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The Impact of Hotel Website Quality on Customer Reservation

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**THE IMPACT OF HOTEL WEBSITE
QUALITY ON CUSTOMER RESERVATION**

By

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the discussion of the relationship between the website design and customer reservations in Las Vegas, specifically, how important the website quality is to hotels and how the features affect the Internet bookings. Since the online market is growing and becoming more and more competitive, hotels are investigating an effective way to keep customers making reservation directly through the hotel's own website, such as providing lowest guarantee rates, promoting loyalty points and cooperating with online travel agents. Consumers expect websites that are informative, attractive and engaging. Usability, security, personalization, usefulness, responsiveness and information content are the dimensions of web quality as classified. In addition, customer's perception of website quality influences the customer's satisfaction and the purchase intentions for online reservations. Therefore, hoteliers should learn to improve the website quality in order to drive business developments, improve clients' online booking experiences and deliver results.

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The use of Internet has changed the hospitality industry with helping organize, promote and market tourism products and services, as well as helping communication, online transaction, and distribution systems for hoteliers and consumers (Buhalis & Law, 2008). The presence of information technology has transformed marketing practices, from passive marketing to the detection of what customers want and the ability to attract and track them. To this extent, the Internet forced the companies and organizations changing the way to operate and communicate. As the number of Internet users' increases, so do the numbers of visitors to hotel websites. Because of the increasing number of websites, it is more difficult for hotels to attract visitors and even to convert them to customers (Auger, 2005). By 2014, in the U.S., 57% of all travel reservations were made on the Internet while online travels bookings revenue has increased by more than 73% over the past five years (Roth & Fishbin, 2015). In the same year, according to TravelClick's numbers, hotel brand websites only gained 6.1% growth on reservations compared with a 9.2% increase for online travel agencies (Skift, 2014).

By looking at a single destination, a recent report (2014 Las Vegas Visitor Profile Study, 2014) indicates that among 68% of visitors who used Internet to book their trip, 41% of travelers who visited Las Vegas in the year of 2014 used hotel websites directly to make accommodations, an increase from 27% in 2010, and 28% in 2013.

Nowadays consumers could get deals and products of better value through the Internet. Website is not only an informational channel but also a trading platform. It provides news and data, creates a brand image, and works as sales tool. Hotel managers have to evaluate such facilities in order to improve, change, or adapt them on websites to

visitors' needs. Hotel managers would also like to respond to the increasing need to harmonize their websites to users' needs. They should be able to deliver successful products and increase productivity and competitiveness (De Marsico & Levialdi, 2004).

With the growing influence of website usage, hoteliers realized that the investment on technology became more and more important. A study by Schmidt et al., (2009), addressed the importance of hotel websites as the heart of digital marketing and selling strategy for hotels; looking keenly at the quality of the information on these websites and its ability to influence buying behavior. According to the study, the most commonly found information on many hotel websites includes the background information about the facility, reservation information, contact information, and information concerning offers and privileges. Despite the availability of such information on the websites, travelers also rely on different information sources available to support their decision, such as OTAs (Bahalis & Law, 2008). Therefore, understanding users' needs and behavior is of the most critical importance to the success of web marketing strategies. Hoteliers have to successfully address their hotels' image, customer perception, and loyalty. A branded website becomes trusted and generates recognizable services and facilities. By establishing a website, hotel managers can increase volumes of sales, enhance the brand images, and increase the overall effect of their marketing plans.

A close look at the factors that contribute to online bookings through the content in websites is important. Satisfying customers may include providing sincere lists of services on the websites as well as giving the payment. For a customer who sees the prices of items on a hotel website, it not only becomes easier to decide whether to pay or not, it shows that there are no hidden agendas related to charges. Satisfaction of the

customer is probably the main reason a hotel website is the actual set up and updated overtime. The customers include tourists, both domestic and international as well as other brands in the industry that wish to connect and partner for business. The information displayed on a website is significant for reservation. The display of content including articles and images plays a big role in the level to which the hotel management satisfies or aims to satisfy its audience. It is the reason that we dig in how hotel website development affects customer satisfaction.

