customer perceived value, their satisfaction, loyalty and retention are strongly interconnected (Hellier, 1995). According to the previous studies it shows that there is mediating effect of customer satisfaction to the relationship between experiential marketing and customer satisfaction. Therefore, based on previous research, the hypothesis below is formulated:

H 4: Experiential marketing has a significant positive impact on customer retention with the mediating effect of customer satisfaction.

3.3. Conceptual Framework



IV. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research Design & Sampling Plan

This study employs quantitative research design as the purpose of exploring the impact of experiential marketing on customer retention with the mediating effect of customer satisfaction in Sri Lanka hotel sector.

Researcher is used quantitative research design because through transforming numerical data into usable statistics it provides a better perspective to make important business decisions. It can be used to understand how the customers can be retained & how they can be satisfied by implementing experiential marketing and what affect it has.

This study is used the convenience sampling method which is one of the non-probability sampling techniques when selecting the sample from the population. A convenience sample simply includes the individuals who happen to be most accessible to the researcher (McCombes, 2019). To conduct this research, it is taken the customers who have recently visited the 3-star, 4-star or 5-star hotel in Sri Lanka as the population. Customers who are going to 1-star or 2 –star hotels, do not expect more facilities from them and hotels also provide basic accommodations to their customers. So, these kind of hotels do not use more marketing strategies to increase customer satisfaction. When comes to the 3-star, 4-star or 5-star hotels, customers are expecting some unique amenities and quality services from them. If these kind of hotels are unable to make their customer satisfy they lose their customers and unable to compete in the market. With this situation, nowadays experiential marketing plays a vital role in these kind of star hotels. So, for this study it only takes customers who have experienced in 3-star, 4-star or 5-star hotel. Using convenience sampling technique 205 respondents were selected from the population as the sample of this study.

4.2. Methods of Data Collection

This study is used secondary data collection method and quantitative data collection method to gather the data based on the form of this study. Questions are asked from the respondents by conducting an online survey which allows for data to be captured immediately, and data analysis can be performed easily and quickly. A self-reported questionnaire was developed in order to test the relationships between the 3 main concepts: experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and customer retention. The questionnaire consisted of 28 statements. A set of seventeen questions regarding the experiential marketing was adapted from Schmitt (1999). Three questions adapted from Oliver (1997), Ryuet al (2012) on customer satisfaction, and three more questions adapted from scale of Eggert and Ulaga (2002) on customer retention. The respondents are asked to evaluate their levels of agreement with the statements about the experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and customer retention using the five-point Likert-type scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*. Five demographic questions were also included in the questionnaire. The statistical tool used for the analysis of the data was SPSS 20.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

5.1. Demographic Data

TABLE I: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Description	Total	Percentage
Gender		
Male	115	56.1%
Female	90	43.9%
Age		
18-25	86	42%
25-35	68	33.2%
35-45	32	15.6%
Above 45	19	9.3%
Occupational Status		
Student	65	31.7%
Employed	91	44.4%
Unemployed	30	14.6%
Self employed	19	9.3%
Income		
Less than LKR 25000	74	36.1%
LKR 25000 - LKR 50000	59	28.8%
LKR 50000 - LKR 75000	39	19%
More than LKR 75000	33	16.1%

Source: Survey Data (2020)

Majority of the respondents are Males which is 115 in number out of 205 respondents and 90 in number for female respondents. Percentage of male respondents is 56.1% and for females it is 43.9%. Nearly 75% of the respondents are aged between 18 years to 35 years whilst highest number of respondents are in the employed category which represent 44.4%. The lowest number of respondents are in the self-employed category

which represent 9.3% from the total sample. Thus, the student and unemployed categories represent 31.7% and 14.6% respectively. 64% of the respondents reported earning income above LKR 25000.

5.2. Reliability and Validity

5.2.1. Reliability

The reliability and validity tests were conducted and the results shown in below tables. According to the table number 02, the reliability of the three variables and the dimensions of the independent variable (experiential marketing) exceeds 0.70 which is a good sign according to literature. The dimensions and the other variables reports values above 0.90.

TABLE II: RELIABILITY

Variable	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Experiential Marketing Dimensions	0.966
Sense	0.955
Feel	0.931
Think	0.933
Act	0.922
Relate	0.938
Customer Satisfaction	0.953
Customer Retention	0.964

Source: Survey Data (2020)

5.2.2. Validity

Validity was assessed using the principle component analysis and varimax rotation. First it was tested whether the dimensions are appropriately loaded to the factor and then assessed whether the indicators of variables are loaded appropriately. The tables below specifies how the indicators are loaded in each situation explained above.

