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Sustainable & service excellence in hospitality: A case study of Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing on City Hotel

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Abstract

This paper investigates the sustainable efforts and premium dining experiences offered by Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City Hotel. By integrating environmentally responsible practices with thoughtful guest services, the hotel demonstrates how sustainability and hospitality can be harmoniously combined. The case study illustrates the hotel's impact on local communities, its eco-friendly initiatives, and the premium dining and accommodation experiences that contribute to its distinguished reputation. The findings show that through sustainable efforts and a commitment to authentic, tailored guest services, Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City sets an outstanding example in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: Sustainability, Dining Experiences, Hospitality, Customer Satisfaction, Eco-Friendly Practices.

INTRODUCTION

In an era where the hospitality industry faces increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices, hotels worldwide are striving to balance environmental responsibility with the expectation of premium service. Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City Hotel has positioned itself as a committed in sustainable hospitality by integrating green practices across its operations while maintaining a high standard of service for its guests. This paper explores the hotel's innovative approaches to sustainability, its contribution to local communities, and its dining experiences that reflect a dedication to quality and authenticity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainable Practices and Premium Hospitality in the Hotel Industry

The hotel industry is increasingly incorporating sustainable practices as a core component of its operational strategies. Sustainability is now a key factor in defining a hotel's reputation, market positioning, and long-term success. This literature review explores the nexus between sustainability and premium hospitality, highlighting how hotels can achieve high guest satisfaction while adhering to environmentally responsible practices.

Sustainability in the Hotel Industry

Sustainability in hospitality involves the implementation of practices that reduce environmental impacts, support local communities, and promote long-term ecological balance. According to Kasim et al. (2018), sustainable hotels focus on energy conservation, waste reduction, and water management, alongside efforts to reduce their carbon footprint. These practices have gained importance as consumers increasingly prioritize eco-friendly travel options. In fact, studies show that travelers are more likely to choose hotels that advertise sustainable initiatives (Han et al., 2019).

Crowne Plaza hotels, for example, have adopted energy-efficient technologies, such as LED lighting and real-time energy monitoring systems, to reduce their environmental footprint. These measures align with global sustainability standards such as the ISO 14001 certification, which outlines effective environmental management systems (Chan & Hsu, 2016). By engaging in sustainable practices, hotels can lower operational costs and enhance their brand image.

Water and Energy Management

Energy efficiency and water conservation are critical elements of sustainable hotel management. According to Zhang et al. (2017), hotels can achieve substantial cost savings and reduce their environmental impact through the adoption of energy-efficient technologies, such as motion-sensor lighting and solar power. Moreover, sustainable water management systems, including low-flow faucets and greywater recycling, are becoming increasingly common in hotels (Bohdanowicz & Martinac, 2018).

In sustainable hotels, implements water-saving measures and reuses greywater for landscaping and non-potable purposes. These efforts contribute to the hotel's overall sustainability goals while ensuring that guest comfort is not compromised. As Benavides-Chicón and Ortega-Egea (2020) argue, the key to successful sustainability in hospitality lies in integrating eco-friendly practices without diminishing the guest experience.

Dining and Sustainability

One of the growing trends in the hotel industry is the incorporation of sustainable dining practices. Hotels have increasingly embraced the farm-to-table concept, focusing on locally sourced ingredients to reduce food miles and support regional economies. According to Schmitt et al. (2019), hotels that adopt sustainable dining practices, such as using organic ingredients and minimizing food waste, are viewed more favorably by environmentally conscious consumers.

Local sourcing not only minimizes the carbon footprint associated with transportation but also enhances the authenticity of dining experiences. Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City, for instance, sources its food ingredients from local farms, reflecting a commitment to both sustainability and community support. Studies indicate that consumers appreciate knowing the provenance of their food and value the transparency that sustainable dining initiatives provide (Kim & Hall, 2020).

