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THE SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

THE DIFFERENCE IN WHAT CUSTOMERS VALUE AND PERCEIVED SERVICE  
QUALITY WHEN STAYING AT BRANDED VERSUS INDEPENDENT PROPERTIES

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## **Abstract**

The goal of this research was to determine whether there were significant differences between customer perceptions of service quality when they were staying at branded hotel properties versus staying at independent hotel properties. By conducting a survey of 105 hospitality management seniors at the Pennsylvania State University, responses were gathered on which to do statistical tests. There were two parallel sections of the survey, one addressing branded properties and the other addressing independent properties. The survey had respondents answer on a 7-point Likert scale their agreement with several statements. The statements had to do with service quality dimensions and related customer service expectation components, as well as some author-designed statements. Analysis of the data showed that for the majority of the dimensions, customers expected essentially the same from branded as independent properties. The two dimensions that showed significant differences were that customers valued the customer service expectation component of Empathy in independent hotels more, and that they would be more willing to pay more for less tangibles in independent hotels. By still valuing the same service quality as branded properties, these results show that customers may desire to stay at independent hotels for the “charm” and “uniqueness” of the properties. They tend to feel that at independent properties, they can have more personalized attention and this difference makes up for lack of size, restaurants, amenities, etc. Limitations of this study include the use of a student sample and its cross-sectional design.

These results can be important to corporate managers, who need to better understand what their customers value from their properties.

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## **Literature Review**

When it comes to comparing the performance of independent hotel properties with the performance of branded hotel properties, there is a lack of empirical research. Perhaps the subjects of customer service and expectations have not been given adequate attention. This study attempts to elucidate some of the differences between independent and branded properties. It is possible that still no conclusive answer exists, but by comparing the expectations customers have of each property, we will be able to get one step closer to finishing the interminable debate.

### *The Argument for Branded Properties*

Graham (2001) goes so far as to say that hotel properties cannot hide from branding. Whether they have a legitimate flag or not, they will be branded one way or another by the consumers, so they might as well make their own brand and tell the customers who they are and what they offer before letting the customer make their own judgment (Graham, 2001). Simple research shows that at its core, branded properties occupy a larger percentage of the market than do independent properties (Szymanski and Busch, 1987). However, most readers would not take this as an undeniable statement of the value of brands. Kinnard et al. (2001) presents us with a list of aspects of a hotel that add to its value outside of its tangible features. Among this list are “the name of the individual hotel and its reputation”, “affiliation with a chain”, and “licenses and permits that are specific to the business operator” (p. 70). In most cases, these assets cannot be found in independent properties without a recognizable name.

However, all of the above may only lead one to question, what exactly *is* a brand? How does one define the value of a name?

Kotler (1991) defines a brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors” (p. 756). In terms of hospitality, the branded properties are parts of chains, defined by the American Hotel & Lodging Association as “three or more hotels operated under a single brand name” (Rushmore, 1992, p. 257). The brands carry with them a level of reliability and certainty in expectations. The associated name relates in the mind of the customer to quality, price, and reputability of the property.

Whether or not it intends to, when a property is affiliated with a brand, certain “promises” are expected. The reduced risk in a known name attracts the majority of both business and leisure travelers (O’Neill and Xiao, 2006). This allows us to postulate that when customers travel frequently, they do not want to chance staying at a property that does not suit their needs and live up to their expectations or deliver to their satisfaction. Therefore, when booking trips, or looking for properties, when a brand is recognized, it is usually chosen over unknown independents, because the customer thinks he or she knows what to expect and does not want to make too much effort regarding the decision. On the other hand, however, the name of a brand could be a loyalty factor for regular recurrent travelers who do know what the property offers and are not only comfortable with it, but dedicated to it, and satisfied enough each time to continue returning.

The majority of a brand’s well-being is based on this type of customer loyalty. However, there is also an unspoken truth that the mere presence of a name incurs better performance by the brand. This concept is known as brand equity, and it is an oft-cited reason that brands are unarguably superior to independent properties, from the business sense. Brand equity is defined by Aaker (1991) as “a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol,

that add or subtract from the value provided by a product or service provided to a firm and/or that firm's customer" (p. 15). Vatjanasaregagul (2007) elaborates on brand equity by comparing it to brand value in that value is the realized financial benefits of the brand, whereas equity is a reflection of the strength of the brand in terms of customer perceptions. Value can be fully controlled whereas equity cannot. Brand equity is an intangible asset of the property, referring to qualities such as quality, satisfaction, personality, or awareness, for example (Vatjanasaregagul, 2007). Equity comes along with having the brand name and the subsequent perceptions from the customers who are looking for expectations to be satisfied from the property.

Brand recognition and equity, however, is only half of the puzzle when it comes to branding success. The other half is the financial performance of the brand. However, that aspect is also two-fold when assessing the argument for branded properties. The first to note is the direct benefit of corporate backing. The benefits of a franchise are many, including operating systems that are tried and true, economies of scale, and sales and marketing advances (O'Neill and Carlbäck, 2010). All of these attributes cost money, including franchise fees. However, the overall benefit to the property should be greater than the cost of the fees, which would indicate that a successful brand pays itself back. "Brand affiliation, name recognition, and good reputation for high-quality service together can add as much as 20 to 25 percent of the going-concern value of a successfully operating hotel" (O'Neill and Xiao, 2006, p. 212). Also, in a franchise, the overall brand company can back the property up and help it get back on its feet. The reputation of the brand can allow a certain level of comfort to the property owner, because the owner does not have to start from scratch, and has a plan already set that has been successful in other properties of the same name. The second to note is the indirect benefit of customer action and reaction to the brand. When a customer finds satisfaction in a particular brand, this

“trademark capital” allows him or her to have a level of assurance from the brand no matter where the brand is located or when the customer stays with a property of this brand (De Alessi and Staaf, 1994). This reliability translates into recognition. When customers perceive the brand as valuable and a suitable fit for their needs, their loyalty allows them to become less price sensitive. There is a phenomenon known as “price premium” that refers to customers paying more for a certain property simply because it is under a brand name to which they are loyal (Temporal, 2002). Customer perceptions of a brand go a long way towards the success of a property, and this satisfaction and quality will be addressed later.

### *The Argument for Independent Properties*

An independent property is one that is unaffiliated with a brand name or flag. There are no franchise affiliations of this property; it is the one and only of its kind. Arguments could be made of the instability of this kind of business, and the lack of corporate backing. Citations could be made extensively to the power of brand equity and customer loyalty and the lack of such assets in an unknown independent.

However, an independent property does not have the volatility as branded properties do during economic ups and downs (Higgins, 2006). With no major company successes or failures to affect its singular property performance, independent properties can withstand overall fluctuations. An independent property can set up the business how the property sees fit for the intended location and target market, without having to sacrifice or give into corporate plans and structures that would not benefit the specific property but only the company at large (Rushmore, 2005). Some can even argue that being independent is more beneficial and makes more sense than being affiliated with a brand because a large-scale company that is not in touch with the

franchise is not making the day to day decisions; the manager of the property itself decides what is best for its own profitability. There are fewer costs and problems to overcome (Jensen, 1983). There are certainly benefits to being recognized with a brand, as mentioned earlier, however, the cost can be substantial; therefore, with independent operation, all of these fees are saved (Rushmore, 2001).

Aside from the financial viewpoints, there are other arguments that support the merit of independent properties. As brand equity is for branded properties, there are intangible attributes of independents that add to their worth. While no defined name for this tribute exists, its value is seen nonetheless, and seen only in independents. O'Neill and Carlbäck (2010), with Rushmore (2004) state it well by saying that historic or charming hotels may be able to perform better on their own without a brand affiliation based simply on their unique characteristics or location. This distinctive quality may also give them reason to enjoy a rate premium that brands cannot, therefore driving both ADR and REVPAR.

### *Customer Expectation, Perception, and Satisfaction of Service Quality*

The focus of this study is to determine whether there are significant differences between expectations that customers have regarding a service encounter when staying at a branded property versus when staying at an independent property. , Therefore, to determine and evaluate the overall outcome of service quality, we must begin by examining each step of this continuum: of expectations, perceptions, and perceived service quality.

