

**THE PERSONALIZED WELCOMING MESSAGES ON HD TV AND HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
INTERNET AS DETERMINANTS OF CUSTOMER'S PATRONAGE IN HOSPITALITY
INDUSTRIES IN IKORUDU, LAGOS**

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ABSTRACT

This study was to examine the personalized welcoming messages on HD TV and high-speed wireless internet as determinants of customers' patronage in the hospitality industries in Ikorudu, Lagos. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in the Sheriffyt Royal Hotel and Suites and the Jamadex Kings Hotel, both in Ikorudu, Lagos, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised management staffs, members of the board of directors, the managing director, functional managers, supervisors, and other workers. A simple random sampling technique was used to select two hotels in Lagos State for the study. 35 respondents were randomly selected from each of the hotels for the study, giving a total of 70 respondents. The main instrument used in this study was a questionnaire titled "Customer's Patronage in Hospitality Industries Questionnaire" (CPHIQ). A letter of introduction was written by the researcher to the management of the two hotels, asking for permission to conduct the research in their organization and also for assistance and understanding. The researcher decided to adopt descriptive statistics and an independent t-test for the research questions and hypothesis testing. These statistical analyses were deemed necessary due to the fact that the data generated for the study were discrete in nature. The data was analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. For the research question, descriptive statistics was used to answer it, while independent t-test analysis was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels. The decision was made based on a 0.05 alpha level and at 68 degrees of freedom. Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions was drawn that there is a significant relationship between personalized welcome messages on HD TV and customers' patronage. Lastly, there is a significant relationship between high-speed wireless internet and customer's patronage. One of the recommendations made was that hotel managers are therefore advised to understand their guests' needs in order to keep current customers and attract new customer's patronage into the hotel.

KEYWORDS: Personalized Welcoming Messages, HD TV, High-Speed Wireless Internet, Customer's Patronage, Hospitality Industries and Lagos

Introduction

From the late 1980s until the present, the hotel business has experienced significant technological advancements. The comfort of a "home away from home" is provided in bedrooms with in-room entertainment technology features. In the past, hotel guests would get to use new technology before it became commonplace in society. (Beldona & Cobanoglu, 2007). Hotels are currently faced with the problem of providing an experience that is on par with or better than what visitors may get at home due to the quick advancements in technological innovation and the shorter time it takes for these technologies to reach the mass market. Today's digitally connected visitor expects a hotel room that gives them access to the same technology they use at home and allows them to stay connected from the time they arrive. The phrase "in-room entertainment" neither accurately describes the atmosphere a hotel guest experiences nor the needs of that guest. Customers have no connection to the entertainment offered by pay-per-view television or Blu-ray devices. At the touch of a fingertip, guests, technology, and entertainment are now integrated.

According to Olsen, Connolly, and Allegro (2000), regardless of the size, type, or location of the property, information technology is the single factor that is most likely to affect how the hotel sector operates in the future. In this sense, it has become crucial to keep track of the features, offerings, and technological advancements that travelers expect from hotels. Managers can provide guests with a useful selection of in-room technology applications thanks to such investigations. Technology has advanced significantly, and new developments are occurring at accelerating rates. Thus, there are a ton of multimedia entertainment goods available for use at home, at work, and while traveling. Customers may be anticipating a broader array of entertainment alternatives in their hotel rooms because they have options when picking a hotel. However, the majority of hotels remain undecided about providing their clients with cutting-edge technologies. (Deeb & Murray, 2002). The rising consumer acceptance of multimedia entertainment over the past several years may now raise the significance of in-room entertainment options in hotels as today's opulent facilities turn into tomorrow's expectations. (Boukis, 2007). Furthermore, the ability to customize guests' experiences through in-room entertainment offerings presents hotels with a potential revenue-producing opportunity. Video on demand, high-speed wireless Internet, interactive TV systems, video games, in-room exercise, and many other facilities are examples of in-room entertainment technology amenities. In an effort to increase their market share, hotels are starting to invest in facilities for in-room entertainment technology. (Beldona & Cobanoglu, 2007). Given how crucial technology is to a hotel stay, the goal of this study is to assess the value and effectiveness of the services for in-room entertainment.

