

## Luxury Tourism and Hospitality Employees

*By Efstathios Marios Papakonstantinou\**

*This paper aims to educate readers on the idea of luxury and the vital role that hospitality employees play in the visitor experience. To provide services that create remarkable luxury accommodation experiences, frontline staff must engage visitors on a sensory level in addition to a functional one. This interaction involves behavioral, relational, emotional, and cognitive aspects. The hospitality and tourist sectors are people-oriented; in order to produce desired experiences, individuals must service others. As a result, it might be challenging to establish satisfaction or to revisit intention in each contact. The provision of these intangible qualities of the industry, along with physical indicators, are what contribute significantly to the overall improvement of the luxury lodging experience. Visitors know exactly what to anticipate from encounters in opulent lodging. They believe that since they are paying for a service, they should be able to tell the employees what they need and desire. One crucial aspect of the business is the co-creation and human engagement between employees and visitors. This paper will examine the impact of these encounters on the quality of service provided to guests.*

**Keywords:** Frontline employees; luxury experience; hospitality; service; intangible characteristics

### Introduction

Academics and industry were attracted by the rise of luxury travel. Scholars studying marketing and consumer behavior have suggested that consumers' perceptions of luxury and non-luxury are influenced by their judgment (Chang, Ko, & Leite, 2016). Travelers are looking for the unique or exceptional feature, which results in additional services and adding an experiential element to the physical aspects. A prominent example includes the increasing use of luxury goods and services, specifically in the travel industry, as travelers aim to explore exceptional locations and engage in memorable, experiential pursuits (Veríssimo and Loureiro, 2013). Luxury travel, according to Strong (2006), can be defined as trips taken by the wealthy that include opulent first-class accommodations, VIP service, and a lasting impression that transforms the customer's lifestyle. Limited edition, genuine, customized, and kind products are what define luxury, according to Schänzel, Yeoman, and Backer (2012). For marketers looking to position their product in the luxury market, one of their primary objectives is to create the appearance of acute personalization. Luxury travel is defined by Purinton-Johnson (2013) as including both high-end tangible and intangible elements of the product.

In light of the above, luxury travel was defined as embarking on a unique adventure and visiting an uncommon and exotic location, as well as enjoying exclusive services, staying in opulent lodging, dining at restaurants that cannot be

---

\* PhD Candidate, Southwest University "Neofit Rilsky" Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria.

equaled, hiring knowledgeable and experienced tour guides, etc. It is regarded as a stress-free mode of transportation that removes the strain of everyday life, ensuring that all expectations are not just fulfilled but surpassed. When it comes to cruise ship merchandise or five-star lodging, the term is really pertinent (Chen & Peng, 2014). Fitzsimmons (2017) offers an alternative viewpoint and clarifies that "luxurious" is not about possessions but rather about experiences and services, something valuable, uncommon, and invested in sentimental value, like picking out a room scent, mixing a glass of wine, and relishing in an exceptional and individualized collection of artwork, plants, or other artifacts.

Through human connection dimensions, tourism and hospitality organizations are creating or choreographing luxury lodging experiences in order to better their relationship with their clients. For instance, attention is being paid to how their front-line staff presents themselves, acts in a professional manner, has a pleasant mood and demeanor, provides proactive service, and helps customers socialize in order to strengthen the bond between the employer and employee. Service quality has taken the place of product quality in service-oriented sectors like travel and hospitality. This new strategy is seen as a way for luxury accommodations to set themselves apart from competitors in their industry and enhance the lodging experiences of its patrons.

The relationship between the consumer and the producer - which is increasingly crucial in the luxury lodging industry - becomes more significant under this new strategy than the product itself. These days, the focus is on designing luxurious lodging experiences where guests are active participants rather than just observers. Frontline employees must facilitate this co-creation because of the frequent encounters they have with visitors. When collaborating to create unique and outstanding luxury lodging experiences, it is crucial to look at and assess the recruitment, selection, training, and development of tourism and hospitality experts. This will enable these professionals to better anticipate and accommodate guests' wants and preferences.

This paper is organized into seven sections, including this introduction. Section two provides a historical perspective on luxury. Section three examines the association between luxury and hotel brands. Section four discusses the role of frontline employees. Section five explores hotels as a unique luxury experience. Section six presents the findings of a case study on luxury hotel and lodge experiences in New Zealand. The final section concludes the paper and provides recommendations.

## **Historical Progression of Luxury**

The idea has altered and developed over time, with obvious historical roots that go back to two hundred or three hundred years, despite the fact that some would contend that its presence has a far longer history due to its origins in empires and kingdoms. Nonetheless, as a commercial strategy, Paris's opulent hotels formerly mirrored the preferences of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. When one examines the history of tourism, one discovers that in the past, the main purposes of

travel were for pilgrimages, commerce, the military, explorers and adventurers, and regular travelers (also known as sightseers). It is also true that, in those days of tourism, anything that went beyond simple travel was regarded as a luxury.