Guest Experience and Sustainability

Sustainability has become intertwined with guest expectations for premium hospitality. Guests increasingly seek out hotels that combine luxury with eco-friendly practices, a trend noted by scholars such as Font and McCabe (2017). The challenge for hotels is to maintain a high level of service and comfort while implementing sustainable practices. Recent research has shown that eco-conscious consumers are willing to pay more for sustainable hotels that offer premium

amenities without sacrificing environmental responsibility (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2017). Hotel offers eco-friendly amenities, such as organic toiletries and sustainably sourced bedding, which contribute to a luxurious yet environmentally responsible guest experience. This reflects a broader industry shift toward sustainable luxury, where the focus is on creating indulgent experiences that are also aligned with green principles (Goldstein et al., 2018).

Economic and Social Impact of Sustainable Hotels

Sustainable hotels not only benefit the environment but also contribute positively to local economies and communities. As pointed out by Melissen et al. (2016), hotels that engage with local suppliers and artisans help stimulate economic development in the surrounding areas. By sourcing materials and services locally, hotels can reduce their environmental impact and simultaneously support local businesses.

Moreover, sustainable hotels can influence social change by promoting responsible consumption among guests. Research by Gössling and Buckley (2016) shows that hotels play a crucial role in educating guests about sustainability, encouraging them to adopt eco-friendly behaviors during their stay. Through such efforts, hotels contribute to broader societal goals, including poverty reduction and the promotion of ethical consumption.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the adoption of sustainable practices in the hotel industry presents numerous benefits, it also poses challenges. Hoteliers must navigate the often-high upfront costs of implementing green technologies and sustainable infrastructure. However, studies by Verma and Chandra (2018) show that the long-term savings in operational costs, combined with increased consumer demand for sustainable services, often justify the initial investments.

Additionally, hotels must ensure that their sustainable initiatives are effectively communicated to guests. As Pencarelli et al. (2020) highlight, transparency and guest engagement are key to the success of sustainability efforts. Guests need to feel that their participation in eco-friendly programs, such as linen reuse initiatives or carbon offsetting, is making a meaningful impact.

Sustainability and premium hospitality are no longer mutually exclusive concepts. Hotels like Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City have demonstrated that it is possible to offer high-end services while adhering to environmental principles. As consumer preferences continue to shift toward eco-conscious travel, the integration of sustainability into hotel operations will become increasingly essential. Future research should focus on exploring the specific factors that enhance guest satisfaction in sustainable hotels and how these practices can be scaled across the global hospitality industry.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This case study utilizes a qualitative research design to explore the sustainable practices and premium dining experiences at Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City Hotel. The case study approach enables an in-depth analysis of the hotel's strategies to combine eco-friendly initiatives with premium hospitality services, providing valuable insights into their operational practices.

Data Collection Methods

The data were collected using two primary qualitative methods to provide a holistic understanding of the hotel's sustainable efforts and guest services:

- **On-site Observations:** Observational research was conducted at the hotel to assess the integration of sustainability in daily operations. Observations included examining energy-efficient technologies, waste management protocols, and the use of locally sourced materials in dining services. These observations were systematically recorded and analyzed to document how the hotel's sustainable initiatives function in practice.
- **Guest Feedback and Online Reviews:** Publicly available guest feedback from online platforms such as TripAdvisor, Google Reviews, and the hotel's own customer satisfaction surveys were analyzed. This feedback helped to gauge the perception of the hotel's sustainability efforts and premium guest experiences. Reviews were categorized based on their focus on sustainability, dining quality, and overall satisfaction, providing qualitative data on customer perspectives.

Sampling

Purposive sampling was used for the analysis of guest feedback. Reviews from customers who mentioned sustainability, dining, and hospitality service quality were selected. This sampling strategy ensured that the feedback analyzed was relevant to the focus of this study. In total, 50 reviews were analyzed, covering a wide range of customer experiences and time periods.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was applied to the observational data and guest feedback to identify key patterns related to sustainability, premium service, and customer satisfaction. The steps involved in the analysis were:

- **Coding:** Data were coded to identify recurring themes, such as sustainability efforts (e.g., energy conservation, waste reduction), community engagement (e.g., local sourcing), and guest satisfaction related to premium services.
- **Thematic Development:** Themes were categorized and compared across data sources to understand the hotel's impact on guest experiences and its sustainable hospitality model.