Customer expectations are formed from many sources, including their own beliefs and desires, outside influences such as advertising and word of mouth, or previous personal encounters. All of these external factors determine what an individual finds important, and what



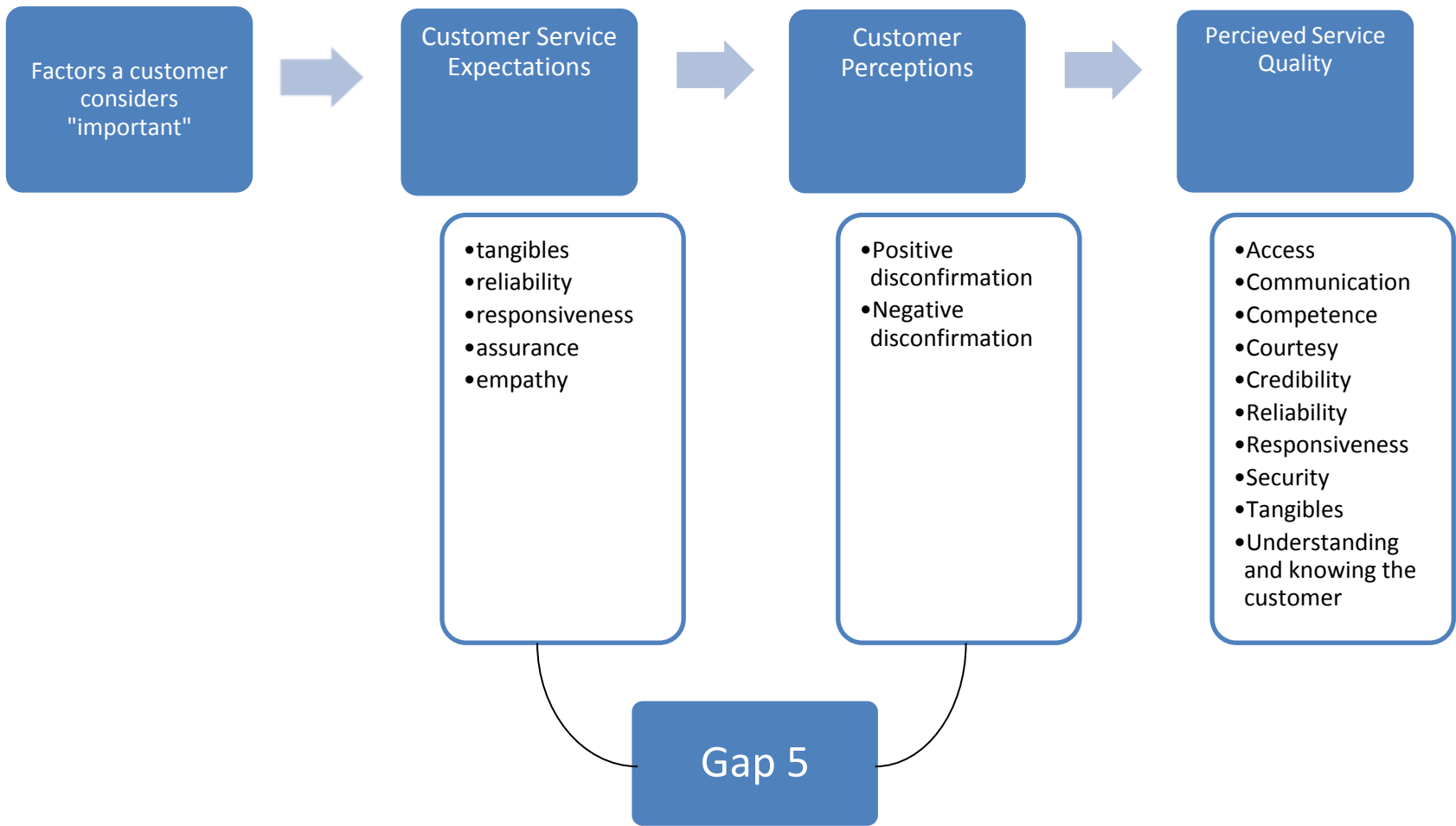
that individual seeks when evaluating a situation or encounter. There is a subtle difference between expectations and importance, but the significant point to make is that what an individual considers “important” dictates what he or she expects. Therefore, one can draw conclusions about what an individual expects, based on what he or she finds “important”. Parasuraman, Berry, and Zeithaml (1991) have illustrated five components that make up the service expectations that customers have. “Customer service expectations can be categorized into five overall dimensions: reliability, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.” (p. 41) They differentiate reliability (as a component to simply meet customer expectations) from the “process dimensions” of assurance, responsiveness, and empathy (that work to exceed customer expectations).

Based on their ideas of what is important and thus their expectations of service, customers form perceptions at the time service is encountered. These expectations and preconceived ideals of what the customer considers important can affect the perceptions of the actual outcome of the service presentation. Based on their judgment of how the service was then executed, the Gap Analysis can be used to analyze the disconfirmations between expectations and perceptions, and whether they are positive or negative. For purposes of our discussion here, Gap 5 is the most appropriate to analyze. This gap measures the difference between expected service and perceived service (Parasuraman, Berry, Zeithaml, 1991). Churchill (1982) states that “satisfaction is related to the size and direction of the disconfirmation experience, where disconfirmation is related to the person’s initial expectations” (p. 491). If the difference favors the perceived service, then it is known as a positive disconfirmation. If, on the other hand, the difference favors the expected service, then it is known as a negative disconfirmation.

When customers receive superior service, they begin to relate that encounter to a definition of quality. This perceived service quality is not the same thing as customer satisfaction, however. Perceived service quality is an examination of the difference between expectations and perceptions. For our purposes, the short-term evaluation, satisfaction, describes the “transaction-specific measure”, whereas service quality is more of a “long-run overall evaluation” (Cronin and Taylor, 1992, p. 56). Quality exists when perceptions outweigh expectations (Vatjanasaregagul, 2007), and the customer experiences long-term satisfaction. Parasuraman, Berry, and Zeithaml (1985) list several dimensions that can help measure service quality: access, communication, competence, courtesy, credibility, reliability, responsiveness, security, tangibles, and understanding and knowing the customer.

By studying the factors that customers consider important when encountering service and the dimensions of perceived service quality, this research hopes to illustrate some of the differences between expectations, perceptions, and perceived service quality that customers have when comparing branded versus independent properties.

What follows is an illustration created to relate all of the above definitions and dimensions together, to better understand the purpose of this research.



## **Hypothesis**

The goal of this research is to determine whether or not there are significant differences in what a customer considers to be important, and the expectations they then have when the customers are staying at branded properties versus when the customers are staying at independent properties. Customers create service expectations based on their beliefs, values, and what they consider to be important. By studying differences in the responses customers have when considering what is important to the customer and the resulting perceived service quality the customers have during an encounter, it can be determined whether or not there are significant differences between results for branded versus independent properties.

The following are the hypotheses written by the author of this study in an attempt to discover if there are differences in expectations and perceived service quality customers have when regarding branded versus independent properties.

### *Hypothesis 1*

Ho: The dimension of Access is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Access is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Access is a dimension of service quality. It relates to the ability of a customer to easily find a hotel employee when the customer has a question or a need. How visible and approachable are the employees?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties, since an employee should be easy to reach regardless of the type of property.

### *Hypothesis 2*

Ho: The dimension of Communication is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Communication is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Communication is another dimension of service quality. It relates to the customer's ability to approach an employee of the hotel and easily speak with him or her to have a question or need addressed. Is there an employee present, or does the customer have to deal with automated processes?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties, since employees should be in touch with the customers regardless of the type of property. While new technologies may be emerging, especially for large branded properties, many customers still wish to speak with someone in person, and it is not yet the norm to have an automated check-in or anything of the like. Perhaps this hypothesis would yield different results in the coming years.

### *Hypothesis 3*

Ho: The dimension of Competence is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Competence is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Competence is another dimension of service quality. It relates to the customer's confidence in the abilities of the hotel's employees. Can the employees answer questions to the best of their knowledge? Do the employees do their job correctly?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties, since employees should know their job, be familiar with the property and the location, and do a decent job regardless of the type of property.

#### *Hypothesis 4*

Ho: The dimension of Courtesy is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Courtesy is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Courtesy is another dimension of service quality. It relates to the way a customer interacts with the hotel's employees, and the greeting and attitude they receive from the employee. Does the employee greet them with a smile and try to make the customer feel special?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties, since employees should be in touch with the customers regardless of the type of property. Representatives of the hotel need to be welcoming and make the customer feel at home.

#### *Hypothesis 5*

Ho: The dimension of Credibility is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Credibility is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Credibility is another dimension of service quality. It relates to the way employees are trained and execute their duties for the customers. Can the customer expect the same service and procedures whenever they stay at the hotel, regardless of the employee they are interacting with?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties, since employees should know their job and deliver standard service regardless of the type of property.

#### *Hypothesis 6*

Ho: The dimension of Reliability is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Reliability is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Reliability is another dimension of service quality. It relates to the ability of the customer to have the same experience each time they stay at the hotel. Can their experiences be repeatable?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties, since employees should be trained to know their job and deliver repeatable service regardless of the type of property.

### *Hypothesis 7*

Ho: The dimension of Responsiveness is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Responsiveness is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Responsiveness is another dimension of service quality. It relates to the speed and accuracy the employees have when responding to a customer's question or need. Is the customer taken care of in an efficient and friendly manner?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties, since employees should take care of their employees and place them at a high regard, regardless of the type of property.

### *Hypothesis 8*

Ho: The dimension of Security is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Security is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Security is another dimension of service quality. It relates to the safety customers feel when staying at a hotel. Do the customers feel safe, and do they trust they will be taken care of if something were to happen on property?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties, since customers need to feel secure, regardless of the type of property.



