

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master's degree in
Management from the Nova School of Business and Economics.

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN CITY HOTELS –
THE POST-VISIT STAGE: THE IMPACT OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON
ATTITUDINAL LOYALTY.**

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Abstract

The research aims to analyze some important aspects of customer experience in city hotels visited for leisure purposes. The paper assesses the impact of online reviews on customers who are already loyal to city hotels, showing differences depending on the degree of attitudinal loyalty.

Keywords: City Hotels, Customer Experience, Customer Satisfaction, Electronic Word-Of-Mouth (eWOM), Loyalty, Online Reviews.

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1. Introduction

Customer experience can be defined as “any sensation or knowledge acquisition resulting from some level of interaction with different elements of a context created by the service provider” (Gupta e Vajic 2000). It comes as an extension of the “experience economy”, a concept that was introduced in the late nineties and was described as the fourth wave in the economic progression (Pine II e Gilmore 1998).

In recent years customer experience has attracted increasing attention and importance in all businesses (Godovykh e Tasci 2020) and is often used as a tool for differentiation and competitive advantage (Gentile, Spiller e Noci 2007). In fact, 85% of business management believes that customer experience is the main competitive advantage, more meaningful than price, product, and quality (Godovykh e Tasci 2020). Moreover, a positive customer experience and subsequent positive word of mouth (WoM) are demonstrated to increase efficiency and minimize issues and complaints from customers (PwC 2017).

In hospitality customer experience is everything, it is the core of the whole industry (Kandampully, Zhang e Jaakkola 2018). It is the main indicator of quality service, and it is one of the few tools that players can use to increase the loyalty rate of guests.

In this sector, customer experience is the result of all interactions of the guest with the service provider, and it can usually be divided into three different stages: pre-visit, onsite, and post-visit (Godovykh e Tasci 2020). It follows that customer experience in hospitality is complex, as it does not only depend on accommodation, food and beverage outlets, and staff, but also on supporting features including on-site technology, website, social media accounts, and online and offline interactions (Kandampully, Zhang e Jaakkola 2018). In order to improve the overall experience of the guests, it is essential to focus on each different stage and to understand what should be fixed, what could be implemented, and what kind of innovations could be introduced. In the context of city hotels, which is typically very fragmented and competitive, providing a seamless customer experience becomes even more essential. Usually, guests intend to stay there

only for a short time – a maximum of one week – and expect to receive the best service while enjoying the city (Walker 2020).

After the rise of alternative accommodations, such as “Airbnb” (O'Brien 2022), it is crucial for hotel managers to keep high standards in all departments and to always provide an innovative and fulfilling experience, which is what attracts guests to hotels.

This paper has the objective to develop a thorough analysis on the topic, and it is structured in eight sections: the brief introduction is followed by the research proposal, the choice of research, and the context of the study; a literature review on the specific topics is then presented and introduces the three main research questions of the paper.

2. Research Proposal

The study aims to fill some precise research gaps identified in the three stages of experience: pre-visit, onsite, and post-visit. Each of the main sections addresses one stage and was developed by one of the co-authors.

The pre-visit stage is analyzed through a research on guests' expectations and their sensitivity to different hotel categories, followed by a presentation of managerial implications driven by the findings. The research question is the following: what are customers' expectations in city hotels visited for leisure purposes, and are these expectations sensitive to different hotel categories?

The section related to the onsite stage aims to fully comprehend the implication of the experience economy on hospitality strategies aspiring to attract new guests, such as promotional packages. This guest-centric analysis investigates the role of city hotel packages in driving superior experiences, with a focus on leisure travelers in the city of Paris, and is embodied in the research question: what types of pre-prepared packages can improve guests' experience in city hotels located in Paris?

The section on the post-visit stage is linked to the evaluation of the impact of electronic word-

of-mouth on loyal customers according to different levels of attitudinal loyalty, such as cognitive, affective, and conative loyalty, and is represented by the research question: are attitudinal loyal customers influenced by online reviews after their visit to city hotels for leisure purposes?

Overall, the study will provide insights on how to improve customer experience in city hotels when visited for leisure purposes.

3. Choice of Research

The authors of this paper had the opportunity to obtain a summer internship in a city hotel located in Paris, and to work together on an interesting challenge during the summer of 2022. The hotel is endorsed by a famous brand (premium category), and the challenge aimed to find strategies to attract more leisure customers during the summer months, which usually display lower occupancy rates compared to other periods of the year in Paris.

During the internship, the authors were kindly hosted by the property, and could thus observe all the operations and the management practices from within, as well as try to understand the attitudes and thoughts of its guests.

This has inspired the choice of research, as the centrality of customer experience was widely recognized during the project. The importance of being customer-centric emerged from the experience and led to a growing interest in analyzing the topic in its entirety, and in understanding what some practices to improve the overall guest experience could be.

The desire to learn more about the topic was also driven by the content of some courses attended at Nova School of Business and Economics during the academic year 2021-2022, where the students had the opportunity to discover some theories related to customer experience and to build some theoretical background about it, as well as to develop some skills on the matter.

4. Context of the Study: The Parisian Tourism Sector

Tourists who decide to visit Paris are mostly driven by their willingness to experience the Parisian lifestyle. According to statistics, Paris is ranked to be the leading capital city in terms of cultural attractions worldwide with 4,206 cultural sites open to the public in June 2021. This factor represents a great competitive advantage when compared with other European cities; for instance, Paris has 2,726 sites more than Milan (Italy) which shows only 1,480 sites (STATISTA 2021).

Outstanding is the performance of the Louvre Museum, which is ranked as the most visited museum in the world, obtaining an estimate that ranges between 2.7 and 2.8 million visitors during Covid-19's years and 9.6 million in 2019 (Themed Entertainment Association 2022).

A crucial factor is played by the transport accessibility of the city, which makes the entire customer journey more enjoyable for guests. A study conducted by Christie & Co underlines how the powerful transportation system (including airport, public transport, and railway accessibility), ranked among the best in Europe and France, is one of the many drivers for Parisian tourism's success (Christie&Co France 2020).

Studies have recognized three main tourist districts in the city of Paris, which are Île de la Cité, Montmartre, and the Opéra district, with each of them showing unique features in terms of historical importance and presence of cultural and shopping attractions.

Historically, the Opéra district, neighbourhood in which the city hotel where the authors worked during the internship is located, registers the highest number of five-stars hotels in the entire city, due to its proximity to the famous "Galeries Lafayette Haussmann" and to many companies' headquarters (as "Le Figaro" Newspaper) (Pearce 1998).

In 2021, a year after Covid-19's outbreak, the number of hotels in the city was 1,611, divided into the following categories (Insee 2022):

Hotel Category	Number of Properties
Unclassified	201
One-star Hotels	22
Two-star Hotels	171
Three-star Hotels	696
Four-star Hotels	426
Five-star Hotels	95

*Table 1: Hotels in Paris in 2021.
Source: Insee, 2022.*

Moreover, the number of Airbnb in Paris counts 56,739 listings divided between apartments/entire homes, private rooms, hotel rooms, and shared rooms (Inside Airbnb 2022), making it the second city after London per number of listings on the platform in 2022 (Inside Airbnb 2022).

According to the newspaper “Le Monde”, the capital city of France is expected to reach 33 million visitors by the end of the year 2022, an amount that has already impacted positively the entire hotel industry, that reached an average occupancy rate of 75% in May (Le Monde 2022). Although the tourism and travel sector contributed 210.7 billion euros to the French GDP only in 2019 (WTTC 2021), one should also consider the downside of excessive tourist arrivals and the implication on the city and its citizens.

4.1. The Tourism Destination Triad

As the guest journey and customer satisfaction involve not only direct touchpoints with the hotel but also indirect ones, the service experience is highly affected by external variables affecting the customer outside of the property (Marc Stickdorn 2009).

In the specific case of the city of Paris, city hotels can benefit from unique urban branding linked to the style of the city itself and its historical legacy, which contributes to high expectations during the pre-service stage and to a desire for specific experiences, such as the

shopping ones (Rabbiosi 2015).

All the factors described imply a certain relationship between Parisian attractions and hotels, where it is necessary to include destination management organizations (DMOs).

Research conducted by Sheehan, reports that city hotels are part of the so-called “tourism destination triad”, a unique relation between the three stakeholders previously listed. The author states that hotels’ role in promoting a destination begins with the promotional pricing offered to its guests, whereas DMOs, who play the role of coordinators, should be in line with the city’s visions and goals for the future. City institutions, to this extent, are the ones in charge of regulating financial resources with the aim to protect and guarantee the public good (Sheehan 2007).

After the easing of Covid-19 restrictions during the second and third quarters of 2022, cities have experienced a drastic increase in arrivals, that put to test hotels and tourist hotspots (The Guardian 2022) – which underlines how the tourism triad has failed during the last year.

4.2. City Hotels

City hotels are properties located in the center of a city, usually in a strategic location that allows guests to easily reach tourist attractions and public transportation. These features have made city hotels the preferred choice for leisure customers and corporate travelers in history (O’Neill 2018).

City hotels, likely any other type of hotels, differ depending on size, segments served, and type of services offered to guests. According to studies, city hotels located in the finest locations have higher average room rates (ARR) when compared to competitors located in distant areas (Shoval 2006).

5. Literature Review

5.1. The Experience Economy

To better understand the context of the study and the findings of the research, a literature review was conducted on the topic of customer experience, and in particular on customer experience in the hospitality industry.

The concept of customer experience as we perceive it nowadays has originated from what is known as the “experience economy”. This term was first used in 1998 by two American authors, B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore. They argue that the history of economic progress can be summarized in four stages, which are tied to the progression of economic value.

The first step relates to “commodities”, which are undifferentiated and have to be sold at market value, followed by “goods”, which are commodities processed up to a certain degree and can be priced accordingly.

The third stage is the one of “services”, which involves a particular type of activity and delivers them directly to customers. Services can guarantee a competitive position in the market, even though this might also be applicable to goods sometimes.

The fourth stage introduced by the authors is the one of “experiences”.

Up to that moment, economists used to tie services and experiences together, when, in reality, they are two distinct economic offerings. Experiences are “as real as (...) any service, good, or commodity” (Pine II e Gilmore 1998), and for this reason constitute a different step of economic value progression.

Experiences combine services and goods to engage customers and leave them with a great memory. They should be designed to be engaging and should require a fee. As cited in the

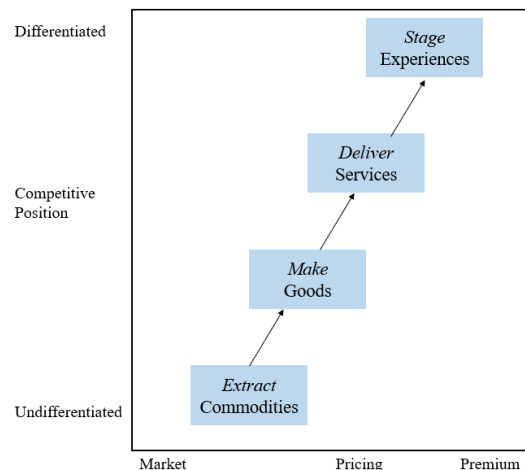


Figure 1: The Progression of Economic Value.
Source: “The Experience Economy”, Pine & Gilmore, 1998 – own representation.

article, “commodities are fungible, goods tangible, services intangible, and experiences memorable”. It follows that experiences are highly subjective, and thus it is extremely unlikely for two people to report the same level of involvement. Nowadays, the experience economy is a widely used concept in the hospitality and leisure industry, whose primary goal is to provide high-quality experiences (Mehmet e Engen 2011).

5.1.1. Dimensions of Experience

As for goods and services, experiences have their qualities and characteristics as well. Following Pine and Gilmore’s research article (1998), there are two main dimensions to consider: “customer participation”, the degree of involvement of the customer, and the “connection” of the customers to the surroundings (Hosany e Witham 2009).

Customer participation can either be “passive”, where customers are not involved in the performance, or “active”, where they are deeply involved. Connection, or environmental relationship, also has two extremes in the spectrum: “absorption”, which happens when the customer is involved in the experience but not completely, and “immersion”, which is realized when customers are totally immersed in “sights, sounds, and smells around them” (Pine II e Gilmore 1998).

These two dimensions can help to categorize experiences in four different sets (the four E’s): entertainment, educational, esthetic, and escapist.

Entertainment includes all those activities where participation is rather passive and customers are absorbed in the activity; an example is watching a football match on tv.

Educational experiences involve active participation from customers while still being in a state of absorption, because they perceive themselves as external to the event; an example is participating in a workshop. Escapist experiences usually display active participation, but customers are immersed in them; this happens for example when playing in an orchestra. The fourth “realm” of experience is the escapist: customers show little involvement in the activity

(passive participation), but they are immersed in it with all their senses; this is the case for visitors of an art gallery (Pine II e Gilmore 1998).

Experiences in the tourism sector can touch three of the four dimensions: they can be educational when tourists expect to increase their knowledge or acquire new skills (Şeker e Unur 2022); they can be escapist when tourists engage actively in activities in order to escape from the rush of modern life, and they can be esthetic when guests lose themselves in admiring landscapes or immersive ambience. Entertainment is less frequently realized, as there is either some degree of participation or immersion when considering an experience in the tourism sector.

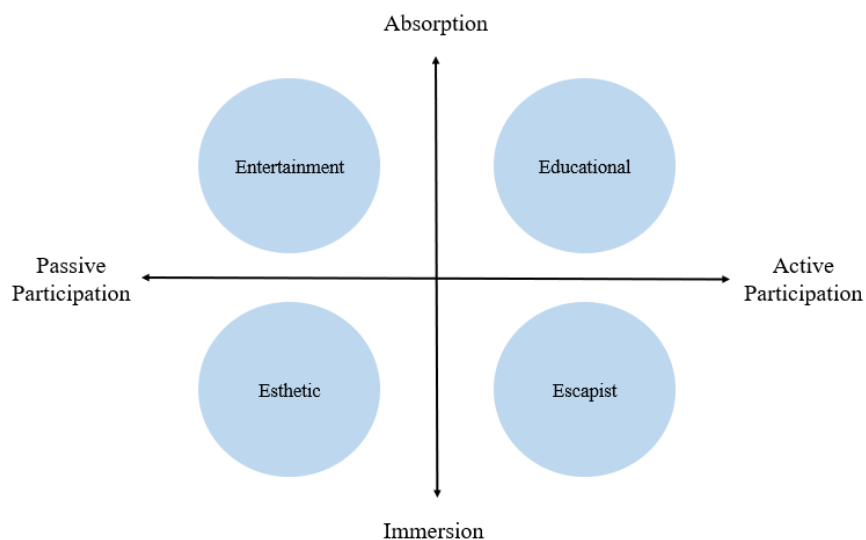


Figure 2: The Four Realms of Experience.
 Source: “The Experience Economy”, Pine & Gilmore, 1998 – own representation.

5.2. The Stages of Experience: Customer Journey

Guest experience can be defined also as “an individual's immediate or ongoing, subjective and personal response to an activity, setting or event outside of their usual environment” (Packer e Ballantyne 2016). This means that the experience starts from internal reactions (concepts and beliefs) triggered by physical and social stimuli through guests’ attributes (past experiences, passions, and expectations). This then leads to guest interpretations and to the creation of impressions (memories and narratives).

This continuum coincides with three phases of experience: pre-visit, onsite, and post-visit (Godovykh e Tasci 2020), and is also called customer journey.

The customer journey consists of a series of touchpoints between the customer and a service, product, or brand. The most significant steps of the hotel guest journey are the following (Operto 2022):

- Inspiration and research (pre-visit): it refers to all the steps the guest goes through before deciding to book any stay. The touchpoints can be word of mouth, online travel platforms (OTAs), social media, and influencers.
- Booking (pre-visit): this happens when the guest checks prices and online reviews and books the stay through OTAs, the official website, or by calling the hotel directly or sending an e-mail to the front desk.
- Pre-arrival planning (pre-visit): it begins when the guest books the stay and ends when the guest arrives at the hotel. During this step guests typically search for activities to do at the destination and gather more information about their trip. Touchpoints will be many and very different, from websites promoting activities and excursions to magazines and social media.
- Check-in (onsite): when the guest physically arrives at the hotel. He/She will have the first approach with the hotel staff and observe the ease of access to the property and the room conditions.
- Stay (onsite): during this phase, the guest enjoys his time at the property. It ends with the check-out and will shape significantly, if not entirely, the opinion of the guest about the property. Touchpoints would be the hotel staff, the activities organised, a mid-stay contact (whenever applicable), and the hotel services.
- Check-out (onsite): the guest is ready to leave the property and is presented with the bill. This is a crucial moment, as it is the last opportunity for the hotel to intervene before

the guest leaves a review in the booking engine or on the website.

- Review and post-stay (post-visit): the journey does not end once the guest leaves. He/She will remember the trip, share experiences with friends and family, write a review and come back if the opinion was positive, which could lead to the guest becoming loyal to the hotel. At this point, it is also necessary to understand the degree of customer satisfaction.

5.3. Understanding Customer Satisfaction through the Kano Model in the Tourism Sector

In 1984, Professor Noriaki Kano established a model to be used to measure customers' satisfaction with a product or a service purchased: the result comes from the difference between expected quality and perceived quality.

Due to its close connection to the final customer, the model has been applied in different tourism research and studies (Zobnina e Rozhkov 2018); (Albu 2009); (Mikulić e Prebežac 2016).

Firstly, the author sorted clients' preferences into five classifications (Kano 1984):

- “Must-Be Quality” refers to all the elements related to the product that can only create dissatisfaction whenever absent, but that are not drivers of satisfaction as they are considered essentials by customers.
- “One-Dimensional Quality”, also called desired quality, includes all the requirements that once met by the provider, make the guest more pleased.
- “Attractive Quality”: additional elements or unexpected services that can positively influence customer satisfaction and therefore also the competitiveness of the firm performing the superior service.
- “Indifferent Quality”: features that do not impact with their presence or absence the overall experience of the customer.
- “Reverse Quality”: elements that can highly create dissatisfaction when present – therefore the absence can drive guest's satisfaction.

The change in customers' needs and wants makes the entire model extremely dynamic; indeed, attractive quality features get habitually considered as basic needs.

The empirical measurement of the Kano model is performed by examining clients' judgements through the conduction of a survey, which implies two questions (one functional and the other dysfunctional) to which respondents need to answer by using a scale composed of "I like it", "I expect it", "I am neutral", "I can tolerate it", "I dislike it". Each of the answers is then associated with one of the previously listed qualities.

Finally, the model is used to derive managerial decisions, using the Kano Diagram, which shows whether a service/product needs more investments to reach a different quality feature, depending on the level of satisfaction derived from it.

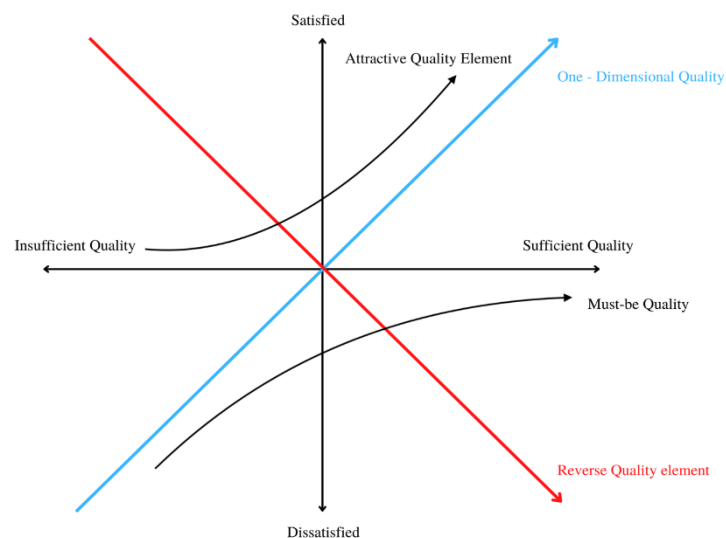


Figure 3: Kano Model Diagram.
Source: Kano, 1984 - own production.

5.4. The Hospitality Model

Another very useful model to be adopted whenever a guest interacts with an organization providing hospitality is the "Hospitality Model", created by Reuland, Choudry, and Fagel in 1985.

The model sees two actors involved, the "provider" and the "receiver" of hospitality, which create the "hospitality experience" whenever they meet.

The provider offers the service, which the receiver appreciates through the payment.

The provider is characterized by three factors: the product, the behaviour, and the environment.

The product in the model refers to all the tangible elements of the hospitality offer that have a tradable value outside the context of hospitality, namely all the furniture of the accommodation.

The behavior explains the human element of the model, which is key to defining the whole experience. There are two types of behaviour: transactional and contextual.

Transactional behaviour underlines the direct interaction between the provider and the receiver, and can be either technical, whenever a task is performed according to the technical standards (check-in procedures, restaurant etiquette), or social, which implies the ability to connect with the receiver in the process of service delivery. In particular, this entails anticipating the unexpressed needs and wants of the guest and acting with empathy during the interaction with him/her.

On the other hand, contextual behaviour explains the indirect interaction between provider and receiver, which the guest usually creates by observing how the staff behaves with other guests. For example, whenever a guest sees other guests being treated kindly, he will create a good impression about the staff of the property, even if he did not have any direct interaction himself.

The third element is the environment, which can be classified as tangible (infrastructure, furnishing, art), and intangible, consisting of the atmosphere, the temperature at the location, and the particular perfume, and is also influenced by other guests. Product, behaviour, and environment should always be consistent and follow the same dynamics: the more consistent the formula is, the easier to communicate the nature of the provider to its receivers.

The second element of the model is the receiver. The receiver of the hospitality experience has a set of expressed and unexpressed needs and objectives, and is actively involved in the creation of the experience. “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs”, designed by Abraham Maslow in 1943, can be a helpful tool in assessing the main needs categories, as customers hardly express their needs clearly. The main goal should be to predict customers’ needs and to cater to their expectations,

in order to achieve an exceptional customer experience. Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be expressed through a pyramid: at the bottom of the pyramid there are the most basic needs (physiological needs and safety needs), followed by psychological needs (belongingness and love needs, and esteem needs) whereas on top there are self-fulfilment needs (self-actualization).

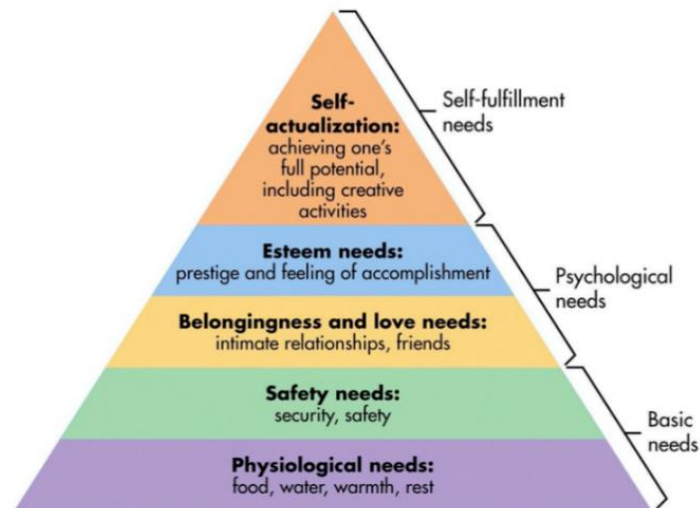


Figure 4: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.
Source: "A Theory of Human Motivation", Abraham Maslow 1943.

As for the objectives of the receiver of the hospitality experience, they usually remain unexpressed, yet they play an important role in the assessment of the quality of the experience. Finding the underlying objective of the guest allows the provider to serve him/her better and to develop stronger bonds. Possible objectives could be relaxation, enhancing social relationships, finding inspiration, solving a problem, and more.

It follows that the hospitality experience is a product of co-creation between provider and receiver, and comes from the match of product, behaviour, and environment to needs and objectives. A visual representation of the model can be found in Appendix 1.

This all leads to the importance of managing expectations. Expectations come from the receiver through needs and objectives, and are usually influenced by brand reputation. In order to have a positive customer experience, the hospitality experience must at least meet expectations. The more expectations are exceeded, the higher the guest satisfaction will be. Product, behaviour, and environment must be internally consistent, as to strengthen the formula and enhance the

communication power, which influences expectations.

5.5. Nature of Expectations

Customer expectations are a set of ideas that customers create about a product, a service, or a brand, and constitute what they “believe or hope will happen in the future” (Cambridge Dictionary 2022).

It is essential to meet these expectations, as it will guarantee that guests feel heard and taken care of, and will leave them satisfied with the product or service.

Focusing on the hotel sector, it is safe to say that when guest expectations are met, the guests will feel passive or neutral about the hotel. They might be satisfied with the stay but will not feel passionate about the place. They can recommend the hotel, but the feedback will probably be mixed (ReviewPro 2020).

Instead, when expectations are exceeded, guests will be particularly pleased with the stay and their satisfaction rate will be high enough to leave them with a great memory. They are more likely to write a positive review and recommend the hotel to someone else (Mews 2022). This means that expectations need to be catered to with the highest level of accuracy in order to create memorability, and need to be used as a tool to retain loyal guests and attract new ones.

On the other hand, when expectations are not met, an expectation gap will generate, which is the difference between the customers' internal perception and their expectations (Zeithaml, Parasuraman e Berry 1990). Guests will feel frustrated and will be more likely to spread negative word of mouth, which will damage the reputation of the hotel. Thus, the expectation gap should always be avoided by all means possible.

In addition to this, following a report published by Deloitte, it seems that guests are likely to spend 140% more at organizations after a positive experience where expectations are met (Monitor Deloitte 2020), and this can be a more than valid reason for hotels and other services in the hospitality industry to close the expectation gap.

When it comes to adapting products or rebranding spaces, hoteliers might forget the importance of customers' expectations and would tend to start by redesigning the change from operations instead of focusing on customers' needs and wants. That is, they could believe to be customer-centric while, in reality, the focus is on the supply side of the equation. Nowadays, being customer-centric is a critical element, and a comprehensive approach should always be adopted when innovating and transforming parts of the business.

All in all, understanding the expectations of customers for hotels nowadays could be used as a tool to improve customer experience and thus obtain higher guest satisfaction rates, which will generate great returns.

5.5.1. Guest Expectations in Hotels

Existing literature about guest expectations in hotels is extremely scarce, almost non-existent. The only articles on the topic are usually case studies referring to a single city, region, or country, and are thus not applicable to the scope of general research. There are also articles proposing alternative systems to rank hotels based on both preferences and expectations (Bi, et al. 2022), but no one reveals what the expectations truly are. The only trustworthy reference to guest expectations is to be found on websites from companies operating with property management systems (PMS) or managing online reviews, which are reliable sources but do not constitute any research. They do, however, constitute a good starting point for further analysis and leave space to be checked and validated.

What most guests expect from hotels nowadays, seems to be excellent service, personalization, and a good quality-to-price ratio (Mews 2022).

Excellent service is one of the most important requirements and is usually a determinant factor for a guest to decide whether to visit the hotel or not. Service entails many different departments of the hotel, including the personnel and the overall organization of operations. Personalization is also an underlying requirement of guests. It is usually difficult to grasp practically, but it is

an important element to keep guests engaged and passionate about their stay. It is about connecting with guests on a more emotional level, and letting them feel taken care of. It starts with small details and particular attention to the guest (Mews 2022).

Lastly, guests really care about a fair quality-to-price ratio. It follows that the higher the rate people are required to pay for their stay in a hotel, the more they will expect. The perceived value needs to be above par in order to motivate guests to come back.

As already mentioned in the choice of research, this study will focus on city hotels. As previously introduced, city hotels are located in the central area of cities and meet the needs of the traveling public for business or leisure reasons. They offer a range of accommodations and services, and they generally include a named restaurant, a named bar, a lounge, meeting and convention rooms, and a ballroom (Walker 2020).

Regarding expectations for city hotels specifically, there is a total lack of literature. This was one of the main reasons why the authors decided to further investigate the topic and to provide insights on a subject that has not been directly addressed before.

5.6. Promotional Packages in Hotels

A great way for hotels to set the right expectations about the stay is to offer packages. Promotional packages sold by hotels usually include the room night (base product) together with other additional products or services. The most known package options are half-board, full-board, and all-inclusive – which is mostly sold by resorts and usually include either two meals, all meals, or both meals and drinks to be enjoyed at the property at a special price (Cvent 2021).

Packages constitute an opportunity to offer a personalized experience, and if the content is communicated correctly the guest will know in advance what to expect from the stay.

In the specific case of city hotels, literature lacks studies about the relevance of packages in maximizing revenues. This is because before the Covid-19 outbreak the corporate sector was a

core business for city hotels, which did not have to spend any resources in attracting more guests to hotels. On the other hand, in February 2022, 42% of business travelers affirmed they did not intend to travel again for business purposes. This underlines the rise of a new travel concept named “bleisure travel” rooted in the idea of longer stays with higher flexibility for corporate travelers (Forbes 2022).

According to EHL Insights, the end of the pandemic has intensified competition among city hotels that need to diversify their identity and offers from rivals in order to attract more leisure customers (EHL Insights 2021).

Therefore, this has accentuated the importance of finding new ways to attract customers to city hotels. From the customer’s perspective, packages are a way to acquire different products at the same time, while from the property’s perspective, packages are marketing tools able to up-sell different products at the same time.

Scholars report that the experience and the service had during a stay are the two factors that gratify guests the most, and they also contribute to boosting their willingness to spend more (Hua 2020).

According to a study conducted by Statista, the creation of packages was the main distribution strategy during the second quarter of 2021 (Oracle 2021). Moreover, an investigation managed by Expedia Group states that packages that are well-tailored for a specific segment can drive more than 30% in average daily rates (ADRs) and cut down cancelations by four times (Maher 2018).

This leads to considering packages as a valuable tool for both improving customer experience and optimizing revenue management through different pricing strategies.

5.7. Pricing Strategies

In late 1980, revenue management was defined as a decision-making technique used to manage supply and demand in relation to prices and availability in the most efficient way. This

quantitative process relies on three main cornerstones: fixed capacity, consumable resources, and pricing discrimination (Georgiana-Florina 2022).

As reported by scholars, the current trends in revenue management extended the concept to different areas such as business strategies, pricing strategies, forecasting, inventory, and price optimization, setting booking controls, distribution channel management, and performance analysis and evaluation (Nair 2019).

The science of revenue management is strongly tied to pricing strategies due to the complexity of the hotel sector, to global technology innovation, and to the recent crises (Ye 2022). Authors suggest that the pricing strategy adopted by a hotel varies depending on the position of the property itself against its competitors and its context.

Moreover, the competitive advantage of a hotel can be driven by pricing strategies and non-pricing strategies (Nair 2019). Consistent with what was stated by Ivanov in 2014, the most widely implemented pricing strategies in hotels are demand-based pricing, optional product pricing, psychological pricing, promotional pricing, and captive product pricing. On the other hand, non-pricing strategies are capacity management, over-contracting and booking, room availability guarantee, and length of stay control (Nair 2019).

5.7.1. Promotional Pricing

Promotional pricing is a technique used to boost sales and make the product more appealing. Therefore, promotional pricing proposes to buyers an additional value, an upgrade to the items they are buying (MAO 2016). The upgrade might involve different products, varying from tangible to intangible ones, with the aim to enhance the customer experience and increase revenues from the hotel's side. During the last few years, Airbnb has clearly demonstrated how intangible products, such as authentic experiences connected to the social and cultural environment, represent a gain-gain situation for guests and properties (Erose Sthapit 2018). The variety of experiences offered has marked the difference between the traditional idea of

accommodation and of promotional pricing, showing that the concepts of sensation tourism and experience tourism should be deepened by hoteliers (Brondoni 2016).

5.8. The “Human Touch” and its Relevance to Customer Experience

As with any other service industry, hospitality is a customer-facing industry. It depends on its employees working in departments where direct contact with guests is the cornerstone: the front desk department, the food and beverage department, and the housekeeping department. As a consequence of being constantly in contact with the public, these departments are the ones to receive appraisals from visitors (Schwindt 1998).

People working in hotels represent a significant portion of the customer experience excellence drivers. A well-motivated and satisfied workforce has been proven to impact positively guests’ experiences (Afshan Naseem 2011). As suggested within the hospitality model, consistency is essential in all hospitality elements; this also applies to employees, who should reflect the hotel culture in their actions with customers.

Authenticity in terms of interaction with guests can influence the service quality perception and their overall experience during their stay at the hotel (Melissen 2014). Consequently, it is indispensable to involve the internationalization of specific quality standards together with the financial performance of the property. Quality standards are driven by proper employee training, defining internal communication procedures, well-defined standard operating procedures (SOPs), and by setting the business goal. All of these elements need to be the result of a never-ending improvement process and investment from the hotel’s management side (TARÍ 2022).

Once resources have been settled, building an effective employee branding, defined as “behaviour in favour of the service brand”, is a human resource practice necessary to build a competitive advantage against competitors (Praveen Dhiman 2020). This can consistently contribute to building a true relationship with customers, which will be more likely to return to

the hotel, thus becoming loyal, and make good use of electronic word-of-mouth, which is particularly relevant in the industry.

5.9. Electronic Word-Of-Mouth

According to Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler (2014), electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication is considered “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual or former customers about a product or company which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet”.

The hospitality industry is probably the most affected industry by this type of communication, and the impact of the eWOM phenomenon is particularly significant for the sector (Serra Cantalops e Salvi 2014).

During the last few years, there has been a significant increase in user-generated online reviews, with consumers communicating their opinions on hotel stays as well as seeking the opinions of others to support their choices when it comes to making a purchasing decision (UNWTO 2014). As a result, travelers are more actively using the Internet to search for travel content, organise trips, make online bookings and purchase tourism-related products and/or services (Bilgihan e Bujisic 2014). Thus, eWOM is an essential source of information in the purchasing decision, since it is difficult for customers to understand the value of a hotel service before consuming it (Sann, Pei-Chun e Chen 2021).

In addition, online reviews are directly related to the degree of customer satisfaction, and they can be described as the result of the success or failure of the customer experience. The customers who are most likely to post online reviews are those who had a bad experience or an extreme experience (extremely great or extremely bad), both positive and negative (Han e Anderson 2020). That said, the content of online reviews can impact the bottom line of an organization, particularly city hotels.

5.9.1. Influence of eWOM on Customers' Behaviour

Sotiriadis & Gursoy also concluded that tourists are influenced by several factors when it comes to using eWOM information as input in the final purchase decision. Some of these factors are (i) the perceptions of trust in the source of the review: understanding the usefulness of the recommendation or critic; (ii) the perception of the credibility of the source: understanding if this source usually influences the consumer's attitudes and intentions toward online reviews; (iii) the evaluation of reviews dimensions: understanding the context and the external factors which influenced that review; (iv) the nationality: customers from different countries have different behaviors; (v) the information quality dimensions; (vi) the gender and level of expertise influence consumers motivations to read online reviews; and (vii) the perceived benefits of the content of the social media as a useful and credible channel to collect information to support the final choice (Sotiriadis e Gursoy 2016).

Indeed, eWOM has different influences according to different perspectives: the consumer perspective, and the company perspective. Regarding the effects from the consumer



Figure 5: Main Impacts of eWOM from the consumer perspective.

Source: "New consumer behavior: A review of research on eWOM and hotels", Serra Cantallops e Salvi, 2014.

perspective, the main impacts are described in figure 6 (Serra Cantallops e Salvi 2014). Among these impacts, the focus will be on the variable "loyalty". Since it was not addressed in academic literature yet, one section of the study aims to develop research on the consequences and the degree of impact of eWOM communication on customers who are already loyal, according to distinct stages of attitudinal loyalty, such as cognitive, affective, and conative loyalty, to be explained in the next paragraph. In contrast, from the company

perspective, it is confirmed that hoteliers consider online reviews a key element to understanding customer needs, since 77% of hotel industry professionals worldwide stated that customer needs are the main output that they can have from online reviews (UNWTO 2014).

5.10. Customer Loyalty

Several authors approach the concept of loyalty through different dimensions.

According to Oliver (1999), loyalty is described as a “deep commitment to repurchase or repatronise a pre-ferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing competing purchases of the same or same brand despite situational influences and marketing efforts with the potential to cause switching behaviour”. Moreover, Kandampully & Suhartanto (2000) state that “a “loyal customer” is a customer who repurchases from the same service provider whenever possible, and who continues to recommend or maintains a positive attitude towards the service provider”. Additionally, Gremler & Brown (1996) designated service loyalty as “the degree to which a customer exhibits repeat purchasing behavior from a service provider, exhibits a positive attitudinal disposition toward the provider, and considers using only this provider when a need for this type of service arises”.

In his research, Day (1969) expresses that brand loyalty is a concept with two dimensions: attitudinal or behavioral. Better defined in later years, the attitudinal component of loyalty represents the customer’s intention of repurchasing and persuading others for his favored product or service (Getty e Thompson 1994). On the other hand, the behavioural component of loyalty represents the customer’s action of repurchasing and preferring a specific product or service over others (Shoemaker e Bowen 1998).

In addition to that, some authors advocated other approaches and Oliver (1997) distinguished three dimensions of customer loyalty: cognitive, affective, and conative.

In 1999, the same author defined these three types of loyalty as attitudinal, because customers can create certain perceptions about the product or brand, which makes them have a specific

attitude toward it.

Oliver (1999) also added a new dimension to this concept, defining it as “action loyalty”, in which the customer always acts in favor of the brand. Going back to Day’s distinction, this would be considered behavioral loyalty, since it involves an action by the customer towards the brand or product.

Customer loyalty is indeed a topic that attracts the curiosity of researchers and in which there are several perspectives on different factors, such as the drivers of loyalty in hotels. Wangchan & Worapishet (2019) found that hotel location, the level of quality in the service provided, and the consumption value perceived by consumers have an impact on consumer satisfaction and consequently can influence the decision to revisit the hotel, thus affecting customer loyalty towards the hotel. Guan & Choi (2020) questioned whether employee satisfaction would also impact customer loyalty and concluded that service quality impacts employee satisfaction and customer loyalty, as the employee ends up with better levels of productivity and service values. This will encourage a higher level of customer satisfaction and, therefore, lead the customer to purchase the service again.

Having said that, numerous factors influence customer loyalty, but in the end, if the overall experience is positive, this will inspire customers to always become loyal to a product/service and will certainly continue to have a positive approach toward the service provider (Padhi 2013).

After the analysis of customer loyalty based on different components and the knowledge of some factors of consumer loyalty, it becomes relevant to cite authors who have related this topic to different types of consumers, in different scenarios, in the context of hotels.

Firstly, Tanford, Raab, & Kim (2012) discovered that loyal customers in the high-tariff hotel category may not be satisfied customers only, since switching costs are an important aspect for them, and, when faced with some risks, such as the quality of service, employees attitude, etc.,

these customers usually opt to become loyal to the initial hotel or hotel brand. Nevertheless, low-tariff hotel clients may easily change to another hotel when dissatisfied, since the importance of switching costs is lower. Given that, Tanford, Raab, & Kim (2012) stated that the effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty is significant. Following this approach, Bowen & Chen (2001) stated that managers should understand that satisfied customers do not coincide with loyal customers. So, having satisfied customers is not enough. In the article, Bowen & Chen (2001) stated that it is important to make the customer extremely satisfied in order to retain them and make them loyal. That said, as mentioned by other authors such as Guan & Choi (2020), and Bowen & Chen (2001), a positive service attitude from the employees, identifying themselves with the customers' values, is a good strategy to retain the end consumers, thus making them loyal to the hotel or the hotel brand. In addition, there are different advantages associated with extremely satisfied customers, namely, repeat patronage and savings on expenses associated with marketing, aimed to invite the customer to stay.

Another element that attracted recent research is the relationship between consumer loyalty and corporate social responsibility. Some studies define customer loyalty as a mediating role between social responsibility and hotel performance. Lee, Barker, & Kandampully (2019) concluded that hotel competitiveness and performance can be achieved when the hotel builds a consistent and popular reputation for serving its society and fulfilling its environmental, social, and economic responsibility. Assaker (2020) confirmed that hotel sustainable practices, when aligned with service quality and implemented through high service quality standards, have a positive effect on perceived value and then on customer satisfaction and loyalty intentions. Moreover, Bani-Melhem, Al-Hawari, & Shamsudin (2022) observed that sustainable innovation initiatives can encourage customer loyalty, particularly when the hotel is dealing with customers who consider the environmental issues a global problem that everyone must address.

Given that the focus of this study is also to understand the impact of e-word-of-mouth on leisure customers who are already loyal, it is important to cite some authors who analyze the aspects to which these customers are sensitive, and which may compromise their loyalty.

A PwC's Consumer Intelligence Series study (2016) looked at the behavior of business and leisure customers who subscribed to a certain loyalty program, and found that the preferences of business and leisure customers are different, as well as their motivations for joining the programs. That said, this study noted that leisure customers are willing to spend \$23 more per stay at their preferred hotel brand, while business

customers are willing to spend \$29 more per stay at their preferred hotel brand. Furthermore, considering the aspects that customers value most about their preferred hotel brand, leisure customers are much more price sensitive than business customers, and the aspect that counts most for both being in a loyalty program is the room quality usually offered by the brand, as can be seen in Figure 7.

5.11. Customer Perceived Value, Customer Satisfaction, and Loyalty

In the hospitality industry, it has been proven that there is a relationship between customer-perceived value, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty (El-Adly 2019). Yang & Peterson (2004) pointed out that perceived value is another key driver of customer loyalty and also influences significantly customer satisfaction. Oliver & DeSarbo (1988) define perceived value as the ratio of the consumer's outcome/input to that of the service provider's outcome/input. Furthermore, Taylor & Cronin (1992) stated that customer satisfaction is described as an antecedent of perceived service quality and, consequently, both consumer satisfaction and

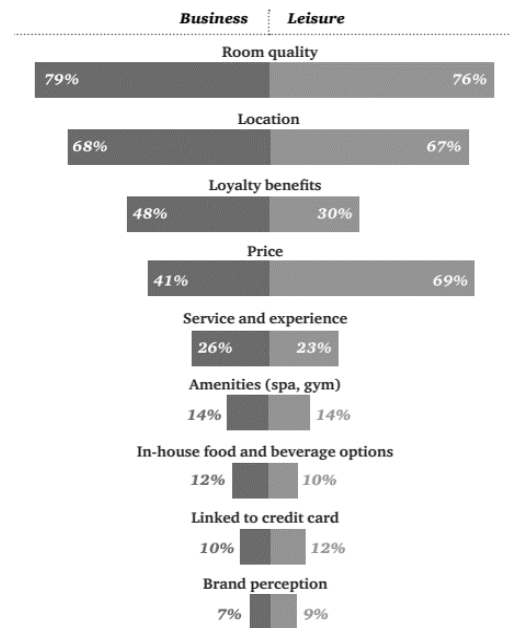


Figure 6: What do travelers value most about preferred hotel brands?
Source: PwC's Consumer Intelligence Series, 2016.

perceived service quality have an important impact on purchase intentions. As a result, the value perceived by the consumer has an impact on his/her experience and also on his/her loyalty, encouraging him/her or not to repurchase the service with which he/she obtained certain satisfaction.

Since the links between perceived value, customer satisfaction, and loyalty can be assessed based on post-purchase or post-experience evaluations, it is important to understand that all these factors are connected and result from adding value to experiences. This value is highlighted in different research articles, namely in Gallarza, Saura e Moren (2013), who also described this value as a possible competitive advantage for companies in the hospitality industry. According to Yang & Peterson (2004), the higher the value, the more primary the motivation for customer patronage.

In the case of city hotels, there is no available literature to assess the drivers of customer loyalty and satisfaction. This does not allow further research on the impact that customer perceived value can have on customer experience when influenced by aspects such as eWOM communication, and on the pre-creation of ideas and expectations in the consumer about a certain level of quality influenced by the post-experience stage of other customers. This is why the topic is deeply analyzed in one of the research questions.

5.12. Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Customer Experience

The last paragraph of the literature review refers to a different topic, which is the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on customer experience. The authors believed such insight was worth mentioning for contemporary relevance at the time the paper was written. As many are now aware, the Covid-19 pandemic had some striking consequences in all sectors. Hospitality was one of the most affected industries, with a global drop in demand, occupancy rates, and revenues (Rivera 2020). Since properties were forced to close for long periods of time or only allow a limited number of guests, impacts on employment were very strong (European Federation of

Food Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT) 2022). The sector had to switch to short-term contracts, or temporary or permanent layoffs. Following this, many employees decided to change their working sector, as recovery was uncertain and income support schemes could not guarantee an acceptable standard of living. Many workers started to appreciate more regular working hours and a better work-life balance and did not feel the desire to work in the hospitality sector again once the effects of the pandemic started to soften and a slight return to normal could be observed. This is why since Covid-19's occurrence it has been hard to attract more talent to hospitality, especially due to the industry instability of the last two years, the workload requested by employees, and low salaries (EHL Insights 2022).

Since the personal touch is the essence of hospitality, shortages in labour became the source of many issues. In fact, it is extremely difficult to provide excellent services and a remarkable guest experience when employees are not committed to the organization because they are casual workers, or when they need to work extra shifts out of necessity for the hotel (Simpson 2022). During the internship at the city hotel in Paris, the authors had the chance to observe the real impact of this issue on guests' satisfaction and the hotel reputation.

It follows that if hoteliers want to maintain the high rates they are currently benefitting from, due to recovery after the pandemic, it is essential to provide a better guest experience, even though this might come at the expense of profitability (Simpson 2022). In fact, if guests are not satisfied with the service received and cannot see any value in what they are offered, they will refuse to pay high rates. They will have a very low tolerance for poor service, and this will make the value for money significantly decline (Simpson 2022). Therefore, redesigning the customer experience in hospitality after what experts defined as the highest peak of the pandemic, is a crucial element that needs to be addressed by all hoteliers. To do this, it is essential to focus on some important aspects of the customers' experience, and to adapt them to rapidly changing customer's expectations.

6. THE POST-VISIT STAGE OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN CITY HOTELS: THE IMPACT OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON ATTITUDINAL LOYALTY.

6.1. Introduction

Focusing on the post-visit stage of customer experience, the third part of this study aims to assess the level of impact of online reviews on the three stages of attitudinal loyalty, namely cognitive, affective, and conative loyalty. In addition, the main drivers of loyalty in city hotels will be studied, as well as the type of content of online reviews that most affects the loyal customer. Furthermore, this chapter will also analyze which digital channels are used most by customers to check online reviews.

6.2. Choice of Research

The increasing use of information and communication technologies has given rise to a greater adoption of the content available online to support the consumer's final purchasing decision. That said, it has been proven that eWOM communication has a significant impact on the loyal customer, but there is a gap in researching the degree of impact that this communication, namely online reviews, may have on different types of loyal customers in a context of city hotels visited by leisure customers. Thus, the author decided to apply a survey with the aim of assessing customers' perceptions of a given scenario that comprised a particular hotel, or hotel brand. In this way, it would be possible to test their level of loyalty when faced with some negative online reviews about the product or service to which they are loyal.

6.3. Research Methodology

In order to gather as many insights as possible, a survey was implemented for the collection of data to assess the impact of online reviews on the three stages of attitudinal loyalty: cognitive, affective, and conative. The questionnaire was divided into five sections: (i) customer loyalty in city hotels; (ii) scenario 1: cognitive loyalty; (iii) scenario 2: affective loyalty; (iv) scenario

3: conative loyalty; (v) online reviews. It can be found in Appendix 2, where it is described as “Questionnaire 1”.

The questions in the survey were defined according to the third research question focused on the post-visit stage: “Are attitudinal loyal customers influenced by online reviews after their visit to city hotels for leisure purposes?”

- **First section: Drivers of Loyalty in City Hotels**

This part of the study aims to understand which of the drivers of customer loyalty in luxury hotels could also be considered as drivers of customer loyalty in the context of city hotels. One research paper on customer loyalty was deeply analysed to test whether there might be common drivers in the context of luxury hotels and city hotels.

“Factors Influencing Customer Loyalty in Hotel Business: Case Study of Five-Star Hotels in Bangkok, Thailand” (Wangchan e Worapishet 2019) named several aspects that contribute to customer satisfaction and become drivers of customer loyalty. The method of data collection was the implementation of a questionnaire with a quantitative approach, through which 700 respondents were reached, all of whom were hotel guests, and were asked to rate the level of agreement in the hotels they stayed in. All the hotels concerned were 5-star hotels in the city of Bangkok, Thailand. The study found that “hotel location”, “service quality” and “perceived consumption value” are key factors when it comes to enhancing customer satisfaction, and lead customers to high levels of loyalty. Wangchan & Worapishet (2019) also concluded that it is challenging to improve customer loyalty, and the success of this improvement depends on factors such as time, type of hotel, seasons, and country where the hotel is located.

For the purpose of the survey, “hotel location”, “service quality” and “perceived consumption value” were broken down in detail into different response options, such as, “location” and “distance to the city center” regarding “hotel location”; “staff”, “personalized service”, “surprise effect when revisiting” and “service quality” as categories that contribute to “service

quality”; and, “hotel facilities”, “emotional connection with the hotel”, and “price” linked to the evaluation of “perceived consumption value”. Furthermore, the option to add other possible factors that respondents consider as relevant to make them loyal to a city hotel was also given. Since the study focuses on city hotels, some options were adapted to this context while considering the main features of a city hotel and the requirements to be a city hotel.

Other answer options were added as a result of onsite observation during the summer internship in which the authors took part, which allowed access to data showing high occupancy rates resulting from loyalty programs and also loyalty to the brand endorsing the city hotel in Paris. Moreover, during the internship it was observed that the creation of packages and promotions in which certain partnerships were involved could also be a possible strategy to boost occupancy and make the customers come back to repurchase a stay, turning them into loyal customers. For this reason, another possible option related to the hotel having special partnerships was added to the answer list.

- **Second, Third, and Fourth Section: Impact of Online Reviews on Customers’ Attitudinal Loyalty**

In the second, third, and fourth sections, the survey presents three distinct scenarios to the respondents, where each scenario corresponds to cognitive, affective, and conative loyalty, respectively. These three dimensions of customer loyalty constitute the model advocated by Oliver (1997) that describes the process of building attitude-based loyalty. Since attitudinal loyalty is measured through consumer perceptions of the overall rating of the brand (Bandyopadhyay e Martell 2007), respondents were asked about their beliefs as if they would be in that specific scenario. Considering that a favorable disposition towards a brand (Bandyopadhyay e Martell 2007), and, in this case, towards a service provider, means a great attitude towards the hotel or the hotel brand, these sections of the survey aim to evaluate the impact of e-word-of-mouth in each stage of attitude-based customer loyalty. To assess the

impact in the different scenarios a Likert scale from 1 to 5 was used, where 1 represents "Very unlikely" and 5 stands for "Very likely".

The second section assesses the impact of online reviews on cognitive loyalty – the first loyalty phase. According to Oliver (1999), this stage refers to cognition, which is described as a prior knowledge or recent experience-based information about the brand. Thus, scenario number one sees a customer that is loyal to a specific hotel, has already subscribed to the loyalty program of the hotel brand, chooses that same brand every time he/she travels for leisure purposes, and accumulates points and subsequent advantages or discounts to use in the next hotel stays for that brand. Through this description, the recent experience-based information is present in the element of the “loyalty program”, since these types of programs usually allow customers to have access to more information about other hotels from the specific brand, even if the guests have never stayed there before.

The third section assesses the impact of online reviews on affective loyalty – the second loyalty phase. According to Oliver (1999), this stage is linked to the degree of affection for the brand or the hotel, and it represents customers that were already loyal, but are then tied to the brand with a deeper level of commitment. Thus, scenario number two sees a customer that is loyal to a specific hotel because he/she has an emotional connection with it, always goes there for his/her birthday, and whenever he/she wants to celebrate personal achievements or other special dates that hotel is always the first option. Through this description, the degree of affection for the brand or hotel is present in the element of emotional connection and celebration of personal achievements. Moreover, the “first option” element represents a deeper commitment from the customer.

The fourth section assesses the impact of online reviews on conative loyalty – the third loyalty phase. According to Oliver (1999), this stage shows the behavioral intention of the customer to repurchase the service again after repeated episodes of positive affection toward the brand or

the hotel. Thus, scenario number three sees a customer that is loyal to a specific hotel because he/she appreciates the quality of the service, always goes there when he/she travels to the city for leisure purposes, he/she is always surprised by some details (e.g. flowers in the room, a bottle of champagne, your favourite shampoo, a pillow with initials on it, etc), the staff calls him/her by the first name and the front office team always assigns the favourite room with privileged views over the city. Moreover, the front office teams no longer asks if the customer will have dinner at the hotel restaurant, but always books a table in advance, and all the staff works to make him/her feel at home.

Through this description, it is possible to identify several elements that are representing the behavioral intention of the customer to keep purchasing stays in the specific hotel, which puts the respondents under a hypothetical situation of conative loyalty.

For these three scenarios, the questions that were implemented to assess the influence of online reviews on the final purchase decision are described in Questionnaire 1 in Appendix 2.

- **Fifth Section: Channels Used to Check Online Reviews**

The last section of the survey is focused on online reviews and it aims to assess which is the main digital channel used by the respondents to check e-word-of-mouth communication. The options are some of the most visited travel and tourism websites worldwide as of August 2022, such as, “Booking.com”, “TripAdvisor”, “Expedia”, “Agoda.com”, and “Hotels.com” (Statista 2022).

- **Content of Online Reviews**

The final question of the survey aims to find out what types of online reviews have the greatest impact on customer perception of a hotel or a brand, and consequently, can influence the final purchasing decision of customers. All of the answer options are exhibited in Questionnaire 1 in the appendix and are a result of empirical observation during the summer internship in Paris. The problems illustrated in the categories are the content of some of the customer’s negative

online reviews about the facilities and the services of the city hotel in Paris.

6.3.1. Choice of Survey Respondents

In order to gather the largest number of responses for the purpose of the research, the survey was delivered to people of different ages and nationalities, who could have experienced a stay in city hotels for leisure purposes or not.

Since the goal of the survey is to evaluate the customer's perceptions and attitudes towards a specific hotel or hotel brand under a hypothetical scenario of attitudinal loyalty, it is possible to use a methodology approach directed to users or non-users of the product or service, because action from the customers' side is not required – it would be requested in the case of assessing behavioural loyalty, involving the actual purchase of the product/service (Bandyopadhyay e Martell 2007).

6.4. Data Analysis

The survey was implemented from October 26th, 2022 until November 14th, 2022, being online for almost 3 weeks and reaching a total of 129 respondents. The data collected through the survey was later imported into Excel and SPSS. A descriptive analysis was carried out through graphs and tables, which allowed the author to underline different findings in the present study. The level of impact was evaluated based on statistics, and the level of importance based on the point average of the answers to the survey.

6.4.1. Characterization of Respondents

The sample of this study was composed of respondents from different age groups and different nationalities, although most of the sample was Portuguese.

The predominant age group in the sample was between 18 and 25 years old, with 60.5% of the respondents. Furthermore, 80.6% of the sample were Portuguese respondents and 13.2% were French, with the remaining percentage being of distinct nationalities.

As for the frequency of staying in city hotels per year, the answers varied greatly, where 28%

of respondents answered "one time per year", as well as 26% answered “two times er year”. On the other hand, only 7% of the sample answered "four times per year" or "never". Three tables in Appendix 3 show detailed characterization of the respondents.

6.5. Findings and Analysis

a) Drivers of Loyalty in City Hotels

In table 2, it is demonstrated that "location", "hotel facilities", "distance to city centre" and "quality of service" are the main features that make the customer loyal to a city hotel, and it is noteworthy that "location" is the most relevant feature when the customer has to make the decision to become loyal to a city hotel, according to 74% of the respondents.

<i>Features of Loyalty in City Hotel</i>		
	Frequency	Percentage
Location	96	74
Hotel Brand	22	17
Staff	49	38
Hotel Facilities	81	63
Distance to the city center	80	62
Service quality	80	62
Emotional connection with the hotel	25	19
Loyalty Program	31	24
Special partnerships	24	19
Personalized Service	29	22
The hotel surprises me every time I come back	25	19
Price	2	2
Total	544	422

Table 2: Drivers of Loyalty in City Hotels

b) Impact of Online Reviews on Customer Attitudinal Loyalty

After assessing the impact of online reviews on customers' purchase intentions, and consequently on their loyalty to a particular city hotel in the context of leisure stays, it is possible to observe a change in the perception of respondents in different scenarios, where the higher is the degree of customer loyalty, the lower is the impact of online reviews on the final purchase decision. In appendix 4, there are some descriptive statistics that will allow an even more detailed analysis of the results.

Cognitive Loyalty

In the first scenario inspecting the impact of online reviews on cognitively loyal customers, as it is possible to see from Table 3, the “likelihood of giving up on buying the stay after noticing negative online reviews" is the highest value representing the most probable action respondents are going to take, with 4.42 points on a scale from 1 to 5. This category shows that the presence

of negative online reviews can lead to giving up on buying the stay, which consequently will impact loyalty in a cognitive scenario, and the customer's perception of the city hotel described in the example will deteriorate as a result of negative online reviews.

Impact of Online Reviews on Cognitively Loyal Customers

4,12	Likelihood of checking online reviews
3,5	Likelihood of reconsidering the purchase of the stay after noticing negative online reviews
3,2	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
4,42	Likelihood of giving up on buying the stay after noticing negative online reviews
4,02	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
3,7	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
3,86	Impact of the Online Reviews on Cognitive Loyal Customers

Table 3: Impact of Online Reviews on Cognitively Loyal Customers

On the other hand, with 3.2 points of relevance, comes the "likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only negative reviews", which reflects that the customer does not consider only negative reviews to influence his final purchase decision, which leads to the possibility that the customer also reads the positive reviews about the city hotel in question. The resulting impact of the six categories is 3.86 points on average, meaning that online reviews have a fairly high degree of impact on the final decision of a loyal customer under a cognitive dimension. Moreover, the probability of this impact on the final decision being negative when it comes to negative comments presented online is high, thus portraying some significance in the level of final impact of e-communication on consumer loyalty.

Affective Loyalty

In the second scenario, described in Table 4, the category that showed the highest importance in assessing the degree of impact of online reviews on affectively loyal customers was the "likelihood of checking online reviews", as well as the "importance of online reviews in the purchase decision", with 2.98 points, on a scale from 1 to 5. This means that customers do check online reviews, and consider them important in deciding whether or not to repurchase a stay at a city hotel. Both categories showed medium importance in the impact of online reviews on affective loyalty. Furthermore, as in the first scenario, the category that showed the lowest

importance in the degree of this impact, with 2.62 points, was the "likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only negative reviews," revealing once again that consumers may also choose to consider not only negative reviews, but also positive comments. That said, the degree of impact of online reviews on a post visit plan to stay again in a city hotel for leisure reasons is on average 2.78 points on the dimension of affective loyalty, the second stage of attitudinal loyalty. Thus, it can be concluded that the level of impact of online reviews under affective conditions of loyalty is low.

Impact of Online Reviews on Affectively Loyal Customers

2,98	Likelihood of checking online reviews
2,79	Likelihood of reconsidering the purchase of the stay after noticing negative online reviews
2,62	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
2,64	Likelihood of giving up on buying the stay after noticing negative online reviews
2,98	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
2,77	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
2,78	Impact of the Online Reviews on Affective Loyal Customers

Table 4: Impact of Online Reviews on Affectively Loyal Customers

Conative Loyalty

In the third scenario, as shown in Table 5, the degree of impact of online reviews on customer repurchasing decisions under the dimension of conative loyalty is on average 2.28 points, which can be considered as low.

Impact of Online Reviews on Conatively Loyal Customers

2,36	Likelihood of checking online reviews
2,21	Likelihood of reconsidering the purchase of the stay after noticing negative online reviews
2,05	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
2,08	Likelihood of giving up on buying the stay after noticing negative online reviews
2,35	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
2,35	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
2,28	Impact of the Online Reviews on Conative Loyal Customers

Table 5: Impact of Online Reviews on Conatively Loyal Customers

In this situation, the category with the highest importance was the "likelihood of checking online reviews" with 2.36 points, and, the category with the lowest importance was the "likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only negative reviews" with 2.05 points. It is possible to observe that online reviews are considered by fewer customers in this scenario, and that they play a less relevant role in the final decision to repurchase the service. Once again, it

can be seen that customers are not interested only in negative reviews and that it is less and less relevant to use online reviews as decision support when circumstances portray a scenario of high loyalty and in the last stage of attitudinal loyalty - conative loyalty.

After analyzing the impact of online reviews on the different types of attitudinal loyalty, an analysis of this impact on each dimension of loyalty per age group was performed. The results differ for the three types of loyalty and the age groups did not show constant results in the different scenarios.

In the cognitive dimension of loyalty, the age group that showed the highest impact of online reviews on customer loyalty was the 36-45 age group with an impact of 4.40 points on a scale of 1 to 5. On the other hand, the group that was shown to be least impacted by online reviews was the 18-25 age group with an impact of 3.42 points. However, all the age groups in the cognitive loyalty dimension were influenced by online reviews intensively, as it is possible to confirm by looking at Table 6.

Impact of Online Reviews on Cognitively Loyal Customers (per age group)	
<i>18-25 years old</i>	
4,03	Likelihood of checking online reviews
3,14	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
3,42	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers
<i>26-35 years old</i>	
4,3	Likelihood of checking online reviews
4,3	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
3,2	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
4,00	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers
<i>36-45 years old</i>	
4,6	Likelihood of checking online reviews
4,6	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
3,6	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
4,40	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers
<i>46-55 years old</i>	
4	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
3,22	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
3,69	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers
<i>56-65 years old</i>	
4,75	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
3,5	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
3,5	Likelihood of giving up on buying the stay after noticing negative online reviews
4,00	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers

Table 6: Impact of Online Reviews on Cognitively Loyal Customers Per Age Group

Based on Table 7, it can be stated that under the affective loyalty condition, the age group shown to be the most affected by online reviews is 56-65 years old, with 3.06 points impact. In contrast the age group that is shown to be least affected by online reviews when deciding to repurchase a stay at a city hotel for leisure purposes is 36-45-year-olds, with 2.5 points impact. Unlike the first cognitive loyalty stage, the affective loyalty stage proved that loyal customers are already less influenced by online reviews than in the first scenario, meaning that as the level of loyalty increases, online reviews are less important in the decision to repurchase the already experienced service.

Impact of Online Reviews on Affectively Loyal Customers (per age group)	
<i>18-25 years old</i>	
2,95	Likelihood of checking online reviews
2,62	Likelihood of giving up on buying the stay after noticing negative online reviews
2,77	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers
<i>26-35 years old</i>	
3,3	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
2,75	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
2,90	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers
<i>36-45 years old</i>	
2,6	Likelihood of checking online reviews
2,6	Likelihood of reconsidering the purchase of the stay after noticing negative online reviews
2,6	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
2,4	Likelihood of giving up on buying the stay after noticing negative online reviews
2,4	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
2,4	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
2,50	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers
<i>46-55 years old</i>	
3,06	Likelihood of checking online reviews
2,5	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
2,61	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers
<i>56-65 years old</i>	
3,5	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
2,63	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
3,06	Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers

Table 7: Impact of Online Reviews on Affectively Loyal Customers Per Age Group

In the third scenario, more specifically under the dimension of conative loyalty, the results showed that the 36-45 age group considered the impact of online reviews on their decision to be the lowest, with 1.20 points on a scale from 1 to 5. The 18-25 age group, on the other hand, proved to be the most impacted in a conative loyalty condition, with an impact of 2.39 points (Table 8). Still, all age groups proved to be only little influenced by online reviews when deciding to repurchase the service. This is the scenario of higher customer loyalty, as it is the

last stage of attitudinal loyalty, which means the results are conforming. In fact, the customer is not as influenced by online reviews as in other stages, and prefers to consider his/her emotional connection and commitment to the hotel, or hotel brand, when making a repurchase decision. Of all the scenarios, again, this proved to be the one where loyal customers are least affected by the content of online reviews.

Impact of Online Reviews on Conatively Loyal Customers (per age group)	
<i>18-25 years old</i>	
2,55	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
2,13	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
2,39 Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers	
<i>26-35 years old</i>	
2,2	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
1,85	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
1,85	Likelihood of giving up on buying the stay after noticing negative online reviews
2,00 Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers	
<i>36-45 years old</i>	
1,2	Likelihood of checking online reviews
1,2	Likelihood of reconsidering the purchase of the stay after noticing negative online reviews
1,2	Likelihood of giving up on buying the stay after noticing negative online reviews
1,2	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
1	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
1	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
1,20 Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers	
<i>46-55 years old</i>	
2,39	Likelihood of checking online reviews
2,39	Likelihood of reconsidering the purchase of the stay after noticing negative online reviews
2,06	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
2,28 Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers	
<i>56-65 years old</i>	
2,5	Likelihood of checking online reviews
2,5	Importance of the online reviews on purchasing decision
2,5	Importance of the experience of other customers on purchasing decision
2	Likelihood of filtering online reviews to check only the negative reviews
2,38 Impact of the Online Reviews on Loyal Customers	

Table 8: Impact of Online Reviews on Conatively Loyal Customers Per Age Group

c) Digital Channels Used to Check Online Reviews

In addition to assessing the impact of online reviews on customer loyalty, this study also evaluated which are the main channels used by customers to check e-word-of-mouth communication and what type of content has the greatest capacity to hurt the customer, as a result of observation during the internship experience at the city hotel in Paris.

Results showed that the most used channel by respondents is "Booking.com" with 57% of the sample, as opposed to the channels

"Agoda.com", "Google" and "Google Hotels" which are the least used with 1% of the sample respectively, as it can be seen in Table 9. In addition to "Booking.com", one of the channels most

<i>Main digital channel used to check online reviews</i>		
	Frequency	Percentage
Agoda.com	1	1
Booking.com	73	57
Expedia	3	2
Google	1	1
Google hotels	1	1
Hotels.com	6	5
Official Website of Hotel Y	19	15
Tripadvisor	25	19
Total	129	100

Table 9: Main Digital Channels Used to Check Online Reviews

chosen by respondents was also "Tripadvisor", with 19% of the sample. In this case, it is possible to conclude that, undoubtedly, "Booking.com" may have the ability to influence the choices of customers who are already loyal to a particular hotel or hotel brand, and sometimes it may also influence the final purchase decision of consumers.

d) Content of Online Reviews

The impact of the content of online reviews was also analyzed through the survey. 81 out of 129 respondents considered that the type of content that would be able to greatly affect their perception and consequently destroy their loyalty as a customer would be comments criticizing "poor cleaning" in the hotel. Furthermore, the least important content for respondents was the restaurant's opening schedule ("not open on weekends and holidays"), with only 18 out of 129 respondents considering that comments with this content would be sufficient to affect their loyalty as customers. Another content category with great ability to influence customers' perceptions of the hotel or hotel brand is "unfriendly staff", which respondents felt would affect them but not be enough to make them unloyal (Appendix 5).

6.6. Discussion

After a thorough analysis, it is possible to conclude that the result of this study is in line with the research conducted by Wangchan & Worapishet (2019), since the possible drivers of customer loyalty in city hotels are common to some of the drivers of loyalty in the context of

luxury hotels. This study confirmed that, indeed, hotel location and distance to the city center are both main drivers of customer loyalty in the context of city hotels, as it is in the case of luxury hotels (Wangchan e Worapishet 2019). In addition to this, some of the categories mentioned in this study as possible drivers of city hotel loyalty are also underlined in the study done by Wangchan & Worapishet (2019), such as service quality and possible components that influence the perceived value of consumption, namely hotel facilities.

Furthermore, the results showed that there are clear differences in the three stages of customer loyalty, as described by Oliver (1997). The theory presented by this author proved that customers' perceptions of a particular service or product, or in this case, hotel or hotel brand, vary according to the loyalty stage in which they are inserted. This way, during this investigation, it was possible to note that the higher the level of loyalty, the better and more cohesive the customer's perception of the hotel or hotel brand is, which consequently reduces the need to check online reviews, decreasing their impact on the final decision to return to the hotel or hotel brand again.

The final outcome of this research also illustrated the theory advocated by Sotiriadis & Gursoy (2016), which designates "the perception of the credibility of the source" as an aspect to influence the consumer's decision. The most used channel by respondents was "Booking.com", which means that consumers consider it a credible source to analyze the eWOM communication of the hotel or hotel brand, and take it into account in the final purchase decision.

6.7. Managerial Implications

This study and its results are useful for hotel managers to understand the importance of online review management, as reviews can influence customer loyalty and their perceptions of the brand or hotel.

The study focuses on city hotels, where the degree of loyalty may be lower given the wide variety of offers, as well as lower is the importance of switching costs. A factor that can

constitute a limitation to the application of the study is the complexity that comes with assessing customer loyalty, not only in the hospitality industry.

It is relevant to point out that the study was conducted with motivations resulting from an empirical experience, in which some observed details contributed to the importance of developing an analysis that related the post-visit experience to the need to retain the customer and the difficulties associated with this process. The practical experience happened in a city hotel endorsed by a brand with a consolidated reputation in the hotel industry, with a renowned loyalty program that contributed to increase occupancy rates. Thus, applying the results of the study to other hotel segments may not be as effective, especially if the level of loyalty is lower. On the other hand, there is a need to evaluate the impact of eWOM communication on the last stage of customer loyalty, which is action loyalty. Through this analysis, the research results will be even more effective, since this level of loyalty consists of a behavioral dimension, and instead of assessing customer perceptions, customer behavior would also be assessed, thus providing a stronger predictive power of what the customer's behavior might be when deciding whether or not to repurchase the service.

Finally, the number of respondents to the survey should be higher to make the result of the study more credible, as well as the variety of nationalities should be, to avoid a biased result.

6.8. Conclusion

The results of this study helped to realize that it is possible to test customer loyalty across different dimensions and based on customers' perceptions of a brand, product, or service.

Once the attitude towards the brand or hotel is assessed, it is possible to understand the position of any individual consumer or non-consumer of the service in question. For this reason, the analysis could not be deepened and extended to the last stage of customer loyalty, given the difficulty in accessing data to evaluate behavioral loyalty. In fact, the sample also included non-consumers of the service, which would not be able to respond to a behavioral assessment as

they never consumed the product and had no action about it, but only a perception towards it.

As for the stage of attitudinal loyalty, for cognitive loyalty there is a significant impact of online reviews on the final purchase decision of a loyal customer. This is because the likelihood of the customer checking online reviews before buying the service again is high, and at this phase it is still relevant for the consumer to understand whether the experience of other consumers was positive or negative.

On the other hand, in the affective loyalty stage, the impact is clearly lower and does not play a significant role in the final purchase decision of loyal customers, since the relationship with the hotel is notably more secure and consolidated, which does not encourage the consumer to consult online reviews before consuming the service again.

Finally, in the conative loyalty phase, the impact of online reviews is slightly lower than in the second dimension, which leads to conclude that it does not play a significant role in the customer repurchase decision, and consequently, it does not affect the level of loyalty of that consumer.

Another of the analyses developed in the study proved that "Booking.com" is the most used channel to read online reviews about a particular hotel, which allows the customer to access rankings and categories that describe how the hotel is doing better or worse. This result can also be explained by the application's ease of use, accessible to all users with the Internet and a mobile device.

In the final section of the study, the type of content in online reviews that is likely to have the greatest impact on a loyal customer was assessed. The result showed that "poor cleaning" would undoubtedly be a comment capable of affecting a loyal customer, given the seriousness with which it is associated and the great influence it has on the customer's perception of the quality of the service.