Problem Statement and Purpose

Las Vegas is a rather different tourist destination and has problems competing with emerging tourist destinations in the wider area of United States. Previous researches (Lindgaard et al., 2006; Magnini, 2011; Morosan & Jeong, 2007 and Peng et al., 2013) have shown that how does hotel website affect customer reservation preferences. However, since most of the hotels in Las Vegas are not willing to provide inside information because of the competition, there is lacking of studies that investigate the factors that influence Las Vegas consumers. This paper will combine prior research to explore the various factors that contribute to website quality influences in online booking behavior.

The purpose of the paper is to find out which attributes and characteristics on websites are relevant with customer reservations in Las Vegas. Specifically, how important the website quality is to hotels and if the features on website show their actions. This paper is structured as follows. First this paper address the hotel website history and background. Then it explore and classify previous research focused on

website features. This paper continue by discussing the factors affect one's online booking decisions and, finally, round off with a general discussion about this study.

History and Trends in Hotel Website Development

Over the years, hotels have embraced technology largely since digital marketing has proved to be a great platform that attracts a significant number of both domestic and international visitors. The websites that were vague in terms of providing information have not only improved, but most have resorted to picture heavy articles and postings, also employed digital marketer together with a website manager. The staff has become less but plays a crucial role in updating the website.

Historically, the websites existed but just for the sake of existence once searched by a potential client or tourist. Not many hotels even the very known paid much attention in managing the websites mostly because, they did not have the drive, or rather digital marketing was not a popular tool back then. Over the years, we have seen already established hotels and restaurants update their websites almost on a daily basis and not only updating but also keeping it 'cleans' for a better view for the views (Ip, Law & Lee, 2010).

Earlier on, website performance were ignored topics of concern. Large amounts of money were poured into website development without much thought given to their usefulness in achieving particular organizational objectives (Alastair el at., 2008). Usually, the hotels did not go deep into categorizing their website into slots that will suit different viewers. This way, not much was known about the hotels. Hotel website creation was not as important for profit making as it is today (Sambhanthan, 2013).

In addition, investing in a website manager was unheard of as most hotels especially the unpopular ones. They used other means of advertising for their new ventures. Therefore, no huge amount of capital was budgeted for hiring a competent website creator and manager. There was absolute no direct permanent jobs in the hotel and tourism industry for website and graphic designers. This being part of the history of the development process for hotel websites, the changes have been major for the hotels that existed during the time, those that have completely embarked on using a website to reach their clients (Qi, 2011).

In essence, the history of hotels web development has improved over the years following the use of technology. Moreover, the idea currently is not only using the Internet as a marketing platform but as a tool for branding. There are more and more new hotels, which come up over the years, jump into the highly competitive market and join to the fight, which named for customer. (Sigala, 2007). The strategy, is how well a modern hotel invests in website design development. What a hotel displays and what it does not. The services offered can be similar but how the same services are viewed on the Internet by the world becomes different. Hotels over the years have used website development as a competition tool.

Another different scenario is in the steadiness of a hotel in relation to receiving guests. Without a well developed website, which was the case in the earlier days, there were days of months when hotels received zero or very few visitors (Spremic, Jakovic, & Bach, 2008). Hotel industry has always had its seasons to peak but in the past, they off-peak periods obviously went for long because the world was not aware of any services on offer or even no testimonials at all from anyone. This has changed overtime as most

hotels prepare their potential visitors beforehand by updating their websites with categories of the then current situations including services and products.

The overview above thus provides us with a history of how hotel website development has improved over time. Following the changes that have occurred with time, there has been an increase in competition in the industry but more so positive trends that the market as well as give most of these hotel businesses enough boost. A good website is not only attractive to the eye, it is diverse with different listings of categories, pictures of the visitors and the staff interacting and other issues that make the website appear as the real form of the hotel (Natarajan, Balakrishnan, Balasubramanian, & Manickavasagam, 2013). There are several trends that are boosting the industry with the updated form of websites.

One of the trends in the hotel website development is the idea of having a web developer. This individual is well conversant with softwares and design tools that will keep the viewers of the hotel interested to visit it (S. & Parida, 2008). The web developer is put on a salary and works like a normal employee in the hotel. The job is to ensure the website is running and everything that the hotel offers is included in the website. The process is challenging because daily happenings or offers must be included on the website for the potential guests to see. The web developer also works like the social media marketer by ensuring people get more of the hotel details through the popular social media platforms.

