

New preparedness of Rooms Division post Unlock – 1 in three selected Hotels; Hyatt Regency Ahmedabad, ITC Royal Gardenia Bengaluru & Taj Lands End Mumbai

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Abstract. Hotels have been a very eternal part of world's economy. This industry has been witnessing many revolutionary changes since centuries. Covid 19 pandemic has been one such phase of the world's transformation which has made almost every walk of life to think and reframe its existence. Hotel Industry has been affected economically, strategically, operationally badly due to Covid 19 pandemic 2020. Hotel industry must restructure its sales and marketing strategy in attracting the business back. In the time of fear of moving out, convincing guest to travel and occupy accommodation in hotels is a big challenge for Hotels across the globe. In such a scenario, Hotels must focus on their potential business givers i.e. Business clientele. Hotels could offer good working place following Covid 19 safety protocols to their business travelers. To determine the maximum business thrust, Hotels should aim offering good 'Work from Hotel' culture packages to its prospective target market. Business travelers are the first key segment under tourism who would prefer to move out to run the economy of any nation. In this situation, formulating strategies should revolve around Business Traveler. This study will examine the impact of Covid 19 on the Hotel Business and would also establish the viability of business revival by developing some key strategies to attract Business clientele.

1 Keywords: Business Traveler, Revival, Strategy, Revenue, Marketing, Covid 19 OBJECTIVE

This research is accomplished with objectives

- To perceive revival strategy for hotels to move on Covid 19 pandemic situation
- To observe and analyze the impulse of prospective business travelers
- To examine the viability of Concept of 'Work From Hotel'
- To probe the future notion of MICE segment in Revenue Activation for Select Hotels in the study

2 INTRODUCTION

Hotels – Home away from Home, truly have made their economic place in the World trade since its inception. The hotel has been instrumental in fulfilling the needs of a traveler across the globe. It has witnessed many phases of evolution. From Caravanserai to Monasteries, from Abbeys to Staging posts, from Dharamshalas to Musafirkhana, from Taverns to Inns, from just a verandah to Modern Hotels. It has seen every phase of change and witnessed different evolutions of mankind. From the Stone Age to Artificial Intelligence, Hotel has been adapting the different environmental, social, economic and global changes. The hotel has seen its own version in a complete manual form where everything was managed, recorded manually. The same Hotel is also witnessing a new version of its where the guest experience is mounted on artificial intelligence from automated door operating systems to fully PMS (Property Management System) managed Information Technology, from Self Check-In counters to QR code-based Menus. The hotel has been an eye witness of World War I to World War II, of freedom fighting to world's deadliest terrorist attacks. In being of constant changes, Hotel has never stopped giving its best. It has always carved its own art in the heart of a traveler.

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The YEAR 2020:

The year 2020 has been exceptional in all these years. The year which had given the first-rate beginning for Hospitality World in the first financial quarter. As per The Economic Times report dated 12th November 2020, the Hospitality world especially in India has witnessed 52.8% decline in RevPAR in the third financial quarter.¹ This happens to be a major game-changer point for the business. Covid 19, an infectious disease brought the entire world at halt from mid of March 2020. As per WHO reports, this virus has infected more than 7 crore population of the world.² This disease forbids complete human activities in the world and India nearly for 70 days; banning absolute human face to face interaction and motion activities. This hit the world terribly in every sense. All attainable things one can think of were at stock-still. The world economy was witnessing dip fall and fright of losing jobs. All sort of business pursuits lost its momentum and out of the race. From enormous commerce outline to nanoscopic trading suits were scuffling for survival. Till today the condition has not been refined acceptably. These travel restrictions imposed by government of different regions have cost tourism industry a huge loss of \$200 billion at global level (Ozili, 2020). In response to the pandemic, within the timeframe of months, the global tourism shrinks from over tourism to no tourism (Conde Nast Traveller, 2020), once the alleys bustle with colors and songs of tourist are now in a dark silence, as like waiting for someone to light a candle. Sharma, B. & Dolkar, R. (2020). Impact Of Covid-19 On Tourism & Hospitality Sector In Union Territory Of Ladakh. Hotels have been miserably struck in the Covid hurricane. As we know Hotel business is only survived on human movement. People travel from one place to other and seek accommodation in hotels is the only inducement of the hospitality existence. This pandemic brought this vary purpose of existence of this beautiful human-oriented world of hospitality to a standstill.

