

Hotel Research- Example



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Business Objectives

Evo Research was asked to look at customers' experience of **Hotel**, by understanding their perceptions of the hotel standards overall including the quality of the rooms, the service provided by staff, their experiences of the restaurant and whether they would make a repeat visit.

Hotel had noticed a decrease in the number of return visitors and wanted to find out how to improve their offer to encourage more customers to come back.

There was also a concern that a significant number of booking enquiry calls made failed to convert to actual bookings, **Hotel** wanted to identify possible reasons for this.

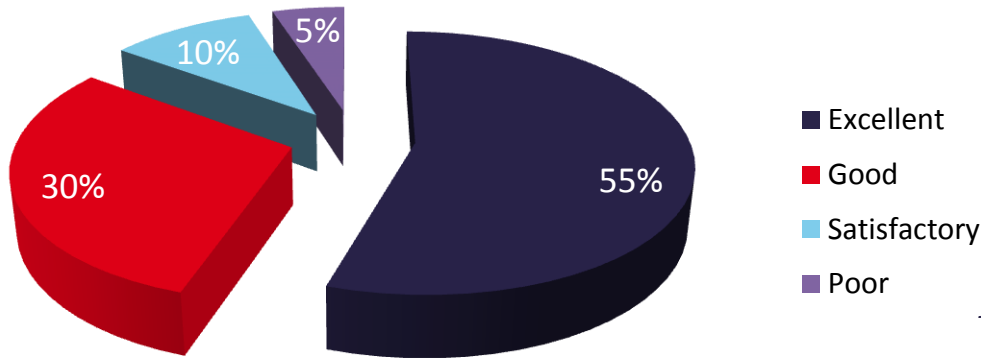
Meeting The Objectives

Methodology

- The optimum way to meet the needs of **Hotel** was to conduct a range of differing research methodologies.
- 20 x Mystery Shops (Telephone enquiries) calls were made over a period of 2 weeks at different times of day between 4th April & 14th April 2011
- 50 x telephone interviews with existing/ past customers (the customer list of 150 names was given by **Hotel** – as the strike rate is approximately 1 in 3)

| Key Questions | Mystery Shops (telephone) | Telephone Interviews (existing/past customers) |
|--|------------------------------|---|
| How welcoming did they find the Hotel reception? Were there needs met? | | ✓ |
| What were customers' opinions of the rooms | ✓ | ✓ |
| How are customer's requests for information met? | ✓ | ✓ |
| What was their experience of the hotel restaurant? | | ✓ |
| How did they rate the customer service overall? | | ✓ |
| Would they return to the hotel? Why? Why not? | | ✓ |

How welcoming did you find the hotel reception?



“The hanging baskets were a really nice touch, they made the hotel really stand out from the street and made me think that they obviously looked after the place- it created a really positive first impression”

“The reception was well looked after, but it’s a shame the rooms weren’t up to the same standard”

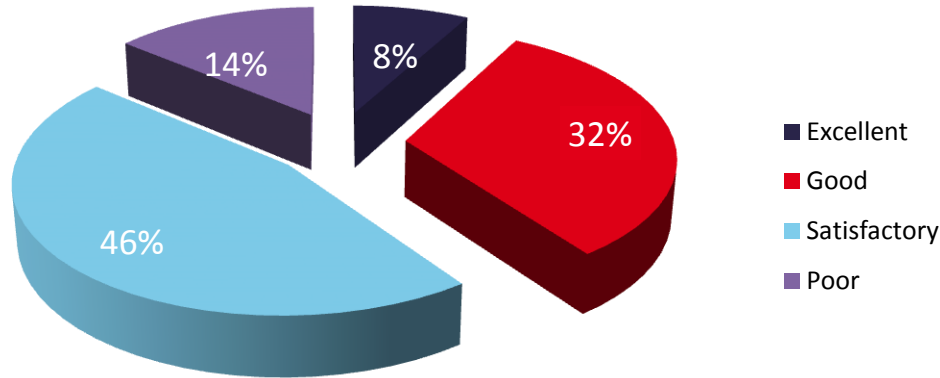
“I found the receptionist polite and courteous and she did everything required”