Statement of the Problem

Across all segments, the hospitality and hotel industry are embracing innovative technology. It is the period of the "on" generation, which is concerned with immediate gratification and rules their world with a device in their hand. They are a group that is aware of what they want when it comes to eating, music, shopping, and lodging. Researchers' studies have revealed that modern hotel clients are seeking far more thrilling experiences. In the past, HBO on cable TV would have been enough to draw tourists, but today's hotel guests are used to the variety of options they have at home. As

a result, they have far higher expectations now than they did in the past. In the constant effort to enhance the guest experience, decision-makers for hotels and companies at all levels are being persuaded that creating an "at-home" experience is the new holy grail of in-room entertainment (IRE). Having a decent place to stay is no longer sufficient because hotel guests' expectations have drastically changed in recent years. Modern tourists expect technology-based amenities and services before, during, and after their hotel stays. However, given the speed at which technological innovation is developing and the shorter time it takes for these developments to reach the mass market, hotels are now under pressure to provide a level of service that is at least as excellent as what visitors can get at home. Given how crucial technology is to a hotel stay, the goal of this study is to assess the value and effectiveness of the services for in-room entertainment.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the relationship between personalized welcoming messages on HD TV and customer's patronage.
2. To assess the relationship between high-speed wireless internet and customer's patronage.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between personalized welcoming messages on HD TV and customer's patronage?
2. What is the relationship between high-speed wireless internet and customer's patronage?

Formulation of Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between personalized welcoming messages on HD TV and customer's patronage.
2. There is no significant relationship between high-speed wireless internet and customer's patronage.

Theoretical Framework

Negativity Theory (1963)

This theory developed by Carlsmith and Aronson (1963) suggests that any discrepancy between performance and expectations will disrupt the individual, producing negative energy. Negative theory has its foundations in the disconfirmation process. The negative theory states that when expectations are strongly held, consumers will respond negatively to any disconfirmation. Accordingly, dissatisfaction will occur if perceived performance is less than expectations or if perceived performance exceeds expectations. This theory developed by Carlsmith and Aronson (1963) suggests that any discrepancy between performance and expectations will disrupt the individual, producing negative energy. Affective feelings toward a product or service will be inversely related to the magnitude of the discrepancy.

The application of this theory to this study implies that the management of Sheriffyt Royal Hotel and Suites and Jamadex Kings Hotel is expected to ensure the availability of in-room entertainment (such as welcoming messages on HD televisions, video on demand, high-speed wireless Internet, interactive TV systems, video games, and in-room fitness) so as to enhance guest satisfaction and build lasting loyalty among customers. The industry is also expected to ensure that the services rendered to their customers go in tandem with their expectations, as any discrepancy in technology could disrupt the individual, producing negative energy and leading to the customer's dissatisfaction. Therefore, the service performance of the industry should not exceed or be less than customers' expectations, as this will enhance continued patronage of the industry.

Literature Review

Personalized welcoming messages on HD TV: 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 (Bartelds, 2014). With this new TV system, upon entering the room, guests can see a personalized welcome message on the screen with the best suggestions. Hotels can begin anticipating every need with some suggestions on the TV screen 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 (Anderson & Sullivan, 2009). For example, an offer to reserve a meeting room or a favorite 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 customized service for every guest (Bartelds, 2014). 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; and checking out. The TV can also provide Wi-Fi, transforming it into a full-service computer.

High Speed Wireless Internet: The Internet is one of the most important amenities for guests in a hotel. A study of 1.2 million guests concluded that 71% of guests consider the speed of their Internet connection as a key factor in their choice of hotel. In another survey with 1,800 hotel guests, 89.6% said that in-room Internet is very important, and 66.5% stated that in-room Internet affects their decision when choosing a hotel. For almost all segments of hotel guests, but particularly for upscale guests, wireless Internet is the most important amenity among items such as complimentary breakfast, bedding and pillow choices, pillow top mattresses, and free parking (Adetayo, 2017). What hotel guests really want is fast Internet like they have at home for free. Although most hotels offer free Wi-Fi to their guests and it is considered a basic service, an increasing number of hotels are adopting a tiered pricing program. This is a plan hotel use to cover the expensive costs where customers have to pay for access to faster Internet and to connect more than one device (Collins, & Cobanoglu, 2008). However, the 2012 North American Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index Study suggests that charging guests for Internet use can have a negative impact on customer satisfaction. Hotel employees focus

on understanding the real needs of their guests in order to make their experience more personal and seamless (Center for Marketing Effectiveness, 2005). One of the ways to meet the high expectations of tech-savvy customers is to upgrade their Wi-Fi networks. Some hotels decide to do it to improve the experience for mobile device users during their stay. One example is the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in New York, which has seen an 85% decrease in Internet-related complaints after the upgrade (Yu, 2012).