Reservations were cancelled, restaurant bookings, banquets bookings, business centres footfall, were withdrawn. Hotels missed a breath to breathe. Sarovar anticipates 12-15% decline in revenue per available room for 2020. Intercontinental hotels group anticipates global RevPAR decline of around 60%.³ All of a sudden the lifeline of this luxurious industry was witnessing straight sleeping line on cardiac monitoring device with wide-open eyes. Bellboys were waiting at their doorsteps for any human moving around with ray of hope. Guest Relation Executives were ready with 'Diya' in hand to welcome the new corona free world on April 5. All the chefs were geared up to prepare healthy, nutritious, immunity booster shots. All the waiters were masked and hand gloved for hygienic food service. All the housekeepers got trained well in sanitizing the world. But the hotels were deserted. Hotel's every corner were waiting for human faces. Many such shining stars from hotel personnel have been laid off from the trade. Hotel's balance sheets were imbalanced where the expenditures were topping the chart over earnings. The hotel industry is not seeing this turbulence first time since their inceptions. They are not new to adapt and accommodate this transpouse.

HOTEL REVIVAL STRATEGY:

In the midst of this darkest hour, history and experiences propose a phenomenal approach to revive the business thrust of the hotels. Every hotel has been receiving different types of clientele in its life cycle. This includes Business Clientele, Leisure Guest, Families, health and wellness travelers etc. Out of all only Business Travelers can be hotels breathing partner in this life-saving ordeal. Unlock stages has been giving some privilege to trading units, commercial outfits. In this opportunistic hiccups, hotels must make good use of this privilege given to the world. A lot of business bodies have opened their trading affairs with all possible precautionary protocols. The world has started witnessing a few crawling movements of such commerce outfits. Few haven't opened their own businesses houses but have asked their employees to pour motion into the market. This activity movement of such employee has brought breathing sign to Hotel Industry also. As they move around, would look for a safe, secure, hygienic accommodation outfit where they can touch and feel the normalcy. Hotels should grab this opportunity to give throttle stroke to its operations which are seeing a deathbed. Every type of hotel whether City or Resort or Suburban can accommodate such opportunity with great pleasure. Hotels in this case may propose the concept of 'Work From Hotels – WFH' to such business commuters. As it was mentioned many commercial outfits have not opened their business headquarters and workplaces especially Information Technology industry, they may look for such a viable place to open up their professional gatherings and meetings. The concept of Work from Hotels may provide a relaxed approach to conduct occupational activities in the outside world with utmost care and safety and with the feeling of ease to these prospective business givers. This may give a boost in the income side of the balance sheet of the hotels.

Hotels may engage its employee with a great amount of motivation to move on. Such places can be hired for a couple of months or maybe for six months and can be made their business hub in the open market.

Apart from offering hotel rooms as business suits, hotels can also target lone commuters for trading and commerce. Their room business can be oxygen for its operational life. Hotels can offer bankable offers with room rates suiting to the pockets of such reviving clientele. Offering Office at the Hotel could bring up a handsome amount of rent from big commercial outfits. Along with Offices, they may propose company employee to stay in the hotel's safest, cleanest, sanitized environment and continue their professional pursuits from the hotel itself. Hence this kind of offer brings accommodation as well as food & beverage sale to the hotels.

Hotels may offer the following services to make "Work from Hotel" concept compelling.

- Free Wi-Fi facility
- Personal Butler for Business activity
- Meeting rooms with touch-free wireless projectors, audiovisual devices
- Small gathering area with f & b facility
- Postal services
- Stationery services
- Contactless check-ins and Checkouts
- STD – ISD calling services
- Wake up call services
- Laundry Services with laundry sanitizing concept etc

These services indeed add the value to the package and would satisfy the business need of an individual. Therefore hotels and online booking OTA platforms to create focus around strategic and marketing effect on the attributes to gain visitor's attention. IHCL – Indian Hotel Company Limited which is a parent company for Taj Hotels – Luxury and resort properties, the only pioneer hotel company in India has also mentioned in The Economic Times Edition dated: 24th June 2020,5 that many business guests are signing up to work remotely at their different properties. This statement embraces the concept of 'Work from Hotel' – WFH concept for their business properties. Taj Lands End, Mumbai, one of its luxury hotel brands located at the heart of the Mumbai City, Bandra could also focus on importing such concept in their hotel to revive their business thrust. Mumbai has been appraised as Economic Capital of India. Hence property like Taj Lands End located at economic hub destination could indeed make the most out of this opportunity. At the same time, another Luxury brand of Hotels in India, namely ITC Hotels, offer Day – Use Packages for Corporate Executives & Business Travelers on the move with complimentary board rooms for two hours to conduct meetings at most ITC and Welcomhotel properties, as per The Economic Times Edition dated: 24th June 2020. 6

