


Chapter 14

Impact of Digital Tools on the Hotel Industry in the USA

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ABSTRACT

Although disruptive innovation is a shortcut to increase revenue by technology, it has been applied little in the hotel industry. The purpose of this study is to examine how disruptive innovation has been applied in hotels via adopting a digital tool of linguistic inquiry word count (LIWC) to explore guests' unconscious needs to increase hotel revenue. The study has been based on the Maslow's hierarchy and the McClelland's motivation to examine the relationships between hotel criteria and guests' unconscious needs to increase hotel revenue. The study sample includes 10918 comments from online travel agency websites of hotels in the southeast destinations of the United States from January 2015 to October 2016. Findings from canonical correlation analyses indicate that hotel value and cleanliness would attract guests with a high-power motive whereas hotel service and quality would attract guests with a high affiliation motive. Finally, hotel room and location would attract guests with a high achievement motive. Implications have been discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

Failure to examine the underlying motives in the guest comments for hotels has created critical issues in hotel marketing and management. Guest comments in social media have been a great asset for hoteliers to improve their services based on what customers need in hotels after COVID-19. These texts contain conscious and unconscious motives (Winter, 1993) that direct human behavior in their consumption. The conscious motives are often changing but the unconscious ones are not. As a result, the unconscious motives become a reliable independent factor in forecasting (McClelland, 1985). Little research has focused on the unconscious motives of hotel guests even though the travel spending declined by 42 percent in 2020 (nearly \$500 billion) from 2019, with international travel and business travel suffering the sharpest declines. International travel spending fell 76% (compared to 34% for domestic travel) while business travel spending reduced 70% (compared to 27% for leisure travel) (U.S. Travel Association, 2020).

In addition, the American Hotel Lodging Association (AHLA, 2021) report that the first phase of recovery was an increase in domestic leisure travel when the leisure occupancy on Saturdays improved faster than Wednesdays from May 2020 to November 2020. In quarter 2 of 2021, the AHLA also showed there were small and medium events in quarter 2 of 2021 in the second phase of recovery. To succeed in these phases through increasing hotel rating, hoteliers are struggling to find whom and when they will target on price changing to increase hotel revenue.

To know who the target market is and when the guests really need, the hoteliers must know their primary needs or unconscious motives (McClelland, 1985). The needs for hotel lodging are related to the theory of Maslow (1954) and the needs for unconscious motives are regarding the motivation theory of McClelland (1985). The previous studies have had difficulties in measuring the unconscious motives objectively and evaluating the priority of lodging needs accurately due to a lack of technology (Tran, 2006, 2017, 2018).

This study has attempted to use a digital tool called Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) to measure the 3 unconscious motives of hotel guests (achievement, affiliation, and power) from their comments and web 3.0 of social media website to gather the frequency of the 6 most common words from hotel guests' feedback (service, location, quality, room, cleanliness, and value). The priority of lodging needs can be obtained from the above two theories supported by canonical correlation analyses.

The remaining of the paper would be arranged as follows. The digital tool LWIC, the two theories of Maslow (1943) and McClelland (1985) would indicate human lodging needs and unconscious motives in the literature ending by three hypotheses. Then canonical correlation analyses would be conducted in the sample of 10,918 comments to support the hypotheses in the methodology. Finally, the discussion and concluding remarks would be presented.

LITERATURE

The theoretical background of the study includes Linguistic Inquiry Word Count (LIWC, 2022) and the relationships of hotel assessment criteria and guest unconscious motives are based on the most popular concepts from Maslow's human needs and McClelland's (1985) three motives. Linguistic Inquiry Word Count-22 Linguistic Inquiry Word Count in 2022 (LIWC-22) is a digital tool in technology to change web 2.0 with "read and write" to web 3.0 with "read, write, and feel" because of the LIWC-22 can analyze multiple text files and change them into graphs of emotions. The digital tool can analyze over 100 dimen-

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