TABLE III: COMPONENT MATRIX OF SENSE DIMENSION

	Component
	1
The place of the hotel engaged my senses.	.907
I liked the design and the decoration of the hotel's premises	.926
I felt comfortable when using the furniture in the hotel.	.924
I enjoyed the taste of food and drinks provided by the hotel.	.929
I enjoyed the smell of food and drinks provided by the hotel.	.916

Source: Survey Data (2020)

TABLE IV:: COMPONENT MATRIX OF FEEL DIMENSION

	Component
	1
The hotel's overall performance put me in a certain mood.	.936
The hotel's overall performance appealed to my emotions.	.932
I feel pleased with the hotel's overall performance.	.946

Source: Survey Data (2020)

Table V: COMPONENT MATRIX OF THINK DIMENSION

	Component
	1
The hotel's overall performance stimulates my curiosity.	.921
The hotel's overall performance stimulates my imagination.	.952
The hotel's overall performance stimulates my thinking.	.945

Source: Survey Data (2020)

TABLE VI: COMPONENT MATRIX OF ACT DIMENSION

	Component
	1
The hotel makes me think of an alternative way of life.	.963
The hotel reminds me of activities I can do.	.963

Source: Survey Data (2020)

TABLE VII: COMPONENT MATRIX RELATE DIMENSION

	Component
	1
The hotel makes me think about my relationships with others.	.947
I can enhance my relationship with people I like by consuming in this hotel.	.953
The hotel makes me think about social activities.	.932

Source: Survey Data (2020)

It is clearly visible that the indicators are loaded to each dimension with factor loadings above 0.70 except the indicator Act 01. Below table specifies the loadings of each variable. For this purpose the averages of dimensions of experiential marketing variable are considered as indicators. This method is used in structural equation modeling (SEM) as well.

TABLE VIII: ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Sense			.857	
Feel			.710	
Think	.680			
Act	.841			
Relate	.815			
I am very satisfied with my overall experience at this hotel.		.763		
Overall, this hotel puts me in a good mood.		.772		
I recommend this hotel to others.		.776		
I intend to continue the purchasing relationship with this.				.818
I consider myself as a loyal customer of this hotel.				.808

Source: Survey Data (2020)

According to table 08 indicators of customer satisfaction variable have been loaded under 2nd component and customer retention variable’s indicators have been loaded under 4th component. Thus, experiential marketing dimensions have been loaded under 1st and 3rd component. According to the literatures, though sense, feel, think, act and relate are the dimensions of one variable, those have been divided into 2 components in the rotated component matrix table. So, it’s bring a new finding. That is these dimensions can be divided into two categories which are cognitive and affective.

5.3. Data Analysis

This section contains the descriptive statistics and the inferential statistics of the data collected throughout the survey.

5.3.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table IX: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Experiential Marketing	3.6226	.8730	-.741	.087
Customer Satisfaction	3.7220	.9946	-.969	.368
Customer Retention	3.5927	1.08406	-.707	-.248

According to the table 09, all variables contain mean values above 3.5 and except customer retention the other two variables has reported standard deviations below 1.0. Further, skewness and kurtosis also reported values below 1.0 for all the variables.

5.3.2. Hypothesis Testing

In this study, researcher is testing the impact and the relationship between three variables. Researcher has taken experiential marketing as the independent variable, customer retention as the dependent variable as well as customer satisfaction as the mediator variable. To test the developed hypothesis researcher is used macro process in SPSS and apply Hayes' model 4 for this mediator analysis. According to table X, there is a significant impact of experiential marketing on the customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.9106$, $p = 0.0000$). Further, Experiential Marketing significantly influence Customer Retention ($\beta = 3586$, $p = 0.0000$) and Customer Satisfaction significantly influence Customer Retention ($\beta = 0.6145$, $p = 0.000$). The result of hypothesis test shows that the indirect effect of Experiential Marketing on Customer Retention when Customer Satisfaction takes as the mediator variable. As per the table X, the indirect effect value is 0.5595. It says that Experiential Marketing has a significant positive impact on Customer Retention with the mediating effect of Customer Satisfaction. Since direct effect is also a positive, Customer Satisfaction can be considered as a partial mediator.

