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## Article

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# HOTEL SERVICE, ASSUMPTION AND STARTER OF THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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## Abstract

The tourism worldwide is continuously making high development ascent and the same is a result of the expansion in the hotel industry. About that is very remarkable the improvement of the working processes, i.e. the quality of the service, but also the construction of numerous new facilities, which together affects the competition on the international tourism market, where Republic of Macedonia also gives its national tourism product. This paper pays special attention to the hotel service and the staff which are its inevitable and irreplaceable factor, and on which depends the guest satisfaction. In this paper is emphasized the monitoring the satisfaction of the hotel guests with hotel service, in the hotel complexes. The results confirm that Republic of Macedonia is recognized on the tourism market for the great and unique hospitality of the population in general, but also of the tourism staff. But that doesn't mean that in future shouldn't be paid attention on even greater improvement of the services quality.

Keywords: staff, quality, competition.

*Jel Classification:* L83; M31; M12

## INTRODUCTION

Republic of Macedonia on basis of all its potentials for tourism development can and deserves to be successful tourist story with truly unique tourism. Exactly in the skillful incorporation of the local values and advantages of the country or the destination can be seen the huge possibility for creation and achievement of the competitive advantage on the global tourism market. Today the tourism happens to the world. The tourism is a global sector that changes the world and is one of the greatest manifestations of the world globalization. The continuous development ascent of the tourism worldwide, in the last two decades is due to the expansion of the hotel industry. The hotel business as activity

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is a material basis for development of the tourism in Republic of Macedonia. It would be impossible to imagine how would be the world without the existence of the hotel industry. The world without the hotel business would probably be a world standing in one place. This fact implies to have proper approach for the tourism development, which means global thinking, because the tourism is a global activity, on a global market, with a global consumer. The global thinking leads to the fact that factor for the development of the tourism is the global consumer, with his needs and expectations i.e. preferences. All that which is potential and advantage of the country or the destination, should be skillfully, with quality and fully packed for the global consumer. The consumer travels to the place of the service and can use the same, and that is possible and conditioned only with the existence of a hotel (Conejo and Wooliscroft 2015). In that sense, the hotel business makes the material basis of the tourism and conditions its existence, and the development of the activity affects directly to the development of the tourism as a whole. That means that the conditionality of the tourism from the hotel business is absolute and continuous.

Republic of Macedonia joined the general world tourism trend for development of the hotel business, by several basic principles:

- Creating conditions to encourage and intensify more serious investments in this sphere, construction of significant hotel facilities, and not just in tourist destinations but also in the business destinations and other business centers especially in Skopje, with the entry of the Marriottchain, and others.
- Affirmation of the local values and the need and meaning of their incorporation in the tourist offer.
- Subsidizing of travel arrangements intended for highly potential market segments that traditionally gravitate to Ohrid as a travel destination (Netherlands, Serbia and others).

To this action leads the fact that today's potential tourist has high perceptions for the real values to which he aspires, in local framework, usually qualified as sensitiveness of the beneficiaries. But the real business understanding of the service users' needs is attached to the presented approach of acting, according to which the guests' needs should not be only satisfied, but also surpassed (Coviello, Winklhofer, and Hamilton 2006). The modern guests want top quality for minimal price.

## **1. THE QUALITY OF THE HOTEL SERVICE IS COMPETITIVENESS**

In modern terms, the quality is a success factor, very important in context of selling the products and services (Zeithaml 2000). The availability of information at world level, the global competition and requirements and the reduced number of loyal guests, are giving additional obligations to the hotel management, regarding the research of new ways for giving quality product. Each hotel product is extremely complex, because is a sum of tangible and intangible elements of the offer which are closely linked and which affect to the guests pleasure. The quality of the hotel product depends not only on the quality of the object, but also on the expertise and kindness of the staff, the access to the hotel, the serving speed etc. That means that the quality of the service is a basic factor for achieving profitability and market competitiveness (Raajpoot 2004). Service quality

has been conceptualized as the difference between perceived service performance and expected service level (Donthu and Yoo 1998).