“The receptionist was really helpful- she welcomed me immediately and gave me information about meal times and asked if we wanted papers or an alarm call in the morning- she did everything I expected and was very pleasant”

Telephone interviews: 50 customers

- Positively the hotel was seen as presenting an overall good first impression –
- The exterior was described as **“clean and stylish”**
- The hotel was described as looking **“well cared for”** and **“inviting”**
- The majority of mystery shoppers reported receiving a warm welcome upon arrival at the reception
- **However-** mystery shoppers reported some problems when information about local attractions and places to visit was requested **“I asked if she could recommend any local places of historical interest that would be good for a day trip, but she didn’t really know and pointed me in the direction of the leaflets on display”**
- Another respondent said - **“I asked them if they could recommend a good restaurant- but the place they sent us was diabolical!”**

What was your overall impression of the room?



“It was ok on the whole- but there were a few marks on the carpet and the sink had a few hairs in it”

“It was clean and comfortable, but that’s all you can say really”

“ I think the room was satisfactory- It was pretty bog standard in comparison to other places I’ve stayed”

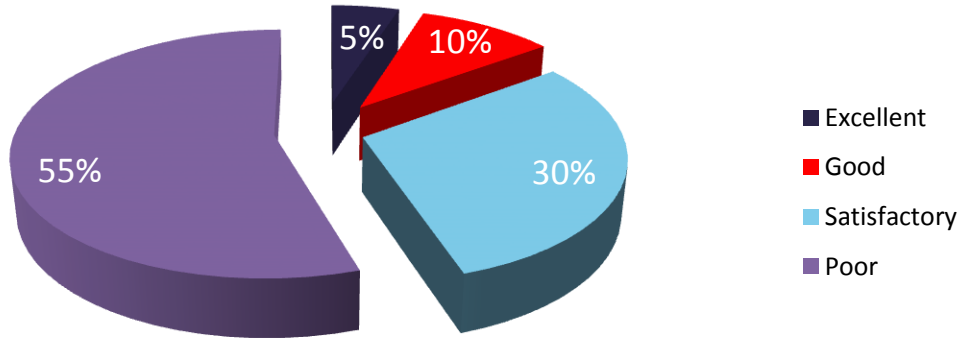
“The room ok for cleanliness, but I can’t really think of anything else that was particularly good”

Telephone interviews: 50 customers

- Most telephone respondents described the rooms as being **“clean”**
- Only 20% of those interviewed on the telephone found the rooms **“Excellent”** or **“Good”**
- Positively, a number of telephone respondents spontaneously described the room as **“comfortable”** or **“very comfortable”**
- There was a feeling amongst respondents that the rooms were **“functional”** but not particularly exciting
- **However-** When questioned about the overall condition of the room most respondents were less impressed



What did you think of the décor of the room?



“The room was ok, but it was a bit tired- it needed a bit of a revamp”

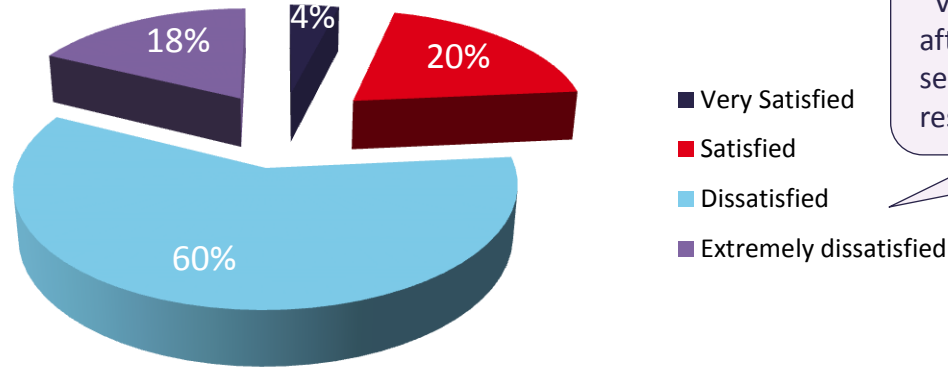
“The room was quite comfortable but it needed some modernisation

“You can go to a Premier Inn for a lot cheaper than it costs there and the bedrooms aren’t any worse – this hasn’t been decorated since the 80’s by the look of it!”

