

## OTELLERDEKİ SATIŞ FAALİYETLERİ: ANTALYA OTELLERİ ÜZERİNDE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

### SALES ACTIVITIES IN HOTEL OPERATIONS: AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON ANTALYA HOTELS

**Bil. Uzm. Mohamed ALSALIHEEN ARHAIAM**

Kastamonu Üniversitesi, Turizm İşletmeciliği Yüksek Lisans Programı, Kastamonu /  
TÜRKİYE, ORCID: 0000-0002-9323-9904

**Prof. Dr. Kutay OKTAY**

Kastamonu Üniversitesi, Turizm Fakültesi, Turizm ve Otel İşletmeciliği Bölümü, Kastamonu /  
TÜRKİYE, ORCID: 0000-0002-5329-3324

**Öğr. Gör. Erhan İŞLEK**

Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi, Marmaris Turizm Meslek Yüksekokulu, Muğla / TÜRKİYE,  
ORCID: 0000-0002-3385-5406

#### ÖZET

Çağımızda otellerin satış faaliyetleri, ulusal ekonomiye önemli katkılarda bulunan ve döviz ve farklı meslekler gibi birçok ekonomik fırsat üreten dev bir olgu haline gelmiştir. Turizm ülkeleri otellerindeki bu faaliyetleri geliştirmek ve artırmak için yeni yöntemler uygulamaya büyük gereksinim duymaktadırlar. Araştırma Yöntemi: Çalışmanın uygulama bölümünü kapsayacak şekilde anket formları (50 başvuru formu) hazırlanmıştır. Çalışma planında sunulan soruları cevaplamayı amaçlayan anket formları, çalışma için gerekli olan doğru bilimsel sonuçların elde edilmesi amacıyla organize örneklem kullanılarak Antalya otellerinden 50 üst yöneticiye dağıtılmıştır. Sonuç: Otel endüstrisindeki satış departmanları, tüketiciler, teknoloji ve yerel ekonomideki değişikliklerle boğuşmaktadırlar. Teknolojideki ve davranışlardaki tüm bu değişiklikleri beraberinde getiren bu yeni ortamla birlikte, oteller teknoloji dünyasındaki bu yeni değişikliklere uymak ve müstakbel tüketicileri kendilerine çekmek ve bu değişikliklerden en iyi şekilde yararlanmak için alışılmadık yöntem ve planları benimsemeleri gerekmektedir.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Satış faaliyetleri, Otel işletmeciliği, Stratejiler, Eğitim Sistemi, Antalya.

#### ABSTRACT

The sales activities in the hotels in the modern era turned to be a huge phenomenon which contributes significantly to the national economy and generates many economic opportunities like foreign currency and different jobs. The tourism countries are in a great need to adapt new methods to enhance and improve these activities in the hotels for the favor of the tourist development and make use of all the existing tourist treasures. Research Method: the forms of questionnaire (50) designed to cover the practical part of the research. The forms of questionnaire aimed for answering the questions presented in the research plan. The aim of the researcher was to distribute these questionnaires forms to the superior administration in Antalya hotels using the organized sample for obtaining exact scientific results which are necessary for research. Results: The hotel industry face in the modern era many challenges: barriers which may occur between the guest and the hotel staff, collaboration rules of the selling process has been changed in new forms, The sales departments in the tourism sector are struggling with the changes in the customer, technology, and local economies In this new environment with all those multiple changes in technologies and attitudes, the hotel needs to adopt methods and plans which are unconventional to deal properly with these new changes in the world of technology and make the most of them to attract prospect consumers.

**Key Words:** Sales Activity, Hotel Operation, Training System, Strategies, Antalya.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The main and basic goal of any hotel is to make their room fully occupied during the whole days of the year in spite of the impossibility to achieve that. There are number of methods which can be followed in order to bring more hosts to the hotel in different parts the year. The sales approaches for the hotel owners are many and varied and all of them follow the same target which is to increase the nights of the room (URL-1). The development and growth of the hotel sector does not belong to it in terms of the importance of the chain operators. In general, through the franchise format, the coffee shops, fast food sector and restaurants have achieved great growth in many operations worldwide (International Labor Organization, 2010:8).