For instance, riding a horse was regarded as a luxury for someone in poverty. When it came to sightseeing travelers, it was a luxury experience because they only went places if they had spare time and discretionary cash, which are characteristics of luxury travel. Thus, it was primarily intended for the "rich class." Throughout the Roman Empire, individuals traveled both short distances and large distances for sightseeing. In addition to being comfortable, the more affluent part enjoyed delectable food and drinks, luxurious residences, and enjoyable activities to pass the time while traveling. There were tourist destinations and attractions in the towns. However, since they enjoyed comparable pleasures at home, many did not consider it to be a luxury. However, a century or so ago, both the Greeks and the Romans made very few tourist trips.

### *The Idea of a Grand Tour emerged*

One of the earliest examples of luxury travel in history may be the very British phenomenon known as "The Grand Tour." The rich English of this era (1613–1785) were the first to engage in luxury travel and tourism, and this practice later extended to other people with time and money. It resembled a trip designed to broaden the young aristocrats' horizons in terms of understanding and exposure. A Grand Tour was a sabbatical period in which the young people, especially men, gave them a broader perspective on education and art, much like in the present when students take a gap year. However, not everyone should take this tour. It was a luxury that was only indulged in by those with spare time and money.

A Grand Tour was also an expensive event, available only to the aristocracy, as it lasted for two to three years, including extensive travel, lodging at luxurious establishments, delicious food, and entertaining. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Grand Tour was still quite popular. And as the eighteenth century came to an end, individuals with less money to spare also yearned for a comparable experience as it became more and more desirable. As a result, a new kind of Grand Tour was organized for those who traveled for weeks as opposed to months or years and for the sake of hedonism and sightseeing rather than education.

A growing number of people believed that the Grand Tour peaked around 1660. But when rail transportation was introduced in the 1840s, it was associated with a predetermined schedule, especially for educational purposes. Although the Grand Tour was first associated with the wealthy gentry and nobility of Britain, young men from other countries, including those in North America, South America, and Northern Europe, started taking part in comparable trips in the second half of the eighteenth century. Only for the top aristocracy, the Grand Tour had established itself as a mainstay of aristocratic education in Central Europe by the mid-seventeenth century.

*The Golden Age of Travel*

The "Golden Age of Travel," a nostalgic expression that describes a period when access to European and American society was restricted to a privileged minority, including the aristocracy, but in ever-increasing numbers, was centered on the wealthy. Additionally, the concept expanded during the nineteenth century, reaching various parts of the globe. Consequently, J. Gilford-Milne produced a report on the subject in 1916 and came to the conclusion that luxury tourism had changed.

The railway and steamship eras coincided with the growth of the affluent class, who arose from the filth and suffering of the industrial revolution in Europe and the United States, as well as individuals who achieved fortune independently. The early nineteenth century is characterized as the "Golden Age of Travel" since it saw the nobility and this idea grow in proportion. It was important to engage in conspicuous consumerism, whether it was via first-class cruise vacations, art purchases, or casino gaming.

*Mass Luxury Tourism*

Since everyone wants a little luxury in their lives, luxury travel has essentially become "mass" today, and individuals from all socioeconomic backgrounds can now access this formerly exclusive market—it is no longer just available to the very wealthy or select few. Fedeli (2011) argues that people's opinions and personal assessments of many physical aspects influence the concept of luxury, making it a relative concept. According to Kapferer and Laurent (2015), it is a good idea to examine how consumers perceive products in order to determine what constitutes luxury to them.

According to the trend, the wealthy female market, Generation X and Millennials who are digital nomads, and the reshaping of the notion and desire for luxury travel are all factors in the new reality (Danziger, 2019). Furthermore, the upcoming markets for luxury travel include the middle and higher middle classes, which will have an impact on the dynamics of supply. It is therefore essential to examine past developments as well as the effects of elements like economic growth, technical advancement, and the consumption patterns of luxury in various societies in order to completely comprehend it.

**Luxury Accommodation and Hotel Brands**

Luxury hotels used to be known for their prime locations, impressive size, excellent food, cleanliness, and stunning beauty, as well as for delivering protection, privacy, and highly customized services (Kucukusta, Heung, & Hui, 2014). Other lodging establishments, however, began to feel that they needed to add more amenities to their rooms (like a variety of well-known toiletry brands). This phenomenon, known as "the amenities creep of the 1980s," was fueled by fiercely competitive market situations (Bell, 1989). By the turn of the century, however,

customers no longer viewed hotel amenities like dining options, bars, rooms, and nightclubs as a luxury; for many, these amenities had really become essential to their way of existence (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000).

The luxury market became more competitive as a result of the higher standards for "average" lodging, and businesses were forced to pay greater attention to customer pleasure (Lu, Berchoux, Marek, & Chen, 2015). By looking at customer satisfaction from the viewpoint of the client, it is possible to see how people relate luxury hotels as a product to their own life (Dixit, 2017). It was discovered that visitors to luxury hotels had powerful emotional experiences and were willing to pay extra for them (Han & Back, 2007). Some hotel organizations specifically upgraded their hotels to luxury as a result of this understanding. However, because the goal of a visitor's stay might influence their perceptions, luxury hotels need to know if they are there for business or pleasure. It is unrealistic to assume that business travelers would be as concerned about their hotel experiences as leisure travelers are, claim Cetin & Dincer (2014). The hotel's brand is another element that may influence how satisfied guests are.

