



## “A CUSTOMER’S EXPECTATION AND PERCEPTION OF HOTEL SERVICE QUALITY IN CYPRUS.”

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### ABSTRACT

In recent years, Hotels in Cyprus have encountered difficult times due to increasing customer demands, and due to strong internal industry competition development. However, the hospitality industry’s main concern around the globe is to cater to its customer needs and their desires, which are mostly addressed through personal services. Hence, the hotel businesses that are able to provide quality services to its ever demanding customers in a warm and efficient manner, are those businesses which will be more likely to obtain a long term competitive advantage over their rivals. Ironically enough though, the quality of good services cannot be fully appreciated until eventually something goes wrong, and then the poor quality of services can have long lasting lingering effects on the customers and hence be translated into lost business. Nevertheless, since the issue of delivery of hospitality services always involves people, this issue must center around the management of the human resource factor, and in particular, on the way in which it interacts with itself and with guests as service encounters. In the eyes of guests, hospitality businesses will be viewed successfully or as failures depending on the cumulative impact of the service encounters they have experienced on a personal level. Finally,

since hotels are offering intangible and perishable personal service encounters, managing these services must be a paramount concern of any hotel business. As a preliminary exercise, visualize when you have last visited a hotel or a restaurant, and then ask yourself these questions: What did you feel about the quality of the experience? Was it a memorable one, which you would recommend to others, or were there certain things which could have made the difference? Thus, the way personalized services are provided can make the difference in attracting and retaining long-term customers.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the marketing thought, the concept of quality service and customer satisfaction has a long history, and since Cardozo's (1965) initial study of customer effort, expectations, and satisfaction, the body of work in this field has expanded greatly, with more than 900 articles focusing on customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Perkins, 1991). However, since the service quality has been characterized as an important determinant in successfully attracting repeat business, consistently delivering high quality services must be considered as an essential and crucial strategy element for surviving in today's highly competitive environment.

## **EMPIRICAL BACKGROUND**

Quality improvement requires the collection of accurate and actionable information, which is carefully analyzed to allow managers to manipulate key components in order to create the right quality of competitive tourist experience.

As a holiday destination, Cyprus faces three considerable challenges stemming from the following factors: competition from similar resorts; an economic system that has not traditionally emphasized service quality; and an unstable political environment (war, terrorism). However, there exist different perspectives in the Cyprus hospitality industry like the following:

The Cyprus Hotel Association has announced satisfactory occupancy rates and has anticipated recovery rates better than the ones predicted, and said that the hotel industry is in a much stronger position to absorb the downturn than during the last recession. On the contrary, some hoteliers claimed that occupancy rates are not expected to increase despite a high number of customers, due to the increased hotel capacity. Under such conditions, both the Cypriot authorities and hoteliers should seek effective means of monitoring and evaluating whether or not Cyprus is delivering the quality and range of services, activities and experiences necessary to satisfy the customers. In addition to these, rumors indicated that the hotels in Cyprus are planning extensive redevelopment. However, the problem remains for the hoteliers to specify

service quality, which can lead to a quality gap or gaps. Further more, it is important to understand customers' attitudes towards the quality of the service provided by hotels, before implementing any service-improvement training programs. Any research should aim to explore the importance of customer care in the hospitality industry generally, covering the following points in particular: the customers' expectation and perceptions of the service quality; the gap between the expectations and perceptions; and the impact of training factors determining service quality on overall customer satisfaction. The study must involve the collection of consumer opinion data that might be helpful to the whole hospitality for improving the quality of service, which delivers or achieves customer's satisfaction.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

“A customer's expectation and perception of service quality survey will provide significant information that can be used by hospitality leaders to develop the service-improvement training programs.”

### **AIMS OF THIS PAPER AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This paper reviews the current state of tourism in Cyprus, followed by the explication of research methodology and research findings, and discusses the managerial implications of the study findings. Accordingly, there will be these several research questions for this study: First, “What target group should comprise the sample?” Second, “What are the customer's expectations regarding the service of a particular hotel?” Third, “How are a customer's perceptions about the service he/she actually lodged in a hotel?” Fourth, “what is the most appropriate method to be used to assess the data?”

The specific objectives of this study will be firstly, to investigate customers' expectations and perceptions of the service quality, and the gap between expectations and perceptions. Secondly, to explore the impact of the factors determining the service quality on the overall customer satisfaction.

