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Pet dog policies in 5-star hotels in Barcelona

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Abstract

The dissertation aims to research if pet dog policies are used as a marketing tool at the 5-star hotels, as it is a niche market that could potentially be catered for in the appearance that it is underestimated. It is also another objective to research the pet dog policies in 5-star hotels in Barcelona, focusing on the services provided as well as the profitability of the market for the properties. Lastly, it is also an aim to analyze the operational feasibility of these pet dog policies in the hotels taking into account if there is a clear process regarding arrival and stay of the guest with his or her pet dog, and if the employees know well the policies at their respective hotel.

In the literature the gap has been identified within the topic of pet dog policies used as marketing tool, and even more so when specifying in the 5-star hotel segment. Regarding the marketing theoretical framework, the key authorities in this dissertation are Philip Kotler, Michael Porter, Adrian Palmer, and Dalgic Tevfik. The originality of the dissertation lies in finding if pet dog policies are used as a marketing tool in 5-star hotels in Barcelona, as well as the feasibility of the current market.

To discover the results over the above-mentioned objectives, two methodologies have been used. First of all, a set of interviews to 5-star hotels in Barcelona focusing on the marketing departments and the operational departments. Secondly, a web analysis of the hotels that have been interviewed has also been carried out to complement the information received through the interviews.

The results show that there is an inconsistency in the information provided on the websites and the depth to which this information reaches. There is, however, a consistency in the fact that the pet dog policies are not used as a marketing tool in 5-star hotels in Barcelona despite the probability of it being a profitable under-catered niche target market.

Keywords: 5-star hotel marketing, hotel pet dog policies, marketing differentiation strategy.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Context of the research

Pet dogs, commonly referred as “man’s best friend”, are key members of family units in Europe, the US, and worldwide. In Europe, 21% of total households have pet dogs. This amounts a total of 75 million households, which produce a turnover of 8.5 billion € per year in additional pet dog services (which do not include feed, veterinarian bills, or accessories). The countries in Europe which traditionally have more pet dogs, ranging between 6 and 9 million animals in total, are France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Spain, and the UK. The country with most pet dogs is Russia, with a grand total of over 15 million animals (FEDIAF, 2014).

In the United States of America, there are around 80 million pet dogs. It is logical to think that in turn the amount of revenue created by the owners on pet dog services is higher, amounting a grand total of 31 billion US \$. The types of services consumed in the luxury segment range from designer clothing, perfumes, high-end groomers, to doggie-restaurants that serve specialty dishes such as kobe beef hamburgers for the pets. It is no doubt that the pet dog has transitioned from a mere companion to a true family member (Time, 2003).

It is not surprising that those who spend high amounts of money on services and pampering their dogs are also interested in traveling with them. In the USA alone, 51% of owners say they would take their dogs on all vacations if they could, and up to 94% take their dogs with them at least sometimes (Go Pet Friendly, 2014).

Traveling with pet dogs is not an easy task, however. To enter Spain (and consequently the European Union) from the United States of America or Canada a dog must pass an approved EU Vet Check, have several vaccinations, and an international travel passport (US Department of State, n.d.). From within the EU, travelling to Spain is easier. Pet owners will only need to have their dog’s passport as well as standard vaccinations (Ministerio de Agricultura y Pesca, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente, n.d.). In hotels, there are also strict pet restrictions such as weight and breed limitations, prohibition of public areas access, and extra cleaning fees (Go Pet Friendly, 2014).

Barcelona, which is a city located on the Mediterranean coast of Spain, received in 2015 nearly 9 million tourists. As a destination it is well known for a wide cultural array of sights, famous gastronomy, very pleasant climate with temperatures ranging from 15-21 ° Celsius on average, and with a broad offer of interests from shopping to nightlife to sports.

Most of the tourists (8,300.000 approximately) spent their night in a hotel, with the rest opting for inns, hostels, and tourism apartments.

Most tourists are either from the rest of Spain (total of 20,3%) and Europe (51%). From Europe, the largest markets are the United Kingdom (8,7%), France (8,2%), Italy (6,5%) and Germany (6,0%). From outside of Europe (28,7%) the largest group of visitors are from the United States of America (8,7%). 55,8% of these tourists visit for leisure reason, leaving the rest for business travel at 35,7% and personal reasons at 8,5%. Accessing the city is mostly done by air travel (80%), leaving in second place the train (9,8%) (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2015).

1.2 Identification of the research problem

The key question for the research is “Are pet dog policies used as a marketing tool in 5-star hotels in Barcelona?”

The main gap found within the literature review has been the specific topic of pet dog policies used as a marketing tool in hotels, let alone the 5-star segment or Barcelona. Therefore, one of the aims is to fulfill this gap.

On a more practical side, the author wants to answer the questions if five 5-star hotels in Barcelona have clear and concise pet dog policies, as well as if they are used as a marketing tool. Not only that, but also if the operational staff are aware of these policies and associate them with a marketing strategy within their hotel.

1.3 Originality and contribution to knowledge

After considering the research context, with all the provided data, it is important to study the trends and product marketing strategies in the 5-star segment in Barcelona, as well as determine if and how they are used either as a marketing and tool in comparison with the feasibility of the current market. By doing this not only will the author see the consistency in the 5-star hotel segment, but as well if there is even an interest in using this policy as a marketing tool to attract potential clients and the needs of their dogs.

With the literature review done so far, per Miller (2013) 71% of luxury properties in the USA allow pets. By studying this in Barcelona specifically it would contribute to knowledge not only by offering a good panorama of pet dog policies in luxury hotels in Barcelona, but also as an eye-opener to if this is used as a marketing tool to attract potential customers, both with the strategy and profitability analysis.

So far, there have been no studies or research carried out in the specific segment of Barcelona nor 5-star hotels in the topic of pet dog policies. There are no studies nor in the benchmarking realm, by comparing the different policies throughout the marketing, nor in the marketing aspect of using the pet dog policies as a marketing tool to attract new guests.

It is relevant considering that there are many more 5-star hotels opening in recent years (BarcelonaCatalonia.com, 2015), as well as evidence that market trends are going towards niche marketing and customization. It is also worth noting that within the maturity stage of hotels, differentiation strategies tend to succeed.

1.4 Aim and objectives

The aim of this research is to analyze the pet dog policies and services in five 5-star hotels in Barcelona used as a marketing tool being feasible for the analyzed properties.

The objectives are:

- A. To research the pet dog policies and services in five 5-star hotels in Barcelona.
- B. To research if the pet dog policies are used as a strategy and marketing tool.
- C. To analyze the operational functionality of these pet dog policies.

1.5 Structure of the study

The undergraduate dissertation has been divided in five different chapters. The first chapter contains the introduction, which in itself englobes the research context, as well as the research problem identification, originality and contribution, and finally the aim and objectives.

In the second chapter the literature review can be found (with three distinct topics; marketing in hospitality, pet dogs in hospitality, and finally pet dogs in numbers), along with the literature map and conceptual framework of how the research is thought of by the author. The key authorities in this section are, for instance, Kotler, Porter, Carr, Abbey, Middleton, and several associations from Dog Owner Federations to local and national authorities.

The third chapter is concerning the method used for data collection. It includes a brief overall research design introduction, followed by the data collection techniques, research instruments, research context and participants, and data analysis. Finally, it also englobes the ethical considerations and evidences of data collection.

In the fourth chapter the author has displayed the findings of the previous data collection phase, comparing it with the literature review. It also englobes the discussion phase of the research.

Lastly, the fifth chapter is regarding the conclusions and recommendations reached by the author. It is also the chapter where the limitations of the research as well as the further investigation is located, ending with the references and appendices.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Summary of the literature

The literature review that has been carried out for this study is structured in three main topics: marketing in hospitality, pet dogs in hotels, and finally pet dogs in numbers.

To start, marketing in hospitality will be discussed. Several definitions of marketing are provided, from known authors to institutions being the ones who created them. The paper of marketing within the hospitality industry is also seen, especially from the point of view of the author Philip Kotler.

After the introduction to marketing and its role in hospitality comes an explanation of several marketing analysis tools and methods mainly from the authors Michael Porter and Philip Kotler. Then an overview of the marketing process that takes place within any given company that wishes to implement a particular strategy, ending with marketing strategies and the marketing mix which can be applied within the tourism industry.

The second part of the literature review, which is regarding pet dogs in hotels, is a brief explanation of some of the current hotel practices regarding pet dog policies as well as objective data such as number of hotels that accepts dogs, under which conditions, and so on.

The third and last part of the literature review is the display of pet dogs in numbers. From the amount of pet dogs in Europe and the United States of America, to their travel behavior in numbers, to the relative importance they may be if this market segment were to be targeted by a hotel group or company.

2.1.1 Marketing in hospitality

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, marketing is “the act or process of selling or purchasing in a market did most of her marketing in local stores” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). However, the actual concept of marketing implies a much more complex study since the scope it reaches is very wide. The starting point for most marketing definitions usually englobes the customer’s needs, and the identification of said needs in order to develop a product or service that will satisfy them.

Semantically speaking, the noun “market” and the termination “-ing” create the verb “marketing” which in itself speaks about bringing together buyers and sellers. (Palmer, 2012).

In any case, the nuances of the definition of marketing have been changing along the new trends. According to the American Marketing Association the term means “an activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at a large” (AMA, 2008).

Another definition, this time proposed by the Chartered Institute of Marketing from the United Kingdom, defines marketing as “the strategic business function that creates value by stimulating, facilitating and fulfilling customer demand – it does this by building brands, nurturing innovation, developing relationships, creating good customer service and communicating benefits” (CIM, n.d.).

