

An Analysis of Customer Satisfaction in a Selected Hotel

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá analýzou spokojenosti zákazníků v Hotelu Abácie & Wellness ve Valašském Meziříčí. Teoretická část se zaměřuje na klasifikaci hotelů, spokojenost zákazníků, na vliv recenzí, dotazníků spokojenosti a sociálních sítí a důležitost řízení vztahu se zákazníky, neboli Customer Relationship Management (CRM). V empirické části byla provedena analýza spokojenosti zákazníků pomocí dotazníkového šetření. Následovalo vyhodnocení dotazníkového šetření a dále byly také prozkoumány recenze na internetu. Na závěr se navrhla doporučení ke zlepšení, která mohou vést ke zvýšení spokojenosti zákazníků.

Klíčová slova: hotelové služby, spokojenost zákazníků, dotazníkové šetření

ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis deals with the analysis of customer satisfaction at the Hotel Abácie & Wellness in Valašské Meziříčí. The theoretical part focuses on hotel classification, customer satisfaction, the impact of reviews, satisfaction surveys and social media, and the importance of Customer Relationship Management. In the empirical part, customer satisfaction was analyzed through a questionnaire survey. This was followed by the evaluation of the survey results and an exploration of online reviews. In conclusion, recommendations for improvement were proposed that could lead to increased customer satisfaction.

Keywords: hotel services, customer satisfaction, questionnaire survey

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I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

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INTRODUCTION

The topic of this bachelor's thesis is 'An Analysis of Customer Satisfaction in a Selected Hotel.' Customer satisfaction is a crucial determinant of success in the hospitality industry. The primary goal of hotels is to ensure customer satisfaction and build customer loyalty. Given its significance, this bachelor's thesis focuses on the already-mentioned topic.

The hotel industry hinges on customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers can become loyal customers, making recurring purchases, thus leading to increased revenues. Moreover, they may advocate for a hotel, spreading positive word-of-mouth, which can attract new customers, build credibility, and improve the hotel's reputation.

This bachelor's thesis is divided into theoretical and empirical part. In the theoretical part, the concept of the hospitality industry and the basics of the hospitality industry in the Czech Republic are described. It is followed by hotel classification. The second chapter of the theoretical part focuses on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, travel intermediaries, the influence of surveys, online reviews, and social media, and lastly on the importance of Customer Relationship Management. The empirical part begins with the hotel's description, followed by the research topic, aim and methodology. Assumptions were determined based on previous observations at the hotel. The empirical part predominately deals with the analysis of customer satisfaction in Hotel Abácie & Wellness using data gathered from a questionnaire survey. Additionally, online reviews were explored and compared with the results from the survey. In conclusion, the research results were summarized. Finally, recommendations for improvement were suggested, which, if implemented, could lead to increased customer satisfaction.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the satisfaction level of guests at Hotel Abácie & Wellness with the various types of services and amenities that the hotel offers. In case of detected inconveniences, this thesis aims to propose potential recommendations that could enhance overall satisfaction at the hotel.

I. THEORY

1 HISTORY OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

According to Beránek (2016, 15), the word 'hotel' originated from the French word 'hote' and the Latin word 'hospicem' which can be translated as a person who provides accommodation. Mentions of the first hospitality establishments date back to the time of BC. Křížek and Neufus (2014, 49) mention that the word 'hotel' became familiar in the European context from the beginning of the 19th century and gradually gained its current international significance.

The hotel industry has been constantly evolving. It transformed into a specialized industry with an increased level of professionalism. In the past, hotels were family-managed, and it was common for a single person to perform several tasks, such as serving breakfast and managing reception duties, which proved to be more cost-effective. (Sandvik 2011, 5)

Křížek and Neufus (2014, 40) point out that it was not until the mid-19th century, that a form of hotel, recognizable to us today, started to emerge in metropolitan areas and spa resorts. The most important impulse for the rise of the traditional hotel model was the rapid expansion of railway transportation. Beránek (2016, 19) claims that since the second half of the 19th century, the hotel industry in the Czech Republic has flourished predominately in spa towns.

However, due to the First World War, there was a decline in the hospitality industry but in the 1930s, several modern hotels were established. Nevertheless, after 1948, due to the nationalization of businesses and the abolition of private enterprise, hotels and spa resorts declined. The first Czechoslovak hotel with a franchise agreement with an international hotel chain was the Intercontinental Hotel located in Prague, built in the years 1968 - 1974. They aimed to operate one hotel in a significant city in each country. After the fall of Communism in the Czech Republic, the hotel industry experienced a resurgence, and the interest in accommodation increased again. Prague especially flourished because, after the opening of borders, it became a popular destination for tourists. In 1990 and 1991, the average occupancy rate in Prague hotels was more than 90%. Between 1993 and 1996, the number of hotels in the Czech Republic increased from 583 to 1,428. The majority of new hoteliers did not possess the necessary professional qualifications, and their employees lacked adequate experience in implementing technologies. In comparison to hospitality facilities in Western Europe, Czech hotels lagged far behind. (Beránek 2016, 20)

The level of quality of 3 and 4-star hotels could not reach the quality of Western competitors. In particular, bathrooms and dining services did not meet the required quality standards. Since 1999, hoteliers have been focusing on the improvement of the quality of services. There is a difference in both the quality of accommodation and pricing between Prague and other regions. (Beránek 2016, 21)

1.1 Classification of Hospitality Facilities

According to Hotelstars. cz (2022), accommodation facilities are classified by their type into the following categories:

- **Hotel** – A hotel is an accommodation facility with at least 10 guest rooms designed for short-term stays, providing associated services, such as catering. Hotels are divided into five classes (1 – 5 stars).
- **Hotel garni** – A hotel garni provides accommodation with limited catering. They are divided into four classes (1 – 4 stars). Only breakfast is typically served.
- **Motel** – A motel is an accommodation facility with at least 10 rooms suitable for short-term stays as well. However, the main difference between hotels and motels is that motels are operated especially for motorists, and they are divided only into four classes. Motels are situated close to roads, offering parking. The reception and restaurant might be located separately from the main building. The accommodation facility of motels meets the criteria for the 1 – 4 stars hotel category.
- **Pension** – A pension provides between 5 and 20 guest rooms and a limited set of services. Even though there is no restaurant, the pension must at least include a dining room, which can also serve as a place for guests to relax. It is categorized into four classes.
- **Apartment hotel/complex** – It is an accommodation facility offering studios or apartments, with a minimum of 10 units. Apartment hotels offer guests various services corresponding to the hotel class, and it falls within the 1 – 4 stars classification. There is also a possibility of being awarded the Superior level.
- **Wellness/Spa hotel** – It is an accommodation facility providing spa treatments and is in places suitable for spas (spa towns).
- **Wellness Hotel Garni** – It has the same conditions as Spa hotels except for the limited catering.

- **Resort/Golf resort** – It is an accommodation facility with sports, social and cultural activities. Resorts are categorized into 5 stars. Restaurants and reception are sometimes located in a different building than accommodation. In addition, golf resorts must have a minimum nine-hole standardized golf course.

1.2 Hotel Classification

According to Beránek (2016, 22), an accommodation facility is considered a hotel if it possesses at least 10 guest rooms equipped for temporary stays, including services such as a reception, all-day dining, and room cleaning. Křížek and Neufus (2014, 69) define a hotel as a place for short-term accommodation offered to tourists of all categories for a fee. Alongside accommodation services, other services are provided based on classification, including catering, social and entertainment, relaxation, conference facilities, and all services relevant to this sector. Typically, a hotel has a minimum capacity of 10 rooms, although in some cases a larger number may be required depending on national standards or historical customs.

Hotels can be differentiated by their size. According to Beránek (2016, 22) hotels are divided by their size into:

- Small (up to 60 beds)
- Medium (from 60 to 250 beds)
- Large (more than 250 beds)

However, hotel size classification varies. Different sources use different scales. Křížek and Neufus (2014, 72) distinguish hotel size into:

- Small (up to 50 rooms)
- Medium (50- 150 rooms)
- Large (150 – 400 rooms)
- Mega (more than 400 rooms)

Furthermore, hotels are distinguished based on their location. Hotels might be located in the mountains, in a small town, in a city, out of town, et cetera. There are different types of hotels such as traditional hotels, historical hotels, and family hotels. (Beránek 2016, 22)

According to Sandvik (2011, 8), hotels can be seasonal or function all year round. Generally, hotels located in smaller places (villages, small towns) have higher differences between low and high seasons, influenced by the character of a hotel. Some hotels experience high season in summer (summer resorts), whereas some have increased demand in winter periods (ski resorts). Additionally, events play a significant part. Hotels might be at their peak when local festivals and events take place. The whole hotel industry is seasonal, and the occupancy rate might fluctuate throughout the year.

Demand is another classification parameter. Some hotels focus mainly on business clients whereas some on recreational stays. Hotels are also divided according to a form of management (e.g. independent management, franchising). (Beránek 2016, 22)

1.2.1 Hotel Stars Rating

The allocation of hotel stars is a demanding process because it deals with 247 criteria, including general hotel information, reception and services, rooms, gastronomy, conference facilities, free time activities, quality and online activities. (Březinová and Horáková 2022, 52)

Hotelstars.eu establishes criteria for the star rating of accommodation facilities. Certified hotels under the Hotelstars brand ensure a consistent range of services and amenities across 21 European countries. Hotels are categorized, based on their amenities and size according to the hotel star rating system, ranging from 1 to 5.