Social media is another tool trending with the hotel website development (Scott, 2011). It is very easy to attract visitors and tourists from social media than merely a website. Therefore, the hotel websites have come up ideas such as a direct link to their

social media pages. These links are to platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube channel, Pinterest, Tumblr and Google Plus. They not only serve as communication tools but also an easy way to reach the desired market (Slattery, 2012). A Facebook page or an Instagram page is probably the most effective because photos are used to communicate. This way, the audience gets a wide coverage of the hotel building, surrounding, and climate at different times. In addition, watching live services or treats through videos is made possible. Social media accounts serve an extension of a hotels website. Social networks provide a functional platform for customer to access information and services easily and conveniently.

Outstanding photography with clear large images is perfect and this is what most hotels are using (Hao, Tang, Yu, Li & Law, 2015). The best photographers in different categories capture all the moments in a hotel often to update the audience on the happenings. There is a merge of many industries for a website to be updated including web and graphic designers, photographers with professional editing skills and also social media marketers (Behrens, 2009). There is also a job creation with the development and maintenance of hotel websites.

Booking of hotels online from within the hotels' local area or in a different country of continent is possible especially with the everyday technological advancement. Customers can manage to book and pay for their stay within minutes of registering as a guest using a hotel website (Graf, 2008). This fast manner of offering services, a type of self-service is what customers are looking for. The method is easier, safe because all transactions are done by the banks required by depositing the payment. The website must, therefore, have a direct link to their bank accounts as well as the form of payment to suit

customers with different currency. Reservations are said to be done by the customers, a notification through email, text or call is sent once payment is made. The process is easy and fun for any tourist, both domestic and international.

For the leading hotels, comparing their performance and presentation is seen mostly through their website upgrades and updates. For the most famous hotel websites such as Hilton, Wynn, Hyatt and MGM always invest their capital and tie in website management because they are popular and have to maintain their image to keep their highend clients coming back (Pranić, 2014). These types of websites are keen to know that there is competition and providing new exciting services is one way to beat the stiff race (Miranda, 2013).

Nowadays, hotels try to drive reservations to their own websites through launching the loyalty programs and modernize the online purchasing experience. One of the most famous hotel firms presented that reservations directly booked from its website has overpassed 50% in 2014 because of its outstanding rewards program (Roth & Fishbin, 2015).

To counter competition, some famous hotel websites are known to use celebrities to market their hotel and services. The website becomes popular when a celebrity visits and makes it known through the Internet for every comment the celebrity put online. Also, hotels build the relationship with food and travel bloggers who give shout outs for the hotels (Gupta, Massisimo, & Koontz, 2013). This is a branding mechanism and while, at it, the hotel websites become associated with a certain category of people living a certain lifestyle. The competition becomes intense because these hotels also choose brand ambassadors to give their name a desired image online.

A new tool that technology has given to well the highly competitive hotels is applications and the search engine tool mechanism (Ryan, 2014). This is where web managers come in and hiring the best gives assurance that once searched on the Internet, the hotel comes up first (Schultz, 2011). For instance, a search for the best hotel in the world will bring up names like Hyatt, Hilton, MGM and Wynn on the first page of Google. Following this, it is up to the hotels to fight for the top most position. This is all effort and investment in website development. A website with more advertisements and less of the hotel details will not attract as many customers as a 'clean' website. It is therefore necessary for the hotel management to forego certain items for the purpose of satisfying their customers or audience (Behrens, 2009).