According to Xu and Chan (2010), a hotel's brand is seen as an implicit guarantee of the kinds of facilities and service standards that visitors can anticipate. As a hotel chain's signature, the brand showcases its offerings and is frequently seen as a way for hotel organizations to stand out from the competition in the eyes of their patrons. Even while a number of businesses, including the Four Seasons and the Ritz Carlton, marketed their premises as luxury hotels, O'Neill (2004), who examined the changing nature of luxury hotel brand values, was unable to provide a clear definition of what "made" a luxury hotel. To help clarify, O'Neill states that "Luxury hotels are about as different from the average hotel as a Prada bag is from a duffel bag," (O'Neill, 2004, p. 30) and he uses a shopping analogy to illustrate the point.

Presbury, Fitzgerald, and Chapman (2005) said that luxury hotel managers needed to identify the special features, offerings, abilities, and strengths that they could continuously offer guests in order for their facilities to differentiate themselves from other hotels. Additionally, luxury hotels are distinguished from other forms of lodging by their highly engaged and well-trained staff (Bagnera, 2017).

### **Frontline Employees**

Employees are the ones who manage the product that is the guests' experience and offer the service, especially those who have direct contact with guests. In light of this, it is imperative that businesses take care to choose and employ the "right" employees - those whose dispositions are inclined to please clients. Additionally, after hiring employees, the company must assist them with training and development initiatives and integrate them into the culture of the company (Torres & Kline, 2006).

According to Walls, Okumus, Wang, and Kwun (2011), human interactions can have a big impact on the guest experience at luxury hotels besides travel-related concerns aspects (such whether guests are traveling for business or pleasure). Due

to the high levels of engagement between employees and customers in the lodging business, the services and behaviors of the employees that guests interact with often have an emotional influence on them (Han & Back, 2007). According to Walls et al. (2011), guests want employees to perform professionally, have a pleasant outlook, and offer services in a proactive way.

According to Scerri, Jenkins, and Lovell (2017), frontline staff encounters with visitors typically begin with planned and practiced verbal exchange sequences. According to Baum (2006), front desk staff in upscale hotels should be able to converse with guests about anything that comes up, whether it be politics, music, sports, movies, or anything else, while maintaining a global perspective. This requirement, however, depends on hiring educated frontline employees who have had some exposure to other countries and who are dedicated to staying current on these topics (Baum, 2006). It has been suggested that luxury hotels maintain high staff-to-guest ratios in order to provide high levels of interpersonal visitor engagement in what is viewed as an extravagant setting (Harkison et al., 2018). Increasing human interaction is essential to improving tourists' positive experiences, claim Bharwani and Jauhari (2013).

One of the main concerns in the hospitality sector is the guest experience, including both hosting and giving the sense that one is being hosted. Some have suggested that hospitality is a lived experience in which the "host" and the "guest" engage in a "here and now" interaction. Hospitality is a gift that is given and shared, and the act of compassion that a guest receives - converting a stranger into a friend, even if only temporarily - is the truest gift. Both the host and the guest's capacity to connect and the guest's willingness to participate in the experience provided by the organization determine the success rate of the hospitality experience (Alcántara-Alcover, Artacho-Ramírez, Martínez-Guillamón, & Campos-Soriano, 2013). Furthermore, there is little doubt that both employees and guests have a part to play in the interactions and experiences of the services.

In an attempt to connect with guests, organizations use aspects of the physical environment (such as the artifacts, function, ambience, symbols, space, signs, and multisensory aspects) and/or human interaction (such as the presentation, professionalism, proactiveness, and demeanor of employees; and the attitude, behavior, socialization, and presentation of the visitor) to create or choreograph experiences (Walls et al., 2011). However, the willingness of the visitor to be influenced by aspects of physical and/or human connection mediates the multifaceted impression created by interactions with goods, services, and companies (Walls et al., 2011). The human contacts with staff and other guests, the visitors' personal traits, and the physical surroundings are all aspects of a tourist experience in a luxury hotel. A comprehensive approach that begins with pre-experience expectations and extends to post-experience evaluations of the hotel experience should be used to manage the visitor experience. Furthermore, as previously mentioned by Gilmore and Pine (2002), a well-planned and creative experience design will eventually become a crucial core competency of effective hotel managers.

It was acknowledged by Williams (2006) that hospitality and theater share a common feature of environment staging and the need to stage-manage the encounters.

