

Concerns of Integrated Resort Customers: Content Analysis of Reviews on TripAdvisor

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Abstract

People are becoming reliant on online reviews when they plan for their trips. A large body of related literature has been published in recent years. However, no study thus far has attempted to analyse the online reviews posted by integrated resort customers and to examine their concerns. To fill the gap, we retrieved 480 reviews of four Macao integrated resorts from TripAdvisor and used content analysis to unearth and compare the components of these integrated resorts and their associated attributes that concern customers. Comment valences were also compared. Seven components and 10 common attributes were identified. Results indicate that hotel is the most frequently reviewed component. The reviewed attributes vary with the components, although attributes such as service and atmosphere received the most attention. Furthermore, positive comments outnumbered negative ones. Meaningful implications are provided for practitioners.

Keywords: Integrated resort; Social media; Online review; Comment valence; Casino; Content analysis.

1 Introduction

Online review has been extensively researched in the past decade. Tourism is a field that has attracted wide attention from online review researchers (Serra Cantallops & Salvi, 2014). However, to date, no relevant study has been conducted in the integrated resort context.

An integrated resort is a modern hospitality business model introduced by Steve Wynn when he built Mirage in Las Vegas in 1989. This resort is a large-scale entertainment property with casino as the core component (MacDonald & Eadington, 2008). Along with its casino, an integrated resort incorporates various elements including hotels, performance, luxury retail, fine dining, convention, exhibition, and others into a single property to provide an overarching experience for customers. The integrated resort is currently a major tourist attraction in leading global destinations, such as Las Vegas, Singapore, and Macao.

To add knowledge to the tourism and hospitality literature, the current research aims to unearth the components and attributes (e.g., service, atmosphere, and others) that concern integrated resort customers. The most reviewed components and attributes

are also identified. Furthermore, the comment valences associated with the attributes of various integrated resort components are compared.

2 Literature Review

Studies using integrated resort as the research context are scant in the tourism and hospitality literature. So, Li, and Lehto (2011) examined the perceptions of convention attendees toward the individual attributes of integrated resorts. Two earlier studies addressed the perceptions of residents toward the development of integrated resorts as a destination (Andriotis, 2008; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2009). Integrated resort, thus far, has not been examined in the stream of online review research.

In the tourism and hospitality literature, online review is primarily studied from the marketing perspective. For instance, perceived benefits, not the cost, drive people to plan their trip through the social media (Parra-López, Bulchand-Gidumal, Gutiérrez-Taño, & Díaz-Armas, 2011). Another stream of online review research probes the effects of online reviews on consumer responses, such as consumers' attitude toward the service provider (Zhang, Wu, & Mattila, 2014). Content analyses of online reviews are also well documented (Guo, Sun, Schuckert, & Law, 2015; Li, Ye, & Law, 2013). The popularity of reviewed attributes is contingent on contexts (Ong, 2012). Cleanliness, service, and value for money prevail in hotel reviews, whereas atmosphere, service, and wait time are salient in restaurant reviews. Therefore, generalizing the findings from one context to another is inadequate. Previous findings may not replicate in the context of integrated resorts, leaving a gap in the literature.

Review valence also receives wide attention from tourism scholars. Positive comments outnumber negative ones (Wang, Xiang, Law, & Ki, 2015). This phenomenon is argued to be specific to online review because reviewers tend to be lenient (Wu, 2013). The findings contradict the notion that people tend to weigh bad stimuli stronger than good stimuli (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001). The asymmetry of review valence deserves revisiting, especially in this unexplored context.

3 Methods

To achieve the research objectives, a content analysis of the reviews on TripAdvisor was conducted. TripAdvisor is currently the largest travel community in the world. A casino is the core of an integrated resort; hence, gaming destinations fit the purpose of the current research. Macao, the most lucrative gaming destination in the world (Fong, So, & Law, 2015), was thus chosen for the current study. Reviews of the four largest integrated resorts, namely, Venetian Macao, Galaxy Macao, City of Dreams, and Wynn Macao, were retrieved from TripAdvisor. For each integrated resort, the most recent 120 reviews (i.e., 480 overall) were analyzed. This number is adequate for the purpose of performing a content analysis of online reviews (Lee, Law, & Murphy, 2011).

The reviews were extracted on February 11 and 12, 2015. Only English reviews were included to avoid misinterpretation of comments written in other languages. The comments were read word-by-word to ensure the accuracy of coding work. The data

had been repeatedly analysed and coded until the smallest possible number of categories were generated. NVivo was used to support the content analysis.

4 Results and Discussion

This study identified seven components of an integrated resort (see Table 1). Hotel is the most frequently reviewed component, followed by property, food and beverage, leisure and recreation, retail, casino, and entertainment and events. In this study, property refers to the areas of the integrated resorts that do not belong to other components, for examples, shuttle buses and property lobby. Although casino is considered as the core component of integrated resorts (MacDonald & Eadington, 2008), our study indicates that it is not the major concern of customers. Customers may have a stronger involvement in non-gaming components, particularly hotel, than in gaming elements. The finding signifies that hotel, instead of casino, may be accurately referred to as the kernel of an integrated resort.

Ten common attributes were identified (see Table 1). Most of them are related to service ($n = 548$, 27.2%) and atmosphere ($n = 472$, 23.5%). The results reflect the contention that service and servicescape are imperative aspects of operation in the hospitality industry (Namasivayam & Mattila, 2007). These two attributes are mostly related to hotel, property, and casino. In the areas of food and beverage and retail, variety is the main concern of customers. With regard to leisure and recreation, amenities are on the top of the list. Finally, the quality of entertainment and events is the paramount concern of customers. The results indicate that the attributes that concern customers are not necessarily consistent, which supports the argument of Ong (2012) that prevalence of reviewed attributes varies with context.