### *Hypothesis 9*

Ho: The dimension of Tangibles is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Tangibles is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Tangibles are another dimension of service quality. They are the physical components of the hotel property, including the building, the amenities, the rooms, and the employees. Is everything up to standard, well-maintained, and in place?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties, since the hotel should meet customer's individual standards, regardless of the type of property. Customers may choose different properties for different physical reasons, but the property should still be well-maintained and appealing to some degree regardless.

### *Hypothesis 10*

Ho: The dimension of Understanding the Customer is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The dimension of Understanding the Customer is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Understanding the Customer is another dimension of service quality. It relates to how proactive the employees are with regards to the customers' needs. Do the employees get to know the customer, so that they can make their stay more enjoyable by anticipating their needs?

The author believes this dimension might be the different in branded versus independent properties. Independent properties that cater to less people may have more long-term regular

guests, so the owner and employees might be able to get to know them easier and make their stay more customized. Branded properties have loyalty programs, but the database is so large, it might be difficult to accurately get all of the customizations correct everytime, and perhaps those frequent travelers do not value the attention as much and just want a decent, standard, and uncomplicated stay.

### *Hypothesis 11*

Ho: The service expectation of Tangibles is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The service expectation of Tangibles is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Tangibles are one of a customer's expectations of service. When comparing hotels, tangibles of the property are taken into consideration. Does the hotel physically offer what the customer desires and meet the customer's own standards of appearance?

The author believes this dimension might be the different in branded versus independent properties. Independent properties offer a different level of amenities and the physical layout and size of the property is different than in large branded properties. One is not better than the other, but the fact that they are catering to different markets makes the author believe this will be a difference in what customers find important. They will be choosing hotels, to some degree, based on what it looks like and what it has to offer.

### *Hypothesis 12*

Ho: The service expectation of Reliability is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The service expectation of Reliability is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Reliability is another one of a customer's expectations of service. When comparing hotels, reliability of the hotel is taken into consideration. Can the customer get what they expect? If the customer reads or hears something about the hotel from the Internet or word-of-mouth, can the hotel live up to the expectations?

The author believes this dimension might be the different in branded versus independent properties. Branded properties value themselves on standardization. Independent hotels, though they may advertise and have experiences customers have be related to others, might not have the resources or the control that branded properties do to manage customer relations. They might not be able to as quickly fix problems or deal with social media, thus they might not be perceived to live up to expectations if the customer sees the property or the review at the "wrong" time.

### *Hypothesis 13*

Ho: The service expectation of Responsiveness is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The service expectation of Responsiveness is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Responsiveness is another one of a customer's expectations of service. When comparing hotels, responsiveness of the employees is taken into account. How long does the customer have

to wait on the phone when calling customer service? Is there always an employee available at the hotel when the customer needs one?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties. Even though the sizes and number of employees differ, there should be a proportionate amount of employees to handle customer calls and needs.

#### *Hypothesis 14*

Ho: The service expectation of Assurance is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The service expectation of Assurance is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Assurance is another one of a customer's expectations of service. When comparing hotels, knowledge of the employees is taken into consideration. Does the employee know the property, what it has to offer, and can the employee answer all of the questions the customer has? Does the employee have time to answer all of the questions the customer has or do they seem distracted?

The author believes this dimension should be the same in branded as well as independent properties. Even though the sizes and number of employees differ, the employees should know the information pertinent to the property and location.

#### *Hypothesis 15*

Ho: The service expectation of Empathy is of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Ha: The service expectation of Empathy is not of equal importance in branded and independent properties.

Empathy is another one of a customer's expectations of service. When comparing hotels, empathy of the hotel employees is taken into account. Empathy has to do with making the experience independent and personal for each customer. Does the employee get to know the customer and can they call the customer by name? Will the employees understand the customers' needs?

The author believes this dimension might be the different in branded versus independent properties. The charm of independent hotels might include the fact that the customer doesn't just feel like another "warm body". The perception seems to be that in independent hotels, they have more time to care for the individual customer on a customized basis.

The following four hypotheses have to do with overall service quality. In order to have positive confirmations of service quality, a customer's expectations must match their perceptions of the delivered service. Meeting or exceeding expectations, then, can lead to service quality, which hotel manager's hope to achieve so that customers will return. The following hypotheses are variations of the above relationship. Sometimes respondents answer survey questions differently when the wording is changed, so the next six hypotheses are designed by the author to see if service quality can be perceived if the customer believes there to be a positive match between expectations and perceptions of the service. This would tie together the objectives of the research outlined previously.

### *Hypothesis 16*

Ho: When expectations are met and/or exceeded, customers are likely to return

Ha: When expectations are met and/or exceeded, customers are not likely to return

*Hypothesis 17*

Ho: When expectations are not met and/or exceeded, customers are not likely to return

Ha: When expectations are not met and/or exceeded, customers are likely to return

*Hypothesis 18*

Ho: When expectations are met and/or exceeded, customers are likely to say the property had good quality

Ha: When expectations are met and/or exceeded, customers are not likely to say the property had good quality

*Hypothesis 19*

Ho: When expectations are not met and/or exceeded, customers are not likely to say the property had good quality

Ha: When expectations are not met and/or exceeded, customers are likely to say the property had good quality

*Hypothesis 20*

Ho: Customers expect more (in terms of tangibles) from properties they are paying more for

Ha: Customers do not expect more (in terms of tangibles) from properties they are paying more for

This question was designed by the author to determine if there is a relationship in customer's minds between the monetary value a hotel offers and the physical appearance and the offerings a hotel offers.

### *Hypothesis 21*

Ho: Customers expect more (in terms of service and quality) from properties they are paying more for

Ha: Customers do not expect more (in terms of service and quality) from properties they are paying more for

This question was designed by the author to determine if there is a relationship in customer's minds between the monetary value a hotel offers and the service quality a hotel offers.

The last two hypotheses were designed by the author to tie together the relationship between expectations and satisfaction, as studied above. These hypotheses aim to see if customer satisfaction can be achieved if the customer believes there to be a positive match between expectations and perceptions of the service. However, after analyzing the results and examining the questions, it is likely that the questions do not relate to the anticipated study. To more accurately design questions aiming at satisfaction, the author would have had to measure expectations pre-experience and then measure the satisfaction post-experience. This is outside of the scope and design of the study

## **Methodology**

To determine whether there is a difference in what a customer values when staying at branded versus independent properties and how this relates to their perceived service quality, two similar surveys were developed, one to address branded properties, and one to address independent properties.

The design of the survey included two separate, 23-question sections, one requesting participants to provide reactions in relation to branded properties, and one in relation to independent properties. The questions were identical but for the replacement of the word “branded” with “independent” on the respective statements.

The first 10 questions address the dimensions of service quality. The following 5 questions address customer expectations. The last 8 questions are specific to the study at hand. By comparing the two surveys, statement-by-statement, hopefully it can be determined whether or not there are significant differences in the answers when pertaining to branded versus independent properties.

The survey was distributed to a class of graduating seniors studying Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management at The Pennsylvania State University. Taken in person, the survey was collected at the end of the class. 105 surveys were completed and available for analysis.

The survey was designed on a 7-point Likert scale for each of the 23 parallel statements. There were also 4 multiple choice questions that asked the respondent to choose one response. These responses were entered into Minitab 16 Statistical Software for analysis and coded. Each statement's answer was recorded as a value between 1 and 7 (according to the respondent's answer on the Likert scale).



To determine if there were significant differences between the parallel statements, the responses to all 46 statements of the 105 surveys were coded into Minitab 16 Statistical Software. Then, the responses for the branded property questions were compared by ANOVA with the responses for independent properties, and tested to see if they were statistically significant (having a p-value less than 0.05). If the parallel statements have a p-value less than 0.05, then the responses are statistically different from each other and therefore are the topics to focus on. These will show where the customers answered significantly differently between branded properties and independent properties.

## **Results**

### *Hypothesis 1*

The first statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Access. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.469. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore, the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded to be of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 2*

The second statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Communication. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.300. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 3*

The third statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Competence. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.361. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

#### *Hypothesis 4*

The fourth statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Courtesy. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.140. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

#### *Hypothesis 5*

The fifth statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Credibility. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.119. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

#### *Hypothesis 6*

The sixth statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Reliability. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.097. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 7*

The seventh statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Responsiveness. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.051. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 8*

The eighth statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Security. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.160. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 9*

The ninth statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Tangibles. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.206. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 10*

The tenth statement had to do with the perceived service quality dimension of Understanding the Customer. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.469. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 11*

The eleventh statement had to do with the service expectation of Tangibles. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.392. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 12*

The twelfth statement had to do with the service expectation of Reliability. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.093. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 13*

The thirteenth statement had to do with the service expectation of Responsiveness. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.280. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 14*

The fourteenth statement had to do with the service expectation of Assurance. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.334. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This dimension can be concluded as of equal importance for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 15*

The fifteenth statement had to do with the service expectation of Empathy. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.003. This level is lower than the significance level of 0.05; therefore, the responses are statistically different from each other. We reject the null hypothesis. This dimension is defined by Parasuraman as “the ability to provide the customer with ‘caring, individualized attention’” (1988, p. 23). For all measures of mean, median, and third quartile, the responses were, on average, higher for independent properties than branded properties. This means that customers value more personal attention when they stay at an independent property (such as using their name more often, anticipating their needs, etc.)

