

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hospitality businesses being a part of the service industry has predominantly transferred into online platforms specially within the past decade. Customer reviews have largely impacted on how well a hotel business is run which is considered as a freely available unbiased testament for future potential customers. Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts (CHR) is present in such online platforms for sales, marketing and brand building purposes which makes guest reviews paramount for the business. In this context, out of the total negative reviews that Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts has received the highest contributor of it being from the food and beverage division the key project objective of this project is to reduce the total volume of customer reviews from the food and beverage division. In order to successfully achieve the project objective, the project team appointed are representative of subject experts that has in depth understanding of factors effecting operational level performance as well as context at corporate level.

Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts is the largest hotel operator in Sri Lanka that has a range of properties representative of three to five-star category. Food and beverage operation is a critical component of the overall service provided for both resident and non-resident guests. Customer reviews and feedback has been placed at the highest level of importance as a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for all hotels within the past three years where the impact of the scores are weighed into competitive position and standing through using AI software that provides the Global Review Index (GRI), Competitive Quality Score (CQI) and Net Promoter (NPS) scores for each hotel. Since negative received for the food and beverage division has the highest impact in terms of volume as well as on the overall performance scores of the hotels the management team requires to address them with immediate solutions. To understand the root causes of food and beverage negative reviews the project team conducted a cause and effect analysis which enabled to discover the sub problems pertaining to quality control, process management and service delivery areas.

Considering the subproblems that were identified a theoretical framework was developed to understand the problem with available literature. According to the literature review; brand standards, guidelines and protocols for menu planning and rotation, budget management, service floor changes, training and communication were areas to be optimized to find solutions

to the food and beverages negative reviews problem. Techniques such as SWOT analysis, cause and effects analysis, five why analysis, interviews, layout optimization and benefit-cost analysis were used to resolve the identified problems further.

There were nine solution areas developed to achieve the anticipated project objective of reducing the total volume of negative customer reviews in the food and beverage division of Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts from 32% to five percent. These solutions are to introduce new core brand standards, introduce guidelines and formats for taste panels, menu planning and menu rotation, internal communication campaign development, new cost allocations, create new recommendations for the buffet floor, refreshing training need analysis, introduce a culinary forum and an operations ready program for trainees. With these solutions, Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts can obtain a positive benefit as opposed to the project costs allowing them to achieve the anticipated outputs and outcomes from the project.

Furthermore, the discussion brings the project components identified with the literature available to display actual scenarios to obtain further practical understanding. Finally, the recommendations that are of critical importance to the project components in order to have the desired level of success are highlighted along with the importance of having the correct management commitment to both short run and long run solutions and investments that the division requires.