TABLE X: HYPOTHESIS TESTING

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*****
Model: 4
Y :Retentio
X :Experien
M :Satisfac

SampleSize: 205

*****
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
Satisfac

Model Summary
   R      R-sq   MSE          F      df1      df2      p
.7993   .6388   .3591   359.0772   1.0000   203.0000   .0000

Model
coeff      se          t          p      LLCI      ULCI
Constant .4232   .1790   2.3639   .0190   .0702   .7763
Experien .9106   .0481  18.9493   .0000   .8158   1.0053

*****
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
Retentio

Model Summary
   R      R-sq   MSE          F      df1      df2      p
.8133   .6615   .4017   197.3826   2.0000   202.0000   .0000

Model
coeff      se          t          p      LLCI      ULCI
constant .0067   .1920   .0347   .9724  -.3719   .3852
Experien .3586   .0846   4.2393   .0000   .1918   .5253
Satisfac .6145   .0742   8.2771   .0000   .4681   .7609

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y*****

Direct effect of X on Y
   Effect      se          t          p      LLCI      ULCI
.3586   .0846   4.2393   .0000   .1918   .5253

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
   Effect      BootSE      BootLLCI      BootULCI
Satisfac   .5595   .0905   .3827   .7393

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS*****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output: 95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence
intervals: 5000
    
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VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusions

Experience can be considered as a pleasant memory and emotions that businesses make for their customers. These pleasant memories and feelings attract the customers to operate; affect them emotionally and even shape their intention to become customers again. Experiential marketing, a customer-centric approach, covers all activities that can reach all the senses of the customer, which can affect them emotionally and cognitively, and drive them to a purchase-like action. Therefore, hotel managers should pay significant attention for all the dimensions of experiential marketing. Decoration and furniture of a hotel, as well as remembering that taste and smell of food and drinks are one of the most important factors of the sense dimension to make customer satisfy and bring them back to the hotels. Thus, the distribution of interior, spacious, modern and clean installations, and well located establishment are important contributors to customer satisfaction. Emotional value and social value have an impact on customer satisfaction as well. Therefore, hotel managers should analyze their current situation, continually plan how to improve these elements, to implement them and control afterward.

6.2. Recommendations

This research is recommended few ideas for hotel managers to give a great hospitality experience to their customers. Know that the guest experience begins long before they arrive at your front desk to check in for their stay. You should create a mobile-friendly website that offers visual appeal and social proof of the experience that they will enjoy at your hotel. When a traveler connects with your brand online, they will immediately develop an opinion of your brand that will impact the ultimate experience that they have at your hotel. Naturally, a large portion of your guest satisfaction ratings have to do with the staff that you employ at your hotel. When hiring an employee for your hotel, you need to look beyond their basic qualifications and experience and delve into their personality. To begin, you need every staff member to be friendly, welcoming and approachable. When interviewing people for positions at your hotel, you should pay close attention to their demeanor before, during and after the interview.

The lobby of a hotel includes reception, luggage storage, a restroom, and a waiting area. It is the first thing that a guest sees when he or she walks through the door, therefore it is incredibly important and furnishing it in the style that will then be maintained throughout the entire hotel is fundamental. We must ensure that guests are never bored, either visually or functionally. Depending on the specific style chosen, the furniture must be arranged in such a way that it does not create obstacles and must be laid out intelligently according to its intended purpose. For example, the reception desk must be easily reached as soon as the guest enters the lobby, while the armchairs and sofas must create a separate and cozy environment.

You must deliver a good night's sleep for each and every guests- clean, quite rooms and helpful staff are a good start. Rooms with enjoyable amenities like a mini-bar, safety lockers, separate balconies, 24 hr on-call room service & much more are helped to deliver a good night's sleep. Thus, it might involve a complete makeover of your premier restaurant's dinner menu, or it could be the addition of a colorful local ingredient or some culinary artistry to the dishes which makes patrons double-take before diving in with their utensils. Think vegetable and herb gardens near the eye-lines of passersby. Think effervescent staff with sharp, distinctive uniforms.

True hospitality isn't about meeting guest expectations; it's about exceeding so that you actually make an impact on consumers. And at the core of experiential marketing is just that – the experience. If you can't conjure something that consumers would suggest to their friends and relatives (let alone come back for a repeat visit), then nothing else matters. Keep your hotels in order by constantly asking yourself the question: am I exceeding what guests expect of my hotel?

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