Several tests were then run to analyze the relationship between the two questions, on both aspects and all of the corresponding combinations.

When analyzing the expectation of service in a branded property with how many times the customer has stayed at an independent property, the p-value is 0.000, which is statistically significant. These two questions have significantly different answers. This would mean that the customers that value Empathy from branded properties would stay at independent properties less, and the customers that do not value Empathy from branded properties would stay at independent properties more. This inverse relationship might lead to the belief that customers value Empathy, but may not go seeking it if they have a loyalty to a certain brand that treats them well.

When analyzing the expectation of service in a branded property with how many times the customer has stayed at a branded property, the p-value is 0.000, which is statistically significant. These two questions have significantly different answers. This would mean that for those that do not value Empathy from branded properties would not stay at them often, and those that do value Empathy from branded properties would stay at branded properties often. It seems customers enjoy finding personalized attention from brands, but if they are not loyal, would enjoy independent properties.

When analyzing the expectation of service in an independent property with how many times the customer has stayed at a branded property, the p-value is 0.000, which is statistically significant. These two questions have significantly different answers. This would mean that customers who value Empathy from independent hotels would not stay at branded properties often, and the customers that do not value Empathy would stay at branded properties more often than at independents. Perhaps customers feel that customized and personalized attention is more needed and entertained at independent properties than in branded properties. Branded properties

have their loyalty programs, and customers that value Empathy would enjoy these. But for the customers that do not value Empathy, they would not mind staying at branded properties (with or without a loyalty program) because they simply want a decent hotel night stay.

When analyzing the expectation of service in an independent property with how many times the customer has stayed at an independent property, the p-value is 0.000, which is statistically significant. These two questions have significantly different answers. This would mean that customers who value Empathy from independent hotels do not stay at them that often, and those that do not value Empathy would stay at them more. This is an interesting phenomenon, and it leads the author to suppose that customers who are unfamiliar with independents do not expect this level of personalized service because they are at the hotel because there is no other property available, it is where a larger party is registered, or they simply want the charm of a location but want to travel independently.

Overall, the relationship between a customer's value on Empathy and the type of property they choose to stay at is significantly different when considering branded versus independent properties. Customers value Empathy when they are loyal to a property, or enjoy the novelty of an independent that can offer them a unique experience. Otherwise, travelers simply want to have a good night stay wherever they are.

### *Hypothesis 16*

The sixteenth statement had to do with likelihood of returning to a property that met or exceeded customers' expectations. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.559. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses



are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This statement can be concluded as of equal validity for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

#### *Hypothesis 17*

The seventeenth statement had to do with likelihood of returning to a property that did not meet or exceed customers' expectations. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.501. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This statement can be concluded as of equal validity for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

#### *Hypothesis 18*

The eighteenth statement had to do with likelihood of saying that a property had good quality if it met a customer's expectations. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.798. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This statement can be concluded as of equal validity for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

#### *Hypothesis 19*

The nineteenth statement had to do with likelihood of not saying that a property had good quality if it did not meet a customer's expectations. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.272. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05;

therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This statement can be concluded as of equal validity for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds.

### *Hypothesis 20*

The twentieth statement had to do with what customers value in the property and what they receive during their stay. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.046. This level is less than the significance level of 0.05; therefore, the responses are statistically different from each other. We reject the null hypothesis. This statement can be concluded as not of equal validity for both branded and independent properties in the customers' minds. The mean and the first quartile are both lower in responses with regard to independent properties. Therefore, customers are willing to pay more for less "things", perhaps smaller sizes of rooms, etc. in independent properties.

Running more ANOVA tests on these questions was required to get a fuller picture of the relationship.

When comparing what a customer is willing to pay more for in branded properties with how many times they have stayed at an independent property, the p-value is 0.000, which is statistically significant. These two questions had significantly different answers, which means customers don't mind paying more for things in a branded property if they do not often stay at independent properties.

When comparing what a customer is willing to pay more for in branded properties with how many times they stay at branded properties, the p-value is 0.000, which is statistically significant. These two questions had significantly different answers, which means that when they

often stay at branded properties, they learn to know what their value is at a branded property and they might come up with a certain scale of their individual price range. Savvy travelers better understand what their money can get at a hotel.

When comparing what a customer is willing to pay more for in an independent property with how many times they stay at independent properties, the p-value is 0.000, which is statistically significant. These two questions have significantly different answers, which means that individuals are more willing to pay a higher price for less tangibles in an independent property. Perhaps they value the location and charm more than the size or number of offerings in the property. These customers more highly value the experience than the price range.

When comparing what a customer is more willing to pay more for in an independent property with how many times they stay at a branded property, the p-value is 0.000, which means that when customers are more willing to pay for less things in an independent property, they do not usually stay at branded properties. A customer with a limited fund would be more willing to pay for less amenities and offerings in an independent property than a branded property. Customers that travel to branded properties more often expect more “bang for their buck”.

Overall, it seems that when a customer values “things” over “experience”, they stay at branded properties. They can more easily find a property that fits their budget and requirements, and once they become well-seasoned travelers, they know what their dollar is worth. When a customer wants an “experience” or unique location, they more often choose independents, regardless of price and what they get for that price.

### *Hypothesis 21*

The twenty-first statement had to do with importance of service and quality to the customer and the “value” of these things to a customer during his or her stay. Running a One-Way ANOVA on the responses produced a p-value of 0.137. This level is greater than the significance level of 0.05; therefore the responses are not statistically different from each other. We fail to reject the null hypothesis. This statement can be concluded as of equal validity for both branded and independent properties in the customers’ minds.

## Table of Results

Hypothesis	P-Value	Significant?
1-Access	0.469	No
2-Communication	0.300	No
3-Competence	0.361	No
4-Courtesy	0.140	No
5-Credibility	0.119	No
6-Reliability	0.097	No
7-Responsiveness	0.051	No
8-Security	0.160	No
9-Tangibles	0.206	No
10-Understanding the Customer	0.062	No
11-Tangibles	0.392	No
12-Reliability	0.093	No
13-Responsiveness	0.280	No
14-Assurance	0.334	No
15-Empathy	0.003	Yes
16	0.559	No
17	0.501	No
18	0.798	No
19	0.272	No
20	0.046	Yes
21	0.137	No

Also, there were four multiple choice questions that the participants were asked to answer. These four questions were also entered into Minitab 16 and analyzed using ANOVA.

The four questions were the following: What is your age? How often do you travel and stay at a hotel? How many times have you stayed at an independent property in the last three years? How many times have you stayed at a branded property in the last three years?

The mean answer for question 1 is 3, which corresponds to an answer of an age range of 21-23 years old. Our sample was a class of college undergraduate seniors, so there was not much spread in the data. The mean answer for question 2 is 3.57, which corresponds to an answer between “Every other month” and “Once or twice a year”. This leads to the belief that the majority of the students do not travel often. Therefore, their “ideals” for branded and independent properties may be limited. The mean answer for question 3 is 2.38 and for question 4 is 3.61, indicating that students travel to branded properties more than independent properties.

The relationship among the responses to these questions were more fully analyzed according to the hypotheses that were significantly different, to examine if these questions had any relation to the difference in the answers.

## **Analyses**

By analyzing all of the above results, it is seen that on the majority of both Service Quality and Customer Expectations dimensions, the participants responded similarly for both branded and independent properties. There were only two statements that had responses that were significantly different from each other, when analyzing the branded property statements side-by-side with the independent property statements.

The first statement that had significantly different responses was statement 15: “When I am planning to stay at a/n [insert] hotel, it is important to me that employees use my name when making a reservation and when I arrive at the property.” This statement had to do with the Customer Expectation dimension of Empathy, defined in the hypothesis presented previously.

The second statement that had significantly different responses was statement 20: “I expect more (in terms of tangibles— more amenities, larger bathroom, etc.) from a/n [insert] hotel that I am paying more for.” This statement was written by the author to gauge expectations customers would have in relation to the price they would be willing to pay.

All of the other parallel statements had similar responses from those surveyed for branded as well as independent properties. Therefore, the two statements with significantly different responses require further explanation.

For the first statement, the responses were higher from the section of the survey regarding independent properties. This result means that when these customers stay at independent hotels, they not only enjoy, but they expect to have more personalized attention from the hotel staff. Customers may believe that independent properties are smaller, attracting more of a “niche” crowd, and they can therefore handle services that are geared towards getting to know the individual guest.