- Tourist (1 star)
- Economy (2 stars)
- Standard (3 stars)
- First Class (4 stars)
- Luxury (5 stars)

Hotelstars Union has the following criteria (Hotelstars.eu):

The tourist (1-star) hotel includes:

- all rooms with a shower/WC or bath/WC
- daily room cleaning
- all rooms with TV and remote control capability
- WiFi access to the Internet in public areas and rooms
- table and chairs
- offer of toiletries upon request (e.g. toothbrush, toothpaste, shaving kit)
- towels
- reception services
- non-cash payment
- expanded breakfast menu
- beverage offer
- storage of valuables

The Economy (2-star) hotel additionally includes:

- breakfast buffet
- bedside reading light
- liquid body soap or shower gel
- shelves for laundry
- bath towels and hand towels
- bilingual staff
- sewing kit and shoe cleaning supplies on request

The Standard (3-star) hotel additionally includes:

- availability of reception for 10 hours a day and 24 hours a day by digital means or by phone
- sofa set in the reception area, help with luggage on request
- luggage storage service for guests
- drinks offered in the room
- devices for internal and external communication on request
- audio or multimedia entertainment system
- hair dryer, cosmetic wipes
- a full-length mirror, corresponding space or box for storing luggage/suitcase
- laundry and ironing service
- extra pillow and extra blanket on request
- clear complaint handling system
- the hotel's bilingual website

The first Class (4-star) hotel additionally includes:

- reception available 16 hours a day, and accessible 24 hours a day through digital communication or by phone
- hotel lobby furnished with seating and beverage service, hotel bar
- breakfast buffet service or breakfast menu provided
- mini-bar or room service offering drinks available for 16 hours daily
- cozy seating options (such as upholstered armchairs or sofas) with side tables or shelves.
- bathrobe and slippers available upon request
- complimentary cosmetic products (e.g., shower cap, nail file, cotton swabs), along with a cosmetic mirror and ample storage space in the bathroom
- access to international TV channels

Luxury (5-star) hotel additionally includes:

- the availability of reception both personally and by digital means for 24 hours a day
- valet parking
- concierge
- shuttle service or hotel limousine
- assistance with luggage
- personal welcome for every guest (flowers or gift in a room)
- breakfast menu via room Service
- minibar and food and drink menu via Room Service 24 hours a day
- internet access in the room on request
- safe in the room
- ironing service (return within 1 hour), shoeshine service and tailoring service
- turndown service

2 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Kotler et al. (2021, 28) claim that hotels' primary goal (and every business in general) is to acquire and retain satisfied and profitable customers. Customers are maintained if their needs are met. According to Fornell et al. (2020, 28) customers today wield unprecedented power, largely attributed to the Information Age and the rise of the internet. This technological transformation has provided consumers with easier access to information about products, and services, empowering them to voice complaints and impact business decisions.

Berners and Martin (2022, 6) explain customer satisfaction as a comparison of the quality of products or services that customers receive versus customers' expectations. Numerous aspects influence customer satisfaction. While measuring customer satisfaction, people often only focus on the quality of services. However, expectations play a huge part as well because if guests are staying in a five-star hotel, their expectations will most likely be higher. Camilleri et al. (2023, 3) interpret customer satisfaction as the level of contentment experienced by customers regarding the products or services they have obtained. This concept is subjective, reflecting individuals' feelings of pleasure and disappointment.

According to Peppers et al. (2016, 15), in today's world, companies have transitioned their emphasis from winning market share to prioritizing customer retention, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Fornell et al. (2020, 28) also emphasize the shift from reliance on market share, revenue and profitability to customer satisfaction, retention and word-of-mouth.

While achieving customer satisfaction, it is immensely important to convey the right message about a hotel (describe how the experience will look like), and secondly to deliver what is promised to every customer. (Berners and Martin 2022, 5)

If the products or service's performance does not meet the customer's expectations, the buyer feels dissatisfied. When performance aligns with expectations, customers feel satisfied. When performance surpasses expectations, customers experience delight. Smart businesses strive to delight customers by promising what they can deliver and then surpassing those promises. Expectations depend on customers' past purchases, opinions of others (friends, family) and market information. (Kotler et al. 2021, 34)

2.1 Customer Experience

Customer experience begins when guests check in at a hotel reception and it is followed by entering a room, visiting a bar and restaurant, using different services that the hotel offers, and it ends with a guest's check out at the reception. (Berners, and Martin 2022, 4)

As far as the customer experience is concerned, the human experience is crucial for ensuring customer satisfaction. The human experience is influenced by the social skills and competencies of the hotel's staff. If the staff is polite, smiley, and helpful with adequate knowledge it will certainly create a positive impact. Secondly, the physical experience such as the hotel's layout, decorations, lighting, interior, exterior, music, and smell influence the experience of hotel guests. Further, a digital experience has become an indicator of customer experience. The hotel's website or mobile app should be well arranged, and easy to use with an appropriate vocabulary. (Lafrenière 2019, 2)

Berners and Martin (2022, 5) point out that it might seem that customer service ends after guests leave a hotel, but it does not have to end with a check-out. Hoteliers can interact with their customers on social media or through e-mails and letters. They can send them feedback questionnaires and send them offers in the future.

Unfortunately, customer service is associated with issues because services are provided and consumed simultaneously, and in case of dissatisfaction of customers, it is almost impossible to recover from it. For this reason, it is crucial to ensure customer satisfaction. Customer services differ from customer purchases among other things for their level of disappointment in case of some inconvenience because products can be easily returned nowadays, and a refund can be offered. This does not apply to services because if some kind of failure occurs at a hotel, the level of disappointment is much more profound. Problems are especially found in consumer behavior decision-making. It is a long process from booking a room, planning some activities in the area, taking a vacation at work, arranging baby or dog sitters, travelling to a hotel, and much more. Customers also often share their enthusiasm with their friends and family and their excitement gradually culminates. Any failure can easily ruin a guest's day or even the whole trip. The impact will be not only psychological but also financial and social.

The vast majority of studies indicate that increased levels of customer satisfaction lead to enhanced customer loyalty, subsequently resulting in improved company performance. (Kotler 2021, 39-40)

2.2 Customer Loyalty

Berners and Martin (2022, 61) describe customer loyalty as a customer's belief in the brand or business and the tendency to repeatedly buy products and services. Customers tend to interact with companies that consistently provide excellent service quality. The advantages of having loyal customers include stable revenue streams, reduced advertising expenses, positive word-of-mouth, and willingness to pay higher prices. Subsequently, loyal customers bring benefits such as increased customer spending leading to higher profits and a higher chance of succeeding with advertisement. Additionally, loyal customers are already part of the hotel's database, the target market is already identified. Berners and Martin (2022, 62) also point out that recurring customers often serve as promoters, reducing the need for advertising expenditure. Moreover, they provide valuable feedback from their long-term perspective.

Camilleri et al. (2023, 3) claim that maintaining customer loyalty presents one of the most considerable obstacles for businesses in a digital world, especially when the cost for customers to switch from one retailer to another is minimal. According to Kotler et al. (2021, 29) assessing the long-term value of customers and taking action to secure their continuing maintenance is necessary. The Forum Company observed that retaining a loyal customer costs only 20 percent of what is needed to acquire a new one.

2.3 Ensuring Service Quality

Rašovská and Ryglová (2017, 131) divide service quality into 5 sections ranked by their importance.

First, Reliability means ensuring the quality that was promised. The second point is Responsiveness which focuses on willingness and a considerate approach toward customers. If a customer has a feasible wish, a hotel must meet the customer's requirements. (Rašovská and Ryglová 2017, 132)

Furthermore, Assurance aims at the qualification and knowledge of personnel and their ability to inspire trust. Empathy is also very important. Personnel should empathize with customers and pay attention to their needs and preferences. (Rašovská and Ryglová 2017, 134)

Lastly, Tangibles apply to the materialization of services. For example, hoteliers might increase customer satisfaction by leaving a small gift in their room. (Rašovská and Ryglová 2017, 135)

2.4 Customers' Feedback

According to Peppers et al. (2016, 289), gathering information about customers is immensely important because the company can gain a competitive advantage. This is the primary motivating factor why a hotel should engage with its customers and should never violate their trust.

Stauss and Seidel (2019, 37) emphasize that conducting a survey is considered the main method of satisfaction assessment. Many companies routinely conduct surveys utilizing standardized questionnaires.

A questionnaire is a structured research tool consisting of validated questions intended to collect specific information. This information pertains to a topic that is typically non-personal or sensitive. The gathered data is largely measurable, allowing for comparisons between responses. (Kara 2019, 11)

Questionnaires are commonly used in surveys and can take different forms, including paper-based or electronic formats sent via text messages, email, or online platforms. Individuals who respond to questionnaires are referred to as respondents. (Kara 2019,12)

Questionnaires are effective for gathering information on factual and everyday topics. They are particularly suitable for researching people's opinions about services or events. However, for more personal or contentious topics, alternative methods like interviews should be considered. (Kara 2019, 13)

The majority of questionnaires are designed and conducted online. Nevertheless, sometimes a paper form can be more suitable, especially for respondents who do not use the internet or if the internet connection is weak. (Kara 2019, 26)

Brace and Bolton (2022, 57) claim that questions in questionnaires can be classified into:

- Open or closed – Open questions are used in order to get a spontaneous answer from respondents. Open questions can be open-ended (respondents are asked to write an answer in their own words) or pre-coded (respondents can select from predefined options or select option ‘other’.) However, closed questions limit responses to a predictable and typically small range of answers. Questions that only allow for a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response are considered closed questions and do not encourage expansive conversation. (Brace and Bolton 2022, 59)
- Spontaneous or prompted - A spontaneous question is one where the respondent is not provided with a predefined list of possible answers to choose from. All open-ended questions are spontaneous. Spontaneous questions are typically used in a questionnaire when the writer is uncertain about the likely range of responses, wishes to gather responses in the respondent's own words, or wants the respondent to think independently without guidance or prompting. (Brace and Bolton 2022, 59)
On the other hand, prompted questions offer a set of options. From the researcher's perspective, prompting helps respondents articulate their answers within the framework desired by the researcher, potentially reducing variability caused by respondent limitations. Frequently, researchers collect both spontaneous and prompted responses, with prompted responses typically yielding higher percentages than spontaneous ones. (Brace and Bolton 2022, 63)
- Open-ended or pre-coded - An open-ended question allows respondents to provide their answers in their own words, which are then recorded verbatim. Open-ended questions inherently invite detailed responses and are not suited for simple yes/no answers. Open-ended questions are almost always open questions. (Brace and Bolton 2022, 63) In pre-coded open questions, respondents can select from predefined options. Nevertheless, closed questions are mostly pre-coded. Pre-coded closed questions involve using either a prompt list of possible answers or having a known and finite number of responses that can be given. (Brace and Bolton 2022, 66)
There are three primary types of pre-coded closed questions: Dichotomous (e.g. Yes/No answers), Single response (e.g. How do you rate the product out of 10?), and Multiple response (e.g. Which of the following amenities would you like to see improved at our hotel?). (Brace and Bolton 2022, 67)

Berners and Martin (2022, 37) point out that one of the most crucial parts of customer satisfaction assessment is conducting a survey. Some managers underestimate the power of questionnaires, and they find it time-consuming. Nevertheless, it is immensely important because face-to-face feedback can be misleading, as customers are more likely to be dishonest. Firstly, a questionnaire should consist of appropriate questions. Once the feedback and evaluation procedures are planned and conducted, they can be repeated and given to all guests at check-out. However, monitoring and making some adjustments are needed.