### **TARGET GROUP**

It will be very useful, as a starting point in this research paper, to consider the service quality managers and marketing researchers who both manage customer satisfaction programs,

focus on customer satisfaction measurement, analysis, and implementation. Then, in the assessment of the service quality, the industry could plan and implement service-improvement training programs. It is also expected to help produce a comparative report which will hopefully identify the key problems faced by the hospitality industry today, and therefore, to make appropriate recommendations to remedy the poor quality of services in the hotel businesses.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In assessing consumer opinion to assist in the hospitality industry, it will involve research in the information of the service quality, customer satisfaction, consumer opinion survey, data collection, and effective methods of assessing and presenting data, and as well to draw on a number of publications and journals from different sources. Then, with the aid of these publications, a review will provide a conceptual framework for the study.

## **SERVICE QUALITY**

In the service literature, there is a number of operational and theoretical framework studies which introduce various methodologies to measure service quality in different hospitality sectors (Ryan & Cliff, 1997; Getty & Thompson, 1994; Saleh & Ryan, 1991; Pizam & Milman, 1993). In the service industry, definitions of service quality focus on meeting customers' needs and requirements, and how well the service delivered meets customers' expectations (Lewis & Booms, 1983). Gronoos (1984) had stated that perceived quality of service was dependent on the comparison of expected service with perceived service, and thus, the outcome of a comparative evaluation process. Parasuraman et al. (1985) had developed the GAP model, and the subsequent SERVQUAL model within the GAPS framework. Parasuraman et al. had defined "service quality" as the degree and direction of discrepancy between customers' perceptions and expectations, and had "perceived service quality" as the gap between customers' perceptions and expectations, as a measurement of service quality. The smaller the gap, the better the service quality provided, and the greater the customer satisfaction.

## **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

The concept of "customer satisfaction" is different from "perceived service quality", although some studies have found a significant correlation between the two paradigms, and

included similar errors of interpretation Oh & Park, 1997). Perceived service quality differs from satisfaction in that service quality is the customers' attitude or global judgment of service superiority over time, while satisfaction is connected with a specific transaction (Bitner, 1990; Bolton & Drew, 1991; Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Most of the studies into customer satisfaction in the hospitality literature have focused on identifying service attributes, which are treated as customers' needs and wants. From a marketing perspective, customer satisfaction is achieved, when their needs and wants are fulfilled. There is a general widespread agreement in the literature that the provision of service quality is concerned with generating customer satisfaction. Gronoos, Parasuraman et al. and Johnston have defined service quality in terms of customer satisfaction, that is, the degree of fit between customers' expectations and perceptions of service.

### **THE SERVICE QUALITY AND THE SATISFACTION**

Quality improvement has become a vital ingredient in the strategy for making destinations more competitive. Customer satisfaction has its roots in the global quality revolution. The relationship between service and product quality and overall customer satisfaction has been repeatedly demonstrated.

***Figure 1: The relationship between quality and satisfaction***



The first research involving the measurement of customer satisfaction occurred in the early 1980s. Works by Oliver (1980), Churchill and Surprenant (1982), and Bearden and Teel (1983) tended to focus on the operationalization of customer satisfaction and its antecedents. By the mid-1980s, the focus of both applied and academic research had shifted to construct refinement and the implementation of strategies designed to optimize customer satisfaction, according to Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996). Their discussion of customer

satisfaction, service quality, and customer expectations represents one of the first attempts to operationalize satisfaction in a theoretical context. They proposed that, the ratio of perceived performance to customer expectations was key to maintaining satisfied customers. Several years later, Parasuraman, Berry, and Zeithaml (1988) published a second, related discussion that focused more specifically on the psychometric aspects of service quality. Their multi-item SERVQUAL scale is considered as one of the first attempts to operationalize the customer satisfaction construct. The SERVQUAL scale focused on the performance component of the service quality model in which quality was defined as the disparity between expectations and performance. The battery of items used in the SERVQUAL multi-item scale is still used today as a foundation for instrument development. The primary areas considered in the scale involved tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. For many years these dimensions were regarded as the basis for service quality measurement.