This news also supplements the concept of 'Work From Hotel' – WFH. One of their business properties set up in Bengaluru, ITC Royal Gardenia and other ITC properties do offer WelcombreaK all-in getaway package where customers can book now and pay later. Hence this concept introduction also invites positive revival strategic points for Revenue generation. In a published interview in B W Hoteliers, Mr. Ashish Shome, General Manager, Hyatt Place, Gurugram mentioned MICE – Meetings Incentives, Conferences & Exhibitions clientele are the most well liked in demand for revival of Hotel Revenue. As per his statement, MICE is helping hotels to gain occupancy % by day use or weekend staycation. This notion of the market could help business hotels of Ahmedabad to get back into Business drive with revenue generation also. Hyatt Hotel in Ahmedabad has been onlooker for such opportunity in the market of Ahmedabad. This design future guest footfall shall encourage the economic revival.

3 METHODOLOGY

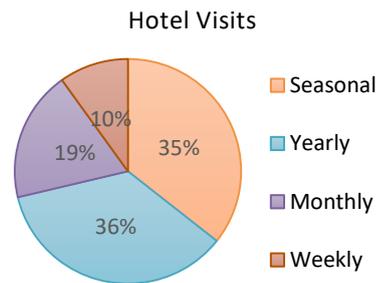
This research is carried out through Exploratory Research methodology. Since the concept of Work from Hotels and targeting Business clientele would need group of prospective respondents to be explored with possible questions, Exploratory Research would give space to look for all possibility of viability. Through this method, Data is collected through Online Survey; sending questionnaire to the prospective

respondents over an email, social media platforms. The questionnaire is prepared on online survey platform. The data is analyzed through pie chart method and NPS method. The questionnaire can be observed in Annexure – I. This choice of methodology is classic in attainment of the desired outcome. The questions formed are closed ended and are appealing the respondents to answer as per their experience.

4 SURVEY ANALYSIS

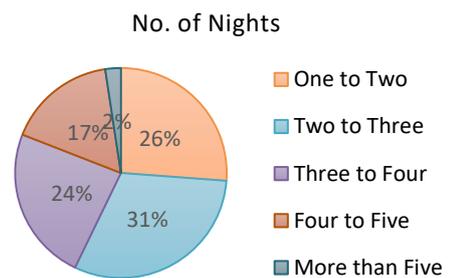
This research paper has doubtlessly brought some worthwhile findings to revitalize the essence of business. Some 42 respondents (frequent hotel visitors) have given their valuable opinions. The findings are furnished below:

As per the survey conducted, 36% of respondents visit hotel seasonal and yearly, wherein 19% visit monthly and 10% visit weekly.



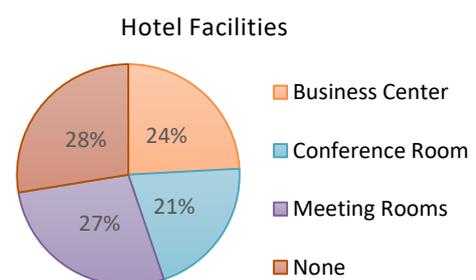
(Figure 1)

As per the survey, the number of nights they would stay in hotels during their official visit, 26% respondents stay for 1 to 2 nights, 31% stay for 2 to 3 nights, 24% stay for 3 to 4 nights, 17% stay for 4 to 5 nights and 2% stay for more than 5 nights.



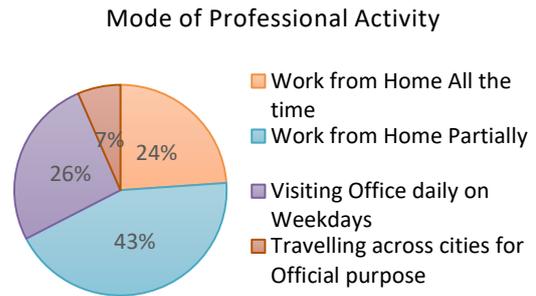
(Figure 2)

The survey stated that all facilities other than accommodation and food and beverage, 28% of the respondents prefer to use Meeting rooms on their every visit, 24% prefer to use Business centre on their visit, and 21% prefer to use Conference Room on their business visit. The rest 28% would only prefer rooms with meals.