The types of business and companies which under the hotels and restaurants subsectors operate are high and varied. The greatest companies in the world which work at these sectors comprise the portfolios which have more than 6,000 hotels each and employ more than 150,000 employees in about 100 countries (International Labor Organization, 2015:46).

Currently, the hospitality is considered a part of the global tourism industry and not only relies on the touristic changes but it relies directly on other markets including oil resource, energy price or investment policies. These are associated with the touristic demands and play a significant role in defining the hospitality sector development strategies. While the hotels are changing rapidly and continuously, there is no uncertainty that the current administration need to be adopted not only for particular needs but also for the challenges of the whole world and sector. There are conceded whiles when the destination administration could look just “intentionally movements” for the succeeding period. In the highlights of the digital marketing, rapid technological changes, the wishes and requirements of new guest and better transportation accessibilities, the strategic planning must be taken into account in the global market even in the domestic development (URL-2).

The sales of hospitality differ from the consumer goods as the sellers can sale perceptible and imperceptible materials. It can be said that they are presenting services instead of goods and achievement hinges by producing the right feeling in the consumer. For instance, a resort will need to promote a calming, fun atmosphere which is familiar to customers and motivates those same feelings in the consumer. The significant brand industry is also important because the tourism industry consist of the tourism and other experimental services. The marketers aim to confirm that the brand recognition is still existed in order to make the customer use their services continuously. Considerable share of customer can bring great percentage of income. Therefore, the strategy of marketing must be divided between managing relationship with the old customers and seek on new ones (URL-3).

In this article, the researcher discusses sales activities in Antalya hotels and examines the challenges that the hotel faces and tries to find out the most effective methods and skills that the hotels use to activate the sales. The researcher also discusses the concept of sales activities, the difference between selling and marketing, the hotel sales industry in modern era and the challenges and hotel future. The research explains the necessity of sales training system the methods used to retrain guests and sales and higher education and the basic of sales skills. Finally, the researcher discusses and explains the methods of study and data analysis, conclusions and recommendations.

## 2. THE CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OF THE HOTEL SALES STRATEGIES

The slow growth of the economy beside the rapid technological development led to reformulate the sales model. The sales use is considered vital to the continuous success of the organization. However, at the current time, the extreme cost control of the goods and services led to measure the value of each area separately, veering distant from famous assessment techniques. The development of the workers elements whether in terms of the income or information management depend on proof of value and achieve the optimal benefit of income which can place additional pressure on sales management to present its value continuously (Marshall and Moncrief, 2005:25).

The activities of the sales are always refused with the emergence of the human elements and decrease the analytical sides. Conventionally, the sales function was limited around the relationships both on the consumer, based business and the interaction with the person is changed to a concept of the high touch. The basic of the sales success is to make the agent participate. The question which arises now is that if the personal participation and interaction face to face is continuous in controlling the process or if there

was high change in the sales of the hotel industry process? Are the organizations will transform far from the singular relationships into mixed management to the lifelong relationships across the organization? Does the technology win in the methodology which focuses on the agents in the commercial business in the twenty one century? (Marshall and Moncrief, 2005:25).

In the last decades, the hotel sales were alike globally whether there are medium, with small size or small size logos. There was simple difference of procedures, expectations and technology. As well as, the differences in the sales basics were basically the cosmetics. This case is changed as the distribution size is a game of changing the structural elements but it rises the questions if the different models is the real future to this industry and the association between each one of them is the way which through the participation of the agents are not returned back. The need to transform the loyalty concept and transform the participation with purchases and find different feeling of collaboration is considered of the most important challenges on all of the levels of sale profession inside the companies and properties. In terms of the hotel industry, this is highlighted to the need of changing the concept and recognizes the reality which requires reconsidering the traditions. Thus, there is not any company, administration or function could lean in any place nowhere is this more important than in hotel sales (Juan, 2009).