The front of the house must be meticulously prepared like a stage in hotels and restaurants; this can take a lot of time, but it is essential to create the experience (Williams, 2006). An illustration of this in the hospitality sector is the use of "experience engineers" by Starwood Hotels and Resorts, whose main goal is to improve the service culture at their locations because it has been shown that better service cultures increase customer satisfaction and loyalty by providing better guest experiences. Starwood employed Second Life software for staging in an effort to give its guests better experiences and to gather insightful input from their guests regarding new hotels they were considering building (Penfold, 2009).

According to Hemmington (2007), incorporating numerous small shocks, hospitality organizations should strive to produce a client experience that is comparable to that of excellent restaurants. Businesses must rely on their staff to provide these kinds of experiences by using their ideas and inventiveness to continuously engage and thrill guests during their stay. However, maintaining the customer's perspective can be crucial when delivering hospitality products: customers purchase experiences rather than service delivery; they purchase memories rather than service quality; they purchase meal experiences rather than food and drink (Hemmington, 2007, p. 749). Organizations must be able to create and provide memorable experiences if they want to succeed in the hospitality sector (Yuan & Wu, 2008).

### **Hotels as a Unique Experience and Service Quality**

Drewer (2005, p.6), suggested that 'rather than simply viewing the hotel as accommodation, clients are looking at the hotel to provide an experience itself'. McIntosh and Siggs (2005) also looked into this idea, focusing on specialized accommodation because they felt that the experiential aspect of accommodation, especially in the field of specialization, had not received enough attention. According to their research, the sensations of luxury uniqueness, host-guest connection, personal touches, history, and comfort that these facilities may offer may be linked to the need for specialized lodging enterprises (McIntosh & Siggs, 2005). A visitor's entire experience can be impacted by both positive and bad interactions with other visitors or staff members (Barsky & Nash, 2002; Sundbo & Dixit, 2020). Visitor dissatisfaction may result from encounters such disorganized arrival or departure procedures, poorly attired employees, or inadequate hygiene standards. According to Bharwani and Jauhari (2013), it is crucial for hospitality organizations to keep the "customer perspective" in mind when creating customer experiences or strategizing the efficient delivery of hospitality goods and services.

In recent years, the hospitality sector and other service industry organizations have gradually replaced product quality with service quality. According to Knutson, Beck, Kim, and Cha (2010), these businesses can differentiate themselves from the competition and improve the tourist experience by improving the service quality parts of their operations. A hotel employee knowing a guest's name or personal information, for instance, can be considered a sign of service excellence since it makes the guest feel valued and like they are being treated like a special guest

(Ariffin & Maghzi, 2012). Since the host-guest relationship is a key component of the visitor experience, personalised service can be achieved through interactions between frontline workers and visitors (Lashley, 2008). Frontline employees are the brand and the service from the standpoint of the customer in any service organization (Zeithaml et al., 2006).

Luxury hotels are known for their excellent service (Kim, King, & Heo, 2019). The ability to engage customers throughout their entire hotel stay is essential for hospitality organizations to create value, and both a hotel's tangible and intangible features are crucial for improving the whole experience (Khoo-Lattimore & Ekiz, 2014). For instance, when it comes to the material components, facilities must always be in top shape, well cared for, and rigorously clean and hygienic. Employees should constantly make an effort to draw customers' attention to the hotel's intangible features, such as staff members might emphasize a hotel's amazing view to guests when they check in, and they should try to upgrade them to a room that offers access to that amazing view whenever possible. Quality service is recognized as a unique service with an experience attitude (Pine & Gilmore, 2011) and is tailored to the needs of the customer. Accordingly, service is designed to maximize every chance for success (Walker, 2017). Luxury hotels are excellent at tailoring their offerings to meet the needs of their visitors (Kimes & Ho, 2017).

The most important element influencing the choice of luxury hotels is service quality (Low, 2012). Luxury hotels are expected to provide excellent service (Kim et al., 2019). Good service has a favorable effect on customers' pleasure at luxury hotels (Allan, 2016), and service, not product, has the greatest influence on how guests perceive their experience. Hotel organizations should no longer consider the guest experience to be a static component or something that was developed independently by the organizations. Instead, they should consider it to be dynamic, highly customized, and actively co-created in real time during specific service encounters by the guest and the personnel.

### **Case Study: Luxury Hotels and Lodge Experience in New Zealand**

Few studies have been conducted on the subject of luxury lodging experiences, and those that have been conducted have mostly adopted a one-dimensional approach to the problem, focusing on the viewpoints of managers or customers. Other important players in the provision of luxury lodging experiences, especially service personnel, have typically been disregarded. Despite being emphasized as an important aspect of tourism experiences, the topic of experience production has also received little attention, especially when it comes to the lodging industry and, more especially, upscale hotels and lodges. No earlier research on designing luxurious hotel or lodge experiences in New Zealand could be found, even after a careful review of the literature (Harkison, 2016).

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to use a case study in New Zealand to analyze and assess the development of the luxury lodging experience. Through a numerous case study approach, the research analyzed and assessed managers', employees', and visitors' perspectives on designing a luxury hotel and lodge

experience in New Zealand using an interpretivist case study technique. During their "experience," 81 people were interviewed, and six high-end homes were used as case studies. In this study, 27 supervisors, 27 employees, and 27 guests took part. The data analysis led to the development of two conceptual models that explained the components of the luxury lodge and hotel experience in New Zealand as well as how it is generated there (Harkison, 2016).