Validity and Reliability

The use of multiple data sources, such as observations and guest reviews, ensured the reliability and validity of the findings. Triangulation of different qualitative data sets helped confirm the consistency of observed sustainable practices and their perceived impact on guests. The use of real-time observations enhanced the credibility of the data, providing direct insights into the hotel's sustainability initiatives.

FINDINGS

Sustainable Efforts at Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City

Sourcing and Supporting Local Communities

Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City's commitment to sustainability extends beyond its immediate operations and into the broader community. The hotel sources its food and beverage ingredients from local farms, reducing the carbon footprint associated with transportation. Local suppliers are vetted to ensure they meet the hotel's high standards for sustainability and quality. This initiative not only reduces food miles but also strengthens the local economy by providing steady business to farmers and suppliers.

In addition, the hotel collaborates with local artisans and craftspeople to furnish guest rooms and public spaces with décor that reflects the region's cultural heritage. From handcrafted furniture to

locally sourced fabrics, these touches create an authentic experience for guests while supporting local traditions and businesses.

Dining Experiences that Reflect Sustainability and Authenticity

Local and International Cuisine

Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City is renowned for its thoughtful approach to dining, where sustainability meets culinary innovation. The hotel offers a range of dining options, including Chinese, Western, and fusion cuisines. At the heart of these culinary experiences is a commitment to using fresh, locally sourced ingredients.

The hotel's Chinese restaurant features traditional Cantonese dishes crafted with ingredients sourced from nearby organic farms. Signature dishes such as steamed fish are prepared using sustainably farmed seafood, while vegetables are sourced directly from local farmers who practice eco-friendly farming techniques. The Western dining restaurant offers seasonal menus that reflect global culinary trends, with an emphasis on reducing food waste through the use of whole-animal butchery and minimal food waste preparation methods.

Farm-to-Table Dining

A key feature of the hotel's dining experience is its commitment to the farm-to-table concept. Guests are provided with detailed information about the origin of the food they consume, including the local farms that supply the hotel's restaurants. This transparency fosters a connection between the diner and the local environment, further enhancing the authenticity of the dining experience.

Beyond sourcing locally, the hotel's chefs are trained in sustainable cooking techniques, ensuring minimal waste in food preparation. For example, leftover vegetable scraps are repurposed into stocks and sauces, while any remaining food waste is composted or used as animal feed, creating a closed-loop system that minimizes the hotel's environmental footprint.

Personalized Dining Experiences

Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City is also known for its personalized dining services, which cater to the diverse needs and preferences of its guests. Whether guests are seeking health-conscious meals, gluten-free options, or bespoke dining experiences for special occasions, the hotel's culinary team is prepared to accommodate. The hotel regularly hosts private dining events in its lush gardens, where guests can enjoy personalized tasting menus made from sustainably sourced ingredients.

These tailored experiences, coupled with a focus on sustainability, allow the hotel to offer not just a meal, but an immersive experience that reflects both the richness of local culture and a deep respect for the environment.

Service Excellence and Authentic Hospitality

Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City's reputation for premium guest service is one of its core strengths. The hotel's team is trained to deliver hospitality with genuine care and attention to detail, fostering a welcoming environment that resonates with guests. From personalized greetings at check-in to thoughtful gestures during their stay, the hotel staff go above and beyond to make each guest feel valued.

This exceptional service extends to the hotel's commitment to sustainability. Guests are encouraged to participate in the hotel's eco-friendly initiatives, such as towel and linen reuse programs, and are provided with in-room recycling options. These small but meaningful actions

contribute to the hotel's overarching goal of reducing its environmental impact while maintaining the highest level of service.