Berners and Martin (2022, 38) also highlight that conducting a survey should be a procedure and not an activity, which means that it should be ideally a standard. It is inaccurate when managers claim that 100% of their customers are satisfied when in fact only a small percentage of customers have been asked. Consistency is key, which means that every customer should be asked.

Nowadays, traditional methods of gathering and analyzing customer opinions are evolving due to the rise of social media. Surveys, focus groups, and individual interviews are being replaced by online platforms like chat rooms, blogs, message boards, and forums. (Barlow 2023, 151)

2.5 The Usage of Social Media

The rise of social media has transformed consumer behavior, altering the way people interact, seek information, and ultimately make purchasing decisions. This shift has not only empowered organizations to reach a wide audience at minimal expense but has also given consumers a platform to share their thoughts, experiences, and opinions globally through social media. As a result, the internet has become a public forum where both satisfied and dissatisfied consumers can openly express their experiences with a brand. (Nee and Burmann 2016, 1)

Additionally to customer feedback, including satisfaction questionnaires, complaints, and purchasing history, hotels can also acquire valuable information about customer preferences, needs, or expectations by observing their interactions with other customers on social media platforms. This is particularly crucial for companies aiming to foster relationships with their customers, due to the profound importance of social networks when it comes to the quality and flow of information.

Further, information shared on social platforms spreads very quickly and influences word-of-mouth communication, and customers tend to value information from peers more. (Peppers et al. 2016, 78)

Today's digital age has introduced an impressive array of new customer relationship-building tools, such as websites, online advertisements, videos, mobile applications, blogs, online communities, and popular social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat, and Instagram. (Kotler 2021, 41)

Social media has significantly impacted the interaction between potential and existing guests. With the rise of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, and TripAdvisor, the influence of social media has grown rapidly. The sharing of travel videos and photos with friends and family has become a major travel inspiration. The variety and appeal of social media content reach a vast global audience, which brands leverage for marketing and customer acquisition. (Marques and Marques 2023, 6)

According to Berners and Martin (2022, 38) in today's world, engaging on social media with customers has become an essential part. Managers can post a link (or QR code) on the hotel's social media. It is an easy and quick way of generating feedback. On the other hand, the level of attention of social media users is lower, thus hoteliers should opt for shorter questionnaires. When it comes to questionnaires, it is recommended to focus on the new customers as well because they tend to engage more. The hoteliers can also send questionnaires via e-mail to both existing and new customers.

Another way of generating feedback, as mentioned by Berners and Martin (2022, 38-39) involves offering a prize. Providing a prize will increase customer engagement. For example, hoteliers can offer guests to enter a contest on condition that they fill out a questionnaire. It is important to be active on social media. Hoteliers can also interact with their customers through direct messages (DM) and actively respond to comments. Another effective tool is to create an online community on different kinds of social media, such as Instagram or Facebook. Using hashtags could be useful as well. Despite the need for monitoring, there are mostly advantages that online communities could bring. Predominately, using online communities builds relationships with customers.

Kotler et al. (2021, 61) point out that hoteliers can track customer feedback on social media platforms. When comments on social media are negative, it sometimes allows the business to address issues before guests depart.

Getting feedback from actual customers is tremendously important but getting feedback from people who canceled their reservations is very important, although frequently overlooked. The knowledge of why someone decided to not be a customer can be very valuable. Surveys also often serve as motivation for the staff, especially when they receive positive feedback about their performance. It should be noted that it does not end after collecting information. The survey would not be complete if hoteliers didn't take action. (Berners and Martin 2022, 40)

2.6 Online Reviews

In today's society, there's a growing reliance on opinions shared online. User contributions on digital platforms facilitate connections among individuals with similar interests. Nowadays, companies have to grapple with the challenge of managing anonymous and concise opinions shared online. On the internet, this influence is ever-present and is communicated through various means, including recommendations, numerical ratings and written reviews. Online ratings concerning the quality of services in hotels have been replacing word-of-mouth communication, and they can influence customers' decision-making. The influence is so profound that consumers are likely to pay at least 20 percent more for services with 5-star ratings than services with 4-star ratings. (Gavilan, Avello, and Martinez-Navarro 2018, 54)

The original, in-person word-of-mouth has been transformed into electronic word-of-mouth. Customers can easily access information related to products or services before making a purchase decision. The tendency to rely on electronic word-of-mouth especially prevails among people who have not used the products or have not experienced the services yet. (Kim and Kim 2022, 2)

Feedback from guests' online reviews serves as a crucial information source for enhancing hotel operations. Due to its independence and decentralization, online reviews are valued more by customers than hotel stars. Most studies used to focus only on quantitative information but more recent studies have been emphasizing the textual aspects of online reviews as well. However, it applies mainly to customers who don't know the hotel.

Online hotel reviews are divided into quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative reviews are mainly numerical and qualitative reviews involve unstructured text. (Antonio 2018, 158-160)

Nowadays, the prevalence of online user reviews has surged and transformed the hotel industry. Duan et al. (2015, 283) pointed out that approximately 50% of purchase decisions are influenced by travel reviews from hotel consumers. This percentage has been increasing. Kotler et al. (2021, 184) mentioned that it was revealed that 72% of customers expressed trust in family and friends, and another 72% trusted online reviews. On the contrary, only 49% of customers indicated trust or belief in advertising.

Reviews on travel websites, which serve as electronic word-of-mouth, have significantly impacted how people choose and book hotels and have influenced information-seeking and sharing of guests. According to Glaveli et al. (2022, 1003), customers consider reviews on travel websites as a more trustworthy source than ratings on hotel websites.

2.7 Travel Intermediaries

Marketing intermediaries assist the company in promoting, selling, and distributing its goods and services to the end consumers. These intermediaries are companies that help hotels find customers or make sales. Travel agents, online travel agencies (Booking.com, Expedia, etc.) and hotel representatives are examples of intermediaries. (Kotler et. al. 2021, 114)

Travel agents typically handle tasks such as making reservations, calculating costs, issuing tickets, arranging travel itineraries, offering advice, communicating with customers, and managing reservation records. (Page 2019, 279)

The HOTREC study on the European hotel distribution market indicates that the influence of online travel intermediaries like Booking.com and Expedia has been steadily growing since 2013, while the percentage of direct bookings is decreasing. (Hotrec 2020)

Booking.com Review System

After the guests' departure, Booking.com sends them an email requesting feedback on their experience. They are given a 90-day window to provide their review. Booking.com uses a 1 – 10 scale system. At first, guests rate their overall stay. Further, they can rate property details such as cleanliness, comfort, value, facilities, location, and staff.

However, these are optional and do not contribute to Guest Review Score. Booking incorporates an overall score to represent guests' experience, prioritizing it over minor details beyond the control of property owners, such as property location. (Booking.com 2023)

2.8 The Impact of Dissatisfied Customers

As demonstrated earlier, customer satisfaction is essential for a hotel's success. If only a small percentage of guests are dissatisfied, it will not affect the hotel on a large scale. However, the power of dissatisfied customers must be taken into account, because it is not possible to isolate a customer. After leaving a hotel, disappointed guests can freely share their disappointment online, give a negative review on booking, share a negative post on social media, and inform their family members and friends about their negative experience. While certain customers may not openly express their dissatisfaction, conducting consistent and effective evaluation procedures enables observation of the vast majority of negative feedback. (Berners and Martin 2022, 49)

Further, customers are usually not dissatisfied only in the short term. The dissatisfaction prevails long after the check-out. Hoteliers can mainly intervene before and during the guest's stay. Due to this reason, it is important to maintain high-quality services from the first interaction with guests until their departure. (Berners and Martin 2022, 50).

However, some compensation can be provided to customers to mitigate their dissatisfaction. Compensation might include an apology, a discount for their next stay, or a refund. The cost arising from customer dissatisfaction might be financial due to a reduction in the number of customers. Secondly, there is a marketing cost used to attract new customers. Marketing not only requires money but also time and effort. (Berners and Martin 2022, 51)

2.9 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

According to Rutherford and O'Fallon (2007, 37), customer relationship management is a philosophy that prioritizes customers. The aim is to create lifetime relationships and maximize revenues. Kotler et al. (2021, 39) claim that customer relationship management can be considered the most crucial concept of modern marketing. It entails management of information of customers being under severe scrutiny, and handling of customers' touch points.

Touchpoints refer to an interaction between a customer and a hotel (or any business in general), including making reservations, check-in and check-out, room service, restaurant service, et cetera.

Rutherford and O'Fallon (2007,37) mention many benefits of CRM. First of all, the hotel can gain a competitive advantage by creating closer relationships with its customers. Customers can share their wants, needs, and preferences after the trust is gained. Another benefit is that Customer Relationship Management can increase customer satisfaction. If done adequately, managers can customize services according to customer's needs and preferences. Further, CRM can decrease marketing expenditures because acquiring new customers is believed to cost more than retaining current ones. Lastly, establishing close relationships with customers can enhance their loyalty. Loyal customers are expected to remain with the company for extended periods and make more and more frequent purchases. CRM results in greater profitability. This is achieved through boosted sales, reduced expenses in acquiring customers, and improved profitability from customers.