Philip Kotler has also defined marketing as the “process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value from the customers in return” (Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism, 2017).

One of the largest industries worldwide is undoubtedly the hospitality industry. Within this industry, the importance of marketing has grown exponentially in the past twenty years as companies understood their customers and developed services delivering them products they needed at a price they were willing to pay. Within hospitality, the hotel industry specifically has been consolidating, with many large companies becoming marketing experts and subsequently creating competitive marketing environments (Kotler et al., 2017).

Within the hospitality industries one must differentiate between hospitality (englobing mainly accommodation) and travel (transportation). Both industries cannot successfully exist without the other, as a destination is tied by both. If either element fails at a specific location, it will eventually end up failing as a touristic attraction. It is one of the most interdependent industries in the entire world (Kotler et al., 2017).

a) Marketing Analysis

Within the hospitality industry, the different products and services can be analyzed in many ways. Two of the most common and widely accepted analysis systems are:

- Marketing Mix (Kotler et al., 2017; Middleton V.T.C., Clarke, J., 2009)

The marketing mix provides a set of tools that are controllable and tactical for firms to use when attempting to produce a response in its target market.

It consists of everything a company can attempt to influence demand over a specific product or service. The aim is to express in practical terms the main aspects of a product in order to take decisions in a company.

The first person to write this theory was Kotler, who started with 4 Ps as following:

- Product

It is the combination of goods, products, and services that a target market is offered. It englobes the characteristics of the product in the way they were designed by strategic management decisions in response to consumer needs.

- Price

It englobes the amount of money a product costs to for customers. In a way, it is the published or negotiated terms of the exchange between product or service giver, the company, and the client. It also refers to the different promotions that exist to target different target markets.

- Place

The totality of actions a firm does in order to make their product or service accessible to their target market. It is as well the location of all the points of sale that provide potential customers with access to the product.

- Promotion

The activities with which a company communicates the merits and benefits of its product or service towards its target market. It includes advertising, direct mailing, sales promotion, merchandizing, sales-force activities, brochure production, Internet communications, and PR activity.

Kotler also added that the initial 4 P's could be directly translated into a customer's point of view by creating the 4 C's.

- Customer solution

Equivalent to the product, it is the object or service that satisfies the client's need which has not been fulfilled until this point.

- Customer cost

Linked with the price, it is the amount of money a customer has to pay in order to obtain said product or service.

- Convenience

Level of accessibility for the target client to reach a product or service provider, which is the company or firm.

- Communication

Lastly, communication is related to promotion as it refers to the way in which a company expresses the benefits of its product or service towards the clients.

In further studies, Middleton added three additional P's that would complete the entire Marketing Mix analysis framework:

- People

In the hospitality industry the product stems from substantial human interactions, which is why Middleton added this component to the marketing mix. It mainly englobes visitors, employees, and the host community.

- Process

The travel and accommodation products consist of both the process and the outcome, being mostly an intangible benefit. Therefore, the way in which it is delivered is crucial. It can be improved by measuring and tracking costs of customer retention, encouraging complaints, and training employees in service recovery methods.

- Physical Evidence

It is rooted in the human being's five senses, which are sight, sound, scent, touch, and taste. In an industry where product and physical setting are inseparable, this is an essential component.



Figure 1. The Marketing Mix - 7 Ps. Source: Middleton Middleton V.T.C., Clarke, J., 2009.

The theories regarding marketing strategies are relevant for this research project as objective B centers around the use of pet dog policies as a marketing tool at 5-star hotels in Barcelona.

b) Marketing Process

Marketing and sales are closely related in the tourism industry, however they should be working hand-in-hand while maintaining slightly different strategies. The main aim of the marketing department should be the satisfaction of customer's needs (Kotler et al., 2017).

"Marketing is the process by which companies create value for customers and society, resulting in strong customer relationships that capture value from the customer in return." (Kotler et al., 2014). This can be clearly seen in the following progress chart.

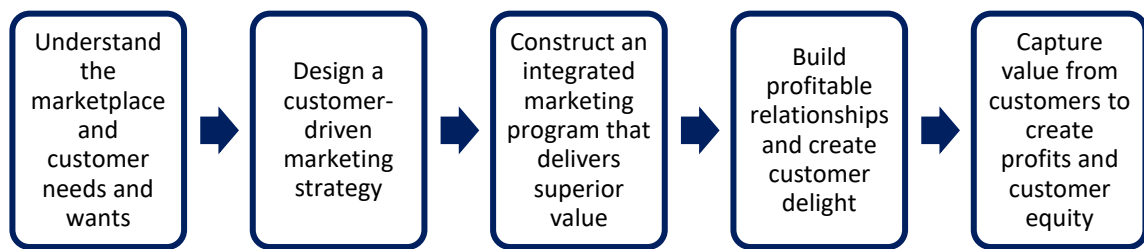


Figure 2. Marketing Process Chart. Source: modified after Kotler et al. 2017.

As seen in Kotler et al. (2014) and Abbey (2008), the main tasks of the marketing department include:

- Development of a marketing strategy and plan.
- Advertising and promotion in print media, radio, TV, and exterior surfaces.
- In-house promotions of hotel's own products and services.
- Management of the hotel's website and blog, and creation of new content.
- Creation and distribution of newsletters, and press releases.
- Customer relationship management.

Therefore, the marketing department is clearly in charge of the product itself as well as taking the decision of marketing it or not, and for which reasons.

c) Marketing Strategies

The most common strategy model was defined by Michael Porter in 1980, who presented the Three Generic Strategies framework. The three generic strategies are overall cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. To effectively implement any of these strategies the firm has to give full commitment and organizational support, which are diluted if there is more than one primary target for the product or service sold.

- Overall cost leadership

This strategy was highly popular in the 1970's, when the increase of the experience curve concept was reached. The aim is to increase the cost leadership in an industry by using policies aimed at this objective. It requires efficient-scale facilities, strict and vigorous pursuit of cost reductions, tight overhead control, marginal customer accounts avoidance, R&D investment reduction, and so on.

Benefits include achieving a high defense against powerful suppliers by providing flexibility to cope with input cost increases, as well less threat of new entrants due to the high up-front capital investment needed for state-of-the-art equipment, aggressive pricing, and start-up losses to build market share.

- Differentiation

This second strategy consists of creating a service or product that is perceived industrywide as being unique. It can take form in many approaches ranging from design or brand image, to technology, features, customer service, dealer network, and other dimensions. The perfect company will differentiate itself in more than one aspect.

If achieved, differentiation provides above-average returns by creating a position that is easily defensible. Insulation against rivals is created thanks to brand loyalty and decreased sensitivity to price. Entry barriers are high due to the need for a competitor to overcome uniqueness, and buyer power is decreased.

On the flipside, often a high market share has to be sacrificed due to the customers' need to feel they have an exclusive product or service.

- Focus

The third and last strategy, focus, consists of centering the company's efforts on a specific target market, segment of the product line, or geographic market. It can take many forms, and is different to the other two strategies in the fact that it is built around serving a particular target exceptionally well.

The firm achieves differentiation by better meeting the client's needs, or lower costs by serving said target, or both strategies simultaneously. This strategy has potential to make a company earn higher than industry-standard revenues, as well as increase the defense against competitive forces and be less vulnerable to substitutes.

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| | | Strategic Advantage | |
| | | Uniqueness Perceived by the Customer | Low Cost Position |
| Strategic Target | Industrywide | Differentiation | Overall Cost Leadership |
| | Particular Segment Only | Focus | |

Figure 3. Three Generic Strategies. Source: modified after Porter, 1980.

d) Niche Marketing

A niche is a small market consisting of individual customers or a small group of clients with similar and specific characteristics or needs. Niche marketing, therefore, is specialized in this topic. There is a distinction in how niche marketing can be approached; first, as a creative process in order to match customers with specific products, or seen as the last stage of segmentation after targeting and positioning.

Other characteristics of niche markets are:

- Smaller size than a regular size of market segment
- Focused on individuals
- Fulfilment of a specific need instead of an emphasis on a segment which is a manageable part of the market

Niche marketing is a bottom-up process. It needs to begin with fulfilling a few people's needs with very specific services and products, and then expand into a broader customer base. There are five essential elements which are addressed during the process:

1. Positioning
2. Profitability
3. Distinct competitiveness
4. Small market segments
5. Adherence to the marketing concept

A company may consider opting for the use of a niche marketing strategy in cases where they are concerned about the ability to approach said market segment better and differently than the competition, and also if the company can create a measurable amount of added value in a relatively short period of time in order to deter competitors that face low entry barriers at the beginning of the strategy implementation.

In any case, to successfully implement this strategy the advantages presented in the service or product must be based on long-term interests of customers, which can subsequently be turned into long-lasting relationships (Tevfic, D., Leeuw, M., 1994).

2.1.2 Pet dogs in hospitality

After the description of niche markets, there is no doubt that pet dog owners who wish to travel to luxury properties in a specific destination, in the case of the study Barcelona, are a niche market segment which started gaining importance within the hospitality industry.

Some large hotel chains have started implementing programs especially for dogs. The Ritz-Carlton in New York has the “Very Important Pooch (VIP)” program, Starwood implemented in all Westin and W hotels the “Love That Dog (LTD)” program, and as well Loewe Hotels with the “Loewe Loves Pets (LLP)” program.