For the second statement, the responses were lower on the section of the survey on independent properties. This result means that when customers are planning to stay at an independent property, it may be for the unique location, the attractive “charm” of the property, or other factors that branded properties may not have to the same degree. By indicating that they would be willing to pay more, even if the property offered less, it illustrates that when booking an independent property, it may be more for the “charm” and unique experiences than for the standard hotel stay. Guests may be more willing to pay for a one-of-a-kind experience.

These results can be significant to corporate hotel managers and/or owners of independent properties. By understanding what the customers are expecting, as well as what their priorities and motivations are for booking the respective types of properties, decisions can be made to improve upon existing processes, reach out to more of the market they are seeking, or to more properly satisfy the customers they might already attract.



## **Limitations**

There are several limitations that are present in this study. The respondents sought after for the survey were all students involved in a hospitality management program. Therefore, while they might have knowledge of the different types of properties, they might not have the most experience with both types of properties. Also, it was a narrow age range, so that limitation can be noted here, as well.

The survey included questions modeled after factors that customers find important when considering their expectations of service and dimensions of perceived service quality. However, it also included questions designed by the author for specific relation to the study at hand. Without a test pilot of the questions, or significant research background, the questions might have garnered different responses if formatted or worded in a different way. Also, the Literature Review and design of the study was based on customer service expectations, whereas the survey was written to incorporate important aspects of service. The author, with additional research in the Literature Review, understands that there is a difference in research between “expectations” and “importance”. However, the basis for the study should remain stable, as there is also research that supports the idea that what someone expects comes from what they consider important. This was written about in the Literature Review. The survey questions dealt with “importance”, when the author believed them to deal with “expectations”, so there might be some discrepancies in the research, but this is outside the intended scope of the design.

This research was cross-sectional, as well, meaning that it is not representative of the entire population. Because it was only studying a specific group of individuals at one point in time, it cannot be related completely to a general consensus.

Possible questions that may be asked further could include: what the customer determines as an “independent property” in his or her mind; how much more they would be willing to pay simply for the “charm” and experience of an independent property; or if the results would be different comparing answers from Baby Boomers versus the Generations X and Y.

## **Conclusions**

Overall, there is not a lot of evidence of significant differences between what customers value in branded hotel properties versus what they value in independent properties. However, the two differences that were noted were related and not contradictory.

Customers may be willing to pay more for an independent hotel property that may offer less tangibles than a branded property, but customers at the same time value more of a personal experience from an independent property.

These results can be utilized (as well as expanded upon) by corporate managers to better target their audiences, and to better serve the customers they already attract.

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## Appendix

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING WITH REGARDS TO BRANDED PROPERTIES (ex. Marriott, Hilton, Holiday Inn, etc.)  Please rate on a scale of 1-7 (1 being Strongly Disagree and 7 being Strongly Agree) how like you are to agree with the following statements:							
	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
1. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that I can easily contact an employee to answer my question or meet my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that I can speak with someone who understands my concerns and listens to my comments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that I can see the employees doing their job so I can confidently trust their services.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that I receive a warm welcome and a smile whenever I interact with employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that I can expect the same service from employees every time that I am there.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that my experiences be repeatable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that the employees respond to my needs in a timely and friendly manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that I feel safe.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that the physical surroundings and the property are well-maintained, the rooms are clean, and the employees are dressed to uniform.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. When I stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that employees make conversation with me in an attempt to learn about my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. When I am planning to stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that the appearance of the property is neat, clean, and well-organized.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. When I am planning to stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that I get what I expect.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. When I am planning to stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that employees are there to answer my questions in a timely manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. When I am planning to stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that employees speak to me and give me adequate attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. When I am planning to stay at a branded hotel, it is important to me that employees use my name when making a reservation and when I arrive at the property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. When my expectations are met and/or exceeded, I am likely to return.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. When my expectations are not met, I am likely not to return.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. When my expectations are met/exceeded, I am likely to say that the branded hotel had good quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. When my expectations are not met, I am likely to say that the branded hotel had bad quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. I expect more (in terms of tangibles— more amenities, larger bathroom, etc.) from a branded hotel that I am paying more for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I expect more (in terms of service and quality) from a branded hotel that I am paying more for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. When my stay at a branded hotel meets/exceeds my expectations, I am likely to say that I am satisfied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. When my stay at a branded hotel does not meet my expectations, I am likely to say that I am dissatisfied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

<b><u>ANSWER THE FOLLOWING WITH REGARDS TO INDEPENDENT PROPERTIES (not branded)</u></b>								
<b>Please rate on a scale of 1-7 (1 being Strongly Disagree and 7 being Strongly Agree) how like you are to agree with the following statements:</b>								
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>						<b>Strongly Agree</b>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that I can easily contact an employee to answer my question or meet my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that I can speak with someone who understands my concerns and listens to my comments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that I can see the employees doing their job so I can confidently trust their services.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that I receive a warm welcome and a smile whenever I interact with employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that I can expect the same service from employees every time that I am there.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that my experiences be repeatable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that the employees respond to my needs in a timely and friendly manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that I feel safe.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that the physical surroundings and the property are well-maintained, the rooms are clean, and the employees are dressed to uniform.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. When I stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that employees make conversation with me in an attempt to learn about my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. When I am planning to stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that the appearance of the property is neat, clean, and well-organized.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. When I am planning to stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that I get what I expect.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. When I am planning to stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that employees are there to answer my questions in a timely manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. When I am planning to stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that employees speak to me and give me adequate attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. When I am planning to stay at an independent hotel, it is important to me that employees use my name when making a reservation and when I arrive at the property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. When my expectations are met and/or exceeded, I am likely to return.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
17. When my expectations are not met, I am likely not to return.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. When my expectations are met/exceeded, I am likely to say that the independent hotel had good quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19. When my expectations are not met, I am likely to say that the independent hotel had bad quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
20. I expect more (in terms of tangibles— more amenities, larger bathroom, etc.) from an independent hotel that I am paying more for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
21. I expect more (in terms of service and quality) from an independent hotel that I am paying more for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
22. When my stay at an independent hotel meets/exceeds my expectations, I am likely to say that I am satisfied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
23. When my stay at an independent hotel does not meet my expectations, I am likely to say that I am dissatisfied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



What is your age? (Circle one)

15-17

18-20

21-23

24-26

27-29

How often do you travel and stay at a hotel? (Choose one)

- a. Once a week
- b. Several times a month
- c. Every other month
- d. Once or twice a year

How many times have you stayed at an independent property in the past three years? (Choose one)

- a. 0
- b. 1-2
- c. 3-4
- d. 5-6
- e. 7-8
- f. 9 +

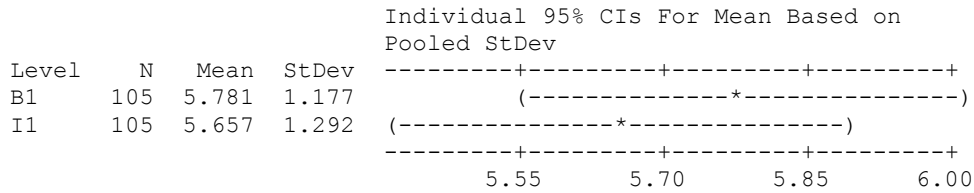
How many times have you stayed at a branded property in the past three years? (Choose one)

- a. 0
- b. 1-2
- c. 3-4
- d. 5-6
- e. 7-8
- f. 9 +

**Figure 1**  
**One-way ANOVA: B1, I1**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	0.80	0.80	0.53	0.469
Error	208	317.62	1.53		
Total	209	318.42			

S = 1.236    R-Sq = 0.25%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.00%

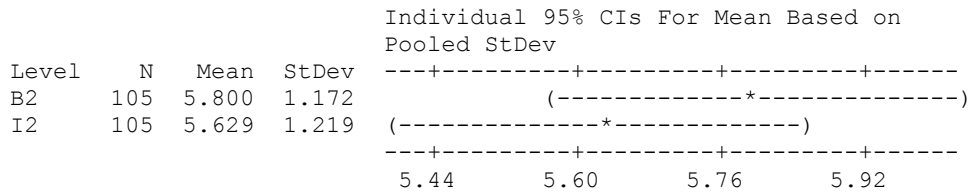


Pooled StDev = 1.236

**Figure 2**  
**One-way ANOVA: B2, I2**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	1.54	1.54	1.08	0.300
Error	208	297.31	1.43		
Total	209	298.86			

S = 1.196    R-Sq = 0.52%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.04%

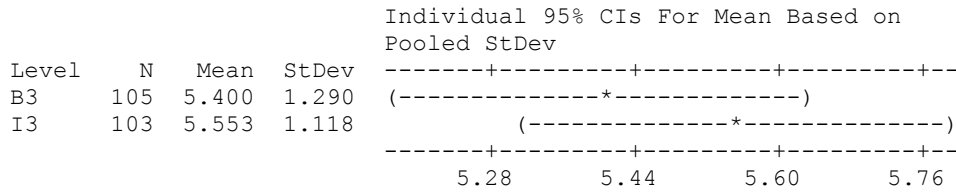


Pooled StDev = 1.196

**Figure 3**  
**One-way ANOVA: B3, I3**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	1.22	1.22	0.84	0.361
Error	206	300.66	1.46		
Total	207	301.88			