Telephone interviews: 50 customers

- Telephone respondents reported being **“satisfied”** with the standard of their room “There was a general feeling amongst most participants that there was room for improvement in the quality of the rooms
- A number of respondents described the rooms as being **“a bit tired”** and **“in need of a bit of modernising”**
- 55% of past customers described the décor of the rooms as **“poor”** and 30% said they were only satisfied with their condition
- The number of telephone respondents rating the décor of the rooms as **“poor”** or **“satisfactory”** 85% , which is a cause for concern

How satisfied with the quality of food in the restaurant were you?



Telephone interviews: 50 customers

“Everything is either frozen or out of a tin”

“Vlad in the restaurant was great- he looked after us really well. We looked forward to seeing him at breakfast- it’s a shame the rest of the food was so dire!”

“I asked about the ingredients of the meal I ordered because I have some food allergies, but all I got was blank looks. I asked to speak to the chef, but he didn’t even know and went to check the packets”

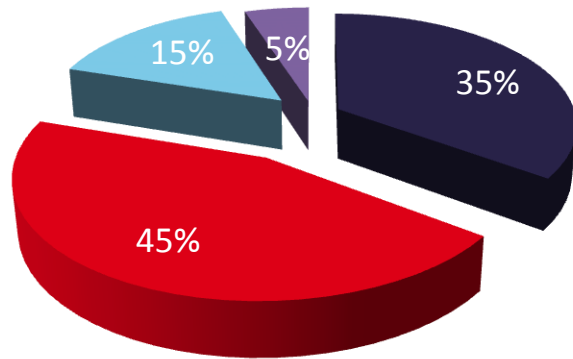
“We had come for a romantic weekend, but the mood was really spoilt in the restaurant with the pervading smell of chip fat”

- The experience of respondents was mixed
 - Breakfast was a positive experience for many of those interviewed- **“it was really good, there was a good selection and the hot breakfast was particularly tasty, especially the sausage!”**
 - **“The staff who were serving were really helpful- they went out of their way to see that I was happy”**
 - **“I really enjoyed breakfast – that was the high point of my stay”**
- **However-** on a negative note many respondents were less enthusiastic about other meals provided by the hotel
 - 78% of telephone respondents reported being “dissatisfied” or “extremely dissatisfied” with the quality of the food

“You can tell from the pings coming from the kitchen that everything is cooked in the microwave!”

“You can’t order anything that doesn’t come with chips”

How Would You Rate Customer Service Overall?



"The staff did everything they could to help, room service was quick and they were very charming"

"If it wasn't for how much everyone bent over backwards to help we wouldn't have enjoyed our stay nearly so much"

"We hated our room and the restaurant was awful but I have to say the staff were extremely obliging- Particularly the young girl on reception"

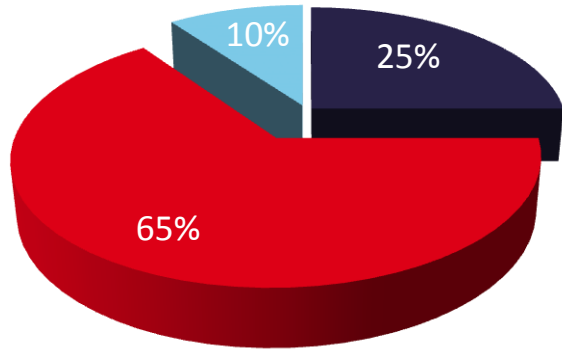
- Excellent
- Good
- Poor
- Extremely Poor

"The staff were so helpful- I left my camera in the back of a taxi, but they immediately rang the company and sorted it out for us, we were very grateful"

Telephone interviews: 50 customers

- The majority of respondents were very positive about the customer service they received
- Many respondents described it as the best feature of the hotel
- **However** – of the 20% of respondents who found the service **"poor"** or **"extremely poor"** a number of different reasons were given : **"The sink in my bathroom was blocked and it took ages for someone to come and fix it"**
- **"I needed an iron and ironing board, so I rang reception , but they expected me to come down and collect it!**
- **"I ordered a taxi from reception, waited ages for it to come, when I rang to check on it they had forgotten to order it, I was late for an important meeting and very annoyed"**

Would you visit the hotel again?



