

Customer satisfaction and expectation in hotel



INTRODUCTION

Hospitality is linked to Customer satisfactions because this industry produces and provides customer satisfactions. Now, Customer requirements can be both tangible and intangible but satisfying all of them and hence meeting their requirements is called customer satisfaction. To construct arguments justifying – the facilities, layout and ambience of the bedroom, only using the concept as a source of examples to illustrate / support the line of argument. The emphasis is on constructing arguments to justify a detail about the concept.

The concept of our hotel revolves around the theme ‘ SPORTS’. We have decided to build an ‘ ALL SPORTS HOTEL’ in the Cardiff bay area near the millennium stadium, which would be completely focussed on the sports oriented market, for the people who have a niche for sports. Our vision is to amuse and dazzle sports fans.

AIM

To use and apply theoretical concepts and models to structure a discussion which critically appraises how the proposed hotel concept will meet customer expectations and satisfy customers. The main motive of this piece of work is to research in general terms about what theory says in answer to these questions:

- What is customer expectation and satisfaction?
- What are the expectations of hotel customers?
- What satisfies hotel customers?
- What is it about my concept that will result in customer satisfaction?

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WHAT IS CUSTOMER EXPECTATION AND SATISFACTION?

Customer Expectation:

The definition of customer expectation according to Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (Leonard L) is:

” the ideas and feelings that a customer has about a product or service, based on what he or she needs from it and expects it to do.”

(Consumer expectation can be formed by earlier experiences, marketing, what other customers say about it, alertness of competitor’s services, and product image. If consumer expectations are met, then customer feels satisfied.)

The need, desires and ideas of a consumer about a product or facility, and what a customer wants from a service he/she is paying for is called consumer expectations. The level of consumer service is also an aspect, and a consumer might expect to meet effectiveness, cooperation, consistency, assurance in the staff, and a personal interest in his/her patronage.

POSSIBLE LEVEL OF CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS AS DESCRIBED BY PARSHURAM, ZEITHAML and BERRY (LEONARD L) (figure 1):

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

A business term, is a appraisal of how goods and services supplied by a company meetup or surpass customer expectation.

In a aggressive market where companies compete for consumers, customer contentment is seen as a key differentiator and progressively has become a key element of industry strategy.

As Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (Leonard L) emphasis, the significance of consumer satisfaction diminishes when a firm has greater than before bargaining power, because consumer satisfaction would be way too low, and consumers would easily have the alternative of leaving for an enhanced hotel offer.

There is a significant body of pragmatic literature that establishes the advantages of customer satisfaction for firms. Businesses need to retain existing consumers while targeting non- consumers. Measuring client satisfaction provides a sign of how flourishing the business is at providing products and/or services to the consumers.

Consumer satisfaction as described by Bluestein, Abram; M. Moriarty; R. J. Sanderson (2003) is an intangible concept and the actual sign of the state of satisfaction will vary from individual to individual and service to service. The state of satisfaction depends on some particular like both emotional and physical variables which associate with satisfaction behaviour such as return and suggest rate. The stage of satisfaction can also differ depending on other factors such as other products against which the consumer can compare the business products.

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Factor's influencing consumer satisfaction:

Product/service features.

Exact products or service feature

Customer emotions

Attributions for service achievement or breakdown

Perception of impartiality or fairness

Other customers.

Price

Individual factors

the customer's mood or emotional state

situational factors

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF HOTEL CUSTOMERS?

To understand the customer expectations from a hotel, we need to think from the customer's point of view. When I`m a customer, i expect that i am:

(methodology of customer expectations, what he expects from a particular service or hotel)

1. Attention

10. Wide Knowledgeable help

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2. Competent, efficient service

11. Friendly nature of staff

3. Anticipation of customer's needs

12. To be informed

4. Explanations in customer's terms

13. Follow up with

5. Essential Courtesies

14. Honest

6. To be informed of the options

15. Feedback of services

7. Not to be passed around

16. Professional service

8. To be listened to (and heard)

17. Empathetic

9. Personalised attention

18. Respect

The involvement of consumers in the modernization process is significant for the development of ground-breaking services and products because very

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often customers make substantial contributions through the articulation of idea, wishes and needs (Beiger and Graf, 2004)

The majority of today's consumer have increasingly higher expectations and tend to be:

Informed

Confident

Independent

Educated

Consumer-driven

Not bound by traditional demographics.