CRM is customer-oriented. This is crucial because the primary aim of customer-oriented behaviors is to enhance long-term customer satisfaction and build customer loyalty. To improve the service experience, hoteliers should prioritize customer interaction, ensuring consistent service delivery of the highest quality. Establishing a positive relationship between the customer and the service provider is key to achieving customer orientation.

The goal of CRM Organization is a perpetuation of staff's engagement with customers which can be achieved by creating a suitable working environment. This involves implementing systems for tracking customer satisfaction and managing complaints, providing inspirational leadership, establishing acceptable reward systems, and equipping staff with tools and technology. CRM Organization can affect several areas of marketing, such as price, brand differentiation, communication and distribution. (Madhovi and Dhliwayo 2017, 3)

Madhovi and Dhliwayo (2017, 5) describe knowledge management as an effective tool that can help with building trust and loyalty of customers. Data about customers can be collected through various touchpoints within the hotel. With the intention of knowledge management to thrive in the hospitality industry, hoteliers need to demonstrate a culture that views customer interaction as a learning opportunity and try to learn new information about the guests. Bernerns and Martin (2022, 6) claim that Computerized CRM systems have evolved in recent years.

The aim is to maintain a record of guests' history, including their preferences and purchases. Ideally, when the guest arrives at the hotel, the receptionist opens their booking record with all the data from the previous stays.

Madhovi and Dhliwayo (2017, 5) emphasize that Customer Relationship Management can highly influence hotel performance. CRM is believed to have a positive impact on profitability, sales turnover, and customer loyalty. Hoteliers primarily depend on quantitative performance metrics. However, there has been a growing trend toward qualitative indicators such as customer satisfaction, retention and brand familiarity.

3 SUMMARY OF THE THEORETICAL PART

The hotel industry has undergone significant evolution, transitioning into a specialized sector characterized by increased professionalism. Accommodation facilities are classified by type into a hotel, hotel garni, motel, pension, apartment hotel/complex, wellness/spa hotel, wellness hotel garni and resort/golf resort. Hotels are classified into star ratings ranging from 1 to 5: Tourist (1 star), Economy (2 stars), Standard (3 stars), First Class (4 stars) and Luxury (5 stars).

As far as customers are concerned, the main objective of hotels is to attract and keep satisfied, profitable customers. Customer retention hinges on meeting customers' needs. In today's Information Age, customers have unparalleled influence due to the internet's accessibility, allowing them to gather information about products, services and other options. This technological shift empowers consumers to voice complaints and influence business decisions. Satisfied customers are likely to return to a hotel and ultimately become loyal customers. It is immensely important to have loyal customers because it provides many benefits such as increased revenues, profitability and positive word-of-mouth.

Further, customer experience is immensely important, and it is affected by many factors. The human factor is an essential part. The hotel personnel's willingness, and friendliness can be very beneficial, as well as the physical experience (hotel's layout, decorations, lighting, atmosphere) and digital experience (hotel's website, mobile app).

Conducting satisfaction surveys is pivotal for hotels, and it is a primary method of satisfaction assessment. Additionally to satisfaction surveys, hotels can also acquire valuable information about customers through an online observation of their interactions on social media platforms. Nowadays, digital word-of-mouth plays a key role, having a significant influence on the decision-making process. Customers trust word-of-mouth from family and friends, and also digital forms like online reviews and social media posts, more than traditional advertising.

Finally, Customer Relationship Management offers multiple advantages to hotels, including enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty, competitive advantage, cost reduction, and increased profitability and revenues.

II. ANALYSIS

4 INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Customer Satisfaction is essential for business success, and it is recommended to frequently conduct surveys in order to get customers' feedback. I have decided to examine the level of customer satisfaction in Hotel Abácie & Wellness.

4.1 Hotel Description

Hotel Abácie & Wellness is a four-star family hotel situated in the town of Valašské Meziříčí located in the Wallachian region. The location is very appealing to customers due to its picturesque countryside. Customers frequently take trips to a nearby town Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, offering beautiful surroundings and a historical city centre. Hotel Abácie & Wellness is divided into two buildings. Reception, restaurant and the majority of hotel rooms are situated in the main building. Wellness, fitness centre and Standard rooms are located in the second building. Hotel Abácie offers 24 rooms in 3 categories – Standard, Comfort and Premium. 4 single rooms, 1 triple room, 2 suites, 3 double rooms with separate beds and 14 double rooms (double bed) are available. Accommodation prices vary, starting from 1,490 CZK/per night for a single room, 2,000 CZK-2,500 CZK/ per night for a double room (depending on room type), and 3,400 CZK/per night and above for Suite based on the number of guests. Breakfast and parking are included in the price. Rooms are equipped with single or double beds, desk, television, landline, safe, air conditioning, free Wi-Fi and a private bathroom with shower or bathtub.

Hotel Abácie provides a lot of recreational enjoyment. The dominant is a wellness centre, featuring various types of saunas such as Finnish sauna, Infra sauna and Steam sauna. Additionally, Kneipp's bath, tepidarium, and two whirlpools are situated in the wellness centre. There is also an outdoor swimming pool. The price for wellness is 530 CZK for 2.5 hours and there is a discount for accommodated guests, with a reduced rate of 410 CZK for 2.5 hours.

Further, the wellness centre offers more types of relaxation for guests who prefer privacy. First of all, Private SPA is a popular option, consisting of a room with a sauna, bubble bath and water bed. Other options for more private types of relaxation are hydromassages and thermal peat body wraps. Hotel Abácie provides wellness stay packages such as Relax wellness stay, Wellness stay for seniors, Romantic stay and Anti-aging stay.

These wellness stays are usually offered for 1 or 2 nights, and they mostly feature half-board dining at the restaurant, unlimited wellness entry and welcome drink. Some of them (Romantic wellness stay, Anti-aging wellness stay) consist of different types of procedures, massages, et cetera.

The hotel includes a variety of possibilities for sports activities, encompassing a spacious fitness centre equipped with a diverse array of modern machines. Besides the fitness centre, guests can engage in other sports activities, including bowling, squash and table tennis.

Hotel Abácie is suitable not only for recreational leisure but also for business stays due to the offer of a conference hall, which is frequently used for the organization of seminars and training of various companies.



Figure 1 Hotel Abácie (Hotel Abácie.cz)

4.1.1 Topic of Research

The topic of this research is customer satisfaction in Hotel Abácie. I have decided to determine the level of satisfaction of the hotel's guests. Guests were given an anonymous questionnaire with 16 questions. They answered general questions about their gender, age and type of stay, and then they rated the level of their overall satisfaction and also their satisfaction with concrete services.

4.1.2 The Aim of Research

The aim of this research is to assess the satisfaction levels of guests staying at Hotel Abácie and find out if there are some issues that need to be dealt with and propose potential improvements to enhance the overall guest experience.

4.1.3 Research Methods

- Quantitative, applied research
- Descriptive research problem
- Survey
- Data analysis

In this thesis, quantitative research was used. The data was collected through a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was anonymous and consisted of 16 questions. Most questions were closed-ended, with a few open-ended questions that were used specifically to capture any expressions of inconvenience or dissatisfaction. The questionnaire began with an opening text that started with a request and appreciation for filling out the questionnaire.

Initially, respondents provided demographic information including gender, age, and details regarding the type, frequency, and duration of their stay. Subsequently, guests assessed their overall satisfaction with their stay, ranging from 'Very Satisfied', 'Satisfied', 'Averagely Satisfied', 'Rather Dissatisfied' to 'Dissatisfied'. Questions 7- 11 focused on different types of services and amenities and respondents rated them as Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average and Unsatisfactory. In question 7, respondents rated the reception sector. Question 8 dealt with the wellness centre. Question 9 was about the fitness centre. In question 10, guests rated their experience with the restaurant and breakfast. In question number 11, guests rated hotel surroundings, hotel availability, hotel condition, maintenance and safety. In question 12, respondents expressed their satisfaction ('Very satisfied', 'Satisfied', 'Averagely satisfied', 'Rather dissatisfied' and 'Dissatisfied') with room services and amenities.

In questions 8 – 10, an additional column 'I don't know' was added for guests who have not experienced some of the services such as wellness, fitness, or restaurant that the hotel provides.

In questions 7, 11, and 12, services like check-in, hotel surroundings, equipment, and room cleanliness were deemed assessable by all guests, thus the additional column 'I don't know' was not added.

4.1.4 Research Assumptions

- It is assumed that the purpose of travel will be mostly business-related based on previous observations in the hotel.
- It is assumed that the overall satisfaction of respondents will be approximately 90 – 95% based on previous observations in the hotel.
- It is assumed that respondents will be satisfied with the personnel, wellness centre, and quality of food in the restaurant based on previous observations in the hotel.

4.1.5 Research Implementation

The questionnaire was personally given to guests of Hotel Abácie & Wellness in paper form during their check-out or throughout their stay in the months of December 2023, January, February and March 2024. The initial text and individual questions consisted of instructions. Guests either selected only one option in most cases or selected multiple options. For example, in question number 13, they were asked, how they learned about the hotel, and a lot of the respondents selected multiple options, often including family and friends, websites and travel intermediaries.

4.2 Research

Question number 1: What is your gender?

Out of a total of **90 respondents**, **51 are male and 39 are female** which means that **56.7%** are men and **43.3%** are women. This distribution is not unexpected. The prevalence of men can be attributed to the fact that a majority of guests travelling for **business purposes** are **male**. As far as recreational stays are concerned, the majority typically consist of couples, comprising both men and women.

Question number 2: What age category do you belong to?