■ Yes
■ No
■ Unsure

“There was nothing particularly good about the hotel that would encourage me to return”

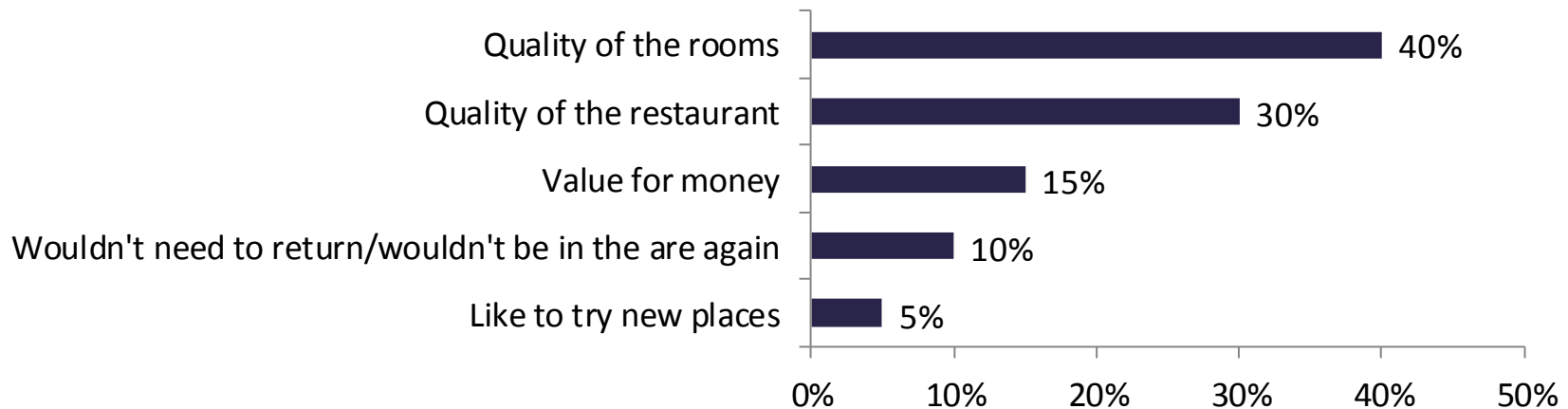
“I think the place is in serious need of a revamp”

“They really need to sort out the restaurant- the food is dreadful. That’s why I wouldn’t go back”

“There are loads of good budget hotels around that are much better value for money, I don’t think I’ll go back”

- Respondents gave a number of reasons why they would not return to the hotel

Reasons why they customers would not return



Telephone interviews: 50 customers

- 20 Mystery Shop phone calls were conducted.
- Overall, mystery shoppers were happy with the service they received on the telephone and all calls were answered within the hotel's accepted limits:
 - All calls were answered within a minute
 - Average wait was 15 Seconds
 - 25% of calls were put on hold
- All telephone mystery shoppers reported that the hotel responded to their enquires with an acceptable level of courtesy