## **THE SERVQUAL AND HOLSAT INSTRUMENTS**

### **THE SERVQUAL INSTRUMENT**

The SERVQUAL instrument was developed by Parasuramen et al. in 1985 to measure service quality. The instrument consists of 22 statements across five dimensions: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Fick and Ritchie (1991) had demonstrated the usefulness of the SERVQUAL instrument in measuring service quality in hospitality-related service industries, although a number of concerns and shortcomings of the instrument were identified. Saleh and Ryan had (1991) developed a modified SERVQUAL questionnaire to survey guests and the management staff of a hotel. A number of criticisms have been made regarding the underlying conceptualization and operationlisation of the SERVQUAL model and scale (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Brown et al., 1992). Carman (1990) had stated that the 22 SERVQUAL items could not be used exactly as designed unless modifications to items and wordings were made to accommodate the new settings. Despite the criticism of the applicability of SERVQUAL, many researchers have found that the instrument is useful for measuring service quality

### **THE HOLSAT INSTRUMENT**

HOLSAT is the name given to the research instrument designed for particular

investigation. The design of the HOLSAT survey builds on previous work to develop indicators of service quality from the consumer perspective. In particular, the method seeks to clarify some confusion that exists in the literature between the terms expectation, perception and satisfaction.

Based on the service quality instrument developed by Parasuraman et al. (1998), and holiday satisfaction instrument, this study aims to assess any service quality gaps between customers' expectations and perceptions of Cyprus mainly important hotels, and to explore the factors in predicting customers' satisfaction with Cyprus hospitality industry.

### **KEY VARIABLES IN THE LITERATURE**

In sum, a number of researchers have investigated the customers' expectations and perceptions of the service quality, and the customer satisfaction. As the key variables, service quality and customer satisfaction have been examine within the large amount of literature. Undoubtedly, survey instrument design is a highly technical process. Study in instrument design and testing is critical to the development of a valid and reliable survey instrument.

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This research will present the research methodology through sampling and assessing consumer opinion in order to provide the hotels with data that could assist hospitality officials in their future effort to develop service-improvement programs. The study will be a descriptive research design, because it will involve the use of secondary research in the form of existing information to design a consumer opinion survey, and descriptive statistics for the assessment and presentation of data. A self-administered survey questionnaire will be used to collect data from the target samples. The questionnaire is consisted of three sections: general information about the respondent and holiday purposes, ratings on expectations, and ratings on the overall holiday satisfaction. The respondents were first required to assess performance of those facilities and services identified by the questionnaire on 7-point performance scale. The study adopted the use of a single overall measure of tourist satisfaction. There will be several procedures used in completing this study. First, a review of literature will be conducted. Second, participating hotels by major tourist region will be contacted. Third, the instrument will undergo testing. Fourth, the survey will be implemented. Instruments will be delivered to the community sample. Surveys of

visitors will be conducted in hotels. Fifth, survey results will be prepared for presentation. Some tables and illustrations will be included.

#### SECONDARY DATA

The data collection will be carried out in two stages. The first stage adopts an inductive, qualitative approach in order to identify the SERVQUAL issues of importance to hospitality industry participants. Secondary data will be in the form of the magazines (Hotels, Hospitality Industry, etc.), newspaper articles, Hotel brochure, and all related information from Internet, will be collected. As a result of the data collection, a number of findings will be structured into a simple consumer opinion survey. The survey will be self-administered and so designed as to collect data regarding the relative importance of factors dealing with lodging, food service, and service attitude.

#### PRIMARY DATA

The second stage will be primary data collection. Primary data collection methods will include the self-administered survey questionnaire.

##### Questionnaires

The structured questionnaire supposes to contain four parts. Part 1 will be designed to assess customers' expectations of service quality on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" (7) to "strongly disagree" (1). Part 2 will assess customers' perceptions of service quality on the same 7-point Likert scale. Part (3) will be used to evaluate customers' overall satisfaction with service quality, on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "very satisfied" (7) to "very dissatisfied" (1). Part 4 is the collected socio-demographic data about the respondents. The surveys was conducted from May 2005 to July 2005. The questionnaire used in this survey has been extracted by the revised publication of the SERVQUAL tool and will be presented in future.

##### Interviews

Interview is an important measurement for the research information. Through the interview, we can direct contact with members of the firm, and gather the newest information. The contact method chosen, was personal interviews where the interviewer was face-to-face with respondents. A series of in-depth interviews was conducted with hotels guests to gain the expectation and perception of the hotels when they considered important when selecting hotels.