2. What age category do you belong to?

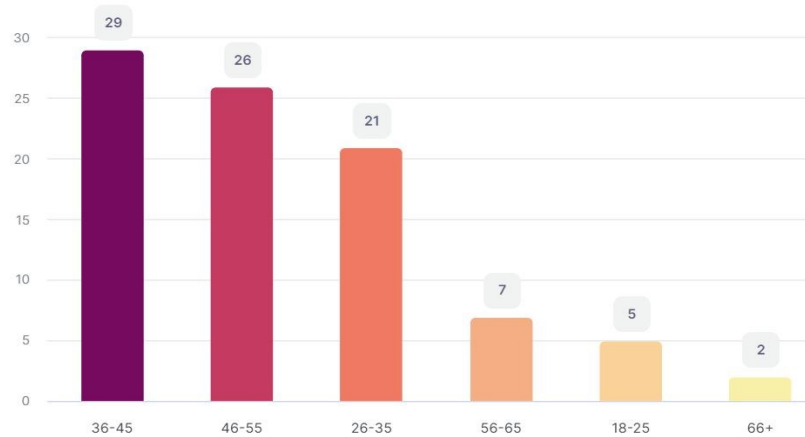


Figure 2 What age category do you belong to?

As illustrated in the figure, the age category ranging from **36 to 45 years prevails**. **29 (32.2%)** out of 90 respondents belong to that category. The second most numerous category is 46 to 55 years old, accounting for **28.9%** of respondents. **21 respondents** fall into the age category of 26 – 35, representing **23.3%**. Additionally, **7 respondents (7.8%)** belong to the 56 - 65 age category, while **5 respondents (5.6%)** are in the 18 - 25 age range. Lastly, only **2 guests (2.2%)** are aged 66 years and above.

Question number 3: I visited Hotel Abácie & Wellness:

3. I visited Hotel Abácie & Wellness:

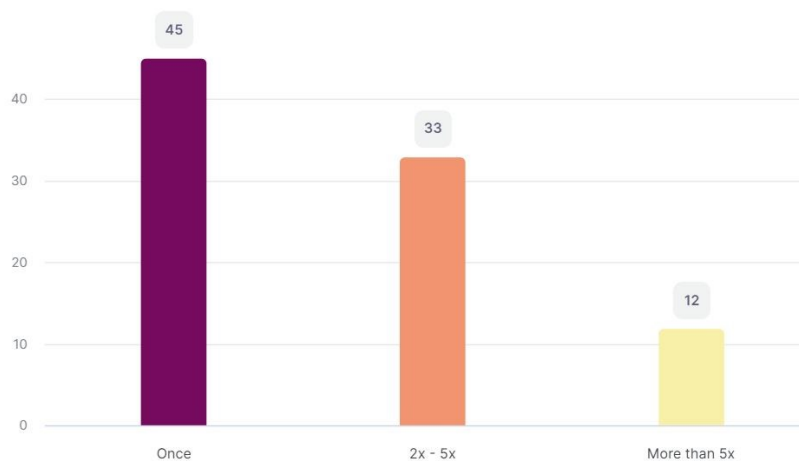


Figure 3 I visited Hotel Abácie & Wellness:

Figure number 3 illustrates the frequency of stays of respondents. **Fifty percent of respondents** visited Hotel Abácie only once. **36.7 %** of respondents visited Hotel Abácie between **2 to 5 times**. Finally, **12 respondents (13.3 %)** visited Hotel Abácie **more than 5 times**. Hotel Abácie attracts a significant number of first-time visitors, particularly among foreign guests travelling for business. Nevertheless, as depicted in the graph, a considerable number of guests have visited the hotel multiple times. This trend is observed not only among business clients but also among guests travelling for recreational purposes who visit the hotel at least once a year, often making multiple visits annually.

Question number 4: What is the length of your stay?

4. What is the length of your stay?

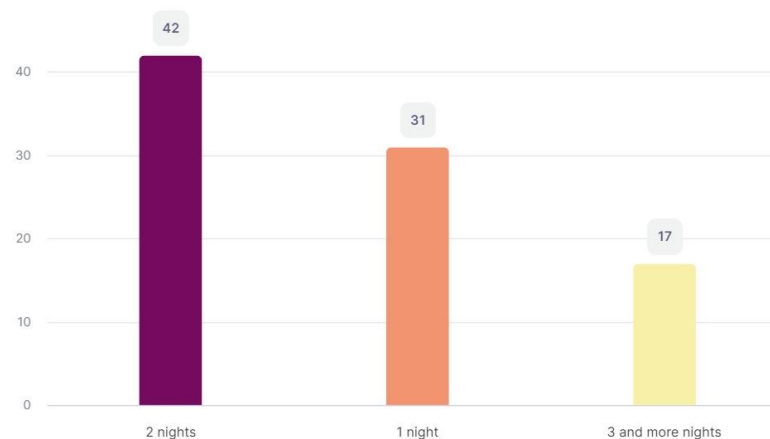


Figure 4 What is the length of your stay?

The majority of respondents stayed in the hotel for **2 nights**, representing **46.7%**. The second most frequent response was **1 night**. **31 respondents (34.4%)** marked this answer. **18.9%** of respondents stayed in the hotel for **more than 3 nights**. As far as the guests travelling for business purposes are concerned, the length of the stay varies considerably. On the other hand, **recreational travellers** often opt for **weekend stays**, and they either stay for 1 night or 2 nights. However, during holidays, they occasionally extend their stays to 3 nights or more.

Question number 5: What is the purpose of your stay?

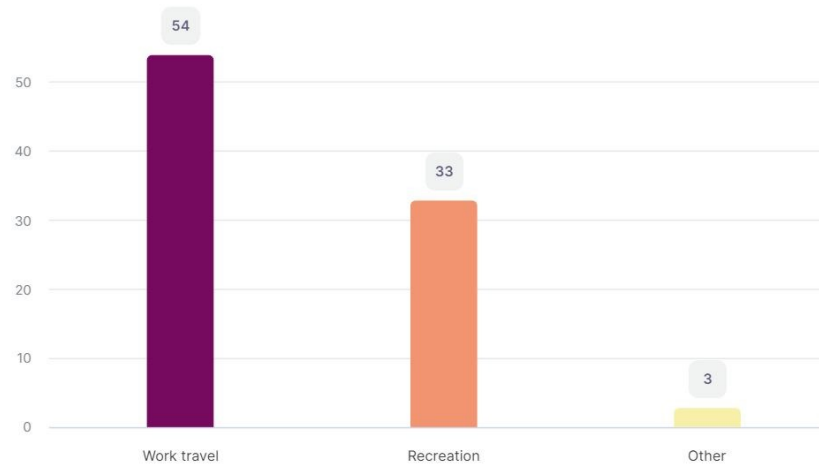


Figure 5 What is the purpose of your stay?

The majority of respondents (60%) travel for **work purposes**. 36.7% of respondents travel for **recreational purposes**. Only 3 respondents (3.3%) selected ‘**Other**’ as their response, indicating that they were travelling to celebrate a **birthday event** hosted in the hotel's restaurant. This distribution is unsurprising as, on weekdays, the vast majority of guests typically travel for work purposes. Conversely, at weekends, the majority of guests are leisure travellers.

Question number 6: How do you overall rate your stay at Hotel Abácie & Wellness?

6. How do you overall rate your stay at Hotel Abácie & Wellness?

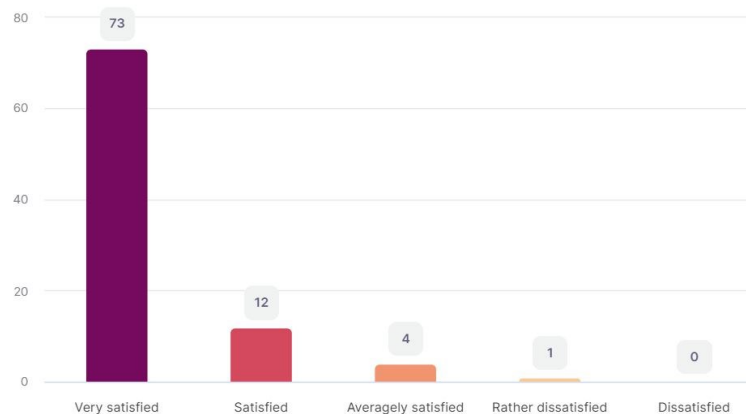


Figure 6 How do you overall rate your stay at Hotel Abácie & Wellness?

Figure number 6 demonstrates **the overall satisfaction of respondents** regarding their stay. The overall satisfaction rate was **94.8%**. The vast majority of respondents (**81.1%**) were **‘Very satisfied’** with their stay. **12** respondents (13.3%) were **‘Satisfied’**. **4** respondents (4.4%) were **‘Averagely satisfied’**, while only **1** respondent (1.1%) expressed being **‘Rather dissatisfied’**. **None** of the respondents selected the option **‘Dissatisfied’**. Respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the **malfunction of the steam sauna** in the wellness centre, **closed wellness** on Mondays and Tuesdays, and one guest was disturbed by **the noise** from the hotel surroundings.