S = 1.208    R-Sq = 0.41%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.00%

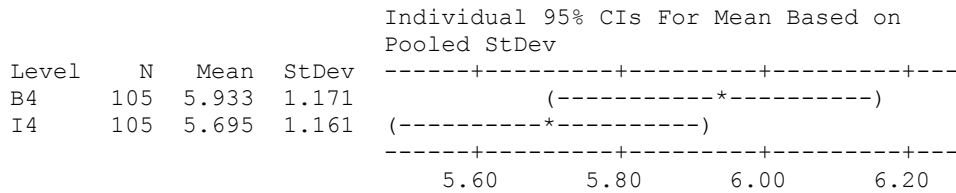


Pooled StDev = 1.208

**Figure 4**  
**One-way ANOVA: B4, I4**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	2.98	2.98	2.19	0.140
Error	208	282.78	1.36		
Total	209	285.76			

S = 1.166    R-Sq = 1.04%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.57%

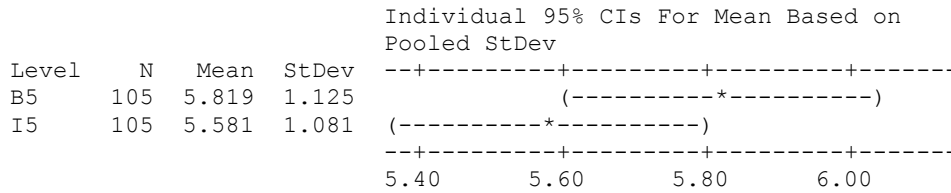


Pooled StDev = 1.166

**Figure 5**  
**One-way ANOVA: B5, I5**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	2.98	2.98	2.45	0.119
Error	208	253.12	1.22		
Total	209	256.10			

S = 1.103    R-Sq = 1.16%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.69%

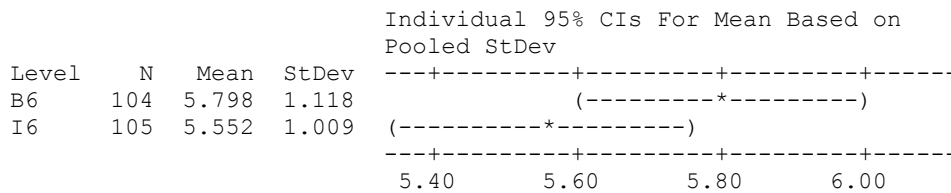


Pooled StDev = 1.103

**Figure 6**  
**One-way ANOVA: B6, I6**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	3.15	3.15	2.78	0.097
Error	207	234.72	1.13		
Total	208	237.88			

S = 1.065    R-Sq = 1.33%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.85%

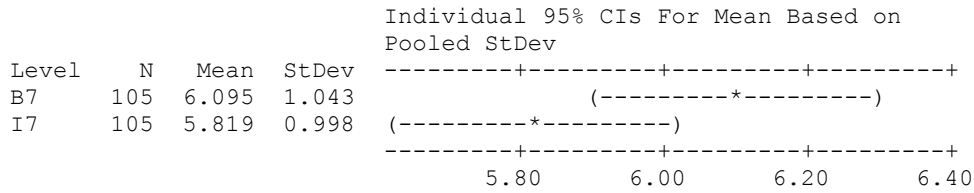


Pooled StDev = 1.065

**Figure 7**  
**One-way ANOVA: B7, I7**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	4.00	4.00	3.85	0.051
Error	208	216.61	1.04		
Total	209	220.61			

S = 1.020    R-Sq = 1.82%    R-Sq(adj) = 1.34%

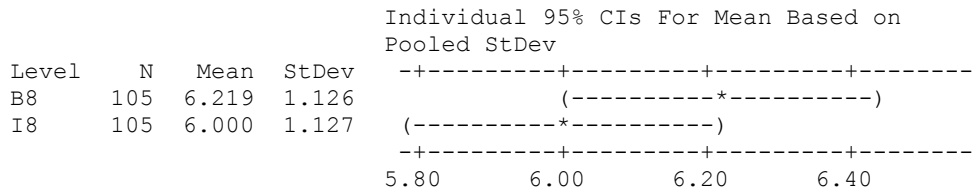


Pooled StDev = 1.020

**Figure 8**  
**One-way ANOVA: B8, I8**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	2.52	2.52	1.98	0.160
Error	208	263.96	1.27		
Total	209	266.48			

S = 1.127    R-Sq = 0.95%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.47%

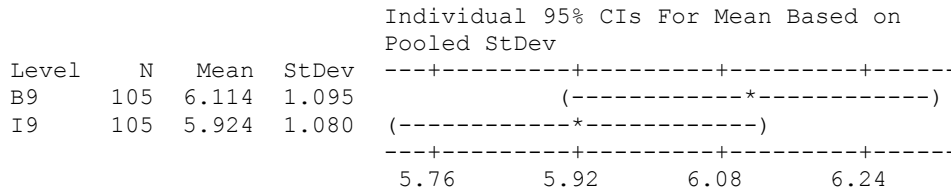


Pooled StDev = 1.127

**Figure 9**  
**One-way ANOVA: B9, I9**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	1.90	1.90	1.61	0.206
Error	208	246.02	1.18		
Total	209	247.92			

S = 1.088    R-Sq = 0.77%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.29%

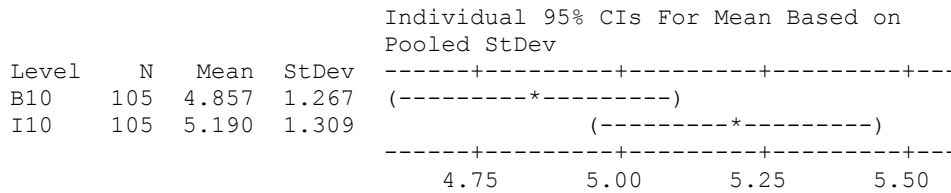


Pooled StDev = 1.088

**Figure 10**  
**One-way ANOVA: B10, I10**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	5.83	5.83	3.52	0.062
Error	208	345.05	1.66		
Total	209	350.88			

S = 1.288    R-Sq = 1.66%    R-Sq(adj) = 1.19%

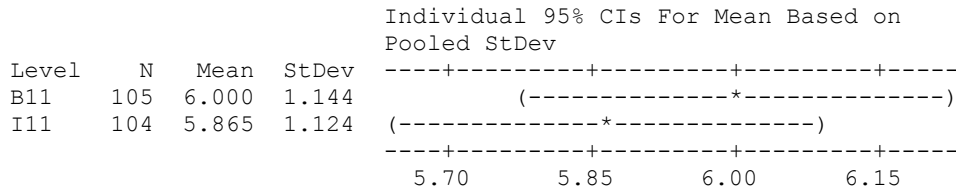


Pooled StDev = 1.288

**Figure 11**  
**One-way ANOVA: B11, I11**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	0.95	0.95	0.74	0.392
Error	207	266.12	1.29		
Total	208	267.06			

S = 1.134    R-Sq = 0.35%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.00%

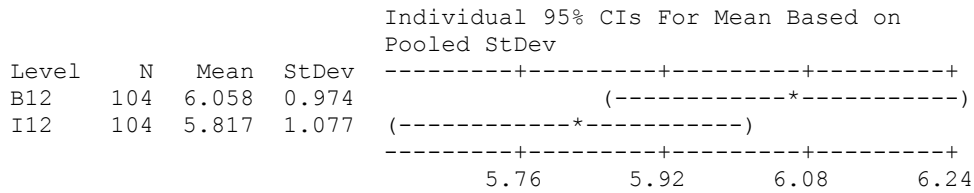


Pooled StDev = 1.134

**Figure 12**  
**One-way ANOVA: B12, I12**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	3.00	3.00	2.85	0.093
Error	206	217.18	1.05		
Total	207	220.19			

S = 1.027    R-Sq = 1.36%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.89%

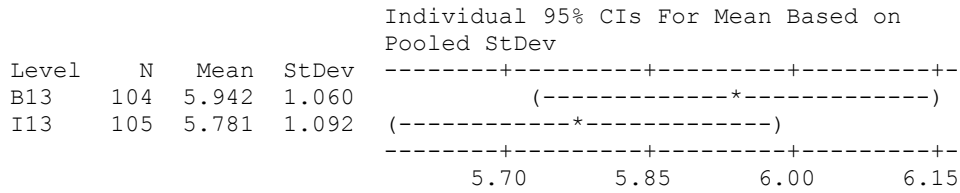


Pooled StDev = 1.027

**Figure 13**  
**One-way ANOVA: B13, I13**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	1.36	1.36	1.18	0.280
Error	207	239.62	1.16		
Total	208	240.98			

S = 1.076    R-Sq = 0.56%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.08%