There are also several traveler-operated websites dedicated to pet travel (including pettravel.com, bringfido.com, travelpets.com, etc.) which on their own can reach up to 115,000 visitors per month thus confirming evidently that it is an area of consumer interest (Taillon, J., MacLaurin, T., Yun, D., 2014).

a) Willingness to pay

In a study carried out by Taillon, J., MacLaurin, T., and Yun, D. in 2014 it was confirmed that individuals who had a strong human-animal bond with their pet dog were willing to pay an extra fee to travel with their pet. They also altered their hotel expectations compared to the rest of clients, which is another reason this niche market is interesting to cater to as it is well underserved in the current hospitality industry.

Another study by Carr, N. carried out in 2004 discovered that 30% of guests traveling with their pet dog are willing to pay between 6% and 10% more in order to bring their pet dog, 18% of guests are willing to pay between 16% and 20% more, and finally 14% of guests are willing to pay 25% more.

b) Barcelona: a pet-friendly city

In recent years there have been several efforts carried out by Barcelona’s City Hall, in collaboration with other institutions such as the Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona (TMB) to address the situation regarding services and facilities for dog owners, both city inhabitants and as well in the benefit for tourists.

Out of the several benefits that Barcelona provides, some of the most notable are:

- Good access on the metro, bus, and tram systems (TMB, 2014)
- Existence of a dog-beach at Platja de Llevant (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2017)
- Total of 105 dog parks in the entire city (Ajuntament de Barcelona, n.d.)

c) Pet policy analysis

As much as 71% of luxury hotels in the USA have some sort of accepting pet dog policy, and 47% of upper-upscale hotels have them as well. Generally, 2% to 5% of clients actually bring their dogs with them to these type of hotels (Miller R.K, 2013). The number of hotels who accept dogs in the UK and Europe have also increased, especially within large hotel chains (Canine Customers, 2003). As an extra note, the amount of problems directly related to the dogs have been less than expected (Canine Customers, 2003; Miller, R.K, Washington, K.D, 2007). This niche was firstly covered by retail and non-service-industry companies (Stein, J. et al., 2003).

2.1.3 Pet dogs in numbers

The amount of pet dogs in the United States of America is of 80.000.000. In Europe, this amount is of 75.300.000, with the biggest amounts being in countries like France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Spain, and the UK (as seen below). From the amount in Spain (5.400.000), around 930.000 are in Catalonia (Miller R.K, 2013; FEDIAF, 2014; AIAC, 2014; ANFAAC, 2013).

| Country | Pet dogs in millions |
|----------------|----------------------|
| United Kingdom | 8,5 |
| France | 7,4 |
| Germany | 5,3 |
| Italy | 6,9 |
| Poland | 7,4 |
| Russia | 12,5 |
| Spain | 5,4 |

Table 1. Pet dogs in millions. Source: modified after FEDIAF, 2014.

In a study done by Go Pet Friendly (2014) in the USA, 51% of dog owners always travel with their pets, and 44% travel with them sometimes. Around 42% have big dogs, 19% medium, and 22% small. 50% stay exclusively at pet-friendly hotels, and for 55% of traveling pet owners the first problem they encounter when travelling have to do directly with hotel policies.

This represents a large niche that applied to perhaps European markets as well as the US market, could be a significant attraction point in marketing for clients.

2.2 Literature map

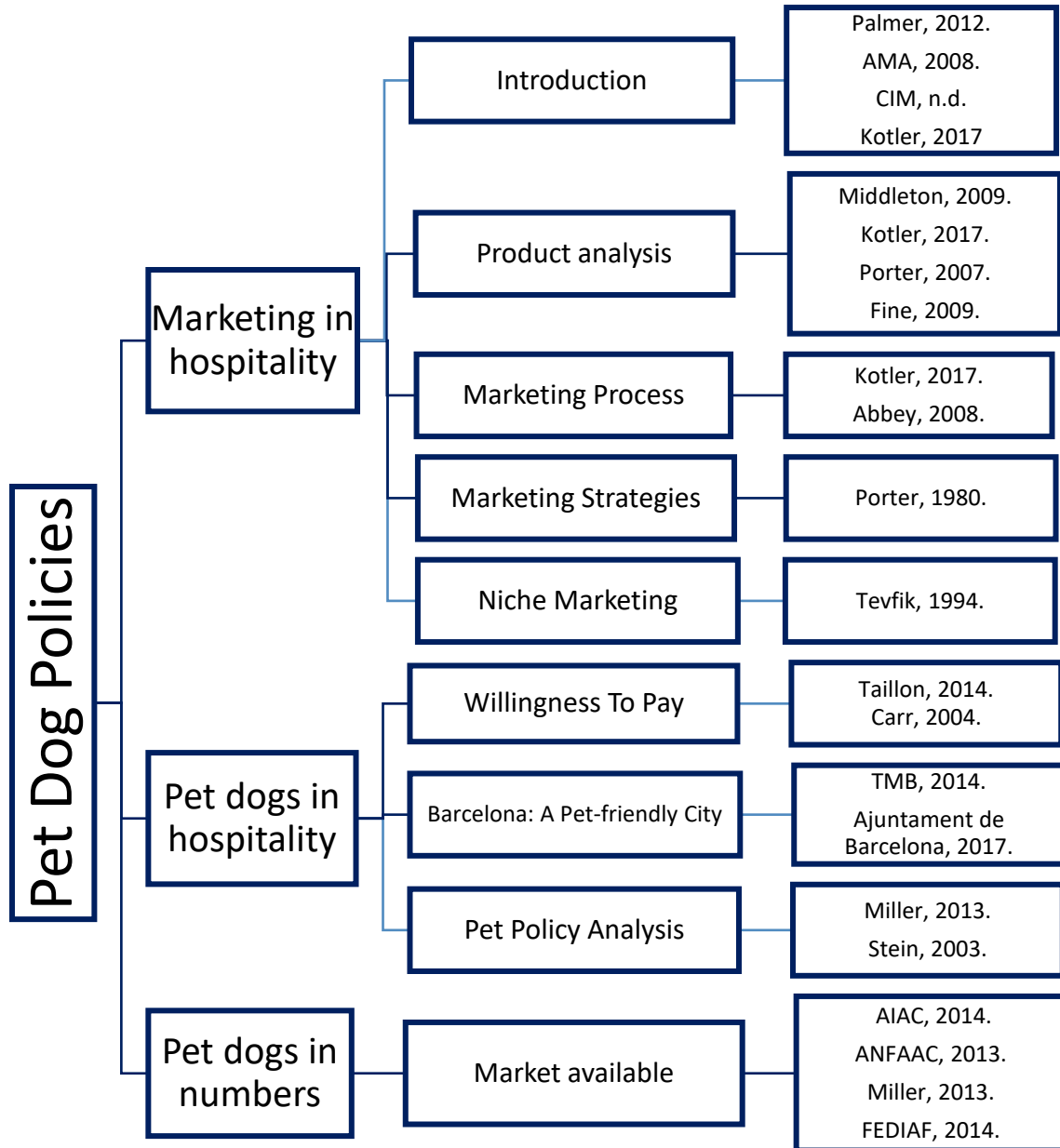


Figure 4. Literature map. Own source.

2.3 Conceptual framework

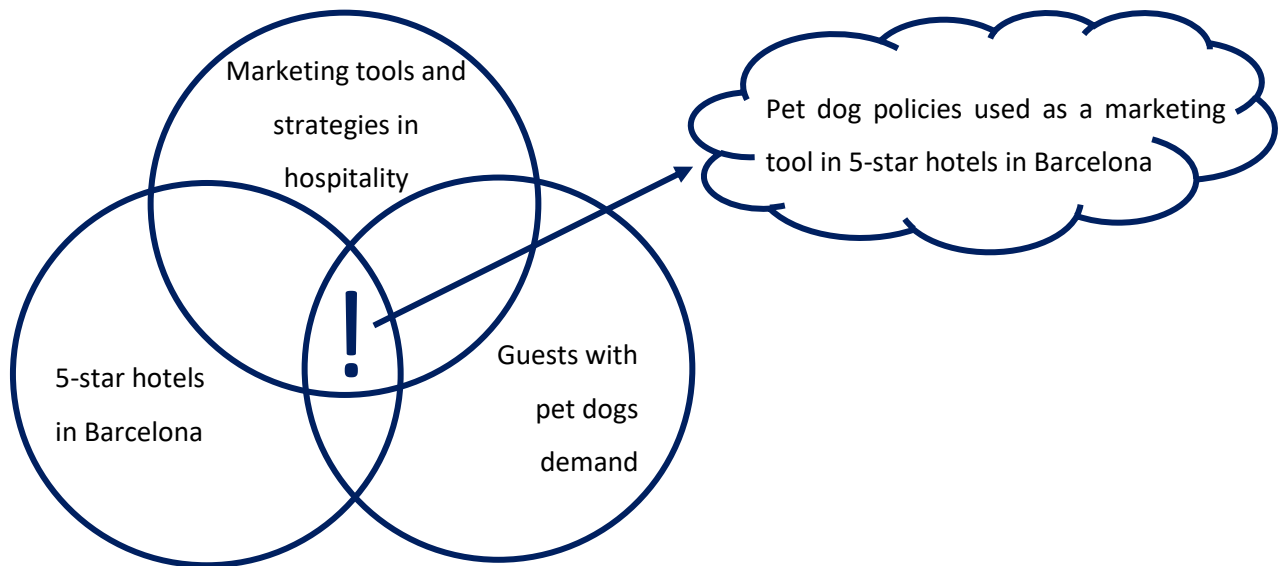


Figure 5. Conceptual framework. Own source.

