

Hospitality leaders demand better marketing metrics for mice business

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Session participants were interested in applying metrics technology to revenue management analysis beyond rooms to that of retail sales in relation to real estate, food and beverage and ancillary services, such as spa's in order to measure return on investment (ROI) and the impact of marketing promotions. Technology, such as RFID, that could track consumer spend in hotels, resorts and casinos in the region was required in order to truly answer how much business is gained or lost from guests. The ability to measure ROI could also be used to argue cases for spend on public relations campaigns or promotions to attract group bookings.

In essence, hospitality marketers want to know where MICE guests spend their money in the hotels, to measure levels of satisfaction and to understand profitability as well as revenues. They want to understand what helps to increase shareholder value in bidding for large events and think that the industry lags behind others in that measurement remains at customer satisfaction and loyalty. The hoteliers stated that they can't relate metrics to products and services.

Hospitality marketers want to be able to more closely differentiate between market segments that stay in their hotels, to efficiently analyze sectors that may be growing or contracting over time. They also wanted to know what share of the business they were getting from specific segments.

During the discussion hoteliers spoke about booking trends, had much debate over pricing trends including questioning the wisdom of government pricing, and considered metrics in terms of micro issues of the hotel and at the macro level, from a city perspective. The fragmentation and lack of standardization of measures were identified as major issues.

Research to create an industry standard for defining market segments and terminology, what impacts customer satisfaction and the long term effects of those impacts, and the effect of macro trends such as what a destination does to sustain activity were defined as areas of interest for measurement.

To get answers, the participants at the breakout session called upon government bodies, in this instance the Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau, a group of the Singapore Tourism Board (STB), to collect and collate data over time from the industry, especially PCO's and intermediaries, using basic metric definitions to facilitate the measurement of trends over time.

If the government collected and disseminated such data participants argued, then the result of such research would assist hotels to better understand the booking trends and demands of major events, such as the Olympics and F1 races.

Governments are in a unique position to find and collect such data advocated hoteliers. One participant stated that the industry needs access to historical and real time data at the planning stage of events, to understand the metrics planned for certain events at an early stage. Aggregating statistics could help determine the type of products suppliers should provide to incentive groups, along with determining what events may or may not be beneficial to the city.

HSMIAI would like to thank the facilitators of the breakout sessions - Dr Judy Siguaw, Dean, Cornell Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management, Christine Toguchi, Managing Director of Macrovision Networks and HSMIAI Asia Pacific, and Bernadette Dennis of BD Concepts. HSMIAI also thanks the following people for participating at the Roundtable event:

- Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts, Mr Michael Lee, VP of Marketing
- Expedia Asia Pacific, Cyril Ranque, VP Asia Pacific
- Hyatt International, Mr Grahame Carder VP, Sales & Marketing-Asia Pacific Division
- Movenpick Spa & Resort Karon Beach Phuket , Mr Craig Fong, Director of Sales and Marketing
- Preferred Hotels Group, Mr. Mark Wong VP, Marketing & Development - Asia Pacific
- Raffles International Limited Ms Jeannette Ho, Vice-President of Marketing & Sales
- Raffles International Limited, Mr Shalabh Kayastha, Executive Director, Marketing and Distribution Services
- Rendezvous Hotels International, Mr. Michael Meade, Senior Vice President, Sales & Marketing
- Singapore Tourism Board , Ms Adeline Lim, Business Development Strategic Cluster II
- TravelCLICK, Mr. Paul Southey, Regional Director - Asia Pacific
- UOB Travel Planners, Alicia Seah, Vice President Leisure Travel
- Terra Firma Groupe, Jinou Park , Managing Partner

About HSMIAI:

Founded in 1927, The Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International 'HSMIAI' is a global organization of sales and marketing professionals representing all segments of the hospitality industry. With a strong focus on education, HSMIAI has become the industry champion in identifying and communicating trends in the hospitality industry while operating as a leading voice for both hospitality and sales and marketing management disciplines, as well as connecting its members with customers.

Today with over 7000 members from 35 countries and 60 chapters worldwide and the establishment of the HSMIAI Asia Pacific Regional Chapter (www.hsmaiasia.com), HSMIAI now offers members and global partners a unique opportunity to Connect, Learn and Network with other hospitality professionals from around the region and the world.

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The program is aimed at cultivating Asia-centric leadership and bringing world-class standards to the fast-growing Asian hospitality industry. The program is accredited by the International Association for Management Education (formerly the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business) and by EQUIS, the accreditation body of the European Foundation for Management Development. The Cornell-NTU collaboration is supported by the Singapore Tourism Board and the Economic Development Board, with International Hotel Management School Pte Ltd playing a lead industry role.

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