

What your latest hotel stay can teach you about marketing

Have you stayed at a hotel recently? Did you enjoy your stay? If you didn't, what was it that you had issues with? Towels not fluffy enough? Housekeeping didn't clean properly? Or my pet peeve, too much noise? If you did enjoy your stay, what made it good? Helpful staff? Location? Great amenities?



Motel in Livingston , MT by Beyond Neon on Flickr

Your experience with the hotel is what makes you like it or not. Not the advertising and probably not the rate you paid.

Last year, I stayed at a chain hotel where the price was right, but nothing else was. I could hear the alarm of the guy next door to me (and his TV and everything else). The coffee in the "free" breakfast was terrible. When I complained and asked for a different room, they did accommodate me. But the problem wasn't the room itself, it was the hotel's cheap

construction. I will never stay there again. On the other hand, over New Year's I stayed at a boutique hotel. There were only a few rooms per floor. The building was old and solidly built. Plus, it was in a great location, quiet and comfortable. I would go back.

Marketing can get you to book a stay, but you won't be coming back if you had a bad experience. And in this social media age, you most likely will share your experiences on a rating site like Trip Advisor or Yelp. If you have questions or concerns, you may go on Twitter or Facebook.

Marketing is important, but so is the customer experience. You can't succeed in business if you don't work on both. Too many companies spend extraordinary amounts of money trying to get you to buy something, but then don't expend any effort once you've made your purchase.

With service products, like hotel stays and air travel, experience matters even more because there is no tangible item that you have bought. All you will be taking home are the memories of the experience. The flight went smoothly and you got to your destination on time? That is either a good memory or something that you don't think about again. But if you got to your hotel and there were dirty linens on the bed and a non-functioning air conditioning unit, not only is that a bad experience, you will remember it.