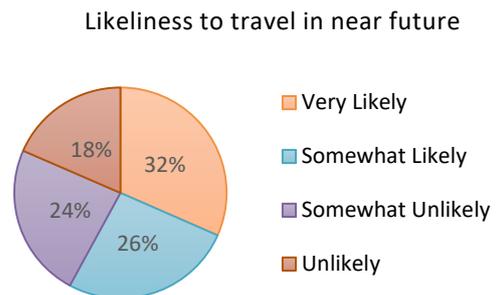
(Figure 3)

The survey concluded that guest’s mode of professional activities post unlock 1, 43% of the respondents say they have to partially work from home and partially visiting the office, 26% of the respondents say they have to visit their offices daily on weekdays for their professional pursuit, 24% registers that they can work from home fully, wherein 7% admit that they have to travel across various cities for the official purpose.



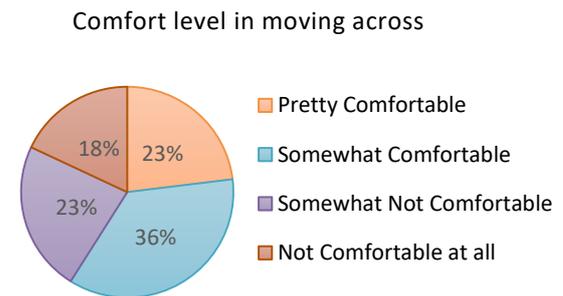
(Figure 4)

The survey stated that likeliness of the guest being asked to travel by their office in near future; 28.6% say it is very likely that they will be asked to travel, 23.8% say it is somewhat likely to be asked, 21.4% say somewhat unlikely and 16.7% say they are absolutely unlikely to be asked.



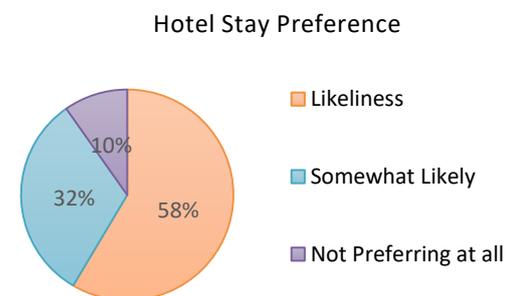
(Figure 5)

The survey concluded guest’s comfort in moving across the cities for an official purpose; 21.4% respondents are pretty comfortable, 33.3% are somewhat comfortable, 21.4% are somewhat not comfortable and 16.7% are not comfortable at all in moving across.



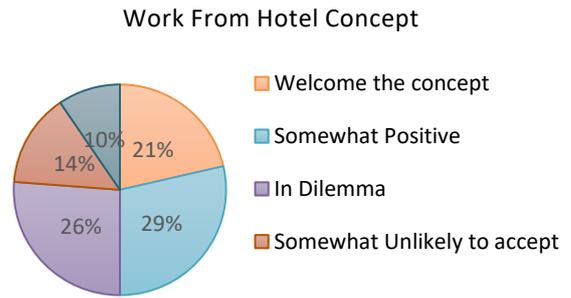
(Figure 6)

The survey showed the options of preferring to stay at hotels which provide guest safer environment; 57.1% expressed their likeliness, 31% are somewhat likely to stay at hotels, 9.5% are not preferring to stay at hotels.



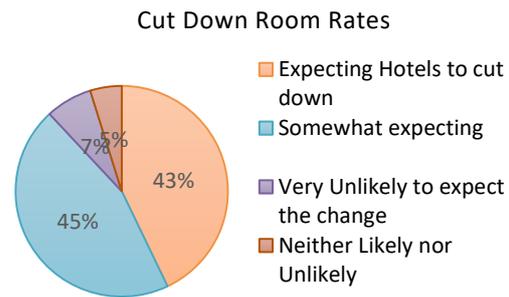
(Figure 7)

The survey showed the options of preferring to adopt the concept of "work from hotel" on weekdays; 21.4% respondents welcome this concept, 28.6% are also somewhat positive in adopting this concept, 26.2% are still in dilemma whether to welcome or not, they are indecisive, wherein 14.3% have shown somewhat unlikeliness towards this concept, and 9.5% are absolute not preferring to adopt this concept.