In the events of the global financial crisis, the hotel industry faced great difficulties from different sides. The crisis led to new period of disruption which resulted into comprehensive research about new expectations in the demand and income prediction in an attempt to understand the strategies and methodologies that can increase the portfolio share and therefore, enhance the profitability. The interrupted can be the result of the technological innovations or change the ideas about product, services or organized methodology (Page, 2009).

The last reason which is the change of ideas is interfered with the old operations and standards and face challenges of the current situation and cause a chaos with the traditional response. This is always the way of implementing things. The existing of a gap in the service, comfort and change in the consumer and behavior or develop new technology may make the professions of companies to adopt wrong methodology. If situation is hampered the standard operational process, the popular response will increase the discomfort of the team where the change does not come easily to most of the individuals. The questioning about the behaviors and suspects which have been created in high equipped environment make everybody take a side as there is an enemy have been sent (Page, 2009:44).

The evolution of the hotel industry in the future will depend "in general" on the availability of several key factors combined with each other:

- The character of the economic system prevailing in the country.
- Nature of administrative system of the state (central or not central)
- Technological development in the country which has the tourist and hotel activities.
- The availability of tourist attractions leading to the recovery of the hotel industry
- Security stability and the political situation in the country because of its impact on the tourist and hotel activities.
- The extent of the development of transport and its compatibility with the technology of the times with the quality and ease of the roads leading to the tourist places and hotel accommodation.
- The continuous development and search for whatever is new to face competition in the tourist and hotel fields.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The aim of the research is to review and examine the sales system on Antalya hotels in terms of its importance and the most effective methods and strategies used in sales system in the Antalya hotels. In short, the research is interested in finding out the followings:

1. Examine the different types of sales activities on the hotels.
2. Recognize the role and importance of sales activities on the hotels.
3. Reveal the most effective methods and skills used in sales activities on the hotels.

Sample of the research includes 50 top and middle level managers from 8 five stars and 6 four stars hotels from Antalya. The researcher would depend on the following basic approaches:

1. **The Descriptive Analytical Method:** is used in order to review all the theoretical ideas and concepts of the study, with using the qualitative and quantitative analysis to get to the most important facts of the study.
2. **The Applied Method:** is used with the aim of applying all the theoretical ideas and concepts of the study through using the Questionnaire on Turkish hotels.

The form of questionnaires (50 application forms) designed have covered the practical part of the research. The form of questionnaire intended for answering the questions given in the research plan. The main point of the researcher was to distribute the forms of questionnaire to the superior administration in sixteen of the Antalya hotels in 2017 using the organized sample obtaining exact scientific conclusion that are important for the research.

#### 4. FINDINGS

90 percent of respondents considered that the sales hotel activities are an essential topic for hotel management, whereas, only 10 percent considered that it is not essential.

**Table 1.** The Importance of Hotel Sales Activities

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	45	90
No	5	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The percentage of 80% of respondents answered that the sales hotel activities are very important, only 10% said it is important, while the rest (10 percent) considered it is normal.

**Table 2.** The Extension of the Importance for the Hotel Sales Activities

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Very important	40	80
Important	5	10
Normal	5	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

70 percent of respondents assured that there are challenges facing the hotel sales in the modern era, whereas, only 30 percent answered with "no".

**Table 3.** The Challenges of Sales Hotel Activities

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	70
No	15	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The percentage of 12 % of respondents answered that slow economic growth is the most significant challenge, 4 % said that the complexity of sales operation , the nature of the modern customer, and the similarity of hotel sales processes are the most significant challenges, while 70 percent answered with "all mentioned" and finally only 6 % did not put any answer.