Namely, the zenith of the sales realization coincides with the arrival of the guest in the hotel, and from that moment on the magic of the success is in the hands of the employees. In that sense, nothing, not even the most modern technologies could not replace the employees in front of the guest, their professional, but also friendly word, their welcome smile, their willingness to fully care for the pleasure and security of the guest (Gambetti and Graffigna 2015). Such relationship creates trust between the service providers and the guests. At the same time, during the communication process both sides are in sales-purchase relationship through direct meeting of the offer and the demand. The need for application of the marketing approach from perspective of the service is a result of the continuous and dynamic increase of the needs, expectations and desires of the service users, the sharper competition as well as the dynamic development of the new technologies.

People today live and work in motion and predisposed to constantly discover and experience new and authentic things (Singh, Saini, and Majumdar 2015). Such general opportunities condition changes in the approach to tourism. The organized mass tourism is continuously declining, except where is, programmatic and economic, conditioned and on the scene is the individual or conditionally said the individual tourism. The bid should be complex and meet all customer expectations, but also packed according to global quality level for a specific category of services.

Republic of Macedonia is small in territory and population, but extremely rich in diversity of tourist potentials. Alignment of appropriate forms of promotion of all potentials, and system for quality delivery of international standards of the overall travel service will in fact place Macedonia worthy place in the international tourist market.

In addition to proper identification of the orientation of hotel service users in Macedonia points out the following statistics:

**Table 1.** Realized overnights in December 2014 in the hotel complexes

Object	Category	Number nights spent	% of participation by structure
Hotels	5*	7.192	26,98
Hotels	4*	10.232	38,39
Total	5*+4*	17.424	65,37
Hotels	All categories	26,649	82,21

Source: State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia 2015, 19, table 6.

The total nights spent in all hotels (where else has the weakest flow of guests on all grounds), 65.37% were achieved in highly categorized facilities with 4 and 5 stars. It points to the fact that users of services are oriented to the quality of the service before anything else, and the average stay time in October in Skopje was 2,06 per guest. This factual situation confirms the willingness of the service users to pay a price for value, indicating that the quality is the road to success.

Ellswert Statleris known for gesture Makes progress the one that gives a little more and a little better service. It is his, the proverb: The client is always right, and he often knew to tell his employees: The client pays both you and me.

## **2. THE USERS OF THE HOTEL SERVICE HOSPITALITY**

The tourism and especially the hotel business is a human activity. Here all that is necessary and desirable for the (human) user of the service becomes possible only with the presence and activity of the (human) service providers. Hence the role of the employees in the process of realization of hotel service is crucial to the satisfaction of the guest which is the reason for its re-return (Kim and Ok 2010). Due to this fact is extremely important: the expertise, ability, skill, communication, charisma and the style of behavior of the employees in the process of realization of the service. They are creators and keepers of the guest satisfaction and it is important and necessary, themselves to be satisfied. Due to such conditionality we will say that satisfaction among guests of the overall service can produce only satisfied employees (Susskind et al. 2000). Because of that, the staff in the tourism sector, with their knowledge, ability and working experience, makes the most important segment of the overall catering-tourist activity in qualitative and quantitative terms (Tse and Ho 2009).

One of the most significant features of the hotel staff in a hotel, regardless of its category is that their individual and procedural actions should be consistent. The overall conformity of the employees' actions in each hotel facility should diffuse the manager of that object. In informatics words, the material part of the hotel (tourist) offer of particular travel destination or catering facility can be compared with one of the two components of the information system—hardware and the employees (the human resources) with the other component of the information system—software. At the same time the mutual conditionality is overall and means that no computer can function not only with the hardware or just with the software support. Despite the numerous benefits as a result of the technological advancement, the guests will not only continue to prefer the "old fashioned" hospitality, but it seems that it increasingly becomes emphasized advantage when choosing a destination and hotel (Boley and Uysal 2013).