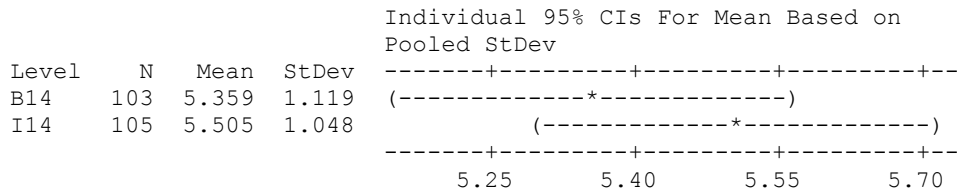


Pooled StDev = 1.076

**Figure 14**  
**One-way ANOVA: B14, I14**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	1.10	1.10	0.94	0.334
Error	206	241.96	1.17		
Total	207	243.06			

S = 1.084    R-Sq = 0.45%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.00%



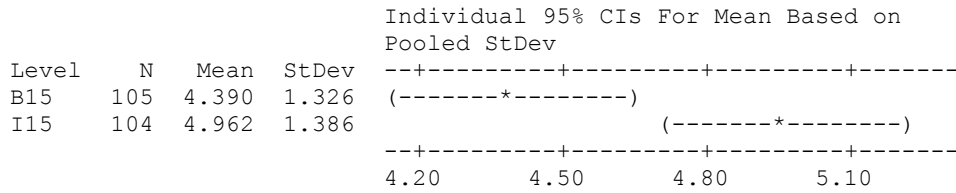
Pooled StDev = 1.084



**Figure 15**  
**One-way ANOVA: B15, I15**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	17.04	17.04	9.26	0.003
Error	207	380.84	1.84		
Total	208	397.88			

S = 1.356    R-Sq = 4.28%    R-Sq(adj) = 3.82%

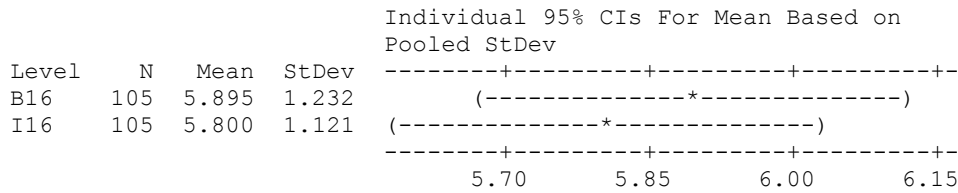


Pooled StDev = 1.356

**Figure 16**  
**One-way ANOVA: B16, I16**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	0.48	0.48	0.34	0.559
Error	208	288.65	1.39		
Total	209	289.12			

S = 1.178    R-Sq = 0.16%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.00%

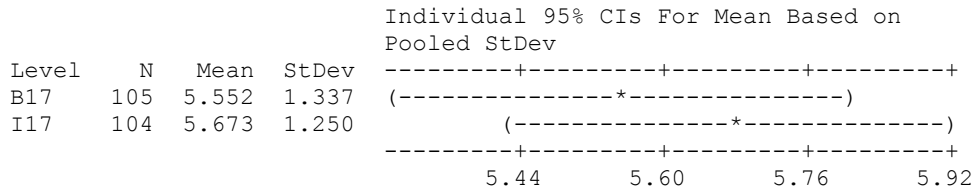


Pooled StDev = 1.178

**Figure 17**  
**One-way ANOVA: B17, I17**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	0.76	0.76	0.45	0.501
Error	207	346.85	1.68		
Total	208	347.61			

S = 1.294    R-Sq = 0.22%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.00%

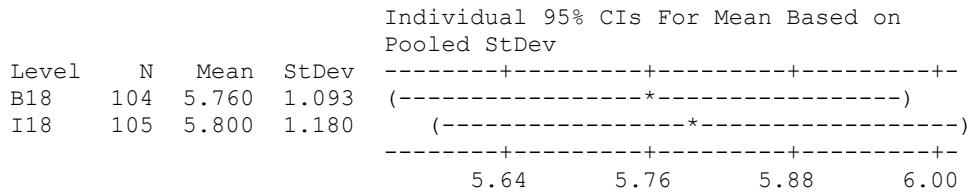


Pooled StDev = 1.294

**Figure 18**  
**One-way ANOVA: B18, I18**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	0.09	0.09	0.07	0.798
Error	207	267.79	1.29		
Total	208	267.88			

S = 1.137    R-Sq = 0.03%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.00%

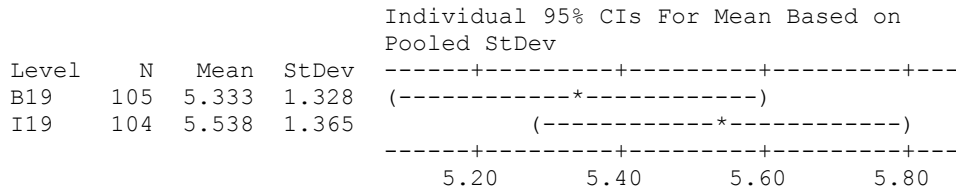


Pooled StDev = 1.137

**Figure 19**  
**One-way ANOVA: B19, I19**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	2.20	2.20	1.21	0.272
Error	207	375.18	1.81		
Total	208	377.38			

S = 1.346    R-Sq = 0.58%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.10%

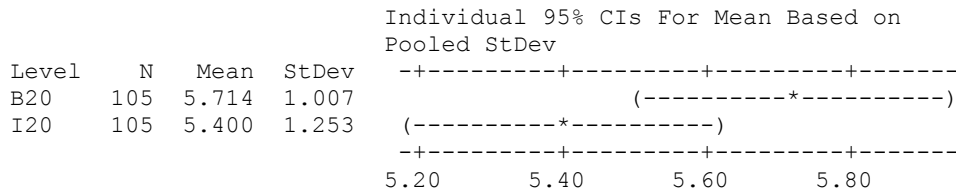


Pooled StDev = 1.346

**Figure 20**  
**One-way ANOVA: B20, I20**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	5.19	5.19	4.02	0.046
Error	208	268.63	1.29		
Total	209	273.81			

S = 1.136    R-Sq = 1.89%    R-Sq(adj) = 1.42%

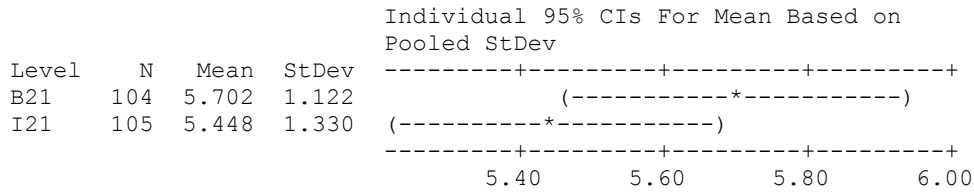


Pooled StDev = 1.136

**Figure 21**  
**One-way ANOVA: B21, I21**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	3.38	3.38	2.23	0.137
Error	207	313.72	1.52		
Total	208	317.10			

S = 1.231    R-Sq = 1.07%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.59%

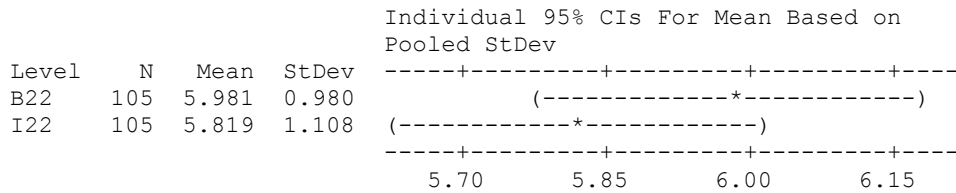


Pooled StDev = 1.231

**Figure 22**  
**One-way ANOVA: B22, I22**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	1.38	1.38	1.26	0.263
Error	208	227.52	1.09		
Total	209	228.90			

S = 1.046    R-Sq = 0.60%    R-Sq(adj) = 0.12%

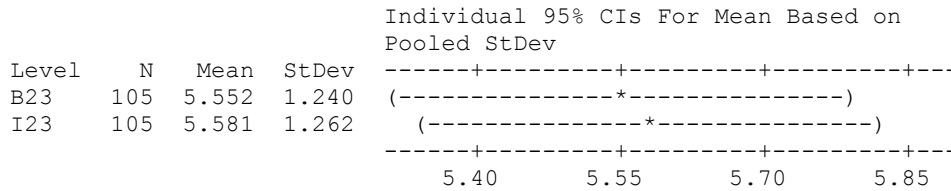


Pooled StDev = 1.046

**Figure 23**  
**One-way ANOVA: B23, I23**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.869
Error	208	325.52	1.57		
Total	209	325.57			

S = 1.251 R-Sq = 0.01% R-Sq(adj) = 0.00%



Pooled StDev = 1.251

**Figure 24**

**Descriptive Statistics: Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4**

Variable	N	N*	Mean	SE Mean	StDev	Minimum	Q1	Median	Q3
Q1	105	0	3.0476	0.0314	0.3217	2.0000	3.0000	3.0000	3.0000
Q2	105	0	3.5714	0.0701	0.7187	1.0000	3.0000	4.0000	4.0000
Q3	105	0	2.381	0.121	1.236	1.000	2.000	2.000	3.000
Q4	105	0	3.610	0.148	1.516	1.000	2.000	3.000	5.000