## **Sample**

The sample will select six hotels within the whole Cyprus. There are: Holiday inn hotel and Cyprus Hilton Hotel in Nicosia, Amathus Beach Hotel in Limassol, Venus Beach Hotel and Pioneer Beach Hotel in Pafos, Adamas Beach Hotel in Ayia Napa. The reason for choosing a wide range of hotels in different destination was to gain the valuable information; which thus, could be used to achieve a reliable and valid research project. The sample unit used in the survey, were hotels guests, both male and female, above age of 18. A total of 300 questionnaires had been distributed to guests lodging in the hotels. The sample size was limited to a quota of 30 respondents per hotel. Through a simple random sample selection each hotel guest had an equal chance of being selected for an interview. A convenient sampling approach to use could have been to choose the sample for this study. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the sampling unit, and was collected immediately after completion.

## **INSTRUMENTS**

There are two mainly research instruments designed for analyzing the concepts of quality service and consumer satisfaction. There are: SERVQUAL, and HOLSAT. In the SERVQUAL instrument, five elements of service quality will be tested: reliability, responsiveness, tangibles, empathy and assurance. Gap scores will be calculated based on the difference between expectation and perception of service delivery. The other instrument is HOLSAT; it will be used to measure holiday and hotel satisfaction. The pilot study will contribute to this instrument. An integral part of the development of HOLSAT will be the testing of it in the main destinations (Nicosia, Pafos, Limassol, Ayia Napa) in Cyprus. The instrument will be divided into distinct sections. Respondents will be asked to rate their opinions according to a seven-part Likert-type scale, 1-7. The data entry will be done using the Questionnaire Processing System program that result in a database of quantitative information from which a cross-tabular report will be produced.

## **FINDINGS & DISCUSSION**

### **Demographic Findings**

The first set of analysis, has involved objective statistics associated with the major

personal and socio-demographic variables. Table 1 contains details from this analysis.

*TABLE 2: Profile of tourists in Cyprus*

Variables		
Gender	Male	44.9%
	Female	55.1%
Age	18-24	15.4%
	25-34	15.7%
	35-44	21.1%
	45-54	15.3%
	55-64	17.7%
	65 or above	14.8%
Occupation	Student	10.0%
	Retired	24.0%
	Housewife	14.0%
	Staffs	35.0%
	Manager	14.0%
	Others	3.0%
Nationality	British	30%
	Russian	32%
	Germany	14%
	Finish	8%
	French	3%
	Arabic	4%
	Norway	2%
Others	7%	
Purpose of traveling	Business	19.6%
	Leisure	69.4%
	Visiting friends & relatives	11.0%
Length of stay	Less than 7days	15%
	7days	31%
	14days	35%
	21days	10%

Of the 300 questionnaires received, 210 were completed and usable, representing a rate of 70%. Table 1 shows that 55.1% of the respondents were female. Most respondents were in the age categories 35-44 (21.1%) or 55-64(17.7%). The majority of respondents were staffs (35%), retired (24%). Russia, Britain, and Germany were the top three countries regarding to the tourists arrival volume. It appeared that respondents with a “leisure” purpose for their trip (69.4%) dominated the sample, while “business” and “visiting friends/relatives” accounted for only 19.6% and 11.0% respectively. Obviously, 7 days and 14 days are the most popular options for the length of stay.

### Expectations vs. Perceptions

It is important to remember that this is a pilot study and that the significance of results may be reduced by the emergent limitations of the methodology. They do, however, serve to illustrate the potential utility of SERVQUAL and HOLSAT in the measurement of holiday satisfaction. Results are presented in tabular and graphical forms in order to improve clarity of interpretation of a detailed and complex survey. The response to the questionnaire is presented in number order in table3.

*Table 3: Distribution of service quality values between consumer's expectations and perceptions of Cyprus hospitality industry (n =300)*

Statement	Expectation	Perceptions	Gap means
1. The holiday would be good value for money.	5.48	4.96	-0.52
2. The destination would be safe and secure	5.57	4.13	-1.44
3. The destination would have a variety of nightlife.	5.53	4.77	-0.76
4. The would have convenient operating hours	5.06	4.42	-0.64
5. The destination would have a variety of restaurants and/or bars	6.64	4.45	-2.19
6. Employees would never be too busy to respond	6.52	4.31	-2.21
7. The restaurants and bars would be cheap.	6.32	4.10	-2.22
8. I would be able to sample local food and drink.	6.54	4.52	-2.02
9. The shops would be cheap.	6.27	4.33	-1.94
10. The nightlife would be cheap.	5.87	3.70	-2.17
11. The hotel staff would be friendly.	5.79	4.19	-1.60
12. The room would have quality furnishings.	6.00	4.16	-1.84
13. Facilities in the rooms would be function properly.	5.76	4.49	-1.27
14. Hotel meals would be of a high quality.	6.03	4.00	-2.03
15. Laundry service would be good.	6.18	4.22	-1.96