The conceptual framework displayed above is organized in three main topics that converge into the area the author will conduct the research on. Marketing tools and strategies within the hospitality industry is the theoretical approach, which is applied within 5-star hotels in Barcelona consequently. The third topic is guests with pet dogs demand, which brings the main research topic into the equation.

Chapter 3: Methods

3.1 Overall research design

The research philosophy the author will be using is phenomenology. Marketing, especially regarding a niche market such as pet dog owners, is a subjective topic driven by human interests and motives, as well as the reasons behind certain phenomena. This philosophy is as well the best regarding the methods and samplings which are described in the rest of the chapter.

The approach will be deductive, as it will be the theoretical findings which will lead the author to analyze and find conclusions. By finding out if pet dog policies are used as a marketing and strategy tool in 5-star hotels in Barcelona the author will find their conclusion.

The research strategy is based on a qualitative method, specifically in the format of a case study, which involves an empirical investigation of the pet dog policy niche phenomenon in real life context using multiple sources as evidence, as seen in the rest of this chapter (Altinay, L. and Paraskevas, A. 2008).

3.2 Data collection techniques and research instruments

The techniques and instruments used will be:

- To accomplish Objective A: To research the pet dog policies and services in five 5-star hotels in Barcelona.

Theoretical research to discover what the current pet dog policies are in five 5-star hotels in Barcelona. The research will be carried out online by consulting the websites, or by the mystery shopper technique and sending an inquisitive e-mail to the property if the information is not available online.

- To accomplish Objectives B and C: To research if the pet dog policies are used as a strategy and marketing tool, and to analyze the operational functionality of these pet dog policies.

Five marketing managers or marketing department representatives, as well as five hotel employees in the operational lines will be subjected to semi-structured interviews. The marketing managers as well as the employees will be part of the five 5-star hotels chosen for this research. (Altinay, L. and Paraskevas, A. 2008).

As mentioned in the previous sub-section, the technique is based on a qualitative method, since they will be semi-structured interviews to explore the phenomenon in topic.

3.3 Research context and participants

The research project will be carried out using applied research. The reasoning is because the knowledge provided by the conclusions serves the professional community by confirming or refuting previous assumptions, ending in specific recommendations aimed to practitioners.

The sampling technique the author will use is purposive sampling (Altinay, L. and Paraskevas, A, 2008). It is the most relevant sampling method due to the fact that it allows for a not too large sample size while still being relevant.

The sample size and composition will be analyzed in the two different interviews:

- Semi-structured interviews with five marketing managers from 5-star hotels in Barcelona. The selection is based on relevance and the priority will be those who publish their pet policies on their website.
- Semi-structured interviews with 5 hotel employees from the same hotels in which the marketing managers have been selected. The selection will be prioritizing operational level associates that have direct contact with guests with pet dogs.

The set timeline for carrying out the interviews will be between March and April 2017. The location will all be in Barcelona, specifically at the five different 5-star properties selected for this research. The selection of hotels is based, first of all, on whether a hotel accepts pet dogs at their property or not. After that, the selection is based in having a variety of samples in terms of size of the hotel (in rooms), and if the brand or chain they pertain to is international or national.

3.4 Data analysis

The data collected during the research by the author will be analyzed following three stages:

1. Familiarization.

Consists of data review by transcribing the interviews carried out, as well as re-listening to the recorded interviews if they exist. This phase is complemented by thorough review of the five 5-star hotels' websites as well as the marketing theory done in the literature review.

2. Coding, conceptualization and ordering.

Once the data has been reviewed in stage 1, the author will identify the specific processes, incidents, comments, or events that occurred during the research and code them through different methods such as open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

3. Enfolding the literature.

The literature review is promptly compared with the particular concepts and relationships that emerged from the analysis process undertaken in both stages 1 and 2 of the data analysis phase. (Altinay, L. and Paraskevas, A. ,2008).

3.5 Ethical considerations

The risk level of this undergraduate dissertation is classified in the category of "Risk 1". The research does not require consent to conduct, it does not involve any risk to any party including the researcher, and it does not contain any elements in which the researcher is not trained to conduct. The risks it does have, are those of requirement of consent to publish, as well as a high risk of compromising confidentiality and anonymity.

The measures that are taken in order to avoid the risks involved are:

- Confidentiality and anonymity: both are guaranteed by not disclosing the name of the person nor the company they are working for, and therefore they are not subject of company espionage or any other immoral practice regarding identification. This is based on the Spanish Law "15/1999 de Protección de Datos Personales".

- Participants informed consent: written consent will be attained from all participants in the interviews, and they will receive a full and clear explanation of the aim of my research and they have complete freedom to participate or not. The subjects will in no case be vulnerable due to the nature of this research.
- Quality of outcomes: the effectiveness of the outcome will be related to the completion of the interviews, otherwise the research will be flawed. As for timelessness, the final conclusions will be relevant in a changing 5-star hotel environment in Barcelona.
- Reliability and replicability: The conclusions reached will be reliable and replicable since the topic is not personal but relating to a company's practices in a given time regarding the subject. Key ethical behaviors which will be used: honesty, integrity, objectivity, carefulness, respect for intellectual property, respectfulness, legality.

3.6 Evidences of data collection and sample information

3.6.1 Interview sample

The sample used for the interviews consists of a total of four hotels. Within each hotel, two people have been interviewed (except the second, where only one person was interviewed). One person is relating to the marketing department and the other is a person working in an operative position.

All interviews have been carried out in person by the researcher or through e-mail answered by the hotel. To find more information regarding the interviewees, refer to Table 1 of the appendices.

3.6.2 Web analysis

The websites analyzed are only of those hotels that have participated in the previous interview stage. Each website has been solely accessed on a laptop computer. Each website has been analyzed thoroughly, searching in all different parts. For more information on the websites consulted, refer to Table 2 of the appendices.

Chapter 4: Findings and discussion

4.1 Sample codification

| Hotel | Brand type and location | Size in hotel rooms (range) |
|-------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| A | Boutique, international chain | Between 50 and 100 |
| B | Lifestyle, international chain | Over 400 |
| C | Luxury, international chain | Between 200 and 250 |
| D | Urban luxury resort, national chain | Between 50 and 100 |

Table 2. Hotel sample codification. Own source.

The hotels that have partaken in the interview process have been classified according to the brand (if they are a boutique, lifestyle, etc.) and the scope of their brand (if they are independent, part of a national chain, or international). The size of the hotel in rooms has been provided so as to set a preconception of the possible physical size the property might have.

| Hotel | Marketing representative | Operations representative |
|-------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| A | MRA | ORA |
| B | MRB | ORB |
| C | MRC | ORC |
| D | MRD | ORD |

Table 3. Interviewees codification. Own source.

At each property, the interviews were done to two employees (except, as mentioned above, in one of the hotels). One was of the marketing department and the other of an operations department.

4.2 Interview questions

4.2.1 Marketing representative

The following questions have been those asked to the marketing representative.

1. What is your position, and what are your main duties?
2. How long have you been working in your current company?
3. What policies does the hotel have regarding pet dogs?
4. How many guests per year bring their dog to the hotel?
5. Do you consider the current market interesting for your marketing objectives? Why, or why not?

6. Are these objectives aligned with the objectives of your brand/chain/consortium, etc.?
7. Do you believe that this market segment could be potentially attractive for your hotel?
8. Are you aware of any other hotel in Barcelona of your category that implements these policies?
9. How do you think you are positioned compared to them?
10. Is the hotel considering modifying these policies in the future?

From these questions the researcher has the objective to accomplish objective B (through questions 3 through 10) by asking about market analysis, strategic analysis, knowledge about competition, and future plans. The first two questions serve as situational context markers.

4.2.2 Operations representative

The following questions have been those asked to the operational department representative.

1. What is your position, and what are your main duties?
2. How long have you been working in your current company?
3. What policies does the hotel have regarding pet dogs?
4. Do you consider that, generally speaking, employees know these policies well?
5. Is only one department involved with the pet dog policies?
6. How does this department coordinate the activities regarding taking care of the dog's needs?
7. Do you consider dogs are well positively welcomed by employees and other guests?
8. Do you think the existing policies could be better in any way?
9. Have you been trained to know and act according to these policies?

From these questions the researcher has the objective to accomplish objective c (through questions 3 through 9) by asking about operational breakdown of the pet dog policies, attention and care, as well as future plans. The first two questions serve as situational context markers.

4.3 Data extraction

In the following pages the results of the data extraction are going to be presented. First of all, the results of the interview to hotel marketing managers and operational representatives, followed by the web analysis carried out by the researcher.

4.3.1 Interviews

a) Seniority

| Hotel | MR | OR |
|-------|--------------|-----------------------|
| A | Over 2 years | Between 1 and 2 years |
| B | 4 years | N/A |
| C | N/A | N/A |
| D | 4 years | 2 years |

Table 4. Seniority (according to the Marketing Representative and the Operations Representative). Own source.

All interviewees that have revealed their length in their current job position have some level of seniority within the organization. In the case of the marketing department representatives, all have been in the organization between 2 and 4 years. As for operational department representatives, their experience is less being between 1 and 2 years.

b) Involvement with the pet dog policies of the hotel

| Hotel | MR | OR |
|-------|--|--|
| A | Directly in charge of the marketing duties. Has the ability to influence actively when deciding which marketing strategies to adopt. | Front office duties, such as check-in, check-out, greeting of guests, etc. Partially in charge of the needs of the guest that is staying at the property with a dog. |
| B | In charge of the marketing strategy, promotion and communication of the hotel and all its venues. | N/A |
| C | Marketing strategy, creation of promotions and communication of the hotel. | Maintain public image of the hotel and guest satisfaction, including those guests that stay with their pet dog. |
| D | In charge of the sales department, as well as the coordination of the sales team. | Coordination of the Food & Beverage outlets (two bars, and two restaurants) and the banqueting department. |

Table 5. Involvement with the pet dog policies (according to the Marketing Representative and the Operations Representative). Own source.