The luxury hotel and lodge experience in New Zealand is explained by the model below (Figure 1). According to this concept, the following characteristics define the luxury hotel and lodge experience:

- the setting and location of the properties
- the emotions and sentiments of the managers, employees, and visitors
- the physical surroundings of the properties
- the provision of personalized attention
- the ability to be present in the moment
- luxuriance
- the essence of the luxury hotel or lodge
- the sense of indulgence
- the activities offered at the properties and the expectations and desires of guests (Harkison, 2016).

The first three elements mentioned above -being present in the moment, extravagance, and the spirit of the luxury hotel and lodge- were the most strongly recognized by the participants across all properties, whether they were hotels or lodges. The model of the luxury hotel and lodge experience is shown in Figure 1, which also summarizes the results of the empirical study. The model's middle section represents the participants' aggregate views on the elements they believed were most important for a successful stay at a luxury hotel or lodge. This figure might be regarded as the comprehensive "blueprint" needed to create such an experience. Two further characteristics that were thought to be specific to the hotels in the study are shown on the left, and three more elements that were thought specifically pertaining to the lodges in the research are shown on the right (Harkison, 2016).

All of the fundamental features of the properties, including the outstanding standards that are thought to be the distinguishing factor between any "ordinary" hotel or lodge in New Zealand and a luxury hotel or lodge, are located at the top of the central area. The next consideration is setting and location, which has to do with the fact that upscale hotels and lodges are always situated in picturesque areas, whether they are in the city or the countryside. According to the participants, New Zealand has a clear edge because it is already known throughout the world as a distinctive vacation spot because of its variety of landscapes, scenery, and locations, and it is already considered to be a premium destination. The third component is opulence, which includes all of the distinctive features that make a place a luxury venue; venues lacking any or all of these features were deemed "ordinary." Accordingly, the standards of luxury experience are defined by the various levels of grandeur (Harkison, 2016).

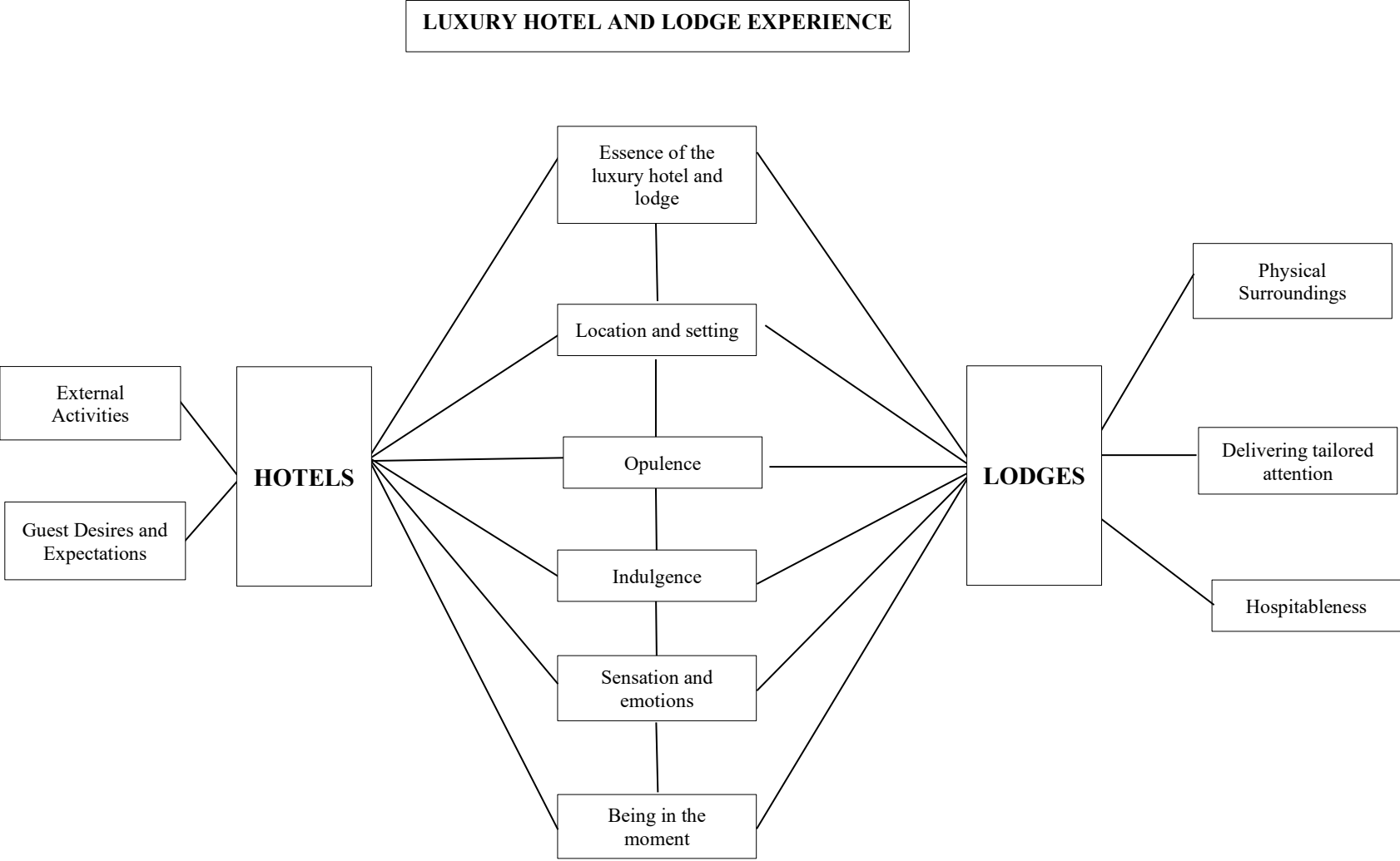
The next step is indulgence, which is defined as the meeting of the needs, wants, and expectations of the guests with the capacity and willingness of the staff to meet those needs. With the help and input of the entire crew, the guests were spoiled, pampered, and made to feel unique. Participants, both managers and workers, said that peer contact and guest interaction had an emotional component. They were able to provide exceptional service by having the "right tools" and operational atmosphere. Being able to "get it right" for their visitors also made them feel more fulfilled and satisfied.

