

**GAINING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY
THROUGH EFFICIENT CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Egbeh, Placid.C (PHD)
Onyeike, Iheanyi, Samuel (PHD)
Okpe, Kelechi, Thecla (PHD)

Department of Marketing, Federal Polytechnic Nekede, Owerri
+2347034672204; egbehpc@gmail.com

Abstract

This study was carried out to establish how service providers in the hospitality industry, which is highly characterized by service homogeneity and intense competition, can gain competitive advantage over rivals through the practice of excellent customer service. The theoretical framework adopted for the study was the Service-Dominant (S- D) logic theory. The study established that unlike products, which because of advances in technology, have assumed commodity status, it is not so with customer service, which is largely intangible and therefore difficult to imitate; implying that service differentiation based on it is a sure bet in gaining competitive advantage over rivals in the hospitality industry. Having established that excellent customer service influences customer perception in the industry and that “your perception by your customers is your reality”, the paper identified customer expectations in the industry and made specific recommendations on the customer service measures to take when interacting with customers; with being available, friendly, respectful, helpful and attentive as well as not only meeting but exceeding customer expectations by ensuring that value promised is value delivered as essentials. When this is the case, the resultant benefits would include but not limited to: repeat patronage, thus harvesting from the customer’s life –time value (CLV) , positive word-of-mouth (W.O.M) from satisfied customers, which encourages trial patronage from new customers and excellent reviews in the social media which are conditions necessary for the sustenance of operations, growth and profitability. As poor customer service has been credited with accounting for about 68% of the reasons why customers defect, to gain competitive advantage in the hospitality industry, a strong culture of customer service excellence should as a matter of necessity be adopted by hospitality services providers.

Keywords: Customer, Competition, Competitive Advantage, Hospitality Industry, Customer Service

Introduction

The essence of marketing is the profitable satisfaction of human needs and wants. In addition to the beginning step of correctly anticipating and identifying these differing needs and wants of human beings through market research, is the ability to offer quality products (value) to the market. However, as advances in technology have made products assume commodity status, there exist a need to identify and adopt other highly effective ways and means of gaining competitive advantage over rivals that does not subject itself to easy imitation, and that is where excellent customer service is considered an effective panacea. This belief is not founded on non-valid or non-factual information as extensive extant literature on the subject matter has established that a significant 68% of customers abandon a product not because of product quality issues (at 14%), but due to poor customer service- the other reasons why customers defect and their percentages as adduced by Svraha & Wolnik (2012) are: activities

<https://journals.unizik.edu.ng/ujofm>

of competition (9%), move away or die (5%) and recommendation from family and friends (4%). Supportive of this position on customer service are also research findings on the subject matter made by Hair, *et al.* (2003), Forbes magazine in Bronotte (2023), and Zabriskie in Gerber (2023). Hair *et al.*, for example asserted that “there is a strong correlation between customer service, customer satisfaction and retention as studies indicate that up to 95% of customers who rate customer service as excellent will repurchase from an organization and are highly unlikely to switch brands or service provider”. Expressing virtually the same opinion as Hair, *et al.* on the subject matter, the influential Forbes Magazine, as cited in Bronotte (2023), in a study conducted in the United States came up with the major finding that up to 73% of companies that offer above average customer service to their clients perform better financially than competitors. Other equally important findings from their study are that “brands with superior customer experience bring in 5.7 times more revenue than competitors that lag in customer experience and that customers who experience good customer service are likely to spend 140% more than customers who report negative experiences”. Holding similar opinions with Hair *et al.*, and Bronotte on the subject matter, Zabriskie in Gerber observed as follows: “70 % of buying experience is a function of how the customer feels and 95% of consumers believe that the quality of customer service impacts on their brand loyalty”- It is therefore a mistake to focus solely on product-centred tactics, Zabriskie in Gerber concluded.

Relating these observations to the hospitality industry, Larkin (2009), opinionated that the greatest challenge facing the hospitality industry is achieving consistency and quality across all elements of the guest’s experience, and, that the difference between success or failure in the industry lies significantly on customer service. These array of valid research findings on the subject matter therefore informed this study but with particular reference to the hospitality industry which available records indicate contributed 7 trillion USD to the global economy in 2022, that is, 7.6 % of the global Gross Domestic Product as well as employing about 173 million people worldwide; pre- COVID 19 era (World Travel and Tourism Council as cited in EHL insights, 2024).

Statement of the Problem

In virtually all facets of human and nay business endeavor, competition exist. In the hospitality industry, however, the level of competition is observed to be very intense as the industry is characterized by a high level of homogeneity in service offerings making service differentiation largely difficult (Li, *et al.*, 2013). To gain competitive advantage over rivals in the industry, would therefore require a service differentiator that that does not lend itself to easy

imitation by other service providers. This study was therefore undertaken to ascertain that service differentiator and excellent customer service was identified.

Review of Related Literature

The Customer

In the words of Henry Ford (the founder of Ford Motor Company), “it is not the employer who pays the wages. Employers only handle the money. It is the customer who pays the wages” (Henry Ford as cited in Kelwig, 2024). Also, and in the words of Peter Drucker (the renowned management expert)-the purpose of business is to create and maintain satisfied profitable customers...business success is not determined by the seller or producer but by the customer- these words of wisdom from a renowned industrialist and management expert are meant to lend further credence to what we already know that for any business to survive the voice –of – the customer must be given priority attention in product development, that is, management must “Think Like The Customer (TLC)”.

A customer can be defined as a person or business who purchases a product, good or service from another individual or organization, they are a party who exchanges something, usually monetarily, for a good or service (Denomme & Tanner, 2023). Kotler (1999) aptly described the customer thus: “A customer is the most important person in any business venture, in person or by mail, a customer is not dependent on us... we are dependent on him. A customer is not an interruption of our work... he is actually the purpose of it; we are not doing a favour serving him... he is doing us a favour by giving us the opportunity to do so. A customer is not someone to argue or match wits with. Nobody ever won an argument with a customer. A customer is a person who brings us his wants. It is our job to handle them profitably to him and to ourselves”.

Corporate Finance Institute (n.d) categorized customers into five and which are: loyal customers, impulse customers, discount customers and need-based customers, and wondering customers (understanding these different customer types allows businesses to tailor their marketing and customer service strategies to better meet the specific needs and preferences of each group). Loyal customers, they observed, most often, do not exceed more than 20% of a company’s customer base but contribute to the majority of the sales revenue. On this premise, they held the view that though all customers deserve equal attention, priority attention in customer service should go to the loyal customers. This is because, in addition to their high contribution to sales revenue, such customers serve as “apostles” to a company and its products

as their impressive word-of-mouth (W.O.M) especially where they are opinion leaders bring in additional customers.

Customer Service

Customer service as defined by Ndubuisi (2010), is the voluntary, friendly, and non-tangible actions or activities performed by organizations through their employees and which are perceived to be valuable to their recipients. Customer service also refers to “all the activities involved in making it easy for customers to reach the right parties within a company or an organization and receive quick and satisfactory service, answers, and resolution of problems (Kotler). Customer service is the support, assistance and advice provided for customers by a company both before and after they buy or use the company’s products or services – it is a critical factor in ensuring buyer satisfaction as it helps a company to retain its customers and grow its business (Grant, 2025). Other reasons for its importance as stated by Grant include: more sales, increased brand value and loyalty; referrals generation, customer retention and increased customer lifetime value (CLV). Above all, Grant observed, it provides businesses in the same industry competitive advantage over others as it has the capacity of boosting corporate reputation by showing consumers and competitors that a business values its relationship with existing and new customers. Customer service, it should be noted are executed through channels. As outlined by Grant, the channels include telephone, in-person interaction, email and social media. The other channels include self-service, text messages and live chats. Customer service is intangible in nature; cannot be examined or evaluated before making a purchase and therefore does not subject itself to easy imitation. It is not easy to match as it does not possess physical dimensions – that’s what makes it unique in competing to gain differential advantage. It focuses on assisting customers by providing information, resolving issues and addressing immediate needs. In the opinion of Kotler, customer service is not just an afterthought or support function but a critical component of a successful marketing strategy. Additionally, Kotler asserted that excellent customer service built on understanding and meeting customer needs and wants is not only a key differentiator by virtue of the fact that it not only helps companies to attract and retain customers in a competitive market but also for the significant role in building brand loyalty and advocacy. The opinions held by Kotler on customer service is also shared by Bolton, Grewal & Levy (2006). In their opinion, “firms can leverage on customer service to build strong relationships with customers and which will likely generate barriers to competition, increase customer loyalty and make market activities more efficient.”

Excellent customer service however has what it entails. On what constitutes it, Grant and Gerber share similar opinions. In their view, the provision of a friendly and warm experience as well listening attentively and responding on time to issues raised by customers should be prioritized. Furthermore, customer service personnel need to exhibit transparency and pro-activeness when interacting with customers as in their opinion, honest and fair communication builds trust and trust in a company is a key factor in brand choice. Making customers feel that their concerns and problems are valid and that they are being addressed - showing empathy- is also advised. Additionally, problems should not be hidden but dealt with openly.

In our opinion, it is not enough to have a good customer service plan; adequate attention must be paid to its implementation. To achieve this objective, the right customer service people need to be employed and trained and processes for service recovery where there is service failure instituted. The customer service personnel must be available and present for guests before, during and after their stay.

Competition and its Nature in the Hospitality Industry

Generally speaking, competition is the rivalry between firms selling similar products and services with the goal of achieving revenue, profit and market share growth (Wells-Mourre & Carnite, 2023). It can also be defined as: “the effort of two or more parties acting independently to secure the business of a third party by offering the most favourable terms” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). In the hospitality industry, as observed by Buttle & Bowie (2011), competition is both direct and indirect- a 3-star provincial hotel for example is in *direct competition* with a 2-star or even 4-star hotel as long as both are long located within a 16km radius or 15-minute travel time. In indirect competition, the firms (i) operate in the same industry (ii) satisfy the same need and (iii) target the same audience- an example are restaurants specializing in only local or continental dishes – they satisfy the same hunger need but with different types of food products (an additional example is the availability of dining options, such as home delivery). Patel (2023), notes that the level of competition in the industry has been made more intense by the ease of market entry, the availability of online booking platforms operated by online travel agencies (OTAs), short-term rentals (serviced apartments) and technological advancement. The key aspects of competition in the industry as identified by Patel are price, service quality, amenities and unique experiences. Though price is a tool of competition, Patel considers it as unhealthy in the hospitality industry as it may result in what he termed “double-death spiral”. In his opinion, in a location for example, where the majority

of hotels focuses on price competition by offering lower rates or large discounts, a “first-death spiral” of prices and profitability bottoming out is likely to occur and which will likely translate to a decline in the level of service and cleanliness- a development that will eventually lead to the “second-death spiral” of declining guest experience and invariably significant reductions in occupancy rates, revenue and profitability. He therefore advocated competing on “value offered and delivered” through excellent customer service. PACE Dimensions (n.d), observes that advances in technology has heightened substitute competition in the industry as exemplified by OTAs using technology to show blends of room choices in search results across hotels and accommodation rentals. Responding to the challenge, PACE advice that hospitality service providers must leverage on their customer service potentials to make a difference instead of directly competing with indirect competitors.

Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage, then, refers to those factors such as cost structure, branding, product quality, the distribution network, intellectual property and customer service, *that allow* a company produce goods or services better or more cheaply than rivals....it is the unique edge which allows companies to outperform their rivals through greater efficiency, superior quality, or distinctive offerings others cannot duplicate (Twin, 2025). Competitive advantage can be comparative or differential in nature, Twin stated. A company has comparative advantage over a rival, if it has the capacity to produce something more efficiently and hence higher profit margins. On the other hand, differential advantage exist where the product offerings of a company are seen as not only unique but of higher quality relative to those of rival competitors.

Describing competitive advantage as what sets a company apart from its rivals, Peterdy (n.d), in seeming agreement with Twin credits the concept with the ability to confer in a company the capacity to achieve and maintain superior margins, a better growth profile, as well as greater loyalty among current customers who have been receiving excellent customer service. He also credits the concept with having the components of value proposition, target market and competitors. Value proposition implies a company having a clear definition of the benefits its product offerings confer on customers that should make their products the preferred brand over competing products. The company must off course have a defined target market it wishes to serve as well as a clear description of its direct and indirect competitors. Put differently, the implication of competitive advantage having components is that companies must acknowledge the need to identify the value proposition that will enable it to be sought after by a target market and which cannot be easily replicated by competitors. An understanding

of the concept of competitive advantage as well as how to identify and leverage it can enable companies gain significant edges in the market place and achieve sustainable and enduring success.

The Hospitality Industry

The hospitality industry is by definition a vast sector that includes all the economic activities that directly or indirectly contribute to, or depend upon, travel, tourism and hospitality. Included in the industry are: hotels and resorts, restaurants and catering, night clubs and bars and travel and transportation as well tourism, spas and wellness, cruise liners and bus tours and cultural and sports [EHL, Hotel Business School,(n,d)]. In the opinion of Adeola & Ezenwafor (2016), the industry includes all businesses, including hotels, guest houses, event centres, and clubs and bars, restaurants (including quick service restaurants) etc., that are responsible for the provision of accommodation, food, drinks and other supplementary services to people for a fee. In terms of a dictionary definition, the Cambridge English Dictionary, defined the industry as all businesses such as hotels, bars, and restaurants that offer people food, drink, or a place to sleep.

The industry comprises of the four main areas of food and beverage, travel and tourism, lodging, and recreation and typically service a broad mix of customers which as identified by Tomeu in Hotelinking (n.d) include:

- 1) Families – Leisure and catering services are often the priority of such customers
- 2) Tourists –. They are the type of customer for whom the hotel is an experience in itself.
- 3) Travellers – Are customer types for which the establishment is solely an addition as they are interested in their destination and the experiences they have there. Leisure, tours and the most active experiences are fundamental for self-proclaimed travellers.
- 4) Special – These types of customers include elderly people or people with disabilities. They often choose destinations and activities that suit their abilities.
- 5) Business – Such customer types have specific needs in terms of facilities that will enable them to continue with their routines. Such facilities include Wi-Fi, writing desks, reading lamps etc.
- 6) Luxury – Such customer types seek for exclusiveness, unique experiences, and an excellent limited service.

- 7) Eco-Friendly – Their main goal is to enjoy the environment in its purest, most natural state.

Clark (2023) acknowledges the many sectors exist in the hospitality industry but that the common focus is on the customer. Managing the customer mix to ensure *that all* the different types of customers are satisfied represent a major marketing challenge to hospitality services providers- a challenge that is even made more difficult to overcome as the industry provides services that people use when they have free time and extra money and therefore are not necessities; implying that a high level of customer service is very important for success in the field.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for this opinion paper is the Service-Dominant Logic, that is, (S-D) logic theory. The theory as propounded by Vargo & Lusch (2004) offers a more dynamic and holistic view of economic activity; highlighting the importance of collaboration, resource integration and the customer's role in value creation. The theory does not see customers as passive recipients of value but as active participants in the value creation process, integrating their own resources (knowledge, skills etc.) to co-create value with the service provider. It seeks to actively involve customers in the value creation process, thus enabling businesses to gain a deeper understanding of customer needs, wants, and preferences, leading to better solutions (Indeed Editorial Team, 2025, Wikipedia). The theory has been chosen for this work because it posits *that all* economic activities are fundamentally based on the exchange of services rather than goods; thus highlighting the importance of customer service in customer satisfaction and retention and invariably competitive advantage by companies. Moreover, it provides a framework for marketing that is more relevant and effective in today's dynamic and customer-driven environment. Additionally, it emphasizes a shift away from being product-centric (Goods-Dominant) scenario to adopting a more customer-centric (Service- Dominant) and collaborative approach to value creation. It is a perspective that believes *that although* products provide a service to consumers, it is however the interaction between consumers and products that creates or delivers the product's value. The choice of the S-D logic theory for this paper is predicated on the fact that it proposes that for success, businesses should not focus solely on understanding customer needs and wants but should also treat their products as vehicles that deliver a service. Not only these, the theory also encourages businesses to; innovate continuously, encourage and handle effectively feedback from customers, as well as place emphasis on the collaborative nature of business relationship.

In summary, the S-D logic, which is a customer centric approach, prioritizes value determination by customer's experience and service they receive over and above the production and distribution emphasis by the (G-D) logic. Businesses adopting the model, in our opinion can differentiate their services by offering superior customer service experience and building stronger and lasting customer relationships.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Considering the importance of the hospitality industry to the economic wellbeing of nations, it has attracted a lot of interest from scholars; although from different perspectives. From the perspective of excellent customer service, Swiss Hotel Management School (n.d), consider the anticipation of guests' needs (pro-activeness), warm and authentic communication in the nature of a friendly greeting, a genuine smile, as well as actively listening to guests as important. Quick and effective problem resolution, consistency in service delivery across board and to every customer as well as timeliness in customer service delivery are other equally important recommendations by the hotel management group. Delays in providing needed information by guests and handling requests or complaints should be avoided. Guests appreciate prompt responses to their requests and complaints whether it is for room service, housekeeping, or assistance with an issue -with regards to timeliness, Kerin, *et al.*, (2009) for example recommended that in a restaurant, lunch should be served within five minutes of order. The opinions of Hotelgix Marketing (2024) does not differ significantly from that of Swiss Hotel Management School on the hospitality industry. Hotelgix marketing, for example also insist on the need for those in the industry to work towards exceeding the expectations of customers through staff exhibiting courtesy and politeness in words and in deed when interacting with customers. Following the trends in terms of technological innovations in the trade and encouraging feedback from customers and promptly attending to their concerns or complaints should be adopted as mantras. It is also observed that the opinion of New Zealand State Service Commission (2010), on when customers perceive services in the hospitality industry as having met their expectations are similar to those of Swiss hotel management school and Hotelgix marketing. From the perspective of New Zealand Service Commission hospitality service providers should focus on not only treating customers with respect but also listen attentively to them as well communicate with them in clear and simple ways. Being customer-focused, friendly, polite, approachable and following through on your promises are equally important considerations.

Daoust (2023) while positing that excellent customer service enables a hospitality service provider distinguish itself from competition also insist that excellent customer service requires constant work and effort from employees... they need to be involved, respectful, available and more importantly attentive to guests. Additionally, customer service excellence as she observed requires quick adaptation to situations as well as extensive knowledge of guests and their needs... providing responsive, efficient and quality customer service has become a necessity for properties as it enhances customer satisfaction and repeat patronage.

From the point of the dis-satisfiers and satisfiers of guests, Hotelgix Marketing, while crediting customer service with being one of the most important consideration of guests when booking hotel accommodation, also emphasized on situations that may discourage them. Situations such as delays in responding to a query, complaint or concern by a customer as well as long queues which are indicators of poor services should be avoided. Rude and unprofessional conduct when interacting with customers as well as excuses and arguments when responding to the grievances of guests should also be avoided.

Focusing on its importance in the hospitality industry, Torrens University, Australia as cited in Bronotte, observed as follows: “when it comes to the hospitality industry, good customer service forms the foundation that every successful business is built upon, whether it is a small boutique hotel, a big international resort or a local restaurant, providing excellent customer service is essential if they wish to thrive. Excellent customer service goes beyond a simple transaction, it aims to build a connection and leave a positive lasting impression; turning ordinary visits into extraordinary memories that is not only great for customers, but also your business as it will benefit from the word-of –mouth marketing”.

To meet and/or exceed customer expectations in terms of customer service in the hotel industry, Larkin (2009) opined that at the core of achieving the aim is the need for clear guidelines as to how key guest-focused tasks should be performed. His suggestions on the subject matter are reproduced below.

S/N	Expectation	Service goal
	Your guests expect their check-in will be handled efficiently and that they will feel welcomed to the hotel and valued as a customer	All our guests will receive a professional, efficient and friendly check-in which makes them feel welcome and valued by us.
	As part of this, guests expect that:	Service Steps
1.	The reception desk and lobby area will be clean, tidy and well presented	Ensure that the reception desk and lobby area are kept clean and tidy <i>et all</i> times.

2.	The appearance and hygiene of employees will be good and that they will be wearing name badges.	Ensure that your hygiene and appearance is excellent <i>et all</i> times and adhere to the hotel dress code. Always wear your name badge.
3.	The will be promptly acknowledged upon arrival and a warm welcome will be given with appropriate eye contact and a smile.	Acknowledge our guests promptly upon arrival and always offer them a warm welcome and make good eye contact with them.
4.	Their booking will be in the system and the details will be correct as per the reservation made.	Ask the guests how you can assist them and check that their reservation details are in the system. Confirm the details of their stay back to the guest to ensure accuracy.
5.	The check-in procedure will be handled efficiently and smoothly.	Complete the check-in efficiently and smoothly <i>et all</i> -times according to our agreed procedure.
6.	A morning call and newspaper will be offered to them.	Check with the guest if they would like a morning call and a newspaper and ensure that their request is immediately entered onto the system.
7.	The hotel facilities will be explained to them.	Explain the hotel facilities to the guest when offering the key card to them.
8.	Help will be offered with their luggage, or, if not provide as a service, then at least clear directions will be given to their room.	Offer the guest help with their luggage and contact the porters to assist them. Provide clear directions to the guest as to how to get to their room.
9.	The employee will be smiling and courteous throughout the check-in process and will interact well with them and make them feel valued as a guest.	Ensure that you are positive and friendly towards the guest <i>et all</i> times throughout check-in and chat with the guest so that they feel that you really care about them.
10.	The check-in will be ended in a friendly manner and that they will be wished a pleasant stay.	End every check-in by providing your name to the guest as a contact point during their stay and wish them a pleasant stay.

Figure 2: Template of service expectations and goals.

Source: Larkin, E. (2010). Delivering quality service – the Holy Grail for hoteliers, www.hospitalitynet.org

Our own point of view is that excellent customer service in simple language involves the adoption of the marketing concept as well as the practice of internal marketing by hospitality service providers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is definitely no doubt that excellent customer service significantly impacts on the ability of a hospitality services provider to gain competitive advantage over rivals. It is a significant predictor of the level of customer satisfaction as research findings indicate that up to 68% of customer loss across industries is attributable to poor customer service. In terms of specifics, the supportive reasons include:

1. It helps in building guest loyalty and repeat patronage as a guest who enjoyed personalized and attentive service is more likely to come for repeat patronage. Loyal customers research has shown spend on the average 67% more than new customers.
2. It helps in driving positive reviews and referrals thus boosting online reputation. Customers who experienced excellent customer service in your property are naturally more inclined to leave positive reviews and recommend your hotel, restaurant, café etc. to others thus attracting patronage from new customers.
3. It enhances the capacity of a hospitality service provider to differentiate his service offerings. In the hospitality industry, one of its basic characteristics is the homogeneity of service offerings. Excellent customer service which cannot be copied or imitated since it is intangible can be an important differentiating variable.
4. It facilitates the creation of exceptional guests' experiences. Excellent customer service goes beyond a simple transaction; it aims to build a connection with customers and leave positive lasting impressions, turning ordinary visits into extraordinary memories.
5. Revenue maximization results from excellent customer service thus impacting positively on profits. Excellent customer service results to creating an environment where guests feel comfortable and valued. In such a circumstance, their propensity to spend more is higher. The resultant outcome is more revenue and invariably profits.

When it comes to the hospitality industry therefore, good customer service is the foundation that every successful section is built upon. It should therefore be adopted as corporate culture.

Recommendations

As the hospitality industry is highly homogeneous and competitive, timely, responsive, efficient and quality customer service provide some veritable basis for service differentiation, which is challenging resulting from the highlighted characteristics of the industry. Ultimately, businesses exist to satisfy customer needs and wants profitably. To achieve the business goals of survival, growth and profitability, excellent customer provides a sound medium.

The ability of quality customer service to instigate competitive advantage is however dependent on the ability of a hospitality service provider to adopt the following measures:

1. Customer-centrism must become the organizational culture. There should be organization-wide awareness of the need to exhibit courtesy, friendliness, politeness and empathy when interacting with customers as staff attitude and behaviour when interacting with customers influences how customers perceive the organization.
2. Customer service requires constant work and effort from mainly employees. They need to be available for customers before, during and even after the service encounter
3. Customer inquiries and concerns needs to be handled professionally and with dispatch and accuracy. Where there is service-failure the initial remedial measure must be right
4. Value proposed must equal or exceed value received. This is important because an enterprise cannot deliver but can only offer value propositions; it is only when a customer uses a product or service that value is delivered.
5. An initial understanding of customer needs and wants is important. This will enable the hospitality services provider to be pro-active instead of reactive.
6. Positive and efficient online interaction with customers in line with current trends in the industry should be given the same priority attention as in-house customer service.
7. Regularly seek for feedback from your customers on how they perceive your services to enable you take timely corrective measures where necessary

References

- Ademola, A & Ezenwafor, K (2016, April). The hospitality business in Nigeria: Issues, An agenda for future research, Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com
- Anon (n.d). Service- Dominant logic, Retrieved from www.gov.com/service+dominant+logic
- Bolton, R.N, Grewal, D. & Levy, M (2006). Six strategies for competing through service:
- Bronotte, M (2023, July, 12). 5 reasons why customer service is important in hospitality,
- Buttle, F.A & Bowie, D (2011, January). Hospitality Marketing: Principles and Practices, Cambridge English Dictionary. Hospitality industry retrieved from challenges and opportunities, Retrieved from www.researchgate.net
- Clark, C. (2023, August 17). Hotel competitive advantage strategy, A 2023 guide; Corporate Finance Institute (n.d). Types of customers- Overview, Retrieved from
- Daoust, C. (2021, April, 23). The role of customer service in the hospitality industry,
- Denomme, D. & Tanner, A (2023, November 21). Customer definition and types,

- Ehl Hospitality Business School (n.d). What is hospitality? What is international hotel, EHL Insights (2024, March). Hospitality Industry: All your questions answered (2024 update), Elsevier financeinstitute.com from www.diva-portal.org
- Gerber, M (2023, December, 19). Customer service management with a people-first
- Grant, M. (2025, February 24). What is customer service and what makes it excellent?
- Hair, J.F, Bush, R.P & Ortinau, D.J (2003). Marketing Research, McGraw Hill, Irwin Hong Kong inbound travelers using the coquet integral, Retrieved from www.elsevier.com
- hospitality touch, Retrieved from www.hospitalyinsight.com
- HOTELOGIX MARKETING (2024, December, 6). 10 tips to improve hotel customer service, <https://dictionary.cambridge>.
- Indeed Editorial Team (2025, June, 5). What is service- dominant logic? (Plus benefits to business), Retrieved from www.uk.indeed.com
- Kelwig, D. (2024, March 22). Customer relations: Beginners guide to building relationships,
- Kerin, Hartley & Rudelius (2009). Marketing, McGraw Hill, Irwin
- Kotler, P. (1999). Marketing Management, Practice Hall of India.
- Larkin, E (2009, December, 3). Delivering quality service- The holy grail for hoteliers,
- Li, G, Law, R, Vu, H.O & Rong, J (2013). Discovering the hotel selection preferences of
- Lusch, R.F, Vargo, S.L & O'Brien, M (2007). Competing through service: Insights from service-dominant logic, Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com Marketing, Anambra State University, Uli Marriam-Webster Dictionary. Competition, definition, synonyms, examples, sentences,
- Ndubuisi, E. (2010). Lecture notes on Marketing Theory and Management, Department of New Zealand Services Commission (2010). Improving service delivery, Retrieved from Overview, Types & impact, Retrieved from www.study.com
- PACE Dimensions (n.d).How tech changed the nature of competition in the travel and hospitality industry, Retrieved from www.pacedimension.com
- Patel, P (2023, February, 28). What does healthy competition look like in the hospitality industry, Retrieved from www.hotelbusiness.com
- Peterdy, K (n.d), What is competitive advantage?, Retrieved from www.corporate Retrieved from <https://blog.hotelogix.com> , Retrieved from <https://hotello.com>
- Retrieved from <https://www.ehl.edu>.; Retrieved from www.cultivateadvisors.com
- Retrieved from www.hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu; Retrieved from www.hospitalitynet.org
- Retrieved from www.investopedia.com; Retrieved from www.investopedia.com.
- <https://journals.unizik.edu.ng/ujofm>

Retrieved from www.marriam-webster.com; Retrieved from www.study.com

Retrieved from www.torrens.edu, Retrieved from www.zendesk.com

Svraka, A & Wolnik, K (2012). A case study investigating customer defection, Retrieved Swiss Hotel Management School (n.d). What is customer service in hospitality? - An essential guide, Retrieved from www.shms.com

Tomeu, F (n.d). Customer types and trends that affect your guests, Retrieved from

Twin, A., (2025, May 1). Competitive advantage: Definition with types and examples,

Wells-Mourre, W.A & Carnrite, J (2023, November, 21). Competition in business:

Wikipedia: Service-dominant logic, Retrieved from en.wikipedia.org
www.corporatefinanceinstitute.com; www.hotelinking.com; www.ss.govt.nz