WHAT SATISFIES HOTEL CUSTOMERS?

A customer is satisfied when his expectations are met. Customer satisfaction is met through –

The product itself -quality, quantity, presentation, price

The service – timing and speed to suit the market, efficiency, expertise of staff, appearance and social skills of staff

The product support -décor, display, heating, lighting, linen, glass, cutlery, cleanliness, etc. must all support the product.

From marketing viewpoint, it is important to consider the needs and requirements for customer satisfaction for at least three major reasons:

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People do not buy goods and services for what they are – they buy them for what they do for them.

Understanding what makes people tick and why they buy things makes it far more likely one will be able to satisfy those needs.

If a group of customers display similar behaviours and have similar needs, they form a market segment. It is far easier, and more profitable, to supply a common range of goods and services to a group segment than to a wide-ranging set of individuals.

One particular approach to people needs, which fits the hospitality industry very well, was advanced by a behavioural scientist called Abraham Maslow in 1943. He proposed a hierarchy (figure 2) of needs consisting of five levels:

Maslow's premise is that all of us have needs which require satisfying in ascending order, i. e. higher-level needs only emerge as those immediately proceeding are satisfied.

At the base of the triangle are physiological needs of food and drink, necessary for survival. At the next level are the needs of safety and security, represented by the stability of a home, a job, and freedom from anxiety.

Then come the need for love, companionship and a sense of belonging. This whole area of needs is central to the hospitality industry whether it's a case of providing an intimate family meal for four or a celebration for a victorious sports team.

After that is the need for esteem and status. The hospitality industry caters to the egos' of its customers as much as to their stomachs, and with some justification. Many people are hungrier for recognition than they are for food and drink alone. Warm, friendly greeting and the appropriate use of customers' names do much to reinforce their esteem and accord them the status they seek, which gives them mental satisfaction.

The need for self-actualization, the desire for self-fulfilment or being the best you can, can be met through activity breaks, featuring special interest groups – fishing, golf, antique master-classes, painting, hot air ballooning. Whatever a person's hobby or interests, most activities can be catered for by the hotels over a course of year to satisfy the customer needs.

The methodology discussed is actually what a customer expects from service industry.

Meeting the consumer expectations will cement relations, increase their fulfilment, and retain their business. Here are six consumer expectations that are the foundation stone of exceptional service and consumer satisfaction:

Well-informed and accessible staff: While a consumer is making the buying decision, they want to be well informed, available when they want it.

Friendly people: Customers not only desire product-confident sales persons, they want them to be welcoming and polite.

Value for money: This is where money factors come in. Customers need value-for-money.

Convenience: The rule here is simple: make it easy!

A fast finish: They want thoughtful help making the right choice.

Most business lose 25% of their customers annually and yet most companies spend five times as much on generating new customers on retaining existing ones.

Steve Mawson (2000) explains that customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction comes more and more from the way the person is treated. Improved technology, more affluence, greater sophistication, foreign travel, intense competition all play their part in increasing customers expectations of levels of service.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT MY CONCEPT THAT WILL RESULT IN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION?

As I mentioned earlier, my concept of proposing a hotel in Cardiff Bay Area, Wales is of “ ALL SPORTS HOTEL”. It is located near the Millennium stadium, Cardiff, also Cardiff City FC and Cardiff City Stadium are easily reachable.

This hotel would be one of a kind in the market, and will surely attract a fair amount of market due to the immense sporting experience it would offer its customers, and also out-of-the-class facilities available at the hotel. To give a sportier feel it's decided that the hotel would be stadium shaped. There would be 120 en-suites on four floors and each of them would be designed with a different theme –

Ground Floor – It would consist of front office, cricket and football themed lobbies, sports museum, an exclusive sports merchandise shop.

First Floor – Designed for the people who love & live for cricket, with 30 en-suites on the name of famous cricketing countries like:

ENCHANTING ENGLAND

INVINCIBLE INDIA

With a theatre where customers can watch live cricket matches going on or specially request matches from the past, with a seating capacity of 30 people and a cricket bar.