16. I would be able to mix and talk with Cypriot people.	6.13	4.40	-1.73
17. I expected the good weather conditions in the area	6.13	4.35	-1.78
18. I would be able to learn more about Cyprus history.	5.57	3.98	-1.59
19. I would be able to visit museums and archaeological sights.	5.21	4.33	-0.88
20. I would be able to use local transports.	5.44	3.97	-1.47
21. The beach and ocean would be clean.	5.79	4.20	-1.59
22. Efficiency of check-in and check-out at the accommodation	5.69	4.92	-0.77
23. Employees would be neat employees	5.65	5.25	-0.40

Note: Gap-mean score is defined as: Gap-mean= Perception mean - Expectation mean.

Table 3 shows the respective expective expectation means, perception means, gaps mean regarding the service quality received by tourists in Cyprus. The results show that tourists had relatively high expectations (means=6.52) of hotels, in regard to employees would never be too busy to respond. However, relatively low expectation scores (means=5.06) were found for items referring to convenient operating hours. The findings suggest that.

It should be noted that all the perception scores in relation to the service attributes in this study were lower than the expectation scores, implying that each service attribute suffered a service quality shortfall. The largest gap scores were found for “ Employees are never too busy to respond to customers’ requests (gap score=-2.21). It might indicate that employees were not motivated to take the initiative in solving customer’s problems.

*Table 4: Results of factor analysis on 23 attributes and its five dimensions (n = 300)*

<u>Attributes</u>	<u>Factor</u>
1. The holiday would be good value for money. 2. The destination would be safe and secure 3. The destination would have a variety of nightlife. 4. The would have convenient operating hours 5. The destination would have a variety of restaurants and/or bars 6. Employees would never be too busy to respond	Factor 1 Responsive-ness & assurance
7. The restaurants and bars would be cheap. 8. I would be able to sample local food and drink. 9. The shops would be cheap. 10. The nightlife would be cheap. 11. The hotel staff would be friendly.	Factor 2 Reliability (-1.99)
12. The room would have quality furnishings. 13. Facilities in the rooms would be function properly. 14. Hotel meals would be of a high quality. 15. Laundry service would be good.	Factor 3 Empathy
16. I would be able to mix and talk with Cypriot people. 17. I expected the good weather conditions in the area 18. I would be able to learn more about Cyprus history.	Factor 4 Resources and corporate image

19. I would be able to visit museums and archaeological sights.	
20. I would be able to use local transports.	
21. The beach and ocean would be clean.	
22. Efficiency of check-in and check-out at the accommodation	Factor 5 Tangibility (-0.91)
23. Employees would be neat employees	

The results of factor analysis as shown in table 4 suggested that five factors, or dimensions with 23 variables from the original 26 variables, were abstracted for interpretation of the scale. The five dimensions were named: “responsiveness and assurance”, “reliability”, “empathy”, “resources and corporate image”, and “tangibility”.

Based on the results of factor analysis, table 3 presents the results of expectation, perception, and gap mean scores for the five factors. The results show that customers had the largest gap score (-1.99), for this factor, suggesting that they had felt relatively disappointed with hotels in relation to this aspect. The shortfall, may also suggest that employees were not able to deliver quality service as promised. The smallest gap score was tangibility (-0.91), indicating perhaps that most hotels were able to provide a computerized check-in and checkout facility, and to ensure that employees were neat and tidy, thus, generally meeting their customer’s expectations.

### **LIMITATIONS**

As for the limitations of this study, measurement of perceived service quality in terms of perceptions and expectations was made at the same time, in that respondents attempted to compare their perceptions of service quality with their expectations. Respondent bias due to demographic differences could have been representative of the whole population, due to the fact that a convenient sampling method was used to collect the data.

It could be argued that the study results might have been different, had the survey been conducted in different months of the season or in different seasons.

