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THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT IN THE SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATION OF CONFERENCES: A CASE STUDY OF HOLIDAY INN MUNICH CITY CENTRE

ULOGA MENADŽMENTA U USPEŠNOJ ORGANIZACIJI KONFERENCIJA: STUDIJA SLUČAJA HOTELA HOLIDAY INN MUNICH CITY CENTRE

Abstract: *This paper explores the role of management in the successful organisation of a conference, with a particular focus on industry events, known as the MICE industry. The terms and importance of the MICE industry are defined, as well as its impact on the competitive advantage of hotels. The paper presents a case study of the Holiday Inn hotel in Munich, which is part of the international hotel chain IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group). The IHG standards and characteristics of the Holiday Inn hotel were analyzed, with special reference to the organisation of events within the hotel. The paper examines in detail the process of organising events at the Holiday Inn hotel, emphasizing the key role of management in this process. Special attention is paid to the policy and set of values that event managers must follow in order to ensure the successful organisation of the conference. Also, the paper analyzes how management can contribute to the creation of competitive ad-*

Sažetak: *Ovaj rad istražuje ulogu menadžmenta u uspešnom organizovanju konferencija, sa posebnim fokusom na industriju događaja, poznatu kao MICE industrija. Definirani su pojmovi i značaj MICE industrije, kao i njen uticaj na konkurentsku prednost hotela. Rad predstavlja studiju slučaja hotela Holiday Inn u Minhenu, koji je deo međunarodnog hotelskog lanca IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group). Analizirani su IHG standardi i karakteristike hotela Holiday Inn, sa posebnim osvrtom na organizaciju događaja unutar hotela. Rad detaljno razmatra proces organizovanja događaja u hotelu Holiday Inn, naglašavajući ključnu ulogu menadžmenta u ovom procesu. Posebna pažnja posvećena je politikama i setu vrednosti koje menadžeri događaja moraju slediti kako bi osigurali uspešnu organizaciju konferencija. Takođe, rad analizira kako menadžment može doprineti stvaranju konkurentске prednosti kroz efektivno planiranje, komunikaciju*

vantages through effective planning, communication and execution of conference events, thereby increasing client satisfaction and guest loyalty. In this context, the application of strategic management and project management facilitates the integration of long-term objectives with day-to-day operations, thereby ensuring efficient and successful management of all aspects of event organisation.

Key words: *event management, management efficiency, strategic management and project management, banquet organisation, Holiday Inn Munich City Centre, Intercontinental Hotels Group*

Introduction

The event industry, including meetings, conferences, exhibitions and other events, is developing very rapidly and provides a significant contribution to business and leisure tourism. Organising and managing events is becoming increasingly complex, bearing in mind that clients expect all requirements to be met and exceeded with quality service. The manager's experience is key in recognising those needs, often before the client verbalizes them, in order to provide the best possible service. In this context, proactive action and understanding of essential client needs are the basis for providing superior service and achieving high satisfaction of conference participants (Bowdin et al., 2012). Each client is unique and comes with different requirements, which is an additional complication for management today, when clients expect an individualized offer and a high level of commitment from workers. This requires managers to be flexible and adaptable, in order to be able to respond to the specific needs of each client and provide a personalized service that will meet high expectations (Nicula, Elena, 2014). Moreover, strategic management plays a crucial role in shaping long-term vision and aligning strategies with market needs, thereby enabling organisations to anticipate and respond to changes in the events industry with a competitive advantage.

i izvršenje konferencijskih događaja, čime se povećava zadovoljstvo klijenata i lojalnost gostiju. U tom kontekstu, primena strategijskog menadžmenta i menadžmenta projekta omogućava integraciju dugoročnih ciljeva sa svakodnevnim operacijama, osiguravajući efikasno i uspešno upravljanje svim aspektima organizacije događaja.

Ključne reči: *upravljanje događajima, efikasnost menadžmenta, strategijski menadžment i upravljanje projektom, organizacija banke-
ta, Holiday Inn Munich City Centre, Intercontinental Hotels Group*

The industry of meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions, which is what the term "MICE" actually represents, is of great importance to the country, as it has a direct impact on the participants in the provision of tourism services and contributes to the improvement of the local economy. The industry refers to the specialised niche of group tourism, which relates to the planning and execution of conferences, seminars and other meetings. The MICE industry has a positive effect on economic growth, but also on the development of destination tourism. Also, the event industry generates millions of revenues for countries and cities around the world, which further confirms how tourism affects the economic growth of the local economy, as well as the travel industry (Ladkin, 2006; Anas et al., 2020). Effective project management within the MICE sector enables organizations to precisely align resources, timelines, and budgets, thereby ensuring successful event execution and maximizing economic benefits for local communities.

MICE events involve participants who have common interests and gather at events for business purposes. Meetings refer to conferences whose goal is to exchange information and contacts, discuss, solve problems, and generate new business opportunities. Incentive is a method of rewarding and motivating employees of a certain company.

Companies can reward their employees with a trip, the purpose of which is vacation with educational training and meetings for improvement. Conventions are similar to meetings, where participants gather to exchange ideas, views, opinions and various information. Exhibitions are events where new products are presented to those who may be interested (Anas et al., 2020).

According to the research of Anas and colleagues, the key elements that contribute to the successful execution of the conference are the following (Anas et al., 2020):