Testimonials in websites also serve as tools for website development where tourists who visit the hotel give comments about the services during their stay in the hotel. The testimonials are done through videos for these popular hotel websites. They share the videos and fun moments with their audience that happens to be people from the whole globe. Ideally, hotel website development requires factors like highly trained professionals in web design, photography, marketing as well as blogging. It is a combined effort of resources for customers to acquire the ultimate satisfaction

Trends of Las Vegas customers

According to the 2014 Las Vegas Visitor Profile Study (LVVPS), the percentage of visitors who were 39 years or younger was 44% (increase from 29% in 2010 and 43% in 2012), and the average age was obviously decrease from 49.2 from 2010 and 49.0 in 2011. It shows that the booming young generation is flocking the market presently. With the current trend in tourism destination, Las Vegas would soon be turning into a Cancun-

like destination of mainly young tourists (Velotta, 2014). While baby boomers are still the main force of new tourists. The soon to retire baby boomers will soon be travelling to destinations to fulfill their dream pleasures. Las Vegas is a tourist destination that hopes to cash in on this customer base (Akinsete, 2010).

Latest data by Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority, Nevada Gaming Control Board, and HVS Consulting and Valuation (Okada, 2014) support the data above as they identify that gambling is the first income generating activity for visitors but there was a slight drop of gaming revenue per person from USD252 to USD234 between 2013 and 2014. Market focus should be in reaching to this population to enhance the overall income generation in Las Vegas. The gaming revenue is not yet to its peak if results from 1980-2003 are compared (Okada, 2014). The number of visitors is up (more generation Y) yet revenue decreased, which affirms that gambling is still the main income source in Las Vegas. Here comes to the problem for hoteliers in Las Vegas, how does hotel attract and maintain high-end clients while not lose the booming young generations?

Increasing tourist numbers visiting Las Vegas could over 40 million by 2015 because of initiatives in place to support tourism. City of Rock by MGM Resorts is expected to accommodate a daily capacity of 80,000 people viewing acts on five stages. Resort World Las Vegas will increase lodging rooms by 155,000 mainly from online clients (Marcus, 2014). These projects represent the new face of market in Las Vegas. Okada, (2014) recognizes, “The demand induced by new sources of customers and the fact that Las Vegas remains a vibrant center for gaming and entertainment bodes well for the market’s future growth”.

PART TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Website Quality

According to Chang and Chen (2008), website quality can be regarded as “users’ evaluation of whether a website’s features up to standard and expose the whole performance of the web site”. It presents the importance of customers in judging website performance (Bai et al., 2008). There are two factors reveal the usefulness and effectiveness of hotel websites: functionality and usability (Au Yeung and Law, 2004). The functionality refers to the viewpoints of right content, while usability reflects whether or not the website is efficient and pleasurable for the displaying products/services (Wang et al., 2015).

The hotel’s website system usually performs two functions. First, is to provide information to customers to make their purchasing decisions online. The efficiency of the information provided may influence customer’s satisfaction leading to loyalty towards the website. Second, it facilitates the purchase of products offered (Crnojevac, Gugić, & Karlovčan, 2010). From a consumer’s point of view, online booking creates by providing useful information at no cost. From a manager’s perspective, the main aim of operating a website is to collect revenue via online businesses. Online exchanges between customers will benefit hotels as more customers will be attracted to the website.

Importance of Utilizing Website for Hotel Business

Through the development of Internet, organizations can distribute their products through channeled networks, as well as other direct channels of distribution. Shifting focus to the hotel, and tourism industry, travel intermediaries (online-travel agencies) and search engines distribute both dynamic and static information including hotel availability

and pricing rates. The use of websites for online reservation may result in an expensive and complex distribution chain due to the number of intermediaries involved.

Consequently, more hotels consider using Internet marketing and their websites to save cost (Sanchez-Franco & Rondan-Cataluña, 2009)

According to a survey on the use of Internet marketing by hotels, many of hotel businesses in the year 2009 stated the use of online marketing was more cost effective in generating returns (Sanchez-Franco & Rondan-Cataluña, 2009). However, lack knowledge and organizational resources were the major challenges facing the use of Internet marketing to its potential. Online booking has become a popular alternative for travelers owing to the nature of the travel business. Consumers are now able to access accurate and reliable information on hotels, make reservations in the shortest time, at lower costs with little conveniences encountered.

The development of information communication technologies particularly the Internet led to the emergence of new crop of tourists who were less interested in mass tourism packages. They are more sophisticated and independent utilizing different tools to plan their itineraries. With the primary aim of satisfying their needs, these tourists will utilize hotel reservation system, social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, search engines including Google and destination managing systems (Hashim, Murphy, & Law, 2007). Moreover, portals such as Trip Advisor and Wynn are used to compare services and prices for different hotels.