The senses and feelings of the customers were experienced from all angles: they were assessing the property, the front desk employees, and all the material components that the hotel supported and advertised. One of the most crucial principles was that none of the visitors ever felt mistreated or "short-changed" by the accommodations they were staying in. The last component, being in the moment, includes how the visitors viewed the opulent hotel or lodge as a "lived experience"; this view excluded any prior opinions or judgments they may have had about the establishment. Due to their simultaneous production and consumption as well as their interdependence, hospitality and lodging are "lived experiences" that entail an "inseparability." Properties only have one chance to make an impression on their guests because these services are ephemeral and cannot be kept for sale at a later time; if something goes wrong, there is no second chance (Harkison, 2016).

The two distinctive features of luxury hotels are the activities that take place outside and the expectations and wants of the visitors. The hotel concierge staff most likely organizes external activities, which are those that take place outside of the hotel and are typically contracted out to a third party (a company that is neither owned nor managed by the hotel). Any unfavorable outcome from these activities, regardless of who conducts them, will frequently negatively affect the entire experience of staying in a premium hotel. According to its own policies, operating standards, and performance requirements, hotels generally provide more prescriptive experiences in an effort to meet the expectations and desires of their patrons (Harkison, 2016).

Luxury lodges are distinguished by their physical surroundings, personalized care, and hospitality. Luxury lodges in New Zealand are usually found in somewhat isolated locations with stunning landscapes and rocky terrain. On the other hand, the amenities are anything but rough or austere; in fact, most of them are the pinnacle of luxury. These lodges' employees have more latitude to exercise their autonomy, which allows them to effectively give each client individualized attention and enhance the luxury experience. In the context of luxury lodges, "hospitableness" refers to a broad idea that suggests all visitors are receiving excellent treatment and that the lodge's primary focus is on their welfare. For a luxury property to be effective and to guarantee hospitality, guests must understand that these efforts are taking place at the luxury lodge (Harkison, 2016).

Figure 1. The Experience of a Luxury Hotel and Lodge Model



## Conclusion and Recommendations

Since a company's vision or mission statement sets expectations, it is essential that they work to keep their end of the bargain. A monitoring mechanism must be developed and used to ensure that what has been promised is truly being delivered, and the mission or vision statement must be ingrained in the minds and behaviors of all management and staff. The management of the company must identify what makes their properties unique and then emphasize and highlight these features to all of the guests, whether they are returning customers or prospective ones, in order for them to use them as part of their competitive advantage (Harkison, 2016). Businesses need to establish the scene for their guests because this will give the fundamental framework that staff members may use to create a luxurious lodge or hotel experience for them.

Businesses may need to create checklists to make sure that all of the tangible and intangible elements found at the properties are accessible to all guests, without exception. This helps to set the scene. Since these "building blocks" (the stage) serve as the framework upon which the entire experience is built, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to provide a luxurious experience without them. Companies need to focus on selecting employees who have the proper look, behavior, attitude, demeanor, proactive ability, and social skills. Additionally, they must focus on hiring, training, and keeping staff that are skilled in designing and executing effective luxury lodge or hotel experiences. Businesses may need to review and reassess their current staff-related policies and procedures in order to comply with this requirement. To ensure that the personnel can properly create the promised luxury experience for customers, management must clearly communicate expectations to them. This could entail drawing up a plan that specifies how to create and provide what is required. (Harkison, 2016).