Also, there is a limitation, which relates to differences in perceptions of tourists, as the majority of sample in this study was British tourists. Thus, this study could be replicated with different nationalities, as the relative importance of destination components may be nationality-specific. The measurement items could also receive further refinement in future studies.

### **CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study accepts the hypothesis question as the research findings reveals that there was a gap between customer expectations and perceptions, in terms of the quality of the service provided by hotels, meaning that customer's expectations of service quality were not met. Factor analysis showed that "reliability", "responsiveness and assurance" were the most influential factors in this study in predicting customer satisfaction. These two factors had the largest gap scores, suggesting that customer's perception fell seriously short of their expectations. To be competitive, it seems that hotels should have to focus on more efforts on improving these two critical areas in terms of employees and professional service attitude.

To achieve this may mean that hotels will have to implement long-term human resource strategies to recruit, train and develop qualified employees. In turn, this may require additional investment in terms of time and training costs. The findings of this study have shown that such an investment is critical to fulfilling customer's expectations, and ensuring customer satisfaction.

In conclusion, delivering quality service will be one of the major challenges facing hospitality managers in the opening years of the next millennium. It will be an essential condition for success in the emerging, keenly competitive, global hospitality markets. While the future importance of delivering quality hospitality service is easy to discern and to agree on, doing so presents some difficult and intriguing management issues.

### **MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The challenge of providing high quality tourist experiences becomes less difficult when managers know what tourists' needs are, and correctly assess the importance that tourists attach to individual elements that make up the total tourist experience. Given the criticality of satisfaction data in developing management strategies and scarcity of research on this concept in Cyprus, the study results have important implications for the Cyprus Tourism Office, which has the opportunity to make recommendations to the various tourism sectors that operates. Considering the multi-dimensional nature of factors affecting tourist satisfaction, authorities should ensure that these factors work together in a systematic and synergistic fashion to secure the delivery of quality experiences to the tourist. The current level of overall satisfaction with the holiday in tourist destinations in Cyprus appears to be largely determined by the level of tourist impressions of hospitality, service quality, accommodation, catering, and other tourist facilities and activities in which the tourist participated. Therefore, there is substantial responsibility on

the part of those who run these facilities. They need to ensure that current levels of satisfaction with their businesses are maintained or improved. This responsibility is particularly critical given that these components impact significantly on the likelihood of recommending, an important factor in generating favorable word-of-mouth. In today's highly competitive market, the destination's survival depends greatly on its ability to provide superior tourist experience, which generates tourist satisfaction.

How can hospitality businesses manage them more effectively? We suggest a two-step process in the evaluation of a service chain.

*First*, hospitality managers should identify each encounter in the service chain that they wish to take apart, and then single out those that are of operational or strategic significance – in effect, focusing in on the few encounters that really make a difference to guest experience and thus to the bottom line.

*Second*, apply what we have called the 6 S's to improving these critical encounters through effective redesign. These are:

Specification

Staff

Space

System

Support

Style

Specification means clearly detailing information about the what, when, where, and how, of service encounters. It requires giving careful thought to the linkages between particular service encounters and others in the service chain.

Which staff members are involved in providing the service? What skills do they need? What training has been provided? How committed are they to service goals? Is team cooperation or individual empowerment required? What attitudes are appropriate—friendly, open, helpful, warm service, or efficient? What staff members deal with guests? Are staff presentations and appearances appropriate?

Is there adequate space to handle each of the activities such as waiting, handling luggage? Are the necessary systems to support the service in place? Is the appropriate technology being fully used? Are the services provided given the facilities and financial and human support needed

to do the job? Is the management style, and marketing orientation, appropriate for the tasks?

When hospitality managers have carried out this two-step process, they will be in an excellent position to make decisions that will both improve the quality of hospitality services provided and the guest perceptions of them.

In short, it is clear that hospitality and tourism managers need to undertake periodic tourist satisfaction assessment, as satisfaction cannot be improved without measuring it. However, they also need to incorporate relative performance measurement into their investigations, as any information without relative performance is incomplete. Service encounters are the building blocks of quality in hospitality service. Zeroing in on hospitality service quality in this manner will help hospitality businesses meet the service challenges of the millennium, enhance their market positions. So far, our hypothesis has been proved. "A customer's expectation and perception of service quality survey will provide significant information that can be used by hospitality leaders to develop the service-improvement programs".

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