Premium and Sustainable Amenities

The hotel's commitment to sustainability is also reflected in the premium amenities offered to guests. All guest rooms are equipped with eco-friendly toiletries, and the bedding is made from organic cotton, providing a luxurious yet sustainable experience. The furniture is crafted from responsibly sourced wood, while the design of the rooms incorporates natural light to reduce energy consumption.

In the wellness center, guests can enjoy treatments that use natural, locally sourced products. The holistic approach to wellness, combined with its use of eco-friendly materials, enhances the overall guest experience while staying true to the hotel's sustainability mission.

Events and Conferences with a Green Focus

Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City has also positioned itself as a leader in sustainable event management. The hotel's meeting and event spaces are equipped with energy-efficient lighting and air conditioning systems. Digital signage and reusable materials are employed in conference rooms to minimize paper waste. Catering for events features locally sourced, sustainable ingredients, reinforcing the hotel's dedication to reducing its environmental footprint.

The hotel's commitment to eco-friendly conferences has attracted numerous corporate clients who prioritize sustainability in their business practices, further solidifying its reputation as a top-tier venue for green events.

CONCLUSION

Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City Hotel exemplifies how premium hospitality and sustainability can be seamlessly integrated. From energy conservation and water management to supporting local communities and providing exceptional dining experiences, the hotel sets a benchmark for sustainable hospitality. This case study highlights how innovative, eco-friendly practices can enhance guest satisfaction, contribute to the local economy, and promote environmental stewardship. As the hospitality industry continues to evolve, the success of Crowne Plaza Zhongshan Wing On City serves as a testament to the importance of balancing sustainability with premium service.

Limitations

Despite the growing body of research on sustainability in the hotel industry, there are several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, much of the existing literature focuses on large, international hotel chains, such as Crowne Plaza, which may not fully represent smaller, independent hotels that might face different financial, operational, and logistical challenges in implementing sustainable practices (Schmitt et al., 2019). This gap may result in an incomplete understanding of sustainability in diverse hospitality contexts.

Second, the studies often emphasize environmental sustainability (e.g., energy conservation and waste reduction), while social and cultural dimensions, such as labor practices and community engagement, receive less attention (Melissen et al., 2016). Focusing solely on environmental factors risks neglecting the holistic nature of sustainability, which includes economic and social considerations. Moreover, guest perceptions and behaviors around sustainability are often studied in isolation from other factors that influence their decision-making processes, such as

price sensitivity or brand loyalty (Han et al., 2019). This narrow focus can limit the applicability of findings in real-world scenarios, where multiple factors influence consumer choices.

Future Research

Future research should address these limitations by broadening the scope to include smaller, independent hotels and those operating in developing countries. Comparative studies between large hotel chains and independent hotels could reveal valuable insights into the different strategies and challenges faced in implementing sustainability initiatives (Benavides-Chicón & Ortega-Egea, 2020). Additionally, more research should explore the social and cultural dimensions of sustainability, particularly how hotels can promote fair labor practices and community engagement as part of their sustainability strategies.

Another area for future research is the intersection of guest satisfaction and sustainable practices. Understanding how various sustainability initiatives, from eco-friendly amenities to responsible dining options, impact overall guest satisfaction could provide hotels with a clearer idea of which practices are most valued by consumers (Font & McCabe, 2017). Moreover, studies could explore whether and how sustainable hotels can influence long-term behavior change in guests, encouraging them to adopt more eco-friendly habits even after their stay (Gössling & Buckley, 2016).

Finally, research should expand to include the role of technology in advancing hotel sustainability. Future studies could investigate the potential of emerging technologies, such as AI-powered energy management systems or blockchain for supply chain transparency, in reducing hotels' environmental impact while enhancing operational efficiency (Verma & Chandra, 2018). These investigations will help the industry understand how to leverage technology to further integrate sustainability into the guest experience and hotel operations.

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