All marketing representatives are directly involved in the department and the decision making in terms of marketing objectives for the company, except in the case of Hotel D where the person

is more in an area of Sales however does still have a level of influence when deciding the pet dog policies.

In the more operational level, the interviewed employees interact in one way or another with guests that go to the hotel with their pet dogs. Be it during check-in, during their stay with requests or needs, or at the food and beverage outlets.

c) Hotel pet dog policies

| Hotel | MR | OR |
|-------|--|---|
| A | Dogs are accepted with a maximum of 6 kg and a surcharge of 50 € per night. They are not permitted in public areas such as the restaurant. | Dogs are accepted with a surcharge of 50 € per night. They are only permitted in the restaurant if they are very small and traveling in a bag. They are also only allowed in certain room categories that have a balcony. |
| B | There is a special program for dogs that offers special chew toys, treats, custom dog beds, etc. Dogs cannot be over 18 kg and there is a fee of 25 € per night and a one-time 100 € cleaning fee. | N/A |
| C | There is a pack where the dog has a bowl and a blanket in the room. There is an extra cost of 60 € per day and the dog can only be maximum 10 kg. | The dog has to be of maximum 10 kg, and it cannot access public areas or be in the room alone. The hotel provides a bowl and blanket, and the cost is of 60 € per day per room. |
| D | The maximum weight allowed is of 10 kg and the extra charge per night is of 50 €. | The part I am aware, which is more regarding food and beverages, is that dogs are only allowed on the terrace area of the restaurants. |

Table 6. Hotel pet dog policies (according to the Marketing Representative and the Operations Representative). Own source.

All the hotels interviewed accept pet dogs at their hotels. In all cases, there are weight limitations as well as an extra fee in order for guests to bring their pet dog to the property.

The weight restrictions range from maximum 6 kg, to 10 kg, and finally 18 kg. As for extra charges, the guest must usually pay a fixed price per night which is around 50 € to 60 € per night. In the case of Hotel B there is a slight variation, and that is a fixed nightly charge of 25 € and a one-time 100 € charge for deep-cleaning purposes.

Only two hotels, Hotel B and Hotel C, offer an added value package for pet dog owners staying at the property. They consist of a bowl, a blanket or doggie bed, and in the case of Hotel B as well customized treats and chew-toys.

Other restrictions include the prohibition of accessing public areas such as the restaurants, except in specific areas such as the terrace in the case of Hotel D. In some cases it is also required to book a room category that has a terrace or balcony.

d) Demand: actual customer base

| Hotel | MR |
|-------|---|
| A | Since the opening of the hotel 2 years ago there have been around 10 guests that have stayed at the hotel with their pet dog. Therefore, 5 guests per year. |
| B | Approximately 30 guests visit the hotel with their dog per year. |
| C | More or less 10 guests per year visit with their dog. |
| D | Around 20 guests per year. |

Table 7. Demand: customer base (according to the Marketing Representative). Own source.

In all hotels there have been some guests that have visited with their pet dog. The largest hotel (Hotel B) received the highest number of guests of this type, followed subsequently by Hotel D (which is the smallest of all hotels interviewed), Hotel C, and finally Hotel A.

e) Pet dog policies alignment between the hotel and the brand, consortium, chain, etc.

| Hotel | MR |
|-------|---|
| A | The brand does not impose any specific policies, and each hotel can do as they prefer regarding pet dog policies according to their possibilities and interest in the market segment. |
| B | The brand has not set objectives regarding pet dog policies. Dogs are simply welcomed as the importance of the pet for their owner is recognized. |
| C | It is the hotel itself that chooses whether to accept dogs or not and if we do, which restrictions we set. |

| | |
|---|--|
| D | All marketing efforts are according to the company, therefore this aspect is completely aligned with it. |
|---|--|

Table 8. Pet dog policies alignment with brand, consortium, chain (according to the Marketing Representative). Own source.

In Hotels A, B, and C the brand or chain does not impose any specific policies. Each hotel had the power to decide whether to implement them or not, regardless if they were similar to those of the brand or not. In the case of Hotel D, however, the pet dog policies do come imposed by the company rather than the hotel itself.

f) Interest in the market segment

| Hotel | MR |
|-------|--|
| A | The interest in the market segment is not high, as the property is aimed at a different type of guest. |
| B | The interest in this specific market is not high, dogs are simply accepted so as to allow the type of guest that travels with their pet to stay at the property. |
| C | The target client is not too relevant for our hotel. |
| D | It is possible, yes, since it is becoming more important in the luxury sector which is where our hotel is positioned. |

Table 9. Interest in the market segment (according to the Marketing Representative). Own source.

In Hotels A, B and C all marketing department representatives confirmed that the current market of pet dog owners willing to travel to 5-star hotels in Barcelona is not particularly interesting. In the case of Hotel D, it could be an interesting market as this type of guests is increasing in the luxury hotel industry.

g) Future plans regarding pet dog policies

| Hotel | MR | OR |
|-------|--|--|
| A | If in the future the market segment grows and our demand increases we are flexible to change our policies. | The existing policies can be bettered if the marketing department decides to do so, by adding specific amenities for dogs. |
| B | The pet dog policies are not planned to be changed in the near future as the feedback is positive regarding the offered amenities. | N/A |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| C | The ideal of the hotel is not to center the marketing efforts in this target as it is not too relevant. | The customer base is not large enough to consider changing the pet dog policy. |
| D | It is not planned to modify the existing pet dog policies now or in the nearest future. | No considerable modifications are needed at the time. |

Table 10. Future plans regarding pet dog policies (according to the Marketing Representative and the Operations Representative). Own source.

All hotels, having interviewed both the marketing and operational representatives, inform that they do not plan to modify their pet dog policies in the near or mid future. Some hotels state it is because the number of guests is not high enough to change them, and others simply do not modify them into a better type of policy because they do not want to focus their marketing efforts in this segment.

h) Competition awareness and positioning

| Hotel | MR |
|-------|---|
| A | Knowledge of two other hotels, but specifying that they are a different kind of hotel with different guests. |
| B | All hotels of the company have pet dog policies, and their positioning is similar to the hotel. |
| C | Knowledge of one other hotel pertaining to the same chain, but specifying that their positioning is different as the brands are different. |
| D | No knowledge of any specific hotel, but in the case that the person knew he/she considers the other hotel(s) would be positioned similarly. |

Table 11. Competition awareness and positioning (according to the Marketing Representative). Own source.

Only Hotels A and C mentioned a particular hotel, or hotels, that they were aware had an existing pet dog policy. Hotels B and D did not specify any hotels in particular. They all mentioned that the positioning was similar in the sense that they were all in the 5-star industry, but that the brands are different therefore the type of guests are different.

i) Employee knowledge and implementation

| Hotel | OR |
|-------|--|
| A | Employees generally know what the policies are, except maybe new incorporations and trainees not. Implemented by all departments more or less, no designated department. |
| B | N/A |
| C | Employees are aware of the pet dog policies as it is an SOP of the hotel. |
| D | All personnel is fully aware of the policies regarding dogs. |

Table 12. Employee knowledge and implementation (according to the Operations Representative). Own source.

Hotels C and D confirmed that all employees were aware of the current pet dog policies and how they are implemented. Only in the case of Hotel A did the employee mention that perhaps some new incorporations or trainees might not be fully aware of these policies.

j) Employee training in pet dog policies

| Hotel | OR |
|-------|---|
| A | No formal training, for example in the employee handbook. Policies are learned as the situation arises and asking a superior. |
| B | N/A |
| C | There is no specific training, however the policies are stated in all department's working manuals. |
| D | There has been a specific training regarding the policies. |

Table 13. Employee training in pet dog policies (according to the Operations Representative). Own source.

In Hotels A and C there is no specific and formal training regarding pet dog policies. Either the policies are learned when the situation arises, or the employees can find them in the department manual. In the case of Hotel D, there has been a specific training and explanation of the pet dog policies at the property.

k) Departmental involvement and acceptance

| Hotel | OR |
|-------|---|
| A | There is no specific department that is in charge of coordinating the requirements to meet the guest's, and their dog's, needs. Anybody who has the change to assist will do so. Dogs are not completely accepted in places such as hotels. |
| B | N/A |

| | |
|---|---|
| C | There are several departments involved: reservations (they arrange the pre-arrival and inform the other departments), housekeeping (they must be aware of the presence of the dog in the room, they have to do a special cleaning upon departure and they have to put the bowl and blanket) and to a lesser extent other departments in FOH and F&B also need to be informed. Employees are indifferent towards pet dogs. |
| D | There are several departments involved, starting with housekeeping, food & beverage, front desk, and management. Pet dogs are not well seen, especially by other guests that do not enjoy their presence in the restaurants. |

Table 14. Departmental involvement and acceptance (according to the Operations Representative). Own source.

In Hotels C and D it is very clear which departments are involved with pet dogs, and the guests that are their owners. From the way the pre-arrival is organized, to the information transmission between involved departments, it is all organized. In the case of Hotel A, it is not as organized as more or less any department that has to do with the pet dog will provide assistance needed.