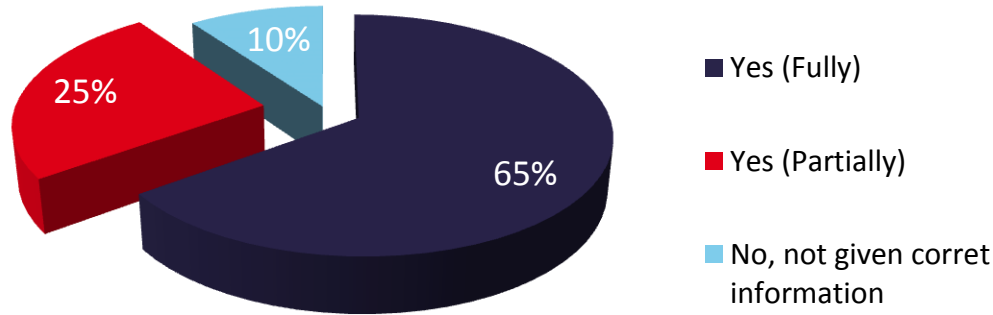
"I spent ages waiting for someone to answer – eventually someone called Helga answered, she tried to help but she didn't have any answers.

Mystery Shop phone calls : 20 calls

| Date | Time | Time taken to answer (secs) | No of people spoken to | Put on hold |
|------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| 4 th April | 9.15 | 7 | 1 | ✓ |
| 4 th April | 17.50 | 12 | 2 | |
| 6 th April | 10.10 | 8 | 1 | |
| 6 th April | 18.00 | 5 | 1 | |
| 8 th April | 11.50 | 26 | 1 | |
| 9 th April | 12.10 | 9 | 1 | |
| 10 th April | 12.50 | 15 | 2 | ✓ |
| 10 th April | 14.30 | 18 | 1 | |
| 10 ^h April | 20.00 | 23 | 1 | ✓ |
| 11 th April | 07.30 | 12 | 1 | |
| 11 th April | 14.55 | 10 | 1 | |
| 11 th April | 20.30 | 9 | 1 | |
| 12 th April | 15.55 | 20 | 1 | |
| 13 th April | 09.45 | 34 | 3 | ✓ |
| 13 ^h April | 16.50 | 9 | 1 | |
| 13 th April | 21.00 | 14 | 1 | |
| 14 th April | 07.45 | 21 | 2 | ✓ |
| 14 th April | 17.50 | 30 | 1 | |
| 14 th April | 20.30 | 15 | 1 | |

Callers asked specific questions about making a reservation and prices

Were you given the information you asked for?



Mystery Shop Telephone Calls: 20 calls

- Those who did not receive or only partially received everything they needed reported not being given the cheapest tariff available.

"I asked for the price of a superior double coming on a Friday and staying until Sunday. The price they gave me didn't take into account the discount for two nights"

"I asked about an offer I'd seen advertised for bed, breakfast, an evening meal and a bottle of wine for £99 but she'd never even heard about it"


"I think they handled my call in a very professional manner, they were very efficient"

"They were very polite on the phone – they did try to help us as much as possible, and I did ask some awkward questions"

- Mystery Shoppers also asked about local attractions so they could plan their visit.
- This was also a cause for complaint:


"I asked how long it would take to get to the dales and if there were any good public transport links. The staff didn't have a clue"

"I asked about any good places to take the children and they suggested that I should look on the internet or buy a guidebook!"




Improve the standard of the bedrooms

- The rooms were a big cause of concern for many customers and mystery shoppers – they were seen as “*tired*” and “*dated*” and in need of renovation – 40% of those who said they would not return to the hotel cited this as the main reason for their decision
- It is clear that an improvement in the quality of the rooms would see an increase in return visitors due to this being the largest reason for not returning



Make the restaurant a more inviting proposition

- The hotel restaurant is another significant problem, the lack of choice and the poor quality food was an issue for guests- both business travellers and those on weekend breaks. As a consequence many guests chose not to eat at the hotel-improvements to the menu and quality of food served would lead to more increased use both by residents and potentially non- residents



Improve staff training

- Overall the customer service offered by the hotel is seen to be good, however, there are some areas for improvement , notably the information given to guests , visitors are often looking for information about local attractions and places to visit. Hotel staff should be trained to a higher level so they can provide this information to guests in order to improve their overall experience.
- A further area in which improvements can be easily implemented is staff knowledge of prices and offers. It is important to ensure that all staff are aware of the hotel tariffs and can easily give that information to clients when needed- they should also be aware of all special offers including those of other providers. The initial telephone enquiry is a key time in which business can be easily lost