Question number 7: Please, rate the following:

7. Please, rate the following:

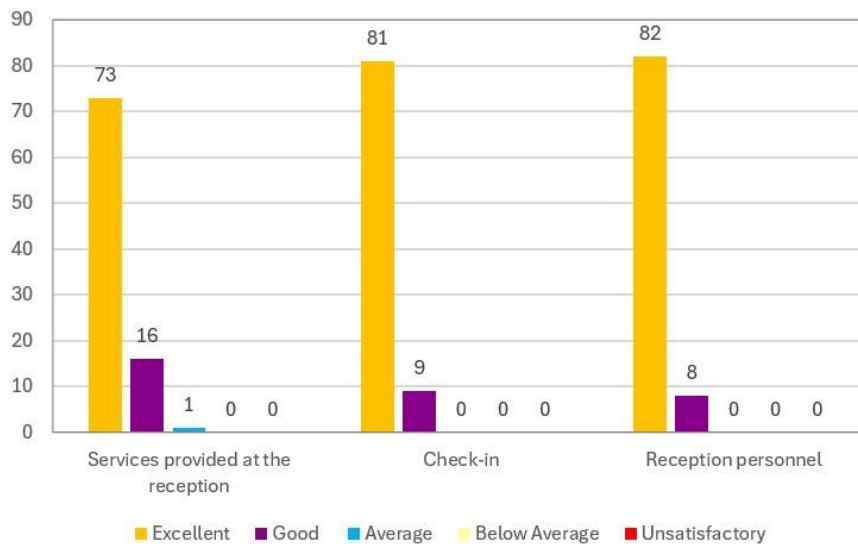


Figure 7 Please, rate the following:

Figure 7 focuses on the rating of **the reception sector**. Respondents rated services provided at the reception, check-in experience, and personnel at the reception as ‘Excellent’, ‘Good’, ‘Average’, ‘Below Average’ and ‘Unsatisfactory’. **81.1%** of respondents rated services at the reception as **‘Excellent’**, **16** respondents (17.8%) rated them as **‘Good’**, and only **1** respondent (1.1%) considered services provided at the reception as **‘Average’**.

Moreover, the check-in process received a rating of **‘Excellent’** from **90%** of respondents. The evaluation of reception personnel was even more favorable, with **91.1%** of respondents selecting the option **‘Excellent.’**

Question number 8: How do you rate the following?

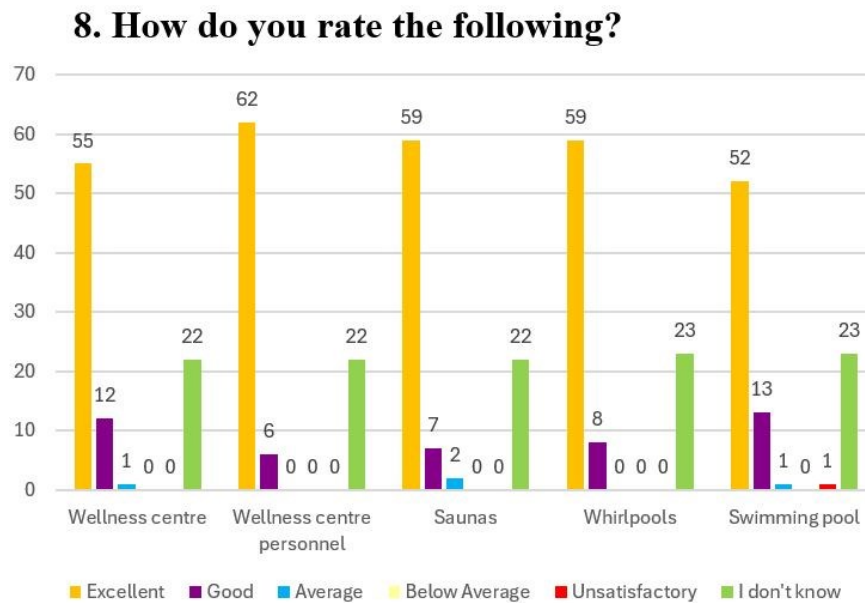


Figure 8 How do you rate the following?

Question number 8 evaluates the quality of services offered at the wellness centre, covering aspects such as the overall facility, the staff, saunas, whirlpools and swimming pool. **61.1%** of respondents rated the wellness centre as ‘**Excellent**’. **1 respondent** considered the wellness centre as ‘**Average**’ due to the fact that one type of sauna was out of order at the time of his stay. Even though the wellness centre offers several other types of saunas (Finnish sauna, infrared sauna, etc.), the respondent was interested in the steam sauna in particular which caused a slight dissatisfaction.

In this question, a column labeled ‘**I don't know**’ was included for guests who chose not to or were unable to use the wellness center facilities. Approximately **19.8%** of respondents **did not visit the wellness centre**. When it comes to the personnel and whirlpools, the ratings were very high. There was moderate dissatisfaction with the saunas and swimming pool. **2 respondents** rated saunas as ‘**Average**’ due to the malfunction of the steam sauna during their stay. **One respondent** was **dissatisfied** with the swimming pool. The respondent expressed a preference for an indoor pool with warm water. The wellness centre only offers an outdoor pool with cold water which might be insufficient for some customers.

Question number 9: How do you rate the following?

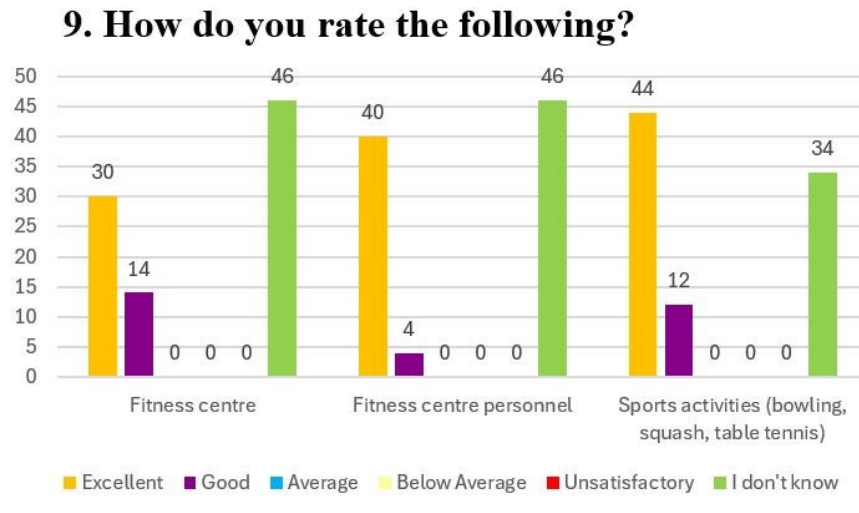


Figure 9 How do you rate the following?

Question number 9 examines **the ratings of the fitness centre, fitness centre personnel and other sports activities** available at the hotel. The figure indicates the absence of dissatisfaction. However, the majority of guests **didn't utilize** the fitness centre. Typically, clients travelling for work are occupied during the day, and they depart early after breakfast. On the other hand, leisure travellers opt for relaxation in the wellness centre. On the contrary, recreational stays at weekends often involve engaging in sports activities such as **bowling, squash, and table tennis**. Especially bowling is very popular among guests.

Question number 10: Please, rate the following:

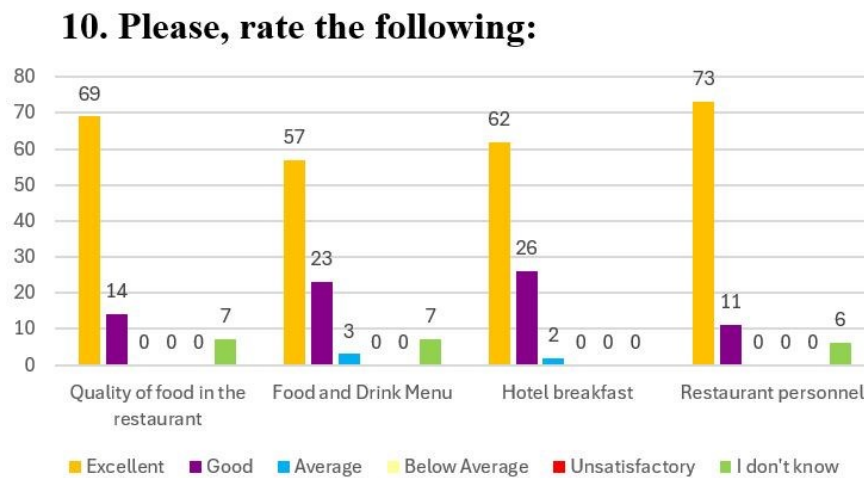


Figure 10 Please, rate the following:

Question number 10 focuses on **the dining sector** of the hotel. It is divided into **4 categories**. The vast majority of guests marked **all sections** as ‘**Excellent**’. However, **3 respondents** viewed the Food and Drink Menu as ‘**Average**’, and **2 guests** rated **the hotel breakfast** as ‘**Average.**’ Some guests expressed a desire for **a wider selection** of meals on the food menu. Breakfast is in most cases highly praised; a few guests would appreciate a wider variety of food at breakfast.

Question number 11: Please, rate the following:

11. Please, rate the following:

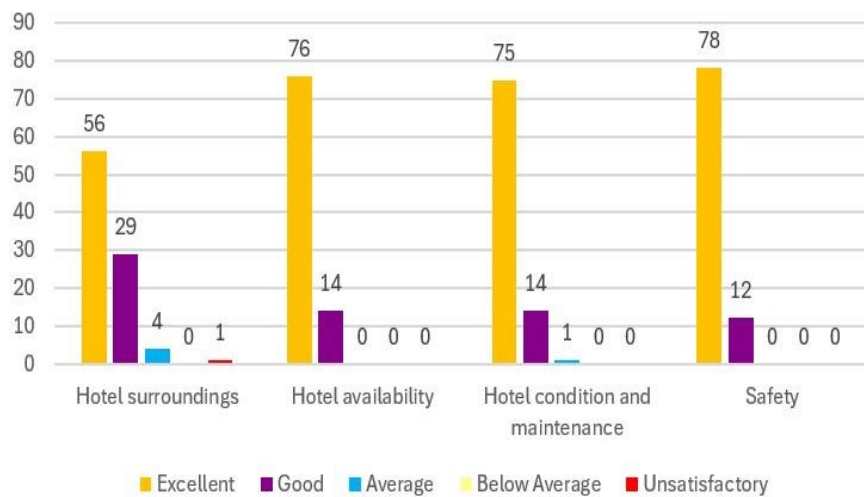


Figure 11 Please, rate the following:

Figure 11 illustrates the ratings of **the hotel environment and infrastructure**. There is a **high satisfaction** with **hotel availability, hotel condition and maintenance and safety**. However, the **hotel surroundings** were not rated as positively. **1 respondent** marked the hotel surroundings as ‘**Unsatisfactory**’, due to noise from a nearby factory and railway. This is attributed to Valašské Meziříčí being an industrial town with many companies situated there. **The advantage** is that **the train station** is located only approximately a 10-minute walk from the hotel, which is convenient for guests but **the disadvantage** is **the potential noise disturbance**.