Second Floor – Designed for the football crazy people, and 30 en-suites named on major teams like:

CHELSEA FC

MANCHESTER UNITED

Theatre with 30 people capacity, live and on request matches and all football bar.

Third Floor – with 40 en-suites, which can be designed on the customer request if he wish to live in his favourite sports room. Like Mr Dave Andrews in presentation said that his favourite football club is BIRMINGHAM FC, so we would design a room with the Club theme, so that no guest goes away disappointed.

Fourth floor – with 20 en-suites, which would be highly luxurious and designed for international sporting personalities who would love to be satisfied in this all-modern sporting facility hotel.

Achieving customer satisfaction can be of ease with an interesting concept like this. Experiencing sporting lifestyle with a touch of nature would be of everyone's interest as it is out-of-the-box hotel concept. It is earlier discussed that when the hotel meets customer's needs and expectation, customer is satisfied.

Margaret M. Kappa, Aleta Nitschke and Patricia B. Schappert states that

“ No other feature or service provided by the hotel will impress the guest than a spotlessly clean and comfortable guest room”.

This statement is very true because it reflects the hotel's reflection and eagerness to provide services and satisfy consumers. After designing the bedroom it is the prime duty of the house keeping dept to maintain the standards. At the end of the day a hotel room is the most revenue generating sector of the hotel. The overall objective of any type of designing activity is to provide services at its best that satisfies customers. The bedroom design must be easily accepted, highly pleasing, comfort zones must be established. But at the same time one must have a clear idea of the budget issued for operations to take place and the level of services to be offered. The way designs and services are offered creates an impact on the customer expectations and satisfactions. In simple words, Designing is a process aimed at meeting customer expectations by shaping activities, resources and processes.

Let's explain how a customer will be satisfied by our hotel concept, focussing on

The facilities, layout and ambience of the bedroom:

A football fan books a room in our hotel as his favourite team Manchester United is playing against Chelsea FC next week in the nearby stadium and is accompanied by his wife and two football maniac kids and books the MAN-U Room in the hotel. As in his booking form he filled that he is a die-hard fan of MAN-U FC and his kids love playing football too. He arrived 2 days before the event and before his arrival his expectations were –

LAYOUT – Big Spacious room, additional rooms for kids, perfectly designed as it is an exclusive sports hotel.

FACILITIES – Exclusive beddings and room accessories, big TV screen in room, games for kids, 24*7 assistance, entry to exclusive football facilities available.

AMBIENCE – Sporty, Energetic & vibrant.

How was he satisfied –

Layout – He was offered a MAN-U theme en-suite on the football floor i. e. 2nd floor for £80 + £40(kids room). It was a big spacious room + adjoining kids room with the balcony facing towards the millennium stadium where his favourite team MAN-U will be competing after 2 days, so that he might catch a glimpse of his favourite stars or 2. Walls were exclusively designed keeping the MAN-U theme in mind, with his favourite stars wallpapers. Walls in the kids room were specially designed keeping the MAN-U FOR KIDS theme in mind, satisfied the guest with the layout of the room.

Facilities - Exclusive MAN-U beddings and accessories was the room designed with. MAN-U themed curtains, alarm clock, table lamp Games for kids was pre-installed in the room, big TV screens were installed in the room as well as in the bathroom so that our guest don't even miss a bit of football and guest even enjoyed exclusive MAN-U players interviews and past matches of MAN-U free of cost. He was even offered free entry to the all-exclusive football bar which included 2 free drinks and unlimited soft-drinks/juices for kids, where he can watch and support MAN-U play with a complete stadium like scenario, satisfied his expectations for the facilities being provided.

AMBIENCE - The time he entered the room he noticed that the room was completely designed on his favourite team, the floor looked like artificial grass and at both the ends of the wall an imaginary goal-post were present. When he called the room service for order the attendant came dressed like a footballer and the dishes in which food was served was completely based on the theme ' Football'. Exclusive football bar was full with fans, supporting their favourite team and enjoying with other fans. The customer expectations of ambience were also met and he was satisfied.

The Guest was satisfied with the services being provided and enjoyed his stay at ' THE ALL SPORTS HOTEL' and promised to return in near future.