Online business transactions will have mutual benefit between hoteliers and their clients. The hotel's management will have the opportunity to regulate their operation costs. As opposed to hoteliers using central reservations systems (CRS), global

distribution systems (GDS), and universal switch the use of websites saves on commissions and fees for connection to other intermediaries (Buhalis & Law, 2008).

Hoteliers enjoy increased profits by adopting direct distribution networks.

Use of online reservation systems results in reduced labor cost. The functions that would be done by hotel staff including providing information about location and amenities are provided in the website. This reduces the number of employees in the hotel and leads to effective management and distribution of the labor force.

Managers can use hotel websites as a medium for interaction with their customers. This creates an important component to build customer loyalty and trust (Buhalis & Law, 2008). Questionnaires, inquiries and service mails can be used to collect customer opinions about hotel's service enabling managers to re-evaluate their hotel's operational and management strategies.

The consumers, through the use of online booking, they are able reduce costs. They will not have to call hotels to do their reservation. Instead, reservations can conveniently be done with only a few clicks on their computers. Crnojevac, Gugić and Karlovčan (2010) acknowledges that, most customers who plan their travel online claimed to have reduced the number of phone calls and visits to travel intermediaries since they started planning their travel through the Internet. This was the same for individuals who needed to make reservations to hospitality institutions such as hotels, airlines and car rental companies. Through the use of websites, online customers find the best rates available and hoteliers carry out Internet businesses without having to incur high fees and commissions.

Moreover, since the web systems are designed to remember a consumer's preferences, customers are able to acquire automated customized services through the search function of the website. Repeat visitors will have the convenience of retrieving their information easily as it is stored in the systems database (Lindgaard et al., 2006).

As a consequence, the use of information technologies in the hotel industry has had several effects to both the consumer and the hotels. The increase in the number of travel websites has led to intense competition. This is attributed to the emergence of third-party intermediaries, specifically online-travel agencies such as expedia.com and hotels.com, selling diverse product offering customers a one stop shopping advantage. In addition to that, customers have become more prices sensitive and less inclined to brand oriented purchasing. Lastly, with the changing shift in power from market suppliers to third-party intermediaries and customers, hoteliers have to handle the risks and utilize opportunities presented in capturing consumers' attention (Lindgaard et al., 2006).

Characteristics of Hotel Websites

In order to effectively meet the needs of its customers, a hotel's website should help its visitors solve their problem and provide an easy process to complete their travel plans (Peng, Xu, & Chen, 2013). There are some key characteristics commonly present on hotel websites:

Provide visual content: Majority of hotel websites contains a picture gallery of their services, facilities, exterior, interior and locations. Sometimes, other websites display pictures of their team personnel. Web pages for specific types of rooms or facilities will display ideal images (Flavián, Guinalú & Gurrea, 2006).

An interactive area: this provides clients with insights about the destination. Interaction maps enable visitors to explore restaurants, shops and different facilities in close proximity to the hotel. This increases the chances of a booking by the visitor. However, a majority of hotels' websites hardly display this information hence not fulfilling the customers desire to explore the locality (Peng, Xu, & Chen, 2013).

An easy to use and responsive design: Because of the nature of the travel industry, many visitors to hotel's website are on the go. Therefore, views to the site will be on smartphones, tablets and other computer devices. A good website should be able to resize and allow reservations on any of these devices. Moreover, an easy to use website will have short confirmation process of a booking.

Social and hotel blog sections: Social interaction medias such as Twitter, Facebook and other codes that help websites communicate with consumer are important to any hotel website. These medias can be used to gauge customer satisfaction and act as a point for conducting Internet marketing. Hotel blogs have been used to write targeted consumer content to increase the levels of search and help web visitors (Peng, Xu, & Chen, 2013).

Show clear instructions: A good hotel website should have an easy to use navigation bar that extends across each top page of the website. It should be clear and provide links that are easy to find directing visitors to various sections of the webpage. Moreover, there should be a clearly visible call-to-action to guide clients through the booking process and find answers to queries

Offer low prices/Rate guarantee: Consumers are thrilled if they understand they will be getting the best rates. No website will give higher rates than those given by travel

agents to customers who do booking directly from the website. Moreover, hotel websites will display offers on special discounted rates and promotions.

Testimonials and Guest reviews: Many travelers tend to seek out reviews from different guest to get a well-rounded perception about the hotel. Sites such as Trip Advisor, Yelp and Guest Review will most readily used to obtain this information (Peng, Xu, & Chen, 2013).

Travelers are able to get up to date and unbiased information about a particular hotel from the perspective of a different traveler. This creates assurance amongst customers as they have heard from their fellow clients' experiences.

Factors Influence the Online Reservation

Online travel booking has not been fully embraced by many travelers because of various reasons including: lack of secure methods of payment, the need for human interaction and personal services and little confidence in technology (Peng, Xu, & Chen, 2013). In this regard, travelers have their booking done by travel agents as opposed to online booking because of the social interface, expertise and save time to carry out research. Different online booking channels show great differentiation in external and internal price search, brand loyalty, unavailability during booking, frequency of purchase and the number of options availed (Magnini, 2011).

There are three factors that influence traveler's preference for online booking. They include characteristics as exhibited in the Internet, characteristics of online sellers and personal characteristics (Hashim, Murphy, & Law, 2007). Internet derived characteristics that influence online booking includes levels of security, alleged risk, suitability, usefulness and timing. The characteristics of online sellers that impact on

online booking are quality of information, price competitiveness, pricing standards, service reputation and performance, rating of online site reviews and terms of use.

According to Magnini (2011), the major motivation of online reservation for complex services and products for example accommodation, events, attractions and activities is driven by information factors such as comprehensive information and obtainability, while booking for less complex services and products for instance air tickets are driven by transactional goals such as price and rewards. Consumers will prefer online reservation systems that have low density content, perform at high speeds, adapt to behavior, have features for customization and have low memory density (Magnini, 2011).

A consumer's behavioral affinity for online reservation is impacted by individual characteristics including technological preferences, levels of innovation, self-efficiency, inclination to offline service, time of booking, level of involvement, previous Internet experience, expected levels of performance, expected levels of determination, online shopping expertise, subjective norm, amount of trust, consumer gender, educational background and age (Sanchez-Franco & Rondan-Cataluña, 2009).

Relationship between website quality and customer purchase

Many consumers are becoming more aware and concerned of their purchasing behaviors in the present business environment. This is especially true if customers have to compare product and service offerings in the Internet before purchasing. A consumer's purchase intent depends on his/her levels of satisfaction and degree of trust on the web (Flavián, Guinalú & Gurrea, 2006).

The functioning of web design plays an important role now. Consumers expect websites that are informative, attractive and engaging. Usability, security, personalization, usefulness, responsiveness and information content are the dimensions of web quality as classified (Law & Cheung, 2005). In the study carried out by Law and Cheung's on the most important factor on a hotel's website, information regarding reservation was found to be the most important. In order to be successful, websites should therefore, capture relevant information about customer preferences to enable them provide personalized services. Usability has gained importance in information technology (Flavián, Guinalú, & Gurrea, 2006). Usability relates to the ease and simplicity with which consumers are to use a system and do basic operations. Efficiency, effectiveness and satisfaction of customers determine the usability levels of a technological system. Therefore, the level of usability of a website forms the basis for business tangibility. Aesthetics is defined as "a pleasing environment" (Merriam–Webster Dictionary). Consequently, visual aesthetics will affect subsequent perceptions. According to Browne et.al (2004) a pleasing environment will positively enhance a customer's perspective and subsequent evaluations influencing their emotions and preference to do business. Visual aesthetics are important to interactive service as they to form judgments for preferences that are hard to change (Lindgaard, Fernandes, Dudek, & Brown, 2006).

Website provides the platform for customers and enterprises to exchange and share information during online shopping (Shih, 2004). Service quality of website plays a significant role for the purchasing process. In addition, customer's perception of website quality influences the customer's satisfaction and the purchase intentions (Bai et al. 2008). According to the study from Hsu et al. (2011), service quality is even more important

than information technology quality during the process of online shopping. Therefore, to meet with the online clients' needs and exceptions, hoteliers should pay attention to improve the user experiences on website service by designing four main features: quality content, usefulness, convenience, and fun (Morosan & Jeong, 2007).

Taking an example of the Bellagio's website (<http://www.bellagio.com/>), which provides a unique feeling for their loyalty customers all the time. As the first Las Vegas resort and casino to ever receive the AAA Five Diamond award, Bellagio put a lot of efforts on marketing to maintain its efforts. From the gorgeous interior design, to the elegant website design, Bellagio maintains its best brand image in front of the public. New customer will be attracted by the first click into the website through the moving pictures with sumptuous meals on offer in the luxury environment, or a dancing stream video with inspirational music and magnificent lighting. Essawy (2006) indicated before that online reservations and revisit intentions were negatively influenced by the usability problems whereas they were positively affected by the improved depth of website contents and customer interactions. Bellagio realized that they should optimally present themselves and exactly deliver the information required by their consumers. Dickinger & Mazanec (2008) performed a survey to prove that "A simple measure such as including pictorial elements significantly raises the average part-worth utility from -1.41 (no picture) to 1.34 (pleasant photo of a hotel room)". Hence, in order to target the purchasing power and decision of the online client, the website needs to capture the most vital contents such as recent activities, the newest restaurant, and the best promotion packages for families.

PART THREE: DISCUSSION

Summary

The purpose of the paper is to find out which attributes and characteristics on websites are relevant with customer reservations in Las Vegas. Specifically, how important the website quality is to hotels and if the features on website show their actions. As mentioned in the literature review, the previous research has shown different opinions on website quality and online reservations. It is clear that customer's perception of website quality influences the customer's satisfaction and the purchase intentions for online bookings. Additionally, consumers will prefer online reservation systems that have low density content, perform at high speeds, adapt to behavior, have features for customization and have low memory density. The study has shown the positive relationship between website quality and customer reservation. More importantly, the study presented the different factors that a hotel website may influence the consumers' bookings.

Recommendations

Olsen and Connolly (2000) stated that there would be substantial transformations among hospitality enterprises due to the rising number of online consumers. Since the online market is growing and becoming more and more competitive, hotels are investigating an effective way to keep customers making reservation directly through the hotel's own website, such as providing the lowest guarantee rates, loyalty points and cooperation with OTAs (Morosan & Jeong, 2007). Hoteliers should develop their websites in order to increase visibility and brand reputation (Hashim & Murphy, 2007).

The study discussed the relationship between hotel website quality and the number of online reservations. From the empirical evidence about online customers intentions and Las Vegas customers trends, it would be beneficial for hotel practitioners to invest in website development to attract more of the social online customer for more bookings. For instance, with the growing number of new restaurants opening and entertainment activities being held in Las Vegas, visualize contents and design should be improved on the websites so that they can attract customers's attention at the first click. Law & Bai, (2007) add that websites are the basis of making purchase intention and as such, hoteliers should include quality factors in design. As consumers become more familiar with technology products, they participate more in online consumption and have higher requirements for hotels' website presentation. Consequently, to seize the profitable online websites opportunity, hotel owners should distribute more resources to improve websites into multifunctional platforms that would meet consumer needs for information, design, and relationship.

Moreover, with the growing number of young visitors (39 years old or younger) coming to Las Vegas, hoteliers should consider the booming group with providing personal booking experience. Since the young generation and middle aged adults are the commonest social network users and they invest a lot of money on gambling and entertainments, it is essential to organize the right arrangement of channels and the appropriate "language" to attract and engage these customers. Additionally, managers should confirm that their rooms and events are promoted appropriately in different types of online channels. Accordingly, hotels need to "make sure the experience they have on the brand site is better than whatever they experience on any other travel or hospitality

portal” (Schueler, 2005), because more customers will make accommodations on hotel’s website if they realize the website is more attractive, user-friendly, easier to access, and more price competitive (Rob, 2009). In a word, whoever keeps up with fast technology revolutions and utilizes the most updated technology tools on its hotel brand website, will differentiate themselves from others and become triumphant as online reservation business grows.

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