

The distinctive challenges of operations and quality management in tourism and le...

[Business](#), [Management](#)



The paper "The Distinctive Challenges of Operations and Quality Management in Tourism and Leisure" is an engaging example of a term paper on management. The service industry is concerned with delivering quality service to customers by satisfying their needs at the time that they demand. It involves a host of processes such as perceiving demand, managing delivery, time, ensuring satisfaction, and paying particular attention to the standard of quality of service. That is why experts in the leisure sector emphasize on delivering the experience as and when required (Hede and Hall 2006). Since this sector is consumer-focussed, it is highly changeable due to changing trends in the social, economic and lifestyle. The challenge is to deliver seamless service without giving customers any indication of change or hindrance. In the following discussion, the writer shall enumerate on the challenges of technological development and product development and delivery in the leisure sector.

Challenges

- Product Development and/or Delivery

At the heart of the leisure sector are its customers. Leisure customers, according to Hede and Hall (2006) are motivated by intrinsic satisfaction, perceived freedom and tourist attractions rather than involvement.

Information, insights, and education are the key to enjoyment, amusement and entertainment experiences. Furthermore, leisure can be categorized into political, commercial or professional, development and delivery of service can be shaped accordingly.

Swarbrooke (2002) enumerates on the fact that once customers are identified, the development of leisure attractions and service delivery depends on the size, capital, and timescale allotted for them. While larger projects take longer time and more capital like theme parks, entertainment complex and sports facilities, smaller projects usually comprise of re-launch, renovations, and improvements over the old ones. Regardless, the main consideration for the management should be to appeal to the potential customers and attract them for visits (Swarbrooke 2002). Considerations for elements like special needs, parents, foreign visitors, parking areas, holiday-makers, technology savvy, non-technology savvy and similar factors to satisfy a larger group of consumers are important in the product development process.

On the other hand, Wuest (2001) also identifies with the idea that once the product has been developed sustenance of service quality is as important. Customers have certain perceptions of service quality which vary in range and dimensions. These greatly influence the level of satisfaction which includes service expectations, service standards, and perceived service performance. Since service quality is the result and contribution of a complex network of service delivery framework, it includes the developed status of tangible and non-tangible resources, and their ability to respond to the customer's needs. The challenge is to balance elements like reliability, error-free, sustained delivery mode, and promptness to establish a competitive edge for the provider against rivals (Wuest 2001).

- Technological development

Given the changing trends of current leisure consumers towards technology-driven lifestyles, experts perceive that service operations need to reflect a similar environment. (Johnston 2005). To sustain developed services to the standards set, the management needs to assume responsibilities for resource, process and delivery management to serve the customers. They need to ensure that equipment, materials, technology, and facilities meet the expectations of the customers yet be within the organization's range of costs. This can only be achieved through innovations and streamlined activities in operation.

Sigala (2008) is of the view that information and communication technology (ICT) development is important for designing, managing and operating in the leisure sector. ICT facilitates travelers as well as leisure facilities by enhancing their performance, satisfying the consumers need for access to information as well as enhance their experiences. Some of the critical ICT applications which affect the operational efficiency and strategic effectiveness include automation, information, knowledge management, tracking facilities, scheduling, health and safety systems, and disintermediation capabilities which allow the management to streamline service delivery options (Sigala 2008).

Thus, Robinson (2009) sums up the impact of IT and innovation on operations management in leisure as having a notable impact on its growth, development and adding value to the traditional model of operation. The

challenge however for practitioners is to integrate technology in their processes right from the beginning of the process. Planning, scheduling, capacity management, and controlling customer demand through improved technology like booking, self-service kiosks, online information brochures, advancement payments, and queuing systems can speed up the process of travel and get to the main site of attractions. What is left for the management to do is to concentrate on the development of the leisure experience and attraction themselves?

Conclusions

These aspects lead the writer to understand that modern-day leisure and attraction sector is very much influenced by the environment in which it operates. It needs to constantly improve upon its systems, structure, and processes in order to facilitate its consumers. Product development and delivery are as important as the maintenance of its service delivery throughout the experience. The imperative for keeping up with technology, standards, and operational techniques inevitably impact the business in terms of price, cost, delivery time frame, and competitiveness.