In addition to facilitating and supporting higher levels of engagement and co-creation among all participants, organizations will need to investigate the range of ways that co-creation takes place within their lodges and hotels. This co-creation takes place within the properties between at least two of the participating parties (visitors, staff, or management), in addition to frequently taking place outside the properties with outside third parties (companies not owned or managed by the hotel or lodge). The development of the luxury experience is probably going to benefit from the encouragement and support of additional co-creation opportunities. Any travel experience must include lodging, which has the power to make or ruin the whole trip. Visitors now seek a luxury lodging experience rather than a luxurious lodging stay. Employees are not only essential but also at the heart of the process in order to produce this experience, as this chapter makes clear.

Luxury hotels and lodges typically have highly skilled and motivated staff, but the establishments need to be careful to draw in and hire the "right" people. These employees must have dispositions that are inclined to make guests happy as well as professional conduct, appearance, demeanor, and attitudes that align with the culture of the property. Luxury hotels and lodges have a higher degree of connection with guests, therefore companies need to ensure that front desk employees have the self-assurance and skills necessary to have informed conversations with guests about a

wide range of topics both domestically and abroad. If organizations want to co-create experiences that their guests will remember, they must concentrate on the guest's whole stay, from before they physically check in at the property to any follow-up after their departure, and everything in between. This is achieved by creating a number of "touch points" that will enhance the overall experience and continuously introducing fresh surprises that will excite and excite guests while they are there. The experience of staying in a luxury hotel is then viewed as a proactive, dynamic, and personal production that was co-created by staff and visitors.

## References

- Alcántara-Alcover E, Artacho-Ramírez MÁ, Martínez-Guillamón N, Campos-Soriano N (2013) Purpose of stay and willingness to stay as dimensions to identify and evaluate hotel experiences. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 33, 357–365. doi: 10.1016/j.ijhm.2012.10.006
- Allan MM (2016) The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction and retention in Ghana's luxury hotels. *IUP Journal of Marketing Management*, 15(4), 60–83.
- Ariffin, AAM, Maghzi A (2012) A preliminary study on customer expectations of hotel hospitality: Influences of personal and hotel factors. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31(1), 191–198. doi:10.1016/j.ijhm.2011.04.012
- Bagnera SM (2017) A (diamond) cut above the rest: Improving hotel operations based on TripAdvisor rating attributes. *Boston Hospitality Review*, 5(3), 1–14. Retrieved from <http://www.bu.edu/bhr>
- Barsky J, Nash L (2002) Evoking emotion: Affective keys to hotel loyalty. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 43(1), 39–46. doi:10.1177/0010880402431004
- Baum T (2006) Reflections on the nature of skills in the experience economy: Challenging traditional skills models in hospitality. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 13(2), 124–135.
- Bell D (1989) Finding your amenities niche. *Lodging Hospitality*, 45, 41–43.
- Bharwani S, Jauhari V (2013) An exploratory study of competencies required to co-create memorable customer experiences in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 25(6), 823–843. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-05-2012-0065
- Cetin G, Dincer FI (2014). Influence of customer experience on loyalty and word-of-mouth in hospitality operations. *Anatolia*, 25(2), 181–194. doi:10.1080/13032917.2013.841094
- Chang Y, Ko YJ, Leite WL (2016) The effect of perceived brand leadership on luxury service WOM. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 659–671. doi:10.1108/JSM-01-2015-0005
- Chen A, Peng N (2014) Examining Chinese consumers' luxury hotel staying behavior. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 39, 53–56. doi:10.1016/j.ijhm.2014.01.002
- Danziger PN (2019) *Meet the Henrys: The Millennials that matter most for luxury brands* (1st ed.). Rochester, NY: Paramount Market Publishing, Inc.
- Drewer P (2005) *Key note market report plus: Hotels*. Retrieved from <https://www.keynote.co.uk>
- Fedeli G (2011) *The luxury side of tourism and China: A qualitative study of motivations and national values of the affluent mainland Chinese leisure traveller in Sydney, Australia*.