Method

Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in the Sheriffyt Royal Hotel and Suites and the Jamadex Kings Hotel, both in Ikorudu, Lagos, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised management staffs, members of the board of directors, the managing director, functional managers, supervisors, and other workers. A simple random sampling technique was used to select two hotels in Lagos State for the study. 35 respondents were randomly selected from each of the hotels for the study, giving a total of 70 respondents. The main instrument used in this study was a questionnaire titled "Customer's Patronage in Hospitality Industries Questionnaire" (CPHIQ). A letter of introduction was written by the researcher to the management of the two hotels, asking for permission to conduct the research in their organization and also for assistance and understanding. The researcher decided to adopt descriptive statistics and an independent t-test for the research questions and hypothesis testing. These statistical analyses were deemed necessary due to the fact that the data generated for the study were discrete in nature. The data was analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. For the research question, descriptive statistics was used to answer it, while independent t-test analysis was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels. The decision was made based on a 0.05 alpha level and at 68 degrees of freedom.

Hypothesis One: The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between personalized welcoming messages on HD TV and customer's patronage. In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used to analyse the data. (See Table 1).

TABLE 1: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between personalized welcoming messages on HD TV and customer's patronage

Variable	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r
	ΣY	ΣY^2		
Welcoming Messages (X)	961	13501	17198	0.99*
Customer's Patronage (Y)	1236	22028		

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

The above table 4.1 presents the obtained R-value of (0.99). 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 (0.99) was greater than the critical R-value (0.254). Hence, the result was significant, meaning that there is significant relationship between personalized welcoming messages on HD TV and customer's patronage.

Hypothesis Two: The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between high-speed wireless internet and customer’s patronage. In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used to analyze the data. (See Table 2).

TABLE 2: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between high-speed wireless internet and customer’s patronage

Variable	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r
	ΣY	ΣY^2		
High-Speed Wireless Internet (X)	831	10127	14876	0.97*
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 (0.97). 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 (0.97) was greater than the critical R-value (0.254). Hence, the result was significant, meaning that there is significant relationship between high-speed wireless internet 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 (0.99) was greater than the critical R-value (0.254) at the 0.05 level with 68 degrees of freedom. This result implies that the result therefore means there is a significant relationship between personalized welcoming messages on HD TV and customers patronage. The result is in agreement with the research findings of Hopkins The finding showed that hotels can begin anticipating every need with some suggestions on the TV screen 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. 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 (0.97) was greater than the critical R-value (0.254) at the 0.05 level with 68 degrees of freedom. This result implies that the result therefore means there is a significant relationship between high-speed wireless internet and customers patronage. The result is in agreement with the research findings of Horner. Findings showed that a hotel uses a plan to cover the expensive costs where customers have to pay for access to faster Internet and to connect more than one device. The result of the analysis caused the null hypotheses to be rejected, while the alternative one was retained.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions was drawn that there is a significant relationship between personalized welcoming messages on HD TV and

customers patronage. Lastly, there is significant relationship between high-speed wireless internet and customer patronage.

Recommendations

1. Hotels managers are therefore advised to understand their guests' needs in order to keep current customers and attract new customer's patronage into the hotel.
2. Since the expectations of hotel guests have changed radically in recent years, the guest no longer demands only a comfortable place to stay. Contemporary travelers demand technology applications and amenities that let them stay connected from the moment they arrive while also enjoying the same technology they use at home. Therefore, managers should see to the availability of these amenities.
3. In-room entertainment systems consist of personalized welcoming message on the HD television, video on demand, high-speed Wi-Fi, interactive TV systems, video games, in-room fitness, and so forth. These should be provided for guest entertainment and information when they want it and on the device of their choosing.

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