Because of this, crucial importance of the staff in framing the guest satisfaction in modern conditions, inside the modern hotel industry, are more developed the forms of internal marketing, which include marketing of the staff. That modern approach involves development and application of various practices oriented to increase the employee satisfaction, which then has reflection to the satisfaction of their guests, whereupon although the management policy is very important, the service to a large extent depends on the staff of the facility (Loveman 1998).

## **3. THE STAFF COMPONENT AND THE QUALITY OF THE SERVICE**

The dynamics of the development of new technologies is tremendous and is reflected on all spheres of human activity. In the conditions of world globalization the development and the application of new technologies has a lightning effect to the change in the competitive ability of enterprises to specific markets on the one hand and to the change of needs, expectations and desires of the consumers of services on the other. The application of new technologies in the hotel industry has limitation which is conditioned on the specifics of the activity. Namely, although it significantly modernizes the hotel working, it affects to the efficiency of the overall process of work, makes the hotel

available to every interested and potential user, but in the context of the service, the staff still remains inviolable (Meyer, Gremler, and Hogreve 2014) .

The service has a personal character and that affects limiting on the level of automation of the working process in which dominates the human effort. The impact of the employees on the success of the operation is reflected exactly at the point of realization of the intangible part of the hotel service that includes the impression on the guest from the professional behavior, the appearance and the charm of the employee. Otherwise the hotel service as a complex structure completes the process of product sales on one hand and creates conditions for increased confidence and future sales of the other. A good caterer other than a measured verbal and visual appearance, must also have a good psychological assessment of the guest in order to leave a good impression on him/her because in this way (with direct communication) the catering facility establishes the most direct relationship with the guest, but also an ability in the best possible way to present the offer in a way to encourage the guest to select and consume the offered services. At the same time the staff doesn't have choice for attempt and errors which is the cause of increased anxiety (at employees) when errors occur during the working process. Many of the guests' perceive the mistakes of the employees as a personal insult and are more emotional when solving the existing problems. The human error is another key element that is different in the production-service and the service sector and has a significant impact on the guest satisfaction (Malthouse et al. 2004). This is a particularly exposed phenomenon due to the fact that a generally accepted rule in the industry is that: the client is always right, and that means that the rule applies also when the client is not right (Persson and Ryals 2010).

Due to the characteristics of the catering-tourism activity as a highly labor-intensive activity, catering-tourism workers face a huge challenge for quality control. This means the from the staff in the hotel industry is expected, in addition to the leading professional capability for professional execution of the working tasks, also a remarkably good skill for required and cultural adaptation to every guest (Mikolon et al. 2015). But no matter how good people can be educated and rewarded for their work, occasionally they tend to be indiscreet and tactless or in other words there is no business activity in which there will be no mistakes.

The characteristics of the tourism, the catering and the hotel business, as services, can be described through a differentiated approach towards the manufacturing organizations. This primarily refers to the characteristics of the services that are the basis of the performance:

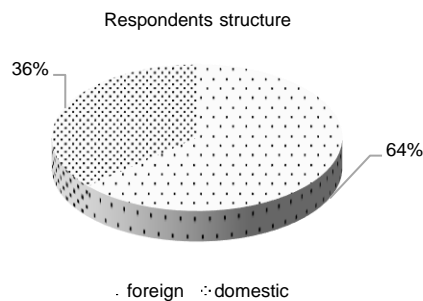
- The intangibility of the service—the service cannot be touched, it doesn't have material shape
- Simultaneity of the production and consumption—the service is first sold and then performed
- The participation of the guest in the production-service process—the guest suggests the way of performance and/or modification of certain procedure
- Transience-waste of the catering-tourist service—the service is a one-time-only and it exists only while is performing.