Question number 12: Please, express your satisfaction:

12. Please, express your satisfaction:

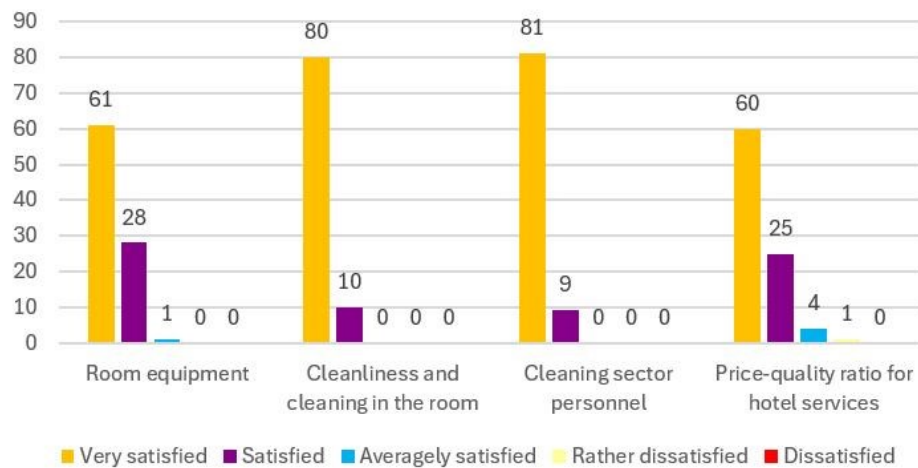


Figure 12 Please, express your satisfaction:

Question 12 pertains to the satisfaction levels regarding **room amenities and cleanliness, staff service of the cleaning sector, and overall satisfaction with a price-quality ratio** of hotel services. The results from the graph indicate that guests are **highly satisfied** with the **cleanliness and cleaning** in the room, as well as the cleaning sector **personnel**. Guests are **satisfied** with **room equipment**, but the satisfaction is not as high in comparison to previous points. There is a **92%** level of satisfaction with **the price-quality ratio** for hotel services. However, **one person** was **rather dissatisfied** with this ratio.

Question number 13: I learned about Hotel Abácie & Wellness from

13. I learned about Hotel Abácie & Wellness from

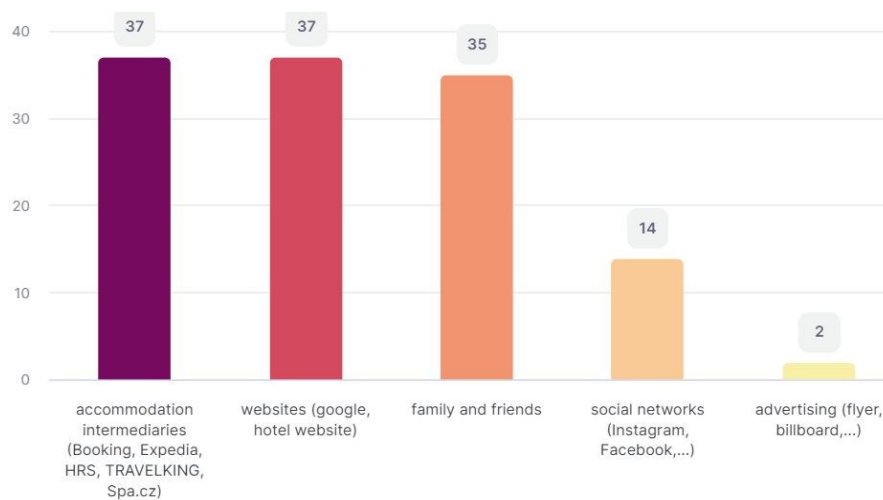


Figure 13 I learned about Hotel Abácie & Wellness from

This figure shows **the sources** from which the respondents obtained information about the hotel. Question number 13 was a multiple-choice question and guests mostly selected multiple options. As observed, the results are very close. **The most common sources are accommodation intermediaries, websites and family and friends.** Unexpectedly, **social media** does not have a profound influence, **representing only 15.6% of respondents.** Lastly, advertising methods like flyers and billboards **hardly influence** the decision-making process of the respondents.

Question number 14: Was there a problem with the hotel during your stay? If so, could you please briefly describe your problem and how it was solved?

Question number 14 deals with **potential obstacles** that the respondents were facing. A significant majority, accounting for **92.2%** of respondents, did not encounter **any issues.** On the contrary, **7.8%** of respondents had **a problem** during their stay. The problems included **the malfunction of a particular sauna** in the wellness centre, **disturbance** caused by a motion light in the room hallway for one respondent, **noise** from the surroundings of the hotel, and issues related to **the operating hours of the wellness centre** for some guests.

Question number 15: Would you recommend Hotel Abácie & Wellness to your friends?

In question number 15, respondents were asked if they would **recommend** the hotel to their friends. The results are very satisfactory. **95.6%** would recommend Hotel Abácie. They would share **a positive word-of-mouth**, which is crucial for the hotel's success. It creates trust, and it can enhance the hotel's reputation and might lead to a competitive advantage.

Question number 16: Would you visit Hotel Abácie & Wellness again?

In the final question, respondents were queried about their inclination to **revisit** Hotel Abácie & Wellness. **91.1%** of respondents expressed their intent to revisit. Another **6.7%** of respondents indicated a possibility (**'Maybe'**), while **2.2%** stated they would not return. Among those two guests, reasons for their decision included dissatisfaction with the closure of the wellness facilities during the time of their stay and disturbances caused by noise from the hotel's surroundings.

4.3 Research of Online Reviews

Customer satisfaction was also examined by analyzing ratings on the websites Booking.com, Google Reviews and Hotel.cz. All ratings from the websites were considered in the comparison.

Type	Number of reviews	Ratings	Maximum
Booking.com	456	8.5	10
Google reviews	419	4.3	5
Hotel.cz	112	93 (%)	100 (%)

Table 1 Hotel ratings on the Internet as of April 4, 2024 (own processing)

The hotel has a rating of 8.5/10 on Booking.com, indicating high satisfaction among guests. The top-rated section is personnel with 9.4 points. Cleanliness is in second place with 9.2 points. The location and the price-quality ratio received the least points. According to ratings on Booking.com, guests predominantly praised nice personnel, wellness centre and quality of food in the restaurant. On the other hand, some guests criticized the noisy hotel surroundings and the variety of food in the restaurant.

	Personnel	Facility	Cleanliness	Comfort	The price-quality ratio	Location	WiFi
Ratings (out of 10)	9.4	8.6	9.2	8.9	8.3	8.3	8.5

Table 2 Hotel ratings on Booking.com as of April 4, 2024 (own processing)

The hotel has received predominantly positive ratings on Google. However, there was some dissatisfaction due to the lack of air conditioning in one of the two buildings, which caused disappointment among guests during the summer months. This issue has since been resolved, and now every room is equipped with air conditioning.

Hotel Abácie & Wellness achieved a satisfaction rate of 93% on the travel intermediary website Hotel.cz. Despite a high satisfaction rate, some guests raised concerns about the absence of air conditioning and the presence of a no-swimwear zone in the wellness area, which could be perceived as inconvenient by certain guests. Despite the implementation of air conditioning in all rooms, the no-swimwear policy in the wellness area remains for hygienic reasons.

Compared to the primary research based on the questionnaire survey, the satisfaction level on these websites appears slightly lower. The difference can be attributed to the higher volume of reviews present on these platforms. While the survey had only 90 respondents, Booking.com features 456 reviews, which could impact the overall perception. Additionally, the time factor is influential, as some of the issues mentioned in these reviews have already been addressed and resolved over time.

5 CONCLUSION FROM THE RESEARCH

It has been found that there is a relatively **high overall satisfaction** of respondents with Hotel Abácie & Wellness, approximately **94.8%**. Respondents were predominantly satisfied with the hotel's personnel, wellness centre, cleanliness in the room and the cuisine. However, minor flaws were discovered.

The dissatisfaction was found in several areas. First of all, some respondents expressed a **slight dissatisfaction** with **the wellness centre**. Even though the wellness centre received **very pleasant ratings**, it is not open every day. It is **closed on Mondays and Tuesdays**. Some guests didn't know that prior to their stay. In the hotel's defense, it is written on the hotel website. Nevertheless, it is not mentioned on Booking.com, which might be a problem because not everyone checks the hotel website while making a reservation. The recommendation for the hotel is to visibly indicate the wellness center's operating hours on Booking.com and to emphasize it during phone reservations to ensure guests are informed and avoid any misunderstandings. Another issue observed in the wellness centre was related to a **malfunction of the Steam sauna** over the weekend, causing dissatisfaction for two guests. Unfortunately, the hotel's repairman was unavailable during that time, and the sauna was not repaired until Monday. To address the issue of wellness malfunctions over weekends, it is recommended to have **on-call maintenance staff available** during weekends who can respond promptly to such issues. This would ensure that any malfunctions are addressed quickly, minimizing guest dissatisfaction and maintaining the quality of services offered. Additionally, implementing **regular maintenance checks** at the weekends can help identify and resolve potential issues before they affect guests.

Another inconvenience concerns **the hotel's surroundings**, which were **negatively rated** in some cases. The surroundings were rated as average by four guests and as unsatisfactory by one guest. This was caused by the noise disturbance due to the hotel's location near the railway and the factory, which can be sometimes disturbing when the windows in the room are open. Unfortunately, this issue **cannot really be solved**. However, it is **compensated by a great hotel availability**, which was rated as excellent by **84.4% of respondents** with no signs of dissatisfaction. On the contrary, the hotel's location near the railway station, city centre and bicycle path is very convenient.

