



Quality and the Customer Experience

As a hotel GM, management company, or owner a key requirement of the role is in providing value to guests. However defining and creating that value is frequently not as simple as it appears, because the hotel attributes that create value depend on the reason a guest is travelling (e.g., for business or for pleasure). Furthermore what is of value to a guest when they are choosing somewhere to stay may not be the same attributes that create value during a stay.

Therefore its essential to know what decision making factors play a central role before and during the stay.- and to ensure that the brand, the hotel and its team can deliver on these attributes.

Getting the balance right in Consumer Experience Management

We tend to think that delivering value prior to a guest stay can be easily satisfied as long as we can put a tick in the box of a great looking web site or an efficient booking engine.

What we forget to take into consideration is that every time a guest touches the hotel – through the reservations team, through the web site, through our call centre, via a meeting and events enquiry - we build up Consumer Experience Credits or Debits according to how well that experience was delivered.

By the time a guest arrives on property they may well have considered hundreds of attributes of your hotel before making a decision to stay. The Experience Credits or Debits balance will have already influenced how the guest perceives the value that your team and your property deliver during the stay. This means that you could be starting the experience game way back behind pole position.

How to gain Pole Position in Customer Experience Management



A happy guest is a guest whose expectations are consistently met and even exceeded – both before and during the stay. Creating a strategy that monitors and tracks guest experience from every brand touchpoint means that you can track what expectations exist and how to deliver them. The attributes that create value for guests will change depending on their reasons for travel. Value-creating attributes for a young mum and family will be different from those of a business traveller. Tracking and delivering on these attributes is central to creating value prior to a stay. This means spending time on identifying how guests create relationships with a brand or property and putting in

place the right checks and balances to monitor how well a positive customer experience is delivered – before the guest gets to the property.

In it for the Long Haul

Once you have the guest in the hotel its essential to close the loop and put in place a continuing strategy to monitor operational delivery of value during the stay. Did we deliver on the experience before the guest got to stay with us? Are we continuing to live up to expectations once they arrive? Do we know where we perform well or where we need to improve when our guests are with us?

Monitoring operational performance through mystery shopping programmes provides insight into how a property is performing against customer expectations and the brand promise. This level of visibility into performance is invaluable in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the operation and where the team is either excelling or needs more support in delivering on customer needs.

Creating the perfect customer journey

It's not always possible to cover off every single attribute of importance to a guest when they choose to stay with us, but defining and monitoring the delivery of our guest experience prior to a stay will ensure we get more Customer Experience Credits prior to arrival and will create a positive platform for the team on property to build on. Creating a robust quality programme delivers a clear visibility on operational performance. Programmes that cover the entire customer journey provide a clear insight into the business and how we deliver on guest expectations – providing greater value and ultimately supporting stronger more positive guest experiences.