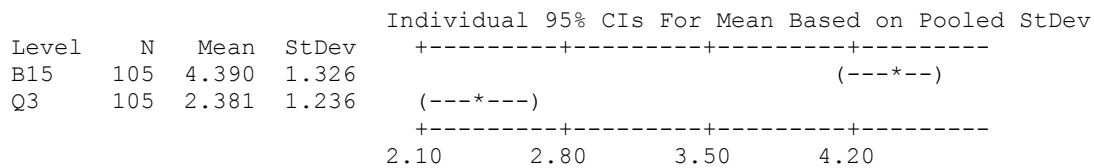
Variable	Maximum
Q1	5.0000
Q2	4.0000
Q3	6.0000
Q4	6.0000

**Figure 25**

**One-way ANOVA: B15, Q3**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	212.00	212.00	129.03	0.000
Error	208	341.75	1.64		
Total	209	553.76			

S = 1.282 R-Sq = 38.28% R-Sq(adj) = 37.99%



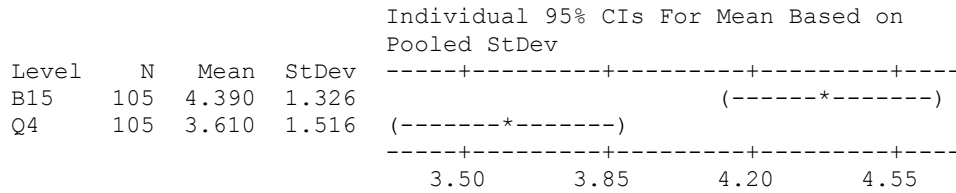
Pooled StDev = 1.282

**Figure 26**

**One-way ANOVA: B15, Q4**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	32.02	32.02	15.78	0.000
Error	208	421.98	2.03		
Total	209	454.00			

S = 1.424    R-Sq = 7.05%    R-Sq(adj) = 6.61%



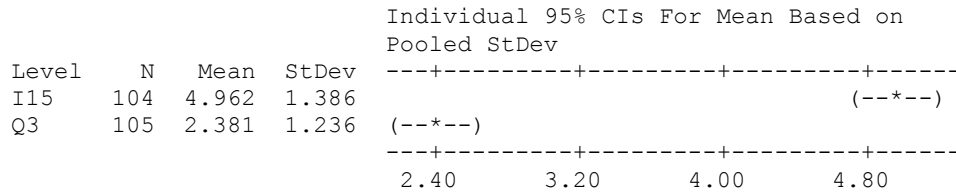
Pooled StDev = 1.424

**Figure 27**

**One-way ANOVA: I15, Q3**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	347.95	347.95	201.97	0.000
Error	207	356.61	1.72		
Total	208	704.56			

S = 1.313    R-Sq = 49.39%    R-Sq(adj) = 49.14%



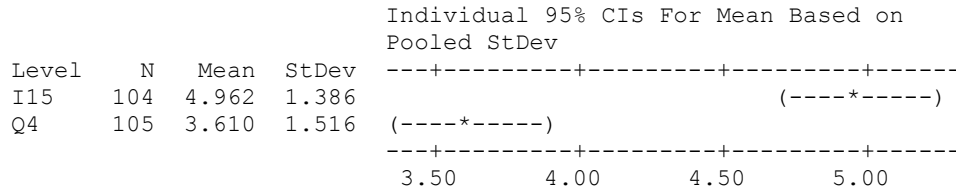
Pooled StDev = 1.313

**Figure 28**

**One-way ANOVA: I15, Q4**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	95.51	95.51	45.26	0.000
Error	207	436.84	2.11		
Total	208	532.34			

S = 1.453    R-Sq = 17.94%    R-Sq(adj) = 17.54%



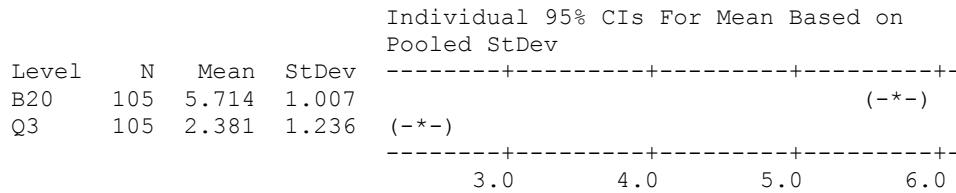
Pooled StDev = 1.453

**Figure 29**

**One-way ANOVA: B20, Q3**

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	583.33	583.33	459.26	0.000
Error	208	264.19	1.27		
Total	209	847.52			

S = 1.127    R-Sq = 68.83%    R-Sq(adj) = 68.68%



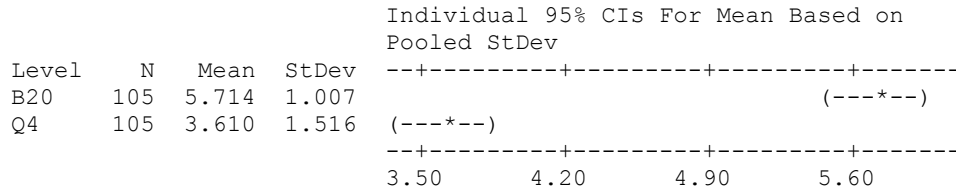
Pooled StDev = 1.127

### Figure 30

#### One-way ANOVA: B20, Q4

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	232.58	232.58	140.46	0.000
Error	208	344.42	1.66		
Total	209	577.00			

S = 1.287 R-Sq = 40.31% R-Sq(adj) = 40.02%



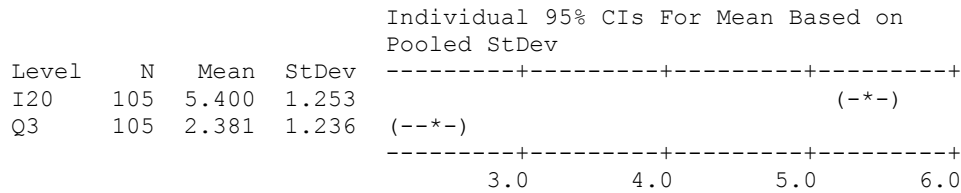
Pooled StDev = 1.287

### Figure 31

#### One-way ANOVA: I20, Q3

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	478.52	478.52	309.14	0.000
Error	208	321.96	1.55		
Total	209	800.48			

S = 1.244 R-Sq = 59.78% R-Sq(adj) = 59.59%



Pooled StDev = 1.244



## Figure 32

### One-way ANOVA: I20, Q4

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	1	168.30	168.30	87.04	0.000
Error	208	402.19	1.93		
Total	209	570.50			

S = 1.391    R-Sq = 29.50%    R-Sq(adj) = 29.16%

Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on  
Pooled StDev

Level	N	Mean	StDev	-----+-----+-----+-----+-----
I20	105	5.400	1.253	(---*---)
Q4	105	3.610	1.516	(---*---)

-----+-----+-----+-----+-----  
3.60            4.20            4.80            5.40

Pooled StDev = 1.391

**Schreyer Honors College**  
**Academic Vita of Sarah Kach**

Name: Sarah Kach

Address: 4610 Smith Drive  
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18017

E-Mail ID: smk371@psu.edu

**Education**

Major: Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management  
Honors: Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management

Thesis Title: The Difference in What Customers Value and Perceived Service Quality When Staying at Branded Versus Independent Properties  
Thesis Supervisor: John O'Neill

**Work Experience**

Date: May 2009-August 2009

Title: Room Attendant

Description: Cleaned guest rooms, did laundry, and attended to guest needs in a small, downtown Bed and Breakfast

Company: Sayre Mansion, Bethlehem, PA

Supervisor's Name: Carrie Ohlandt

Date: September 2009-December 2009

Title: Housekeeping Intern

Description: Cleaned hotel guest rooms, stocked housekeeping closets, interacted with guests and attended to their needs at a large conference center hotel

Company: The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, State College, PA

Supervisor's Name: Christina Huston

Date: May 2010-August 2010

Title: Food and Beverage Intern

Description: Worked in a rotational setting between banquet set-up and service, restaurant service and food preparation, and event planning at this member-only club

Company: Hershey Country Club, Hershey, PA

Supervisor's Name: Eoin Lehane

Date: May 2011-August 2011

Title: Guest Services Intern

Description: Worked in a rotational setting between front desk, concierge, bellstand, and VIP services at this independent lodge

Company: Hershey Lodge, Hershey, PA

Supervisor's Name: Scott Comport

Awards: President's Freshman Award; Sparks Award

Professional Memberships: Penn State Hotel and Restaurant Society; American Hotel and Lodging Association; Professional Convention Management Association; Eta Sigma Delta hospitality honors association

Community Service Involvement: worked through the Women's Leadership Initiative to put on an activity day for several girls of Big Brothers Big Sisters in Café Laura