**Table 4.** The Most Significant Challenges to Sales Hotel Activities

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
The slow economic growth	6	12
The complexity of sales operations	2	4
The nature of the modern customer	2	4
The similarity of hotel sales processes	2	4
All mentioned	35	70
No answer	3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The Table 5 shows that the sales training is necessary in developing hotel sales with the percentage of "90%". While, only 10 percent considered that it is necessary "To some extent".

**Table 5.** The Necessity of the Sales Training System

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	45	90
No	0	0
To some extent	5	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The percentage of 60% of respondents answered that sales training system is necessary because of all reasons mentioned above, 8 % said it is necessary because it maximizes the effectiveness of each customer encounter, teaches a systematic selling process and improves the ability of salespeople, while 16 % considered that it is necessary because it helps salespeople to understand their customers.

**Table 6.** The Causes of the Importance of the Sales Training System

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Maximizes the effectiveness of each customer encounter	4	8
Teach a systematic selling process	4	8
Teach a systematic selling process	4	8
Help salespeople to understand their customers	8	16
All mentioned	30	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The percentage of 60% of respondents answered that the most effective methods used to retain the guests are all mentioned, 20% said it is to leave good impression, while 10% chose "take immediate action" and 4% said that the most effective methods are: "Regard the customer loyalty "and " make every visit count". Finally, only 2 percent answered that the most effective method is keeping in continuous touch.

**Table 7.** The Most Effective Methods to Retain the Guests

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Leave a very good impression	10	20
Keep in continuous touch	1	2
Regard the customer loyalty	2	4
Make every visit count	2	4
Take an immediate action	5	10
All mentioned	30	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

48 percent of respondents answered that the most effective sales skills in the hotel is "listening skills", while 40 percent answered with "all mentioned", 6% considered that the most effective skills is "problem solution skills", while 4% said it is "communication skills", and finally, only 2% chose "interpersonal skills" as the most effective sales skills.

**Table 8.** The Most Effective Skills in The Hotel

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Interviewing skills	0	0
Listening skills	24	48
Communication skills	2	4
Problem solutions skills	3	6
Interpersonal skills	1	2
All mentioned	20	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The percentage of 10% of respondents answered that the most important strategies are Product knowledge strategy and Customer behavior strategy while 20% considered that it is "innovation strategy" and 60% answered with "all mentioned".

**Table 9.** The Most Important Strategies For The Hotel

Alternatives	Frequency	Percentage
Product knowledge strategy	5	10
Customer behavior strategy	5	10
Management strategy	0	0
Innovation strategy	10	20
All mentioned	30	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

## 5. DISCUSSION

From the questionnaire, it was clear that the sales activities on the hotel are considered as an essential and important topic for hotel management. Most answers of the questionnaire showed that there are many and different challenges facing the hotel sales activities in the modern era. It was found out by the researcher that the most important challenges are the slow economic growth followed by "at the same level" the complexity of sales operations, the nature of the modern customer and the similarity of hotel sales processes.

The most respondents showed that sales training is necessary in developing hotel sales because it maximizes the effectiveness of each customer encounter, teaches a systematic selling process and helps salespeople to understand their customers. It has been concluded that most effective methods used to retain the guests are to leave a very good impression and take an immediate action, and then "at the same average" regard the customer loyalty and make every visit count. From the questionnaire, it is clear that the most effective sales skills in the hotel are listening skills followed by problem solution skills, communication skills and interpersonal skills.

Most respondents agreed with the fact that the hotel must adapt a strategy and the most important strategies which must be taken are innovation strategy followed equally by product knowledge and customer behavior strategy. It was found out by the researcher that the above mentioned strategies are important because they increase sales profits in the first place, then they save money and time, and finally, a few respondents mentioned that they enhance the value of business, while others mentioned they set the goals and define the directions.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The sales activities are complex process which involves performing several operations at the same time, and these operations as a whole are considered to be crucial for the company to sell its products and maximize its own profits.