4.3.2 Web analysis

The web analysis has been carried out by the researcher following two premises:

4. Is the information about the pet dog policies on the website?
5. Is the information available extensive and informative?

a) Information available on the websites

| Hotel | Analysis result |
|-------|--|
| A | After thorough analysis, the pet dog policies have not been found to be published on the website. |
| B | In this hotel the pet dog policy was found easily. It is under the “More” section. |
| C | Hotel C specifies that they allow pets for a fee, however the researcher was not able to find any specific policy or price. It is linked under “More” then “Hotel Facilities”. |
| D | Hotel D links a PDF Document with their pet dog policy and the liability waiver on their website. To find the pet dog policy document, one must scroll to the bottom of the page and click on an image that states “pet friendly”. |

Table 15. Information available on the websites. Own source.

In the hotels analyzed, it is possible to observe that Hotel A does not mention anything regarding pet dogs being allowed. On the other hand, Hotels B, C, and D do mention that pet dogs are allowed on their website.

b) Degree of extensiveness of the information available on the websites

| Hotel | Analysis result |
|-------|---|
| A | In neither of the links can one find the pet dog policy of this hotel, or even know if the hotel allows pet dogs on the property. |
| B | The link that provides the information on pet dog policies also provides the detailed information regarding the pet dog program, which includes bowls, treats, dog beds, etc. |
| C | On the website, it is only stated that pet dogs are accepted. No further explanation of what type of services are provided, or about the restrictions or price. |
| D | The PDF document that is linked is simply the waiver that is signed upon arrival at the property, which includes information regarding restrictions, etc. |

Table 16. Degree of extensiveness of the information available on the websites. Own source.

In the sample chosen, the researcher has found that there is a lot of variety. Some hotels, such as Hotel A, did not even mention pet dogs being allowed in the hotel. Others, such as Hotels C and D, did mention pet dogs are allowed but did not give full details. Finally, Hotel B mentions the pet dog program and all its benefits.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

The conclusions of the research project are based on the three main objectives stated in the introduction by the author.

- A. To research the pet dog policies and services in five 5-star hotels in Barcelona.

The hotels analyzed in the research project had to accept pet dog policies, therefore it is possible to conclude that there is a wide variety of hotels that allows pet dogs to stay at the property along with their owners. It is noteworthy to mention that there are 5-star hotels in Barcelona that do not accept pet dogs under any circumstance, however they were not chosen for the research project.

In conclusion, all hotels have restrictions related to weight of the dog itself as well as access to certain areas of the hotel such as the restaurants. In all cases, however, the restrictions to accessing those areas is because of the law and not so much because of own decision.

The pet dog policies are, in most cases, stated on the website providing a varying degree on information regarding extra charge, restrictions, etc. It has been found, however, that there are hotels that accept pet dogs however they do not even mention them being permitted on the property.

It could be considered that in the future a trend will appear of accepting pet dogs in 5-star hotels in Barcelona. This is based on the fact that the number of hotels who accept dogs in the UK and Europe have increased, especially within large hotel chains (Canine Customers, 2003).

- B. To research if the pet dog policies are used as a strategy and marketing tool.

Pet dog policies are not used as a marketing tool in 5-star hotels in Barcelona. The main cause is due to lack of interest in attracting such guests and incentivizing them to actually travel with their pet dog.

This is clearly seen in the research gap in the literature review, as well as the actual customer base in the hotels which is infimal (ranging between 5 to 30 guests travelling with their dog per year). Generally, 2% to 5% of clients actually bring their dogs with them to hotels (Miller R.K, 2013), which is in accordance with the results found.

Most hotels, especially those pertaining to international chains, do not have imposed pet dog policies from the chain or brand itself. They have the power on their own to decide whether to

modify or adapt these policies. No hotels have plans of modifying these policies in the near to mid future, despite having the freedom to do so.

The guests with pet dogs, however, are willing to pay more to stay in a hotel that offers them the facilities and ease with staying with their pet dog. It is also arguable that due to the differentiation a hotel would have if they implemented a strong marketing strategy towards this niche, a loyal customer base would be formed of pet dog owners that would repeat the same hotel in the future when they are traveling with their pet dog.

Regarding competition awareness, some hotel marketing representatives were aware of other hotels having pet dog policies but did not see them as an aspect that differentiated them as they always mentioned having different target clients.

C. To analyze the operational functionality of these pet dog policies.

Generally speaking, all hotel employees are aware of the pet dog policies, or at least part of the policies in their specific hotel. In no case will an employee have absolutely no knowledge of what restrictions there are, or if there is an extra cost attached to staying with a pet dog. Surprisingly, hotels pertaining to international brands and chains do not train or explain the policies when, for instance, a new employee starts at the company. National chains do, however, explain the policies in a specific training for the employees.

For the most part, there are several departments involved when it comes to a guest staying with their pet dog. Generally, the departments that have some degree of involvement or right of information about the guest are housekeeping, front of house, food & beverage, and management.

5.2 Recommendations

The recommendations are going to follow the structure of the conclusions, meaning that they will refer to the specific objectives.

A. To research the pet dog policies and services in five 5-star hotels in Barcelona.

Firstly, if a hotel does indeed accept pet dogs at their property they should state so on their website. In the case that the hotel already mentions allowing pet dogs to stay at the property, it is recommendable that they include as much information as possible and present it in a welcoming manner. It should also be relatively easy to find when looking for this type of information.

- B. To research if the pet dog policies are used as a strategy and marketing tool.

It is true that there are main segments of clients for each hotel, however even if it is a small segment it is worthy to consider that they are potentially very loyal to the property that facilitates their stay by providing all needed for their pet dog.

The recommendation is to consider the potential increase in length of stay, revenue by guests who are willing to pay more, and loyalty of those guests towards the hotel and even the whole brand and chain.

- C. To analyze the operational functionality of these pet dog policies.

First and foremost, the methodology of organizing the arrival of the guest and informing the concerned departments needs to be structured and explained clearly to all employees involved. This is to be achieved by introducing an explanation or training within the induction sessions for new employees or by revising the policies with existing staff.

5.3 Limitations and further research

The limitations encountered have been in diverse aspects. First of all, the literature available on the subject is not extensive therefore creating a visible gap. The little literature available is regarding other countries, and other sectors such as retail that do not directly apply in hotels.

Another limitation was the difficulty in finding hotels that accepted being interviewed, reducing the final amount of hotels interviewed to four instead of five as initially intended. Furthermore, one of the hotels only answered the interview partially therefore providing incomplete information. This is all related to the lack of time in preparing the interview process, as well as the lack of interest of many hotels in the topic researched.

Further research would be recommended in the area of the guest's point of view. Guests who travel with their pet dog to 5-star hotels in Barcelona could be analyzed regarding their lifestyle, travel frequency, level of loyalty, spending capacity, and so on.

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5.5 Appendices

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5.5.1 Ethics form

Risk checklist – Please answer ALL the questions in each of the sections below.

| Risk category 1 | YES | NO |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Use any information other than that which is freely available in the public domain? | X | |
| Involve analysis of pre-existing data which contains sensitive or personal information? | X | |
| Require consent to conduct? | | X |
| Require consent to publish? | X | |
| Have a risk of compromising confidentiality? | X | |
| Have a risk of compromising anonymity? | X | |
| Involve risk to any party, including the researcher? | | X |
| Contain elements which you or your supervisor are not trained to conduct? | | X |

- In this case the supervisor can give immediate approval for undertaking the field work for the Undergraduate Dissertation.

| Risk category 2 | YES | NO |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Require informed consent other than that which is straightforward to obtain to conduct the research? | | X |
| Require informed consent other than that which is straightforward to obtain to publish the research? | | X |
| Require information to be collected and/or provided other than that which is straightforward to obtain? | | X |

- A meeting must be held with the supervisor to clarify how the issues encountered are going to be dealt with before taking off with the field work.
- Once clarified, the actions taken must be stated in this form. Then the supervisor can guarantee approval for the field work for the Undergraduate Dissertation.

| Risk category 3 | YES | NO |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Involve participants who are particularly vulnerable? | | X |
| Involve participants who are unable to give informed consent? | | X |
| Involve data collection taking place before consent form is given? | | X |
| Involve any deliberate cover data collection? | | X |
| Involve risk to the researcher or participants beyond that experience in everyday life? | | X |
| Cause (or could cause) physical or psychological negative consequences? | | X |
| Use intrusive or invasive procedures? | | X |
| Include a financial incentive to participate in the research? | | X |

- A meeting with the supervisor must be held to discuss re-directing the research to avoid the risks of category 3, reducing to risk categories 1 or 2.

IF APPLICABLE:

List of agreed actions with your tutor to be taken to address issues raised in questions Risk Category 2: Non-Applicable for this Undergraduate Dissertation

Student Declaration: I confirm that I will undertake the Undergraduate Dissertation as detailed above. I understand that I must abide by the terms of this approval and that I may not make any substantial amendments to the Undergraduate Dissertation without further approval.

Name: Karla U. Velten Ambattle Signed: Date: 02.03.2017

Agreement from the supervisor to the student:

Name: Jorge Peralta Signed: Date: 02.03.2017

5.5.2 Interview consent forms

a) Hotel A Consent forms

Hoja informativa y autorización expresa

Nombre del investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Información de contacto: karlaurgell.velten@aluhtsi.url.edu

Nombres de los supervisores universitarios: Jorge Peralta, Esther Binkhorst

Correos electrónicos: jorge.peralta@htsi.url.edu / esther.binkhorst@htsi.url.edu

Estoy recopilando información para mi Trabajo de Final de Grado, realizado en el marco del Grado en Gestión Turística y Hotelera impartido en la Facultad de Turismo y Dirección Hotelera Sant Ignasi (Universitat Ramon Llull). El tema del trabajo es investigar las políticas de mascotas en hoteles de 5-estrellas de Barcelona y analizar su uso como herramienta de marketing.