In this context, it can be said that the usual tourist-catering companies which are proud of their service, develop such operations that creates worries for the market competition.

#### 4. RESEARCH

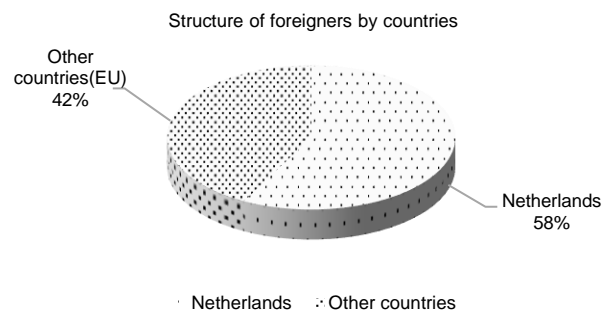
The best way to see the quality of the hotel service in the Republic of Macedonia is to make a questionnaire of the visitors in certain hotel complexes and to determine their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. For this purpose were questioned 153 respondents in the hotel complex Bellevue and the resort Metropol Ohrid – Macedonia, with 10 questions, randomly selected respondents, which is 52.7% of the total number of rooms. The obtained data will be used for determination of appropriate strategies for improvement of the hotel service quality.

From the conducted questionnaire were obtained the following data for the structure of the respondents, which are shown in the following figure:

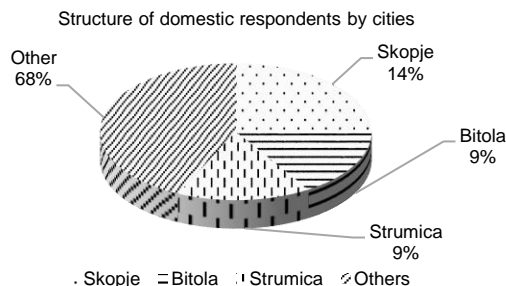


**Figure 1.** Respondents' structure

According to the figure can be noticed that 83% of the respondents are foreign, and 27% are domestic. For more detailed perception of the respondents' structure are made other chart for the structure of the foreign respondents by countries and the structure of the domestic respondents by cities.



**Figure 2.** Structure of foreign respondents by countries

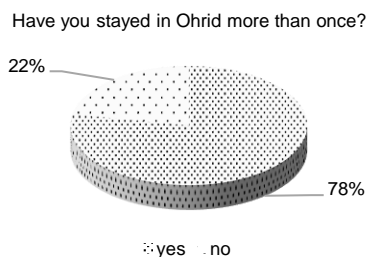


**Figure 3.** Structure of domestic respondents by cities

According to the figure can be noticed that from the foreign respondents 58% are from Netherlands and 42% from the other countries of the European Union, which shows the interest of the Dutch tourists for our country. According to the chart where is given the structure of the domestic respondents by cities, can be noticed that most of them 14% are from Skopje, 9% from Bitola and also 9% from Strumica and the remaining 68% are from the other cities of Republic of Macedonia.

From the conducted questionnaire here below are isolated only the key questions for this research.

Regarding the first question have you stayed in Ohrid more than once, were obtained the following answers shown in the figure:

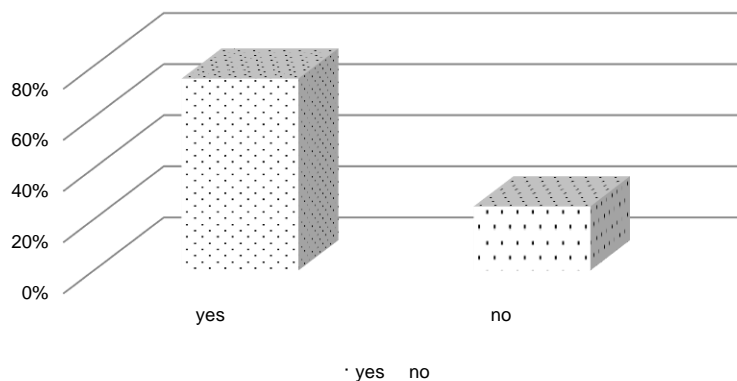


**Figure 4.** Percentage for the stay in Ohrid more than once

According to the figure 78% of the respondents have stayed more than once in Ohrid, and 22% have come for the first time. The fact that 78% of the foreign respondents from 8 European countries, repeated their stay in Ohrid more than once, indicates the general satisfaction of tourists and that the Government subsidies for encouraging the development of tourism in this destination is bearing fruit. Confirmation for that is the fact that 66.08% of the respondents from the group of Dutch tourists comes in Ohrid for the first time. This suggests that the interest for stay in Ohrid on the Dutch market is growing enormously.

To the question if the price is an equivalent to the value of the package arrangement were obtained the following results:





**Figure 5.** Percentage of the satisfaction from the price according to the value of the package arrangement

From the figure can be noticed that 75% of the respondents are satisfied with the price and they think it is equivalent to the value of the package arrangement, while 25% consider that this price is higher than the value of the package arrangement. According to the results can be noticed that the dissatisfaction with the price is mainly at the domestic respondents. The subsidize of the price for the stay of foreign tourists in Ohrid according to the results of the questionnaire is a high motivator for the tourists, especially due to the fact that they have an objective evaluation of the high value of the arrangement.

To the question if they are satisfied with the hospitality of the staff, were obtained the following results:

**Table 2.** Satisfaction with the hospitality of the staff

Domestic	Yes – 75%	No – 25%
Netherlands	Yes – 84 %	No – 16%
Other foreigners	Yes– 100%	No – 0 %

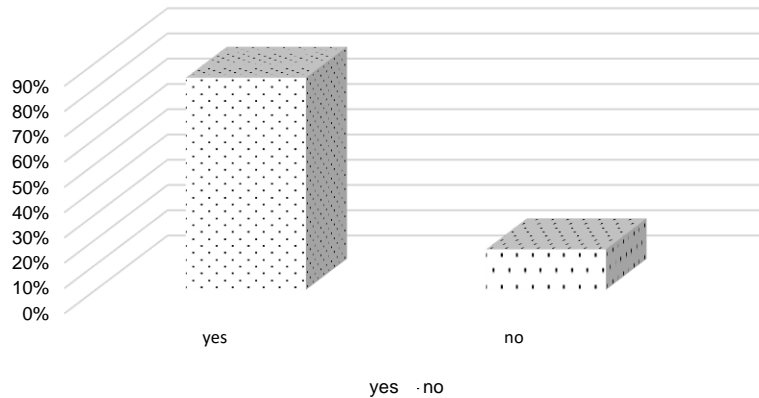
The hospitality of the employees is evaluated with high marks especially from the group of foreign tourists with 100% satisfaction expressed by the respondents from 8 European countries, 83.93% satisfied are those from Netherlands, while the domestic as connoisseurs of the traditional Macedonian hospitality expressed higher expectations of the employees regarding the foreign, i.e. 25% expect more hospitality and 75% are satisfied.

To the question if in the hotel are available all the information that you need, were obtained the following answers:

**Table 3.** Percentage of the availability of information for the guests

Domestic	Yes – 84%	No – 16%
Netherlands	Yes – 100%	No – 0%
Other foreigners	Yes – 88%	No – 12%

This data can be shown in the following figure:

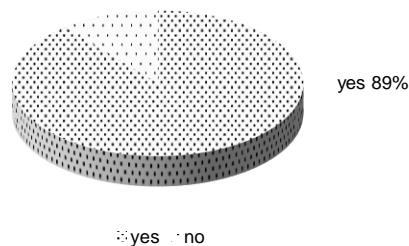


**Figure 6.** Percentage of the availability of information for the guests

According to the figure 86% of the respondents are satisfied with the availability of information, and 14% are not.

To the question if the hotel employees are always at your service, were obtained the following results shown in the chart:

Are the hotel employees always at your service



**Figure 7.** Percentage of the availability of the employees in the hotel

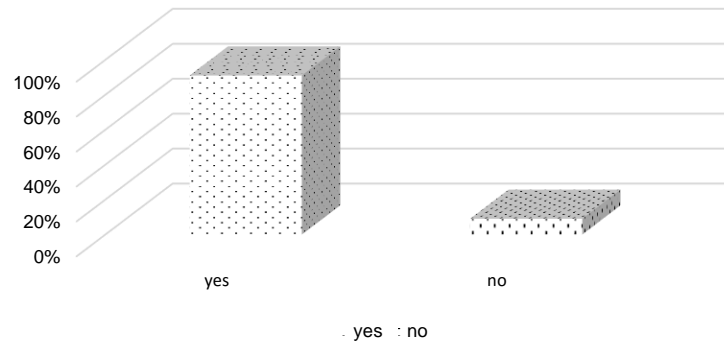
According to the figure can be noticed that 89% of the respondents are satisfied with the availability of the employees at the hotel. Each management team would like to have employees for which he obtains information from the satisfied guests that those employees are always available and at their service. Maximum pleasure expressed the respondents in all three groups of domestic guests, guests from the Netherlands and guests from European countries.

To the question if the quality of the service is reason to come again, were obtained the following data:

**Table 4.** Percentage for the respondents' satisfaction for the quality of the service they received

Domestic	Yes – 91%	No – 9%
Netherlands	Yes – 84%	No – 16%
Other foreigners	Yes – 100%	No – 0%

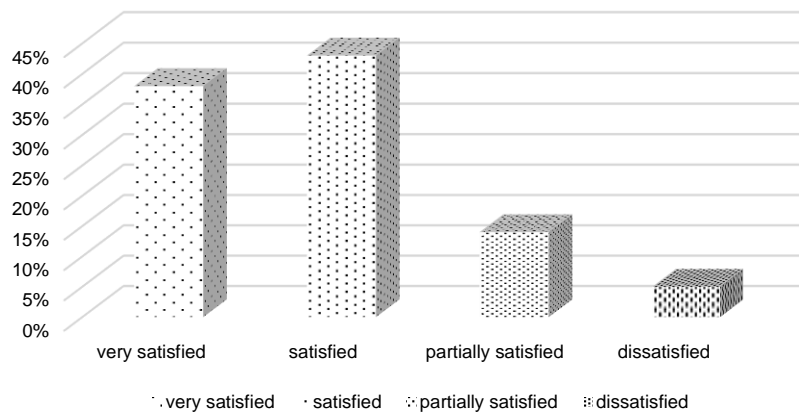
The total results from the domestic and foreign respondents regarding the quality of the service are shown in the following figure:



**Figure 8.** Percentage for the respondents' satisfaction for the quality of the service they received

From the figure can be noticed that 91% of the respondents are satisfied with the quality of the service, and only 9% expressed certain dissatisfaction. High grade received the quality of the service by the domestic service of which 91,07% were satisfied, the Dutch were 83,93% satisfied, and the guests from the other 8 European countries expressed high 100% satisfaction.

To the question how much are you satisfied with the food assortments, were obtained the following results shown in the figure:

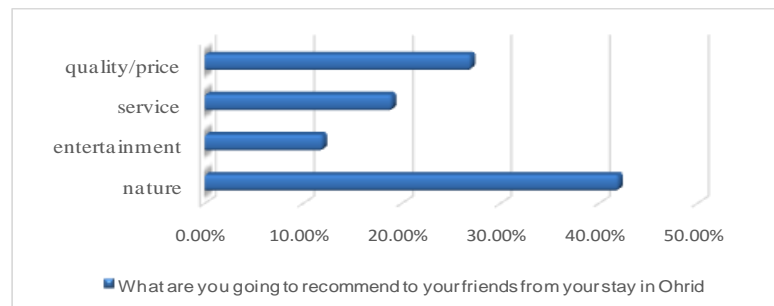


**Figure 9.** Percentage of the respondents' satisfaction with the food assortments offer

From the obtained results regarding the satisfaction of the respondents with the offer of the food assortments 81% expressed absolute satisfaction. 38% of the respondents are very satisfied, 43% are satisfied, 14% are partially satisfied and only 5% are dissatisfied. The fact that the food is everyday need and source of health and energy, but also the gastronomic adventure when it comes to recreation and enjoyment of the guest, even the

slightest guests' dissatisfaction must be a strong challenge for the management to solve it quickly.

To the question what are you going to recommend to your friends from your stay in Ohrid, were obtained the following results:



**Figure 10.** Percentage for recommendations to friends for their stay in Ohrid

According to the figure can be noticed that 42% of the respondents would recommend the beautiful nature, 12% the entertainment, 19% the service, and 27% would recommend the price and the quality.

The received answers to the question, what will you recommend to your friends from your stay in Ohrid, point to the conclusion that besides the beautiful nature, the balanced relation of quality/price of the arrangements, the highly evaluated service, availability and hospitality of the employees, Ohrid as a destination misses organized forms of entertainment for the tourists such as adrenaline rush that will satisfy the passions for pro-active vacation.

## 5. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

From the obtained results can be noticed that the quality of the staff, which is providing the hotel service, is extremely important for the satisfaction of the visitors. Actually the quality of the hotel service in terms of greater competition and the consumers' requirements became significant factor for achieving the profitability and the competitiveness on the tourism market. The availability of information worldwide, the global competition and the requirements of the less loyal guests create additional obligations for the hotel managements to explore new ways of providing better products and services. Each hotel product is complex because it consists of tangible and intangible elements of the offer which are closely linked and are extremely important for the guests' satisfaction. The quality of the hotel product depends not only on the quality of the facility, but largely depends on the professionalism and kindness of staff, access to the object, the atmosphere in the object, serving speed, etc. This study came to the conclusion that visitors are mostly satisfied, but that does not mean that the management has completed its work. The management need to work further to reduce the percentage of dissatisfied, giving the best possible service from the expected. The quality service is a guaranty for successful working, and such service can give only people who are motivated and professionally trained.

## CONCLUSION

An important success factor in the hotel industry is the human factor, since many of the services provided to the guests include elements of personal contact. The quality of the staff, especially those who perform front-stage activities depends on the quality of services provided at the hotel. The guest through direct contact with employees evaluates the competences, the expertise and the hospitality of the entire hotel. Due to that, the managing with people and human resources management are crucial elements that any hotel management must take into account.

From a marketing perspective, it is not enough the guest to come. It is the best when the confidence of the guest is ensured for long term or when the guest calls the hotel “my hotel”, when they recommended it to their friends when they feel cared for, safe and comfortable like at home. Such guest satisfaction and such confidence in the hotelier is a real gift for the management, and not effort and commitment.

The positive effect of the gained trust with guests not only survives through repetition of stay by the guests, but it also expands on the principle of geometric progression in the circles of each guest. It is important and valuable for every hotelier. Thereby is increasing the sales capacity and market participation, and the loyalty of guests continues to strengthen. It is the strongest guarantee of success, especially if the success is evaluated through the profitability of the investment. The hotel industry is very expensive and organic for sale per unit product per unit time.

Of all the insights derived from the case of study as the main conclusion still imposes that tourists prefer an integrated quality level of the destination, which absolutely fits with the experiences of the modern trends of tourism development. The quality of all the individual services that make the destination image means systemic action of all factors of the tourism development. But even then the focus on fully gaining the trust of the guest and his reinstatement in the hotel/the destination as crown factor remains the quality of service and the employees as its immanent creators.

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