Lastly, some respondents would have appreciated **a broader variety of food** on the restaurant menu. This usually does not concern guests who are staying only for one night, but the ones staying for multiple days expressed a desire for a larger selection of meals. The hotel currently offers eight main courses on the menu. Even though it is being supplemented by seasonal offerings such as Valentine's, Easter and Weekend specials from time to time, it is still deemed insufficient by some customers. The recommendation for the hotel is to **slightly expand the selection of meals** on the menu to cater to varied preferences, including vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free diets. Subsequently, the hotel can offer daily specials, weekend menus and seasonal menus regularly to meet customers' needs.

5.1 Evaluation of Assumptions

It was assumed that the purpose of travel would be mostly business-related based on previous observations in the hotel. This assumption was confirmed. **60% of respondents** selected **'Work travel'** as the purpose of their stay.

It was assumed that the overall satisfaction of respondents would be **approximately 90 – 95%** based on previous observations in the hotel. This assumption was further supported by the actual overall satisfaction rate, which was **94.89%**.

Lastly, it was assumed that respondents would be satisfied with the personnel, wellness centre, and quality of food in the restaurant based on previous observations in the hotel. **The personnel** received an excellent rating, and **the wellness centre** was also positively rated with few exceptions, concerning the opening hours and temporary malfunction of one type of sauna. Similarly, **the food quality** in the restaurant garnered positive feedback overall.

CONCLUSION

The success of the hotel industry relies on **customer satisfaction**. Customer satisfaction is critical for the success and longevity of hotels. Satisfied customers are likely to become **loyal customers**, resulting in **enhanced hotel performance**. Having satisfied and loyal customers is tremendously important, leading to **competitive advantage, increased revenues, profitability and lower costs**. Acquiring new customers is more costly than maintaining the current ones. Additionally, customers can spread **positive word-of-mouth**. Positive word-of-mouth recommendations from satisfied customers can attract new customers, build credibility, and improve reputation. It is a highly effective form of advertising because people tend to trust recommendations from friends, family, or peers more than traditional advertisements.

The aim of my bachelor's thesis was to **analyze customer satisfaction** in Hotel Abácie & Wellness in Valašské Meziříčí, and **suggest potential areas for improvement**. Before the research, I formulated **three assumptions** based on previous observations at the hotel. All three assumptions **were confirmed**, indicating that work travel prevails as the purpose of the stays. Secondly, the overall satisfaction level of respondents fell within the 90 – 95% range, precisely **94.89%**, and lastly, the respondents were, as assumed, satisfied with personnel, wellness centre and quality of food in the restaurant.

For the analysis, I used **a questionnaire survey** and **research of online reviews**. In contrast to the questionnaire survey, online reviews received lower ratings. This discrepancy can be attributed to the larger volume of reviews and the time factor. Some issues mentioned in online reviews have already been addressed and resolved.

Respondents were particularly satisfied with **the hotel's personnel, availability, safety, cleaning and cleanliness in the rooms and quality of food in the restaurant**. Despite the high satisfaction level, **obstacles** were found in several areas, such as **the opening hours of wellness centre, the hotel's surroundings and insufficient variety of meals** on the restaurant menu for some respondents. Based on the findings, I proposed **recommendations for improvement**.

The research yielded predominantly **positive outcomes**, indicating a high degree of satisfaction among respondents. However, there is potential for **further development**.

In case of taking the provided recommendations into account, **customer satisfaction might increase**, which would be beneficial for the hotel's performance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CRM Customer Relationship Management

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APPENDIX P I: DOTAZNÍK SPOKOJENOSTI HOSTŮ (ČJ)



HOTEL ABÁCIE
& WELLNESS
restaurant & fitness

Dotazník spokojenosti

Vážení hosté,

velmi si vážíme Vašeho rozhodnutí strávit pobyt v hotelu Abácie.

Poprosíme Vás o vyplnění dotazníku. Dotazník je anonymní a zabere

Vám pár minut.

Budeme vděční za Váš názor.

S pozdravem,

tým Hotelu Abácie & Wellness

1) Uveďte prosím své pohlaví.

- Muž
 Žena
 Jiné

2) Do jaké věkové kategorie patříte?

- 18-25
 26-35
 36-45
 46-55
 56-65
 66+

3) Hotel Abácie & Wellness jsem navštívil(a):

- Poprvé
 2x - 5x
 Více než 5x

4) Jaká je délka Vašeho pobytu?

- 1 noc
 2 noci
 3 a více nocí

5) Jaký je účel Vašeho pobytu?

- Pracovní
 Rekreční
 Jiný

6) Jak celkově hodnotíte Váš pobyt v Hotelu Abácie & Wellness?

- Velmi spokojen(a)
 Spokojen(a)
 Průměrně spokojen(a)
 Spíše nespokojen(a)
 Nespokojen(a)

7) Zhodnoťte prosím následující:

Výberte v každém řádku pouze jednu odpověď.

	Vynikající	Dobré	Průměrné	Podprůměrné	Neuspokojivé
Služby poskytované na recepci					
Check-in					
Personál na recepci					

8) Jak hodnotíte následující?

Výberte v každém řádku pouze jednu odpověď.

	Vynikající	Dobré	Průměrné	Podprůměrné	Neuspokojivé	Nevím
Wellness centrum						
Personál wellness centra						
Sauny						
Vířivky						
Bazén						

9) Jak hodnotíte následující?

Výberte v každém řádku pouze jednu odpověď.

	Vynikající	Dobré	Průměrné	Podprůměrné	Neuspokojivé	Nevím
Fitness centrum						
Personál fitness centra						
Sportovní aktivity (bowling, squash, stolní tenis)						

10) Prosim, zhodnot'te nasledujici:

Vyberte v kazdem radku pouze jednu odpoved.

	Vynikajici	Dobre	Prumerné	Podprumerné	Neuspokojivé	Nevim
Kvalita jidla v restauraci						
Jidelni a napojovy listek						
Hotelová snidaně						
Personál restaurace						

11) Prosim, zhodnot'te nasledujici:

Vyberte v kazdem radku pouze jednu odpoved.

	Vynikajici	Dobre	Prumerné	Podprumerné	Neuspokojivé
Prostředí hotelu					
Dostupnost hotelu					
Stav a údržba hotelu					
Bezpečnost					

12) Vyjádřete prosim svou spokojenost.

Vyberte v kazdem radku pouze jednu odpoved.

	Velmi spokojen(a)	Spokojen(a)	Prumerné spokojen(a)	Spíše nespokojen(a)	Nespokojen(a)
Vybavení pokoje					
Čistota a úklid na pokoji					
Personál úklidového sektoru					
Poměr ceny a kvality za hotelové služby					

13) O Hotelu Abácie & Wellness jsem se dozvěděl(a):

Můžete vybrat více odpovědí.

- od známých
- ze sociálních sítí (Instagram, Facebook...)
- z webových stránek (google, webové stránky hotelu)
- od zprostředkovatelů ubytování (Booking, Expedia, HRS, TRAVELKING, Spa.cz)
- z reklamy (leták, billboard...)

14) Naskytl se nějaký problém s hotelem v průběhu Vašeho pobytu?

Pokud ano, můžete prosím stručně popsat Váš problém a jakým způsobem byl vyřešen?

- Ano
- Ne

15) Doporučili byste Hotel Abácie & Wellness Vaším známým?

- Ano
- Pokud ne, uveďte prosím důvod.

16) Navštívili byste Hotel Abácie & Wellness znovu?

- Ano
- Ne
- Možná

APPENDIX P II: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE



HOTEL ABÁCIE
& WELLNESS
restaurant & fitness

Guest Questionnaire

Dear guests,

We greatly appreciate your decision to stay in Hotel Abácie.

We kindly ask you to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire is anonymous and will only take you a few minutes.

We will be grateful for your opinion.

Best regards,
Hotel Abácie Team

- 1) What is your gender?
 Man
 Woman
 Other
- 2) What age category do you belong to?
 18-25
 26-35
 36-45
 46-55
 56-65
 66+
- 3) I visited Hotel Abácie & Wellness:
 Once
 2x - 5x
 More than 5x
- 4) What is the length of your stay?
 1 night
 2 nights
 3 and more nights
- 5) What is the purpose of your stay?
 Work travel
 Recreation
 Other
- 6) How do you overall rate your stay at Hotel Abácie & Wellness?
 Very satisfied
 Satisfied
 Averagely satisfied
 Rather dissatisfied
 Dissatisfied

7) Please, rate the following:

Choose one answer in each row:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Unsatisfactory
Services provided at the reception					
Check-in					
Reception personnel					

8) How do you rate the following?

Choose one answer in each row:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Unsatisfactory	I don't know
Wellness centre						
Wellness centre personnel						
Saunas						
Whirlpools						
Swimming pool						

9) How do you rate the following?

Choose one answer in each row:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Unsatisfactory	I don't know
Fitness centre						
Fitness centre personnel						
Sports activities (bowling, squash, table tennis)						

10) Please, rate the following:

Choose one answer in each row:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Unsatisfactory	I don't know
Quality of food in the restaurant						
Food and Drink Menu						
Hotel breakfast						
Restaurant personnel						

11) Please, rate the following:

Choose one answer in each row:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Unsatisfactory
Hotel surroundings					
Hotel availability					
Hotel condition and maintenance					
Safety					

12) Please, express your satisfaction.

Choose one answer in each row:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Averagely Satisfied	Rather dissatisfied	Dissatisfied
Room equipment					
Cleanliness and Cleaning in a room					
Cleaning sector personnel					
The price-quality ratio for hotel services					

13) I learned about Hotel Abácie & Wellness:

You can choose multiple answers.

- from family and friends
- from social networks (Instagram, Facebook...)
- from websites (google, hotel website)
- from accommodation intermediaries (Booking, Expedia, HRS, TRAVELKING, Spa.cz)
- from advertising (flyer, billboard,...)

14) Was there a problem with the hotel during your stay?

If so, could you please briefly describe your problem and how it was solved?

- Yes
- No

15) Would you recommend Hotel Abácie & Wellness to your friends?

- Yes
- If not, could you tell us why?

16) Would you visit Hotel Abácie & Wellness again?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe