

Can a Hotel Stay Be a Memorable Tourism Experience? A Netnographic Exploration of Experience-Based Marketing in Hospitality

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Abstract

The tourism sector has undergone significant growth in recent years, and both tourism and hospitality competitiveness increasingly depend on the memorable experiences gained by travelers. In the hotel context, this is reflected in the concept of memorable hotel experiences. This study combines netnography and grounded theory to identify the core elements of memorable hotel experiences, examining 5 themed hotels across Europe—historical (Lisbon), music (Budapest), Beatles (Liverpool), LEGO (Billund), and Cars/Pixar (Paris/Marne-la-Vallée)—each with over 1,000 TripAdvisor reviews. The 5,795 reviews confirmed that visitor opinions align with the original memorable tourism experience model and apply to themed hotels. Accordingly, memorable hotel experiences are built upon sensory-multisensory experience, narrative–emotional elements and participatory aspects, corresponding to five of the seven MTE dimensions. The findings offer clear managerial implications as well. Keywords: tourism, memorable tourism experience (MTE), memorable hotel experience Track: Tourism Marketing

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