Mi objetivo es poder recopilar la información necesaria a través de entrevistas con empleados del hotel, tanto en el departamento de marketing como en operaciones (realizando un máximo de dos entrevistas por hotel).

Ruego confirme:

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Confirmando que he comprendido la información expresada anteriormente en este documento | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • He tenido la oportunidad de considerar la información, realizar preguntas y recibir una respuesta satisfactoria | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Comprendo que mi participación es voluntaria y que tengo el derecho de retirarme de la investigación en cualquier momento, sin tener que proporcionar motivo y sin que los derechos legales y de negocio se vean afectados | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Confirmando que voy a participar en el trabajo de investigación anteriormente explicado | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Autorizo que la entrevista sea grabada por voz | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que la información compartida con el investigador/a puede ser revelado en el estudio | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que mis datos personales no serán revelados para el estudio y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que la información del hotel (nombre y cadena si aplicable) no serán revelados y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |

Persona que autoriza:

Fecha: 08 / Abril / 2017

Firma:

Investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Fecha: 30 de marzo 2017

Firma:

Hoja informativa y autorización expresa

Nombre del investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Información de contacto: karlaurgell.velten@aluhtsi.url.edu

Nombres de los supervisores universitarios: Jorge Peralta, Esther Binkhorst

Correos electrónicos: jorge.peralta@htsi.url.edu / esther.binkhorst@htsi.url.edu

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|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Confirmando que he comprendido la información expresada anteriormente en este documento | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • He tenido la oportunidad de considerar la información, realizar preguntas y recibir una respuesta satisfactoria | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Comprendo que mi participación es voluntaria y que tengo el derecho de retirarme de la investigación en cualquier momento, sin tener que proporcionar motivo y sin que los derechos legales y de negocio se vean afectados | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Confirmando que voy a participar en el trabajo de investigación anteriormente explicado | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Autorizo que la entrevista sea grabada por voz | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
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| • Certifico que mis datos personales no serán revelados para el estudio y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que la información del hotel (nombre y cadena si aplicable) no serán revelados y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |

Persona que autoriza: S.S.

Fecha: 3 abril 2017

Firma:

Investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Fecha: 30 de marzo 2017

Firma:

b) Hotel B Consent form

Hoja informativa y autorización expresa

Nombre del investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Información de contacto: karlaurgell.velten@aluhtsi.url.edu

Nombres de los supervisores universitarios: Jorge Peralta, Esther Binkhorst

Correos electrónicos: jorge.peralta@htsi.url.edu / esther.binkhorst@htsi.url.edu

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Mi objetivo es poder recopilar la información necesaria a través de entrevistas con empleados del hotel, tanto en el departamento de marketing como en operaciones (realizando un máximo de dos entrevistas por hotel).

Ruego confirme:

Kindly confirm:

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I confirm that I have read and understood the information stated above | YES | NO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have them answered satisfactorily | YES | NO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, without my business or legal rights being affected | YES | NO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I agree to take part in the above explained research study | YES | NO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I give permission for the interview to be voice recorded | YES | NO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I certify that the information shared with the researcher can be revealed in the study | YES | NO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I certify that my personal details will not be revealed for the study and made anonymous | YES | NO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I certify that the information of the hotel (name of the brand and chain if applicable) will not be revealed and made anonymous | YES | NO |

Name of person taking consent: Y E

Date:

Signature:

Researcher: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Date: March 30th, 2017

Signature:

c) Hotel C Consent forms

Hoja informativa y autorización expresa

Nombre del investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambattle

Información de contacto: karlaurgell.velten@aluhtsi.url.edu

Nombres de los supervisores universitarios: Jorge Peralta, Esther Binkhorst

Correos electrónicos: jorge.peralta@htsi.url.edu / esther.binkhorst@htsi.url.edu

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Mi objetivo es poder recopilar la información necesaria a través de entrevistas con empleados del hotel, tanto en el departamento de marketing como en operaciones (realizando un máximo de dos entrevistas por hotel).

Ruego confirme:

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Confirmo que he comprendido la información expresada anteriormente en este documento | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • He tenido la oportunidad de considerar la información, realizar preguntas y recibir una respuesta satisfactoria | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Comprendo que mi participación es voluntaria y que tengo el derecho de retirarme de la investigación en cualquier momento, sin tener que proporcionar motivo y sin que los derechos legales y de negocio se vean afectados | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Confirmo que voy a participar en el trabajo de investigación anteriormente explicado | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Autorizo que la entrevista sea grabada por voz | <input type="radio"/> SÍ | <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que la información compartida con el investigador/a puede ser revelado en el estudio | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que mis datos personales no serán revelados para el estudio y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que la información del hotel (nombre y cadena si aplicable) no serán revelados y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |

Persona que autoriza: *A M*

Fecha: *2/MAYO/2017*

Firma:

Investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambattle

Fecha: 30 de marzo 2017

Firma:

Hoja informativa y autorización expresa

Nombre del investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Información de contacto: karlaurgell.velten@aluhtsi.url.edu

Nombres de los supervisores universitarios: Jorge Peralta, Esther Binkhorst

Correos electrónicos: jorge.peralta@htsi.url.edu / esther.binkhorst@htsi.url.edu

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Ruego confirme:

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| • Confirmando que he comprendido la información expresada anteriormente en este documento | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • He tenido la oportunidad de considerar la información, realizar preguntas y recibir una respuesta satisfactoria | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
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| • Confirmando que voy a participar en el trabajo de investigación anteriormente explicado | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Autorizo que la entrevista sea grabada por voz | <input type="radio"/> SÍ | <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que la información compartida con el investigador/a puede ser revelado en el estudio | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que mis datos personales no serán revelados para el estudio y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |
| • Certifico que la información del hotel (nombre y cadena si aplicable) no serán revelados y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="radio"/> SÍ | <input type="radio"/> NO |

Persona que autoriza: A A

Fecha: 2/MARZO/2017

Firma:

Investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Fecha: 30 de marzo 2017

Firma:

d) Hotel D Consent form

Hoja informativa y autorización expresa

Nombre del investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Información de contacto: karlaurgell.velten@aluhtsi.url.edu

Nombres de los supervisores universitarios: Jorge Peralta, Esther Binkhorst

Correos electrónicos: jorge.peralta@htsi.url.edu / esther.binkhorst@htsi.url.edu

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Ruego confirme:

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| • Confirmando que he comprendido la información expresada anteriormente en este documento | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SÍ | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
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| • Certifico que mis datos personales no serán revelados para el estudio y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SÍ | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| • Certifico que la información del hotel (nombre y cadena si aplicable) no serán revelados y serán tratados con anonimidad | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SÍ | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

Persona que autoriza: M F

Fecha: 03/05/17

Firma:

Investigador/a: Karla U. Velten Ambatlle

Fecha: 30 de marzo 2017

Firma:

5.5.3 Additional tables and

figures a) Table 1. Interview sample

| Hotel | Interviewee(s) | Interview date | Interviewer |
|--------------------|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Hotel Cotton House | Alfredo Martínez Sònia Sala | April 3 rd 2017 | Karla Velten |
| Hotel W | Yamil Errasti | April 27 th 2017 | Karla Velten |
| Hotel Le Méridien | Anna Albentosa Ana Miquel | May 2 nd 2017 | Karla Velten |
| Hotel La Florida | María Fernández (answers as well for the F&B Manager) | May 3 rd 2017 | Karla Velten |

Table 1. Interview sample. Source: own.

b) Table 2. Web analysis.

| Hotel | Website | Access date | Person accessing |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Hotel Cotton House | www.hotelcottonhouse.com | April 19 th 2017 | Karla Velten |
| Hotel W | www.w-barcelona.com | April 29 th 2017 | Karla Velten |
| Hotel Le Méridien | www.lemeridienbarcelona.com | April 29 th 2017 | Karla Velten |
| Hotel La Florida | www.hotellaflorida.com | April 29 th 2017 | Karla Velten |

Table 2. Web analysis. Source: own.

c) Figure 1. Hotel A Website screenshot

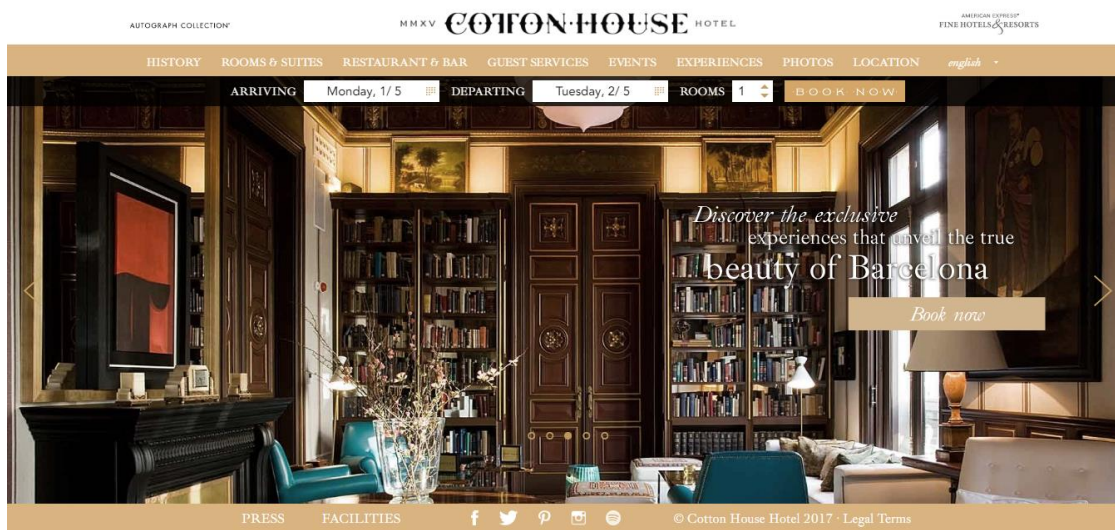


Figure 1. Hotel A Website Screenshot. Source: www.hotelcottonhouse.com.

