

Research Proposal

Creating friendships through interactions between hosts and guests leads to competitive advantage

We need more knowledge on how this works and new ways of measuring outcomes



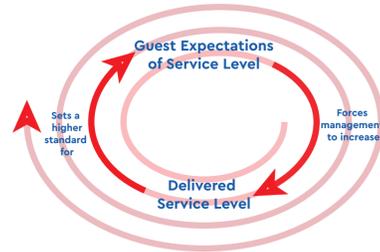
university of applied sciences



Problem:

Businesses suffer from the gradual devaluation of service quality in the eyes of repeat guests. The more often they return the less their expectations are exceeded.

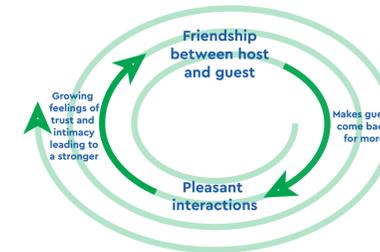
- Once guests have an experience with a company, the service level they were offered is what they come to expect.
- Businesses need to create better services to exceed guest expectations in order to have them coming back. (Balmer & Baum, 1993)
- This is a vicious circle where companies keep improving and guests keep expecting more.
- This eventually leads to exceeding resources and capabilities.



Solution:

Friendships grow each time people have pleasant interactions with each other. Friendships among host and guests are called commercial friendships. If done correctly it could lead to repatronage of guests.

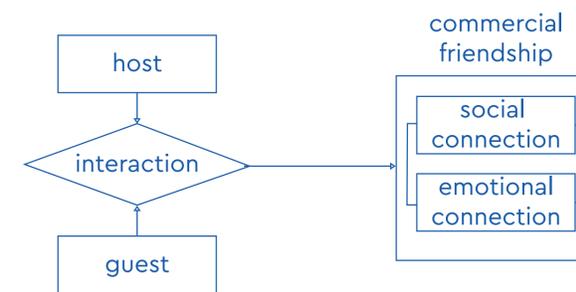
- Friendships are intended to facilitate socio-emotional goals. (Hays, 1988)
- Through enjoyable interactions, feelings of trust, spontaneity, and intimacy grows (Banerji et al., 2020).
- Experiences are services where people connect on a personal, social and emotional level (Pine & Gilmore, 2019).
- Hospitality is about making a genuine connection between a host and a guest (Medema & De Zwaan, 2020).
- Hospitality is about making friends, hence the German word for hospitality: "Gastfreundschaft"



Knowledge Gap:

- Experiences are designed from five components: sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral, and relationships Pearce & Zare, 2017).
- Emotions are conceived of as episodes where there are changes in feelings, information processing, action tendencies, and physical responses Moors, 2017)
- Therefore the proper design of experiences can lead to emotions.
- Most research only measures valency instead of discrete emotions like happiness, joy or contentment (Prayag et al., 2019)
- Much research in hospitality is done via self-reports, yet emotions are hard to put into words.
- A combination of verbal, behavioral and psychophysical measuring techniques can be combined to create higher validity and reliability (Wang & Minor, 2008), but there is little experience with these techniques in the hospitality industry.

Conceptual Map



References:

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Proposed Research Questions

1. How can we design experiences in such a way that they would lead to commercial friendship?
2. What are the causal relationships between elements of human interaction and elements of commercial friendship?
3. How can we measure components of friendship in situ?
4. Are there different stages or levels in commercial Friendship
5. How does friendship evolve during a series of experiential episodes?
6. Under what circumstances is an act of friendship accepted as genuine by a guest?

Measuring Techniques



Facereader

Measures facial expressions showing basic human emotions as well classifying different expressions using artificial neural networks



Elektro Dermal Activity

Measures sweat gland activity, which reflects the intensity of an emotional state also known as arousal



Eye tracking glasses

Measures saccades and fixations of the pupils, showing where a respondents attention is focused on.