In terms of comment valence, most comments are positive, regardless of the components. This finding corroborates the argument that online reviews tend to be positive (Wang et al., 2015). Thus, the asymmetry of comment valence is demonstrated. Similarly, comments on the attributes of each component are primarily positive, especially for certain attributes, such as additional benefits offered by the hotel, amenities of property, service and cleanliness of leisure and recreation areas, atmosphere and location of retail stores, and quality of entertainment and events.

Table 1. Instances of Components, Attributes, and Comment Valence

Components and Attributes	Comment Valence		Total Instances (Column %)
	Positive Instances (Row %)	Negative Instances (Row %)	
Hotel ($\chi^2(5)=55.2$)***	718 (84.9%)	128 (15.1%)	846 (100.0%)
Atmosphere	247 (94.6%)	14 (5.4%)	261 (30.9%)
Amenities	156 (81.3%)	36 (18.8%)	192 (22.7%)
Service	135 (78.0%)	38 (22.0%)	173 (20.4%)
Additional benefits	84 (96.6%)	3 (3.4%)	87 (10.3%)
Cleanliness	53 (68.8%)	24 (31.2%)	77 (9.1%)
Value for money	43 (76.8%)	13 (23.2%)	56 (6.6%)
Property ($\chi^2(4)=16.7$)**	531 (89.5%)	62 (10.5%)	593 (100.0%)
Service	280 (91.8%)	25 (8.2%)	305 (51.4%)
Atmosphere	105 (80.2%)	26 (19.8%)	131 (22.1%)

Location ^a	79 (92.9%)	6 (7.1%)	85 (14.3%)
Amenities	53 (94.6%)	3 (5.4%)	56 (9.4%)
Cleanliness	14 (87.5%)	2 (12.5%)	16 (2.7%)
Food & beverage (Fisher's Exact Test=9.3)	202 (81.8%)	45 (18.2%)	247 (100.0%)
Variety	66 (79.5%)	17 (20.5%)	83 (33.6%)
Quality	70 (89.7%)	8 (10.3%)	78 (31.6%)
Service	31 (72.1%)	12 (27.9%)	43 (17.4%)
Value for money	18 (78.3%)	5 (21.7%)	23 (9.3%)
Atmosphere	15 (88.2%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (6.9%)
Cleanliness	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	2 (0.8%)
Accessibility ^b	1 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)
Leisure & recreation (Fisher's Exact Test=17.3)**	87 (92.6%)	7 (7.4%)	94 (100.0%)
Amenities	47 (97.9%)	1 (2.1%)	48 (51.1%)
Service	16 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	16 (17.0%)
Variety	10 (76.9%)	3 (23.1%)	13 (13.8%)
Atmosphere	11 (91.7%)	1 (8.3%)	12 (12.8%)
Cleanliness	3 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (3.2%)
Accessibility	0 (0.0%)	2 (100.0%)	2 (2.1%)
Retail (Fisher's Exact Test=12.6)**	84 (96.6%)	3 (3.4%)	87 (100.0%)
Variety	58 (98.3%)	1 (1.7%)	59 (67.8%)
Atmosphere	14 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	14 (16.1%)
Location ^a	9 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (10.3%)
Value for money	3 (75.0%)	1 (25.0%)	4 (4.6%)
Accessibility ^b	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)	1 (1.1%)
Casino (Fisher's Exact Test=6.1)	66 (78.6%)	18 (21.4%)	84 (100.0%)
Atmosphere	32 (86.5%)	5 (13.5%)	37 (44.0%)
Variety	11 (68.8%)	5 (31.2%)	16 (19.0%)
Service	9 (81.8%)	2 (18.2%)	11 (13.1%)
Value for money	5 (55.6%)	4 (44.4%)	9 (10.7%)
Cleanliness	5 (71.4%)	2 (28.6%)	7 (8.3%)
Additional benefits	4 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (4.8%)
Entertainment & events (Fisher's Exact Test=7.7)*	57 (93.4%)	4 (6.6%)	61 (100.0%)
Quality	38 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	38 (62.3%)
Variety	11 (78.6%)	3 (21.4%)	14 (23.0%)
Accessibility ^b	8 (88.9%)	1 (11.1%)	9 (14.8%)

Note: * represents $p < .05$; ** represents $p < .01$; *** represents $p < .001$; ^a Location refers to distance from other components; ^b Accessibility refers to the situation that the component is available if wanted by customers.

5 Conclusions

This study fills the research gap on the lack of analysis of online review for integrated resort, which is an emerging business model in hospitality. Results indicate that a non-gaming component, namely, hotel, rather than casino, is the core of an integrated resort. The findings provide the Macao Government, which has been striving to shift the attention of tourists from gaming to non-gaming components, with a positive signal as non-gaming components draw more tourists' attention. Furthermore, this study enhances understanding of the integrated resort operators of the components

(e.g., hotel) and corresponding attributes (e.g., service and atmosphere) that concern their customers. Improved understanding plays a crucial role in allocating resources to adequate components and attributes. The findings also implied that prevalence of attributes varies with contexts (i.e., components in this study) (Ong, 2012). To extend the current study, future research may compare the popularity of attributes of a component in integrated resort and the same component which is not within integrated resort. Additionally, Macao is only one of the destinations equipped with integrated resorts. Therefore, future studies may revisit the issue in other destinations, such as Las Vegas and Singapore, which may result in different findings.

6 References

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