

Assessment of In-Room Entertainment and Interactive TVs as Determinants of Guests' Patronage Experiences in Hospitality Industries in Ikorudu, Lagos

Commy Precious GODDYMKPA, Ph.D
Faculty of Education
University of Uyo

AND

AKPAN, E. Ebenezer, Ph.D, FCICN, AP, PPGDCA, PHDCDPM
Corporate Institute of Research and Computer Science
140 Ikot Ekpene Road
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

ABSTRACT

This study assessed in-room entertainment and interactive TVs as determinants of guests' patronage experiences in hospitality industries in Ikorudu, Lagos. The study was carried out at Sheriffyt Royal Hotel and Suites and Jamadex Kings Hotel in Ikorudu, Lagos, Nigeria. An Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of management staff, members of Board of Directors, the Managing Director, functional managers, supervisors, and other workers of the two aforementioned hotels. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 35 respondents from the two hotels, and this gave a sample size of 70 respondents, which was used for the study. The main instrument used in this study was a questionnaire titled "In-Room Entertainment on Quest Patronage Questionnaire" (IEQPQ). A letter of introduction was written by the researcher to the management of the two hotels for permission to conduct the research in their organisation and for assistance and understanding. When permission was granted, the questionnaire, which was developed by the researcher for data collection, was administered to the respondents, and retrieved six days later from each respondent in the two selected hotels in Ikorudu, Lagos. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to appropriate statistical techniques, such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis, for testing the hypotheses. The test for significance was done at a 0.05 alpha level and at 68 degree of freedom. Based on the findings of the study, it was observed that all younger generations give significantly more importance to connectivity panels. They assign significantly high importance to many technologies such as: in-room fitness and interactive TV. With this system, guests can watch their favorite movie or show when it is most convenient for them. The study concluded that there is significant relationship between interactive TVs and customer's patronage. And there is a significant relationship between in-room fitness and customers' patronage. The study recommended among others that for customers who lack the understanding of the benefits of in-room fitness, it is pertinent for the hotel management to demonstrate convincingly to the customers the value of what the in-room fitness can provide them with as well as creating an avenue to meeting customers' expectation.

KEYWORDS: In-room entertainment, In-room fitness, Interactive TVs & Customer patronage

Introduction

The colossal development of multimedia entertainment products over the last few years reflects the acceptance and importance of in-room entertainment offerings in hotels. The diversity of amenities may consist of in-room fitness systems, interactive TV systems, and so much more. In-room entertainment systems provide guests with access to a variety of forms of entertainment and information when they want it and on the device of their choosing. Today, the digitally-connected traveller wants a hotel room that lets them stay connected from the moment they arrive, while also enjoying the same technology they use at home. The term "in-room entertainment" doesn't capture the essence of the space a hotel guest enjoys, nor is it even a true reflection of that guest's needs. Entertainment provided by pay-per-view television or Blu-ray equipment is disconnected from the customer. Today, guests, technology, and entertainment are blended, coming together at the swipe of a fingertip.

Travelers have many choices among hotels. In this highly competitive environment for travelers, hotel managers should understand their guests' needs in order to keep current customers and attract new ones (Ananth, DeMicco, Howey, & Moreo, 1992; Howell, Moreo, & DeMicco, 1993; Sammons, Moreo, Benson, & DeMicco, 1999). Many hotels use technology as a value-added service to their guests. When deploying technology as a value-added service, hotels can create differentiation, enhance guest satisfaction, and build lasting loyalty among customers (Cobanoglu, Ryan, & Beck, 1999). Since the expectations of hotel guests have changed radically in recent years. Having a comfortable place to stay is no longer enough. Contemporary travelers demand technology applications and amenities before, during, and after their stay in hotels (Collins & Cobanoglu, 2008).

Statement of Problem

Not surprisingly, guests still say in-room entertainment is important to them. What is surprising, however, is that guests say they actually expect the in-room experience to be as good as or better than what they have at home. Better in what ways? They cite picture clarity, more channels, and premium content as the areas driving their expectations. Given that technology is integral to a hotel stay, this study seeks to evaluate the importance and performance of in-room entertainment technology on guest patronage.

Purpose/Objective of Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the effect of in-room entertainment on guests' patronage experience in hospitality industry. Specifically, the study sought:

1. To examine the relationship between in-room fitness and customer's patronage.
2. To assess the relationship between interactive TVs and customer's patronage.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered:

1. What is the relationship between in-room fitness and customer's patronage?
2. What is the relationship between interactive TVs and customer's patronage?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested:

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between in-room fitness and customer's patronage.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between interactive TVs and customer's patronage.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Customer Patronage

Customer patronage is defined as the person or thing that eats or uses something, or a person who buys goods and services for personal consumption or use. In the context of marketing, patronage is an exchange process where one receives a service or good in exchange for money or other considerations. Customer patronage is, therefore, the purchase of goods and services from a vendor by a customer or a business. The customer purchases and expects to derive benefits or satisfaction from the goods or services as consideration for the exchange of money paid. According to Anderson and Sullivan (2009), customer expectation of satisfaction leads to an increase in tendencies to purchase a particular brand. According to them, firms that provide high-quality products and services on a regular basis will have more satisfied customers, and these customers will likely re-patronize the service and products next time. These assertions are supported by Kivela, Inbakaran, and Reece (2009) when indicating that, comparatively, firms that offer service of superior quality are bound to get their customers satisfied as well as get higher economic returns than their competitors.

Concept of In-Room Fitness

Whether it's at-home gym equipment or on-demand workout videos, in-room exercise is becoming just as common as hotel workout facilities. The response from travellers has been overwhelmingly positive (which is probably why Hilton went as far as adding in-room fitness-centric suites to their portfolio in 2017 but is just now being made available in 2020). From technologically enhanced equipment to pre-loaded mind/body morning routines, wellness in any form should be a top priority for hotels interested in upgrading their in-room hospitality technology. Therefore, hotels have to attract and concentrate on younger travellers (Lussan, 2011). Young travellers assign significantly high importance to many technologies, such as: in-room fitness, video on demand, guestroom lock access via mobile phone, and new

technology phones with visual displays. Younger generations give significantly more importance to connectivity panels (Center for Marketing Effectiveness, 2005).

Concept of Interactive TVs

A new guestroom TV (interactive TV) is much more than a way to simply watch television; it is a device with a lot of functions and applications. Aside from entertainment, it can transform the way hotels communicate with their guests and can also personalise the experience (Bartelds, 2014). With this new TV system, upon entering the room, guests can see a personalised welcome message on the screen with the best suggestions. Hotels can begin anticipating every need with some suggestions on TV screens based on the information that hotels have in their Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system about each guest, such as personal preferences, the purpose of travel, and services normally requested (Hopkins, 2014). For example, an offer to reserve a meeting room or a favourite drink may appear. It is also possible to transform the television into a digital concierge where guests and hotel staff can communicate directly, providing superior and customised service for every guest (Bartelds, 2014).

With this system, guests can watch their favourite movie or show when it is most convenient for them. Some of the services they can access through the TV include viewing restaurant menus and wine lists in real time and booking a table, looking up directions, booking a massage, booking airport transfers and taxi services, ordering room service, booking an excursion, or checking out. The TV can also provide Wi-Fi, transforming it into a full-service computer (Bartelds, 2014). This new all-in-one entertainment system has another feature: room control. With one remote, guests can control drapes, lights, temperature, TV, music, as well as schedule wake-up calls (Control4, n.d.). Hotel guests can control everything in their guestroom, but all these functions and applications are also possible for tablets, iPads, and smartphones.

In-Room Fitness and Customer Patronage

According to Ma (2011), better living standards encourage people to prioritise fitness and wellness programmes as essential activities. As a result, hotels that support the utilisation of in-room fitness stand a chance to win more customers compared to their counterparts. Given the nature of services offered by the hotel, the appraisal of service quality is closely linked to its marketing reputation. For instance, the concept of a product for in-room fitness is associated with two factors: the intangible product, which is offered in terms of the service; and the tangible products, which are used to provide services to the customers. These tangible products include exercise equipment and other accessories that are necessary for the services offered by the organization. Both tangible and intangible factors equally and significantly contribute to customer patronage. In the same vein, a customer who is extensively satisfied with the services of an organization, despite having an alternative option, is not only willing to spend money on the services, but is also willing to recommend his or her fitness centres to new customers by providing sincere feedback (Nuseir & Madanat, 2015).

Many customers in an interview are of the view that they are capable of understanding their own wellness and fitness requirements, but that they do not

know what fulfilling those requirements is worth to them (interview, 10 August 2019). This lack of customers' understanding is emphasised as an opportunity for the organisation to demonstrate convincingly to the customers the value of what in-room fitness can provide them with. Thus, creating value for their service by meeting customers' expectations helps the organisation achieve customer satisfaction, customer retention, and the attraction of new customers.

Interactive TVs and Customer Patronage

The hospitality industry cannot function without communication, particularly long-distance wireless communication. This has evolved into a consumer product that is purchased and enjoyed on a large scale and on a regular basis. As a result, hotels that offer more and more cost-effective communication services tend to have more customers than others (Ndukwe, 2006). It is impossible to overestimate the importance of interactive TV services in the smooth operation of business activities in the hospitality industry. Hotel managers are becoming more aware of the need for communication facilities as well as the importance of services, particularly interactive TV services, in development and growth. As a result, one major driver of the increase in the use of telecom services in hotels is their accuracy, speed, precision, and efficiencies in information management (Adetayo, 2017). According to Su (2016), in a parity market, the only way organisations may be differentiated is through communication. Marketing communication can provide a real, sustainable competitive advantage to any organisation that leverages its potential. In an economy that is highly competitive, hotel management must leverage integrated marketing communication in the most effective way to ensure the creation and maintenance of long-term relationships with current and potential customers. By this way, the quality of services rendered and the customers' patronage gain absolute equilibrium. Modern-age customers are defeated by a multitude of stimuli, the vast majority of which are the result of marketing communication activities initiated by organisations operating in the domestic, international, or global market. The aim is to create a unitary image of the organization, products, and brand, with the ultimate goal of attracting and retaining customers.

Method

The study adopted an Ex-post facto research design. The study was carried out at Sheriffyt Royal Hotel and Suites and Jamadex Kings Hotel in Ikorudu, Lagos, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of management staff, members of Board of Directors, the Managing Director, functional managers, supervisors, and other workers of the two aforementioned hotels. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 35 respondents from the two hotels, and this gave a sample size of 70 respondents, which was used for the study. The main instrument used in this study was a questionnaire titled "In-Room Entertainment on Quest Patronage Questionnaire" (IEQPQ). A letter of introduction was written by the researcher to the management of the two hotels for permission to conduct the research in their organisation and for assistance and understanding. When permission was granted, the questionnaire, which was developed by the researcher for data collection, was administered to the respondents, and retrieved six days later from each respondent in the two selected hotels in Ikorudu, Lagos. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to appropriate statistical techniques, such

as Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis, for testing the hypotheses. The test for significance was done at a 0.05 alpha level and at 68 degree of freedom.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis One

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between in-room fitness and customer's patronage. In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used to analyse the data. (See Table 1 below).

TABLE 1: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between in-room fitness and customer's patronage.

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	r
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
In-Room Fitness (X)	1108	17880	19804	0.94*
Customer's Patronage (Y)	1236	22028		

***Significant at 0.05 level; df = 68; N = 70; Critical R-value = 0.254**

The above table 1 presents the obtained R-value of (0.94). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical R-value (0.254) at 0.05 level with 68 degree of freedom. The obtained R-value (0.94) was greater than the critical R-value (0.254). Hence, the result was significant, meaning that there is significant relationship between in-room fitness and customer's patronage.

Hypothesis Two

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between interactive TVs and customer's patronage. In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used to analyse the data. (See Table 2).

TABLE 2: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between interactive TVs and customer's patronage

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	r
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
Interactive TVs (X)	1184	20314	21138	0.92*
Customer's Patronage (Y)	1236	22028		

***Significant at 0.05 level; df = 68; N = 70; Critical R-value = 0.254**

The above table 2 presents the obtained R-value of (0.92). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical R-value (0.254) at 0.05 level with 68 degree of freedom. The obtained R-value (0.92) was greater than the critical R-value (0.254). Hence, the result was significant, meaning that there is significant relationship between interactive TVs and customer's patronage.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the data analysis in table 1 was significant due to the fact that the obtained R-value (0.94) was greater than the critical R-value (0.254) at 0.05 level with 68 degree of freedom. This result implies that the result therefore means there is significant relationship between in-room fitness and customer's patronage. The result is in agreement with the research findings of (Lussan, 2011). Finding showed that hotels have to attract and concentrate on the younger travelers assign significantly of high importance to many technologies such as: in-room fitness, video On Demand, guestroom lock access via mobile phone, and new technology phones with visual displays. The result of the analysis caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was retained.

The result of the data analysis in table 2 was significant due to the fact that the obtained R-value (0.92) was greater than the critical R-value (0.254) at 0.05 level with 68 degree of freedom. This result implies that the result therefore means there is significant relationship between interactive TVs and customer's patronage. The result is in agreement with the research findings of (Bartelds, 2014). Finding showed that a new guestroom TV (interactive TV) is much more than a way to simply watch television; it is a device with a lot of functions and applications, aside from entertainment it can transform the way hotels communicate with their guests and can also personalize the experience. The result of the analysis caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was retained.

Conclusion

Younger generations give significantly more importance to connectivity panels. They assign significantly high importance to many technologies such as: in-room fitness and interactive TV. With this system, guests can watch their favorite movie or show when it is most convenient for them. Some of the services they can access through the TV include viewing restaurant menus and wine lists in real time and booking a table, looking up directions, booking a massage, booking airport transfers and taxi services, ordering room service, booking an excursion or check-out. The study concludes that there is significant relationship between interactive TVs and customer's patronage. And there is a significant relationship between in-room fitness and customers' patronage.

Recommendations

1. For customers who lack the understanding of the benefits of in-room fitness, it is pertinent for the hotel management to demonstrate convincingly to the customers the value of what the in-room fitness can provide them with. As well as creating an avenue to meeting customers' expectation.
2. With the ultimate goal of attracting and retaining customers, hotel management must capitalize the integrated marketing communication (interactive TVs) in the most effective way, to ensure the creation and maintenance of long-term relationships with current and potential customers.

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