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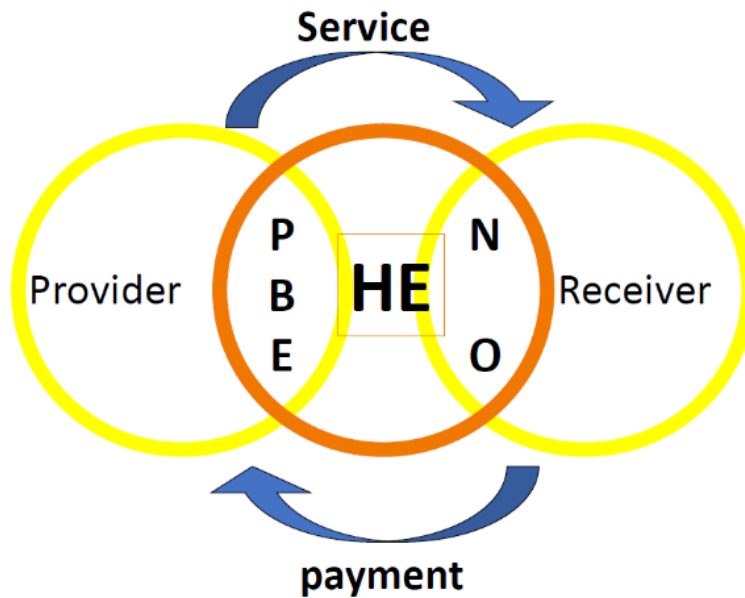
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8. Appendix

Appendix 1: Visual representation of the Hospitality Model (Reuland et al., 1999).

Source: Reuland et al., 1985 – an adaptation of Professor Sander Allegro.



Appendix 2: Questionnaire 1

Personal Information

What is your age?

- > 18
- 18 – 25
- 26 – 35
- 36 – 45
- 46 – 55
- 56 – 65
- > 65

What is your nationality?

How frequently do you stay in city hotels for leisure purposes during a year?

- Never
- One time per year
- Two times per year
- Three times per year
- Four times per year

- Five or more times per year

Customer Loyalty in City Hotels

What are the features that would make you loyal to a city hotel? (select a maximum of 5)

- Location
- Hotel Brand
- Staff
- Hotel Facilities
- Distance to the city center
- Service quality
- Emotional connection with the hotel
- Loyalty Program
- Special partnerships
- Personalized Service
- Hotel surprises me everytime I come back
- Price

Guidelines

In this section, you will be asked to assess the impact of online reviews on your repurchase decision of a stay in a hotel you have already visited. Different scenarios will be presented and you will be invited to think how a loyal customer would act when making the final decision. Always consider that Hotel Y is a city hotel visited for leisure purposes.

Scenario 1

You are loyal to Hotel Y because:

- *You have subscribed to the loyalty program of the Hotel Y's brand (you can see some examples below)*
- *Whenever you travel for leisure you choose hotels of Hotel Y's brand*
- *You accumulate points and then obtain advantages or discounts that you can use in your next stays in hotels of Hotel Y's brand*

(Always remember that you have already made several purchases of stays in different hotels of the Hotel Y's brand)

- How likely are you to check the online reviews about Hotel Y before buying a stay at this hotel?
- How likely are you to reconsider buying your stay in Hotel Y because you noticed some negative online reviews about this hotel?
- How likely are you to filter online reviews to check only the negative reviews about Hotel Y in order to make a quicker decision?
- How likely are you to give up buying your stay because you found that there were some negative online reviews about the Hotel Y?

- How important are online reviews for you to purchase a stay at Hotel Y?
- How important is the experience of other customers of Hotel Y compared to your previous experience with this hotel brand?

Scenario 2

You are loyal to Hotel Y because:

- *You have an **emotional connection** with Hotel Y*
- *On your **birthday**, you always like to stay at Hotel Y*
- *Whenever you want to **celebrate personal achievements or other special dates**, Hotel Y is always your first option*

*(Always remember that **you are a frequent customer** at Hotel Y)*

- How likely are you to check the online reviews about Hotel Y before buying a stay at this hotel?
- How likely are you to reconsider buying your stay in Hotel Y because you noticed some negative online reviews about this hotel?
- How likely are you to filter online reviews to check only the negative reviews about Hotel Y in order to make a quicker decision?
- How likely are you to give up buying your stay because you found that there were some negative online reviews about the Hotel Y?
- How important are online reviews for you to purchase a stay at Hotel Y?
- How important is the experience of other customers of Hotel Y compared to your previous experience with this hotel brand?

Scenario 3

You are loyal to Hotel Y because:

- *You truly believe in the **quality of its service***
- *Hotel Y is **your choice** whenever you travel for leisure to this city*
- *Every time you buy a stay at Hotel Y, you are **surprised** by some new detail (e.g. flowers in the room, a bottle of champagne, your favourite shampoo, a pillow with your initials on it, etc)*
- *All of the staff **always calls you by your name***
- *Front Office team always assigns you **your favourite room** in the hotel with privileged views over the city*
- *Front Office team no longer asks you if you will have dinner in the hotel restaurant or not and **always books a place for you in advance**, even if you change your plans at the last minute then*
- *Whenever you stay at the hotel, **they take care to make you feel at home***

*(Always remember that **you are a frequent customer** at Hotel Y)*

- How likely are you to check the online reviews about Hotel Y before buying a stay at this hotel?
- How likely are you to reconsider buying your stay in Hotel Y because you noticed some negative online reviews about this hotel?
- How likely are you to filter online reviews to check only the negative reviews about Hotel Y in order to make a quicker decision?
- How likely are you to give up buying your stay because you found that there were some negative online reviews about the Hotel Y?
- How important are online reviews for you to purchase a stay at Hotel Y?
- How important is the experience of other customers of Hotel Y compared to your previous experience with this hotel brand?

Likert scale for all questions ranged from: very unlikely, somewhat unlikely, neither likely or unlikely, somewhat likely, and very likely

Content of Online Reviews

As a loyal customer who has already bought several stays at Hotel Y, which digital platform would you use first to check online reviews about the hotel, if you felt the need to do it so?

- Agoda.com
- Booking.com
- Expedia
- Google
- Google hotels
- Hotels.com
- Official Website of Hotel Y
- Tripadvisor

What type of content in online reviews would affect you most if you were a loyal customer of Hotel Y?

- Poor Cleaning
- Unfriendly staff
- Some of the hotel facilities were not available
- Long waiting time for check-in or check-out
- Malfunctioning in the hotel infrastructures
- Rooms are not soundproof
- Malfunctioning in the room facilities
- Incorrect information given by staff
- Restaurant was not open on weekends and public holidays

Answer to each category with one of these options

- It would affect me so much that I would no longer be loyal to the Hotel Y
- It would affect me a lot but I would still be loyal to the Hotel Y
- It would affect me a little but it would never be enough to affect my loyalty to the Hotel Y
- It wouldn't affect me at all

In submitting this form I agree to my details being used for the purposes of gathering information for the realization of research and work projects (thesis), which will only be accessed by necessary university staff.

I understand my data will be held securely and will not be distributed to third parties.

I understand that when this information is no longer required for this purpose, official procedures will be followed to dispose of my data.

Press "send" after this last question.

Appendix 3: Characterization of the Respondents

<i>Age Group of the Respondents</i>		
	Frequency	Percentage
<18	0	0
18-25	78	60
26-35	20	16
36-45	5	4
46-55	18	14
56-65	8	6
>65	0	0
Total	129	100

<i>Nationality of the Respondents</i>		
	Frequency	Percentage
American	2	2
Brazilian	1	1
French	17	13
Italian	3	2
Portuguese	104	81
Spanish	1	1
Tunisian	1	1
Total	129	100

<i>Frequency of stays in city hotels</i>		
	Frequency	Percentage
Never	9	7
One time per year	36	28
Two times per year	34	26
Three times per year	25	19
Four times per year	9	7
Five or more times per year	16	12
Total	129	100

Appendix 4: Descriptive Statistics Analysis

Scenario 1 - Cognitive Loyalty				
	N	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation
How likely are you to check the online reviews about Hotel Y before buying a stay at this hotel?	129	4,12	5	1,094
How likely are you to reconsider buying your stay in Hotel Y because you noticed some negative online reviews about this hotel?	129	3,50	5	1,206
How likely are you to filter online reviews to check only the negative reviews about Hotel Y in order to make a quicker decision?	129	3,20	5	1,388
How likely are you to give up buying your stay because you found that there were some negative online reviews about the Hotel Y?	129	3,42	4	1,190
How important are online reviews for you to purchase a stay at Hotel Y?	129	4,02	5	1,004
How important is the experience of other customers of Hotel Y compared to your previous experience with this hotel brand?	129	3,70	5	1,143
Valid N (listwise)	129			

Scenario 2 - Affective Loyalty				
	N	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation
How likely are you to check the online reviews about Hotel Y before repurchase a stay at this hotel?	129	2,98	2	1,332
How likely are you to reconsider the repurchase of your stay in Hotel Y because you noticed some negative online reviews about this hotel?	129	2,79	2	1,102
How likely are you to filter online reviews to check only the negative reviews about Hotel Y in order to make a quicker decision?	129	2,62	2	1,245
How likely are you to give up on repurchasing your stay because you found that there were some negative online reviews about Hotel Y?	129	2,64	2	1,131
How important are online reviews for you to repurchase a stay at Hotel Y?	129	2,98	2	1,182
How important is the experience of other customers of Hotel Y compared to your previous experience with this hotel?	129	2,77	2	1,189
Valid N (listwise)	129			

Scenario 3 - Conative Loyalty				
	N	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation
How likely are you to check the online reviews about Hotel Y before repurchase a stay at this hotel?	129	2,36	1	1,430
How likely are you to reconsider the repurchase of your stay in Hotel Y because you noticed some negative online reviews about this hotel?	129	2,21	1	1,260
How likely are you to filter online reviews to check only the negative reviews about Hotel Y in order to make a quicker decision?	129	2,05	1	1,214
How likely are you to give up on repurchasing your stay because you found that there were some negative online reviews about Hotel Y?	129	2,08	1	1,222
How important are online reviews for you to repurchase a stay at Hotel Y?	129	2,35	1	1,412
How important is the experience of other customers of Hotel Y compared to your previous experience with this hotel?	129	2,35	1	1,315
(listwise)	129			

Appendix 5: Content Of Online Reviews

