

Hotel Guest Satisfaction Differs Across Countries

The truth is out – hotels that operate in different countries with identical performance levels can earn totally different satisfaction ratings for guests. This was revealed in a new study organized by J.D. Power and released by the Cornell Center for Hospitality Research (CHR).

The study was part of CHR's Industry Perspective series which strives to examine the structural differences if any, in guest satisfaction levels in a total of 8 countries. The J.D. Power study, which was aptly called "Lost in Translation: Cross Country Differences in Hotel Guest Satisfaction" was done by Stuart Greif, Weihua Huang and Gina Pingitore. It is available free of charge.



According to Pingitore, the researchers noted that hotels which were in different countries consistently received satisfaction scores that were not similar; these scores could not be based on the operations of the hotels. The authors used some data that had been collected over a span of 2 years from almost 200,000 hotel guests dotted around the eight countries. This provided them with an opportunity to study the different characteristics of the guests, paying keen attention to the factors they used to determine the satisfaction levels. For this particular study the 8 countries included; USA, Canada, Japan, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany and Spain.

Even though most of the guests from the above mentioned countries had lots of similarities, the study identify some points of departure with regards to specific standard operating procedures and guest satisfaction factors that varied in importance depending on the country of origin.



An interesting similarity was the fact that all guests from the 8 countries looked at the location of the hotel first. Most of the countries had price coming in a close second apart from the Spaniards who placed previous experience as second and Italians who felt the reputation of the establishment was the

second concern.

The Japanese were the only guests who felt that a package deal was important. With all factors being equal, the study noted that guests from the US and Canada did provide the highest ratings whereas the Japanese provided lower ratings. This kind of information is very important for international chains.



The most impatient guests were those from the US; a check in delay of five minutes caused a considerable drop in their satisfaction levels. In comparison, guests from Japan were more patient and only showed considerable drop in satisfaction levels once the wait time exceeded 30 minutes. The researchers pointed out that international chains need to take into account these differences.

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