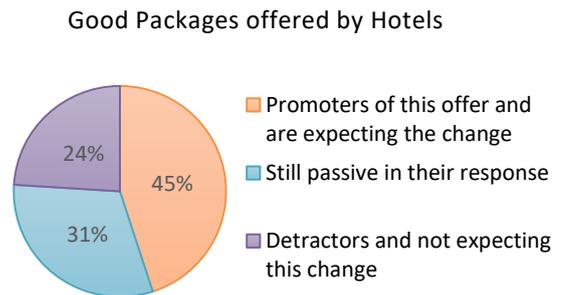
(Figure 8)

The survey concluded that guests expect the hotels to cut down the room rates in this pandemic; 42.9% are expecting to cut down, 45.2% are also expecting somewhat, wherein 7.1% are unlikely to expect this change, 4.8% are neither likely nor unlikely to expect the change.



(Figure 9)

The survey concluded that guests expect some good packages offered by the hotels to business travelers in this pandemic; 45% of respondents are promoters of this offers and are expecting the change, 31% are still passive in their responses, and 24% are detractors and not expecting this change of package. Hence the Net Promoter Score NPS stands for this survey 21 on a positive side.



(Figure 10)

5 FINDINGS

Consequently, if the findings are observed and analyzed;

- 73% of the respondent guests always prefer to use some of the business services like Business centre, meeting rooms, conference room; which we have proposed in our earlier proposal for Work From Hotel Package.
- In another finding, it is observed that 76% of our respondent guests have to come out from their houses for their professional need; which again keeps up our concept of Work From Hotel.
- Further 53% of our respondent are expecting from their offices to move out for business purposes, thus this generates the need for accommodation and food & beverage.
- 54% of respondents are pretty comfortable in moving across cities which again adds on value to our research.
- Hotels will be very happy to find out that 88% of the respondents are comfortable visiting hotels where all the safety protocols are followed in Covid 19. Thus this figure can be an eye-opener for Hoteliers to take some concrete steps towards restructuring their strategies.
- 50% of our guests have shown their welcoming gesture for Work from Hotel concept; which justifies our research concept for boosting the hotel economy.
- At the same time, 88% of our respondent guests are expecting some major revival in room rates with some good packages for business travelers.

6 CONCLUSION

All the above points of observation and analysis figure out that targeting business clientele would be the righteous strategic move for hotels to revive back. At the same time offering such a service like "Work From Hotel" may appeal the business need. The world is walking on the path of a new evolution and every segment of commerce is going to witness that conversion. Hotels have to push forward its strategic force to delight the need of such prospective business givers. Work from Hotels and targeting business clientele could be their throttle force at this moment in pandemic revival situation.

Hence Business Hotels like ITC Royal Gardenia, Bengaluru; a luxury hotel brand of ITC, Taj Lands End, Bandra, Mumbai; a luxury hotel brand of Taj Hotels & Hyatt Ahmedabad; 5 star brands of Hyatt Hotels could concentrate on their parent company's current strategic movement and taking above findings into consideration to revive their Business Revenue Strategy and setting up their Hotels with new normalcy. These hotels own more cured and superior theory of focusing and targeting corporate guests and could design their services suitably.

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Questionnaire

1. How often do you travel and stay at hotels for your official purpose before pandemic?

Daily	Weekly	Fortnightly
Monthly	Seasonal	Yearly

2. How many nights would you prefer to stay in hotels during your official visits to any place?

One to two	Two to three	Three to four
Four to five	More than five	

3. While your hotel visit, which all other Hotel facilities mentioned below other than accommodation & food - beverage do you use?

Business Centre	Conference Room
Meeting Rooms	None

4. What is your mode of business or professional activities after unlock 1 Covid pandemic situation?

Work from Home all time	Work from Home partially
Visiting office daily on weekday	Travelling across cities for official

5. How likely is it that you would be asked to travel by your office in near future?

Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely
Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	

6. How likely will you be comfortable in moving across the cities for official purpose?

Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely
Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	

7. While on your move, would you prefer to stay at hotels which provide you safer environment?

Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely
Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	

8. How likely would you prefer to adopt the concept of "work from hotel" on week days?

Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely
Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	

9. Do you expect the hotels to cut down the room rates in this pandemic?

Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely
Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	

10. How likely are you to expect some good packages offered by the hotels to business travelers in this pandemic?

Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neither likely nor unlikely
Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	