d) Figures 2, 3, and 4. Hotel B Website screenshots

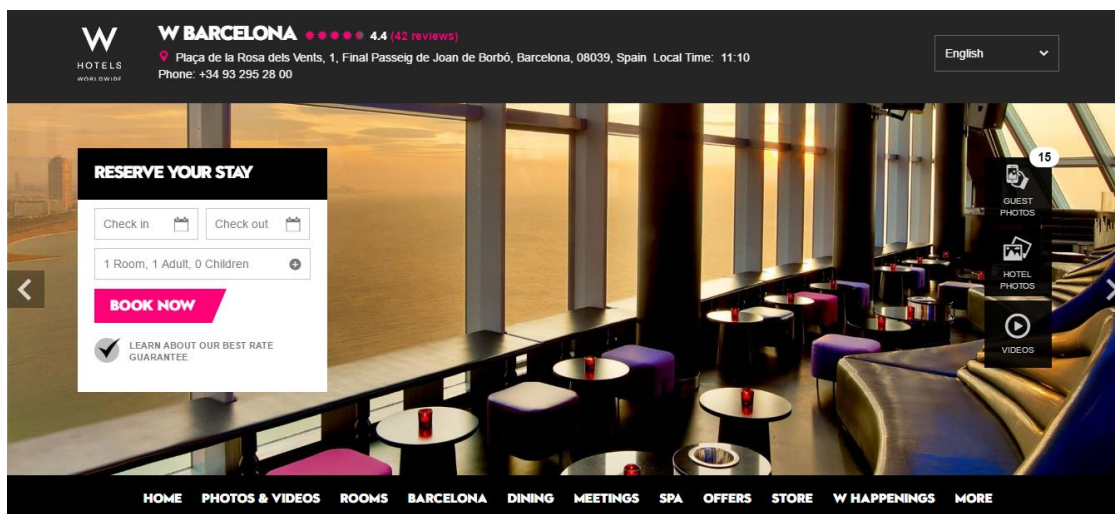


Figure 2. Hotel B Website Screenshot. Source: www.w-barcelona.com.



Figure 3. Hotel B "P.A.W: Pets Are Welcome". Source: www.w-barcelona.com.

HOME
PHOTOS & VIDEOS
ROOMS
BARCELONA
DINING
MEETINGS
SPA
OFFERS
STORE
W HAPPENINGS
MORE

RESERVE YOUR STAY

Check in

Check out

1 Room, 1 Adult, 0 Children

BOOK NOW

P.A.W (PETS ARE WELCOME)

Who loves your pet? We do! At W Barcelona, the red carpet rolls out for your furry friend, too, with our Pets Are Welcome service. **Snuggle up with your favorite furry friend during your Barcelona escape.** From custom W pet beds to special toys to chew, your pet pals are not only welcomed at W but enjoy special treats to make their experience as spectacular as yours.

We welcome **cats and dogs 18kg (40 pounds) or less.** Guests must sign a waiver upon check-in and will be charged **€25 per pet per day above the room rate.** There is also a non-refundable €100 cleaning fee regardless of length of stay.

STAY CONNECTEDSHARE
DOWNLOAD OUR APP

Figure 4. Hotel B "P.A.W: Pets Are Welcome" Conditions. Source: www.w-barcelona.com.

e) Figures 5 and 6. Hotel C Website screenshots

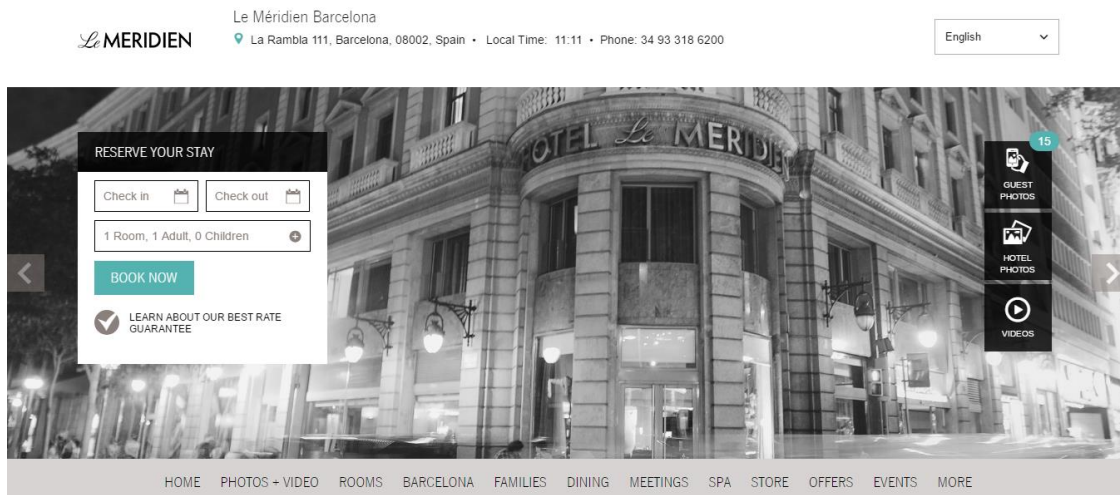
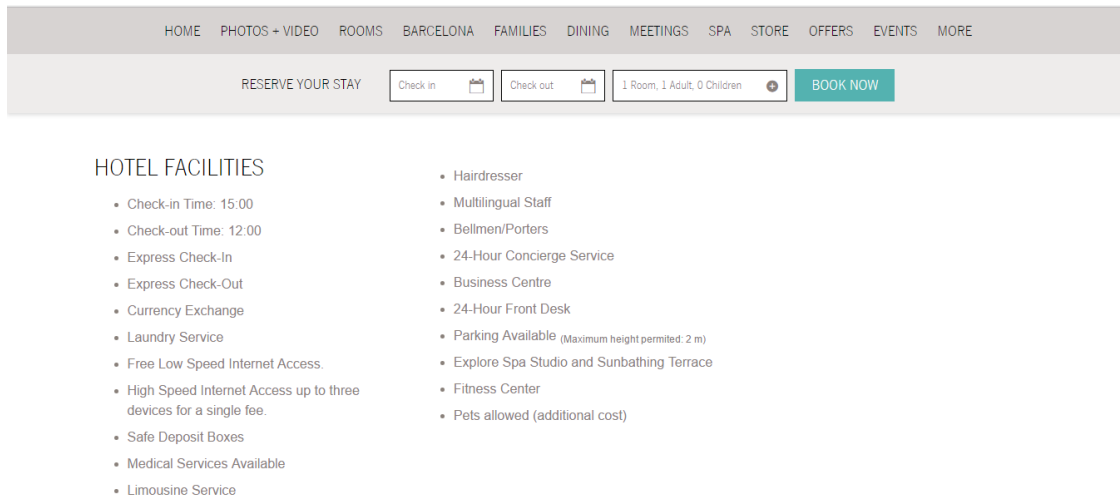


Figure 5. Hotel C Website Screenshot. Source: www.lemeridienbarcelona.com.



f) Figures 7 and 8. Hotel D Website screenshots



Figure 7. Hotel D Website Screenshot. Source: www.hotellafloida.com.

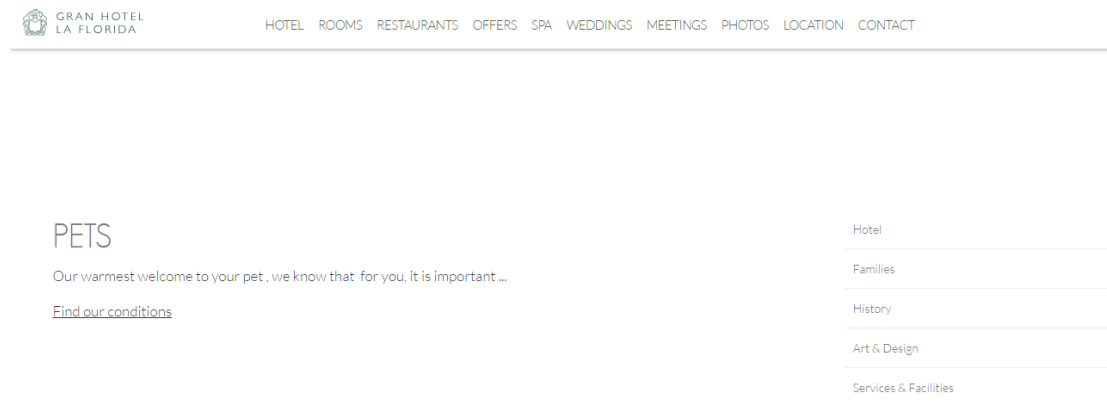


Figure 8. Hotel D Pet Dog Policy Section. Source: www.hotellafloida.com.