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## **BUILDING GUEST'S BRAND LOVE THROUGH INCREDIBLE PRODUCTS, HEARTWARMING SERVICES, AND GLAMOROUS ATMOSPHERE: A CASE STUDY OF INTERCONTINENTAL ZHUHAI HOTEL (IHG)**

**Dr. Ming Kwan<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Liu Minghui<sup>2</sup>, Liu Xinyu<sup>3</sup>, & Leo Tong<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, China

<sup>2</sup>Macau University of Science and Technology, Macau, China

<sup>3</sup>Faculdade de Ciências Humanas, Universidade Católica Portuguesa

<sup>4</sup>Capital Delight Inc. Hong Kong

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Corresponding Author: Dr. Ming Kwan

Email: [ming-wai.kwan@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:ming-wai.kwan@polyu.edu.hk)

### **Abstract**

This case study examines the success of InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel (IHG) in building guest's brand love through the implementation of exceptional products, heartwarming services, and a glamorous atmosphere. In a highly competitive hospitality industry, the hotel has distinguished itself by creating a remarkable guest experience. The article explores the strategies employed by IHG and identifies the key factors that have contributed to its success. The findings demonstrate the importance of delivering outstanding products, providing personalized and heartfelt services, and creating an ambiance that exudes luxury and sophistication. By prioritizing these elements, IHG has effectively cultivated strong brand loyalty and established itself as a leading player in the industry. The insights gleaned from this case study can serve as a valuable guide for other hotels seeking to enhance their guest experience and build brand love

**Keywords:** Brand, Love, Service, IHG, Hotel, Guests.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the competitive world of the hospitality industry, creating a remarkable guest experience is crucial for hotels to succeed. The InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel, a part of the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), has become a shining example of how to build guest's brand love through a combination of incredible products, heartwarming services, and a glamorous atmosphere. This article explores the strategies employed by the hotel and highlights the key factors that have contributed to its success.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Brand Satisfaction

Grisaffe and Nguyen (2011) provide a definition for brand satisfaction as the overall satisfaction of guests based on their purchase and experience of branded products or services. This definition highlights the significance of guest satisfaction with a brand, as it influences their likelihood to become repeat customers and share positive experiences with others (Grisaffe & Nguyen, 2011). Gibson (2005) emphasizes that satisfied guests are more inclined to engage in positive word-of-mouth marketing, which can greatly benefit businesses by increasing brand awareness and fostering loyalty (Gibson, 2005). Lin and Choe (2022) further suggest that brand satisfaction is closely associated with brand commitment, as satisfied guests are more willing to commit to a brand and become loyal customers. This emotional connection established through brand satisfaction fosters trust, loyalty, and advocacy (Lin & Choe, 2022). Consequently, it is crucial for businesses, particularly those in the hospitality industry, to prioritize the creation of positive experiences for their guests. By doing so, they can enhance brand satisfaction, leading to repeat business and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Moreover, by nurturing emotional connections with guests, businesses can cultivate brand commitment and loyalty, thereby achieving long-term success in a highly competitive market.

### Brand Love

Barsky and Nash (2002) emphasize the importance of evoking emotions in guests during their hotel stay as a key factor in building brand loyalty. This research highlights the significant role that guests' emotions play in their overall hotel experience and how it can greatly impact their satisfaction and loyalty (Barsky & Nash, 2002). The hospitality industry recognizes the significance of creating positive emotions and experiences for guests, as it fosters strong emotional connections between guests and hotels. When guests feel welcomed, valued, and cared for during their stay, they are more likely to develop an emotional connection with the hotel, resulting in increased satisfaction and loyalty. On the contrary, negative emotions such as frustration, disappointment, or anger can have a substantial impact on guest satisfaction and may even lead to negative reviews, damaging the hotel's reputation. Therefore, it is crucial for hotels to prioritize creating positive emotional experiences for their guests to build long-lasting relationships and foster brand loyalty.

To build emotional connections with guests, hotels can employ various strategies that resonate with guests on a deeper level. Personalized interactions, attention to detail, and experiential offerings are effective approaches. For instance, hotels can provide personalized welcome messages, remember guests' preferences, pay attention to small details, and offer unique and immersive experiences to establish emotional connections. When guests feel emotionally connected to a hotel, they are more likely to become loyal customers and recommend the hotel to others. These emotional connections foster a sense of community among guests, leading to positive word-of-mouth recommendations and increased revenue for the hotel. Therefore, creating emotional connections is crucial for building long-term relationships with guests, increasing customer retention, and driving success in the highly competitive hospitality industry. So et al. (2014) have identified that hotel brand loyalty can be strengthened not only through the service consumption experience but also by engaging guests beyond the service encounter. Therefore, hotels should focus on engaging guests in various ways, such as through loyalty

programs, social media, and other marketing channels, to build lasting relationships and brand loyalty (So et al., 2014). Cheung et al. (2022) further suggest that guests' voluntarily engaged behaviors with brands can increase brand performance, which can be achieved through consumers' online brand-related activities like social media posts, reviews, and recommendations. Hotels can encourage guests to share their experiences on social media and other online platforms to leverage these activities. Furthermore, mutual marketing with the support of guests' brand engagement can contribute to strengthening brand loyalty (Cheung et al., 2022).

## METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a case study approach, which is a qualitative research method that involves conducting a detailed analysis of a specific case. In this study, data for the case study will be collected from various sources, including observations of hotel stay experiences and analysis of customer reviews. The collected data will be analyzed using content analysis to identify patterns and themes that contribute to the success of diverse hotel stay experiences. The case study approach is well-suited for this research as it provides a comprehensive understanding of the process of crafting hotel experiences within a specific context.

By focusing on the case of InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel, this study aims to identify best practices and strategies that can be applied to enhance hotel stay experiences in other hotels and restaurants. The qualitative nature of the research allows for an exploration of the perceptions and experiences of guests, providing valuable insights into the factors that contribute to successful and accommodating experiences.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### **Incredible Products**

One of the cornerstones of building guests' brand love is offering incredible products and hardware that exceed their expectations. The InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel understands the significance of exceptional products and has made substantial investments to ensure that its facilities and hardware epitomize the pinnacle of quality and refinement. By providing guests with awe-inspiring and top-notch products, the hotel creates an experience that goes beyond their imagination, leaving a lasting impression and fostering brand loyalty.

The InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel's commitment to excellence is evident in every aspect of its hardware offerings. The guest rooms are meticulously designed, blending elegance and comfort to create a luxurious sanctuary for guests. Such as breathtaking views and innovative amenities, every detail is carefully considered to provide an extraordinary experience. The hotel's hardware also extends to its public spaces, where stunning architectural design and meticulous attention to detail create a captivating ambiance. Whether it's the grand lobby, the stylish restaurants, or the state-of-the-art fitness center, guests are surrounded by an atmosphere of sophistication and glamour.

In addition to the physical hardware, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel understands the importance of providing cutting-edge technology to enhance the guest experience. From high-speed internet connectivity and smart room controls to interactive in-room entertainment systems, the hotel ensures that guests have access to the latest technological advancements. By seamlessly integrating technology into its hardware offerings, the hotel not only meets but exceeds guests' expectations, creating a memorable and convenient stay.

Moreover, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel goes beyond providing exceptional products and hardware by offering innovative amenities that elevate the guest experience. The hotel's spa facilities, for instance, offer a haven of relaxation and rejuvenation with state-of-the-art equipment and a comprehensive range of indulgent treatments. The fitness center is equipped with top-of-the-line exercise machines and offers personalized fitness programs to cater to guests' wellness needs. These remarkable amenities, combined with the exceptional hardware, contribute to an unforgettable stay that sets the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel apart from the competition.

By offering incredible products and hardware, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel creates an environment that exceeds guests' expectations and fosters brand love. The hotel's commitment to excellence in its hardware offerings, from the meticulously designed guest rooms to the cutting-edge technology and innovative amenities, ensures that guests are immersed in a world of luxury and sophistication. This attention to detail and dedication to providing an extraordinary experience sets the foundation for building a strong emotional connection with guests. As guests encounter the incredible products and hardware of the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel, they develop a deep appreciation for the brand and become loyal advocates, sharing their exceptional experiences with others and solidifying the hotel's position as a leader in the industry.

### **Heartwarming Services**

In addition to incredible products, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel places great emphasis on providing heartwarming services that create a sense of care and personalization. The hotel's staff members are trained to anticipate guests' needs and deliver service with a genuine smile. From warm greetings upon arrival to personalized recommendations and attention to detail throughout the stay, every interaction is designed to make guests feel valued and appreciated.

Every interaction within the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel is thoughtfully designed to make guests feel truly valued and appreciated. Whether it is the personalized recommendations offered by the knowledgeable staff or the meticulous attention to detail that permeates every aspect of their stay, every gesture is imbued with the intention of creating an unforgettable experience. The staff members, adept in the art of effective communication, engage in genuine conversations with guests, fostering a sense of connection and understanding. They are attuned to the subtleties of guests' preferences and desires, ensuring that their individual needs are met with precision and grace.

The InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel recognizes that building emotional connections with guests is paramount to fostering brand loyalty. To achieve this, the hotel invests wholeheartedly in comprehensive staff training programs that prioritize empathy, effective communication, and problem-solving skills. Through these initiatives, the hotel empowers its employees to go above and beyond, not merely meeting guests' expectations but surpassing them with unwavering dedication. The staff is encouraged to imbue their interactions with a genuine warmth and personal touch, elevating the guest experience to new heights of excellence.

The heartwarming services provided by the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel leave an indelible impression on guests. The genuine care and attention they receive throughout their stay create a lasting emotional connection, evoking a sense of loyalty and affinity towards the brand. Guests depart with cherished memories of their interactions with the hotel's staff, their needs anticipated,

and their desires fulfilled with a level of care that resonates deeply. These experiences become the foundation for a lasting relationship, where guests not only return time and again but also become passionate advocates for the hotel, sharing their extraordinary encounters with others and further solidifying the hotel's reputation as a paragon of exceptional service.

To sum up, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel's commitment to providing heartwarming services goes beyond meeting guests' expectations. Through empathetic and personalized interactions, the hotel creates an environment where guests feel valued, appreciated, and emotionally connected. The investment in staff training programs and the empowerment of employees to exceed guest expectations solidify the hotel's position as a beacon of exceptional service, fostering brand loyalty and leaving an enduring imprint on the hearts of its cherished guests.

### **Glamorous Atmosphere**

Creating a glamorous atmosphere stands as yet another crucial element in the construction of brand love. The InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel, with its astute discernment of the transformative power of aesthetics and ambiance, endeavours to craft an immersive experience that transcends the ordinary. The hotel's architectural design, a symphony of elegance and grandeur, serves as a testament to the meticulous attention to detail that has been invested in every facet of its creation. From the moment guests step foot into the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel, they are enveloped in an ambiance of refined luxury and sophistication. The interiors, tastefully adorned with opulent furnishings and carefully curated art pieces, exude a sense of timeless elegance. Every nook and cranny of the hotel's public spaces has been thoughtfully designed to create an atmosphere that captivates the senses and inspires awe. The interplay of light, colour, and texture creates a harmonious tapestry that evokes a feeling of opulence and indulgence.

Beyond the exquisite physical surroundings, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel orchestrates a myriad of special events and themed nights that elevate the guest experience to new heights of exclusivity and excitement. Whether it is a grand gala dinner where guests can revel in an atmosphere of glamour and splendour, captivating live performances that enrapture the senses, or thoughtfully crafted seasonal celebrations that infuse the air with a palpable sense of joy and festivity, the hotel leaves no stone unturned in curating moments of enchantment and wonder.

At the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel, every occasion is transformed into an extraordinary affair, where guests are transported to a realm of unparalleled luxury and indulgence. The meticulous attention to detail and the unwavering commitment to creating a captivating atmosphere contribute to guests' perception of the hotel as a haven of distinction and elegance. It is within this realm of enchantment that guests find solace, where every moment is imbued with a sense of wonder and every experience is elevated to a level of unparalleled grandeur.

To sum up, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel's dedication to creating a glamorous atmosphere is a testament to its commitment to providing a truly extraordinary guest experience. From the awe-inspiring architectural design to the meticulous attention to detail in the interiors, and the carefully curated events and themed nights, the hotel ensures that guests are immersed in an ambiance of refined luxury and enchantment. It is through the creation of this captivating atmosphere that the hotel forges an indelible connection with its guests, leaving an enduring impression that lingers long after their departure.

## CONCLUSION

The remarkable success attained by the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel in cultivating a profound sense of brand love among its guests can be unequivocally attributed to its unwavering commitment to three key pillars: the provision of incredible products, the delivery of heartwarming services, and the creation of a glamorous atmosphere. Through a holistic approach that encompasses every facet of the guest experience, the hotel has garnered a devoted following of patrons who not only return time and again but also enthusiastically serve as brand advocates, extolling the virtues of the hotel to others.

The foundation of the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel's triumph lies in its relentless pursuit of excellence in product offerings. The hotel has made substantial investments to ensure that its facilities and amenities rank among the finest in the industry. Luxurious and impeccably appointed guest rooms envelop guests in an ambiance of refined opulence, while state-of-the-art fitness centers and spa facilities cater to the desires of even the most discerning health enthusiasts. Moreover, the hotel's commitment to culinary excellence is manifested in its array of exquisite dining options that tantalize the palate and delight the senses. By consistently surpassing guest expectations through these exceptional products, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel has established itself as a beacon of unparalleled quality and refinement.

Complementing its extraordinary products, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel places great emphasis on providing heartwarming services that forge a profound connection with its guests. The hotel's staff members are meticulously trained to anticipate the needs of guests and deliver service with an authentic smile. From warm and gracious greetings upon arrival to personalized recommendations and meticulous attention to detail throughout the stay, every interaction is imbued with a genuine sense of care and attentiveness. The hotel recognizes the significance of building emotional connections with its guests and therefore invests in comprehensive staff training programs that foster empathy, effective communication, and problem-solving skills. By empowering its employees to go the extra mile, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel ensures that guests' needs are not merely met but exceeded. These heartwarming services create a lasting impression on guests, engendering a sense of loyalty and affinity towards the hotel.

In addition to its commitment to exceptional products and heartfelt services, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel understands the transformative power of a glamorous atmosphere in shaping the guest experience. The hotel's stunning architectural design, elegant interiors, and breathtaking views of the city and surrounding landscapes create an ambiance that captivates the senses and evokes a feeling of awe-inspiring splendour. Attention to detail is evident in every aspect, from the luxurious furnishings that adorn the guest rooms to the carefully curated art pieces that grace the hotel's public spaces. The hotel further augments its captivating ambiance through the organization of special events and themed nights that exude exclusivity and excitement. By immersing guests in a world of luxury and glamour, the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel ensures that every moment spent within its walls is imbued with a sense of enchantment and wonder.

The case of the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel stands as an exemplar for other hotels in the industry, offering invaluable insights into the strategies that underpin the cultivation of brand love. By investing in the quality of their products, training their staff to provide heartfelt and personalized services, and creating a captivating atmosphere, hotels can forge a powerful emotional connection with their guests. It is this profound sense of brand love that enables hotels

to differentiate themselves from the competition and thrive in the ever-evolving hospitality landscape. By following in the footsteps of the InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel, hotels can aspire to create extraordinary experiences that leave an indelible imprint on the hearts of their guests, fostering loyalty, advocacy, and enduring success.

### **Limitation and Future Studies**

While this study aims to provide valuable insights into the exemplary service experiences at InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel, there are certain limitations that should be acknowledged. These limitations may present opportunities for future research to further explore and enhance our understanding of the topic.

**Generalizability:** The findings of this study are specific to InterContinental Zhuhai Hotel and may not be directly applicable to other hotels or establishments with different contexts, target markets, and resources. Future research could involve conducting similar case studies on a broader range of establishments to compare their approaches to exceptional service experiences.

**Subjectivity of Data:** The qualitative nature of the research, relying on observations and document analysis, may introduce subjectivity in interpreting the data. Future studies could consider incorporating quantitative measures, such as customer satisfaction surveys or performance indicators, to provide a more comprehensive and objective analysis of the impact of exceptional service experiences.

Future research can build upon these limitations by conducting comparative studies, incorporating quantitative measures, exploring long-term impacts, examining employee perspectives, and investigating emerging trends and technologies. These avenues of research would expand our knowledge and contribute to the continuous improvement of exceptional service experiences in the hospitality industry.

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