The research has shown that salespersons are always dealing with customers who are resistant for making a purchase even before the salesperson had made a presentation

So strategies are important and essential for the hotel as they increase sales profits in the first place, save money and time, enhance the value of business, set the goals and define the directions.

The sales activities are required to be more organized and accurate as a way to get more opportunities to reach the process of closing the sale and put up long period relationships with the guest.

The sales departments in the hotel business are fighting with the changes which are in the customer, technology, and local trade, even changes of institution at the part level of hotels, company offices of hotel brands, administration companies and ownership groups.

In this new environment with all those multiple changes in technologies and attitudes, the hotel needs to adopt methods and plans which are unconventional to deal properly with these new changes in the world of technology and make the most of them to attract prospect consumers, and this would require applying new and unfamiliar sales activities for the hotel through concentrating and focusing on the training and marketing program and how to effectively communicate with potential consumers and paying much attention on the way the hotel provides its products and services.

Hotel companies went around revising sales training as a procedure for obtaining an advantage in the market, an necessary act in defining the activity as a profession.

There are new methods and approaches of selling which are essential for the hotels which will make sure that the sales force would meet their volume, decline the competition, and make buyer loyalty to the goods or service

The successful hotel management is the one that provides programs for the recruitment of qualified staff with higher education and the refinement and improvement of their talents through various training and educational courses which enable them to handle complex and practical tasks within the hotel.

The successful sale organizations always attempt to adapt different and unique training methods, as to teach their employees to focus on how to present the products on a way during which the customer

would get a real benefit and not just making a purchasing process and see the possibilities of how to get the customer to the product he really needs.

The development of the hotel industry in the future will depend "in general" on the availability of several key factors combined with each other among which the most important are: The character of the economic process prevailing in the state, The nature of the administrative system of the state (central or not central), the technological development in the country and the availability of tourist attractions leading to the recovery of the hotel industry

The main concentration of the training is on how potential wholesaler and buyer work with each other, in this case, it offers methods and strategy that help salespersons study what they should know to persuasively provide their products or services to customers in terms that customer will and finally make a purchase.

Communication skills "among which the most important are listening and understanding" are effective tools used within the hotel to remove any barriers which may occur between the guest and the hotel staff.

The slow economic growth represents the biggest challenges which the hotel sales activities may face in the modern era as a result of the growing competition in the tourist market.

The suggestions of the research are as follows:

- The hotel staff wants to get know that customers "hotel guests" inquire the suitable questions; hence, it is necessary to identify the suitable cares and disclose wants previously unconsidered.
- Staff of hotel at the present must use forward-looking system for maintaining skills and abilities which are important for success through joining and participating in multiple training systems.
- It is essential for the hotel to adapt a strategy and the most important strategies which must be taken are innovation strategy followed equally by product knowledge and customer behavior strategy.
- The hotel administration must teach his staff the most communication effective skills (listening and understanding skills) to remove any barriers which may occur between the guest and the hotel staff.
- The hotel administration must take consideration about the collaboration rules of the selling process in the modern era (hotel marketers should work with the buyer for their mutual benefit.)
- The successful hotels should attempt to adapt different and unique training methods, to teach their employees to focus on how to present the products on a way during which the customer would get a real benefit and not just making a purchasing process and see the possibilities of how to get the customer to the product he really needs.
- The successful hotel management must provide programs for the recruitment of qualified staff with higher education and the refinement and improvement of their talents through various training and educational courses which enable them to handle complex and practical tasks within the hotel .

This study confirms the importance of sales activities in the market for organization and sales professionals alike and shows the importance of strategies for hotels and sales departments in hotel business are fighting with changes. The study showed that sales activities are required to be more organized and accurate as way to get to reach the process of closing sales. The study also confirmed the hotel management must adapt new methods and approaches which will make sales force meet their volume.

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