- Doctoral dissertation, NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences. Researchgate. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/>. Accessed on August 7, 2020.
- Fitzsimmons A (2017, January 11) *7 luxury travel trends for 2017*. National Geographic. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/top-10/seven-luxury-travel-trends-hotel/>. Accessed on August 10, 2020.
- Gilmore JH, Pine BJ (2002) Differentiating hospitality operations via experiences: Why selling services is not enough. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 43(3), 87–96. doi:10.1177/0010880402433009.
- Han H, Back KJ (2007) Assessing customers' emotional experiences influencing their satisfaction in the lodging industry. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 23(1), 43–56. Retrieved from [https://doi.org/10.1300/J073v23n01\\_04](https://doi.org/10.1300/J073v23n01_04)
- Harkison T (2016) *How is the luxury accommodation experience created? Case studies from New Zealand*. Doctoral thesis, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10292/9925>
- Harkison T, Hemmington N, Hyde KF (2018). Luxury accommodation – Significantly different or just more expensive? *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, 17(4), 231–243. doi:10.1057/s41272-017-0085-1
- Hemmington N (2007) From service to experience: Understanding and defining the hospitality business. *Service Industries Journal*, 27(6), 747–755. doi:10.1080/02642060701453221
- Kandampully J, Suhartanto D (2000) Customer loyalty in the hotel industry: The role of customer satisfaction and image. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 12(6), 346–351.
- Kapferer JN, Laurent G (2015) Where do consumers think luxury begins: A cross cultural comparison over 21 luxury products in 7 countries. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(1), 332–430. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.08.005
- Khoo-Lattimore C, Ekiz EH (2014) Power in praise: Exploring online compliments on luxury hotels in Malaysia. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 14(3), 152–159. doi:10.1177/1467358414539970
- Kim B, Kim S, King B, Heo CY (2019) Luxurious or economical? An identification of tourists' preferred hotel attributes using best-worst scaling (BWS). *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 25(2), 162–175. doi:10.1177/1356766718757789
- Kimes SE, Ho J (2017) Revenue management in luxury hotels. *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, 17(4), 291–295. doi:10.1057/s41272-017-0113-1
- Knutson BJ, Beck JA, Kim S, Cha J (2010) Service quality as a component of the hospitality experience: Proposal of a conceptual model and framework for research. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, 13(1), 15–23. doi:10.1080/15378021003595889
- Knutson BJ, Beck JA (2004) Identifying the dimensions of the experience construct: Development of the model. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 4(3–4), 23–35. doi:10.1300/J162v04n03\_03
- Kucukusta D, Heung VC, Hui S (2014) Deploying self-service technology in luxury hotel brands: Perceptions of business travellers. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 31(1), 55–70. doi:10.1080/10548408.2014.861707
- Lashley C (2008) Studying hospitality: Insights from social sciences. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 8(1), 69–84. doi:10.1080/15022250701880745
- Low TA (2012) *Influence of consumer values and sustainable business practices on brand loyalty within luxury hotels*. Doctoral thesis, University of Bedfordshire, England. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10547/323658>
- Lu C, Berchoux C, Marek MW, Chen B (2015) Service quality and customer satisfaction: Qualitative research implications for luxury hotels. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 9(2), 168–182. doi:10.1108/IJCTHR-10-2014-0087

- McIntosh AJ, Siggs A (2005) An exploration of the experiential nature of boutique accommodation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 44(1), 74–81. doi:10.1177/00472875276593
- O'Neill L (2004) Luxury hotel values are on the rise. *Lodging Hospitality*, 60(10), 30.
- Penfold P (2009) Learning through the world of second life: A hospitality and tourism experience. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 8(2–3), 139–160. doi:10.1080/15313220802634224
- Pine BJ, Gilmore JH (2011) *The experience economy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press
- Presbury R, Fitzgerald A, Chapman R (2005) Impediments to improvements in service quality in luxury hotels. *Managing Service Quality*, 15(4), 357–373. doi:10.1108/09604520510606835
- Purinton-Johnson EF (2013) *Segmenting the mature market: Have marketers matured along with their market?* ASBBS Proceedings, 20(1), 579. Retrieved from [http://asbbs.org/files/ASBBS2013V1/PDF/P/Purinton-JohnsonE\(P579-588\).pdf](http://asbbs.org/files/ASBBS2013V1/PDF/P/Purinton-JohnsonE(P579-588).pdf). Accessed on May 8, 2020.
- Scerri MA, Jenkins JM, Lovell G (2017) A grounded theory model of service language in Australia's luxury hotels. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 33, 82–92. doi:10.1016/j.jhtm.2017.09.003
- Strong J (2006) *Craving for travel: Luxury experiences for the sophisticated traveler*. Luxury Travel Books.
- Torres EN, Kline S (2006) From satisfaction to delight: A model for the hotel industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 18(4), 290–301. doi:10.1108/09596110610665302
- Veríssimo M, Loureiro SMC (2013) *Experience marketing and the luxury travel industry*. Tourism and Management Studies, 296–302. Retrieved from <http://www.tnmstudies.net/index.php/ectms/article/viewFile/429/701>. Accessed on June 8, 2020.
- Walker JR (2017) *Introduction to hospitality* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Walls A, Okumus F, Wang Y, Kwun DJW (2011) Understanding the consumer experience: An exploratory study of luxury hotels. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 20(2), 166–197. doi:10.1080/1936823.2011.536074
- Williams A (2006). Tourism and hospitality marketing: Fantasy, feeling and fun. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 18(6), 482–495. doi:10.1108/09596110681520
- Xu JB, Chan A (2010) A conceptual framework of hotel experience and customer-based brand equity: Some research questions and implications. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(2), 174–193. doi:10.1108/09596111011018179
- Yuan YH, Wu C (2008) Relationships among experiential marketing, experiential value, and customer satisfaction. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 32(3), 387–410. doi:10.1177/1096348008317392
- Zeithaml VA, Bitner MJ, Gremler DD (2006) *Services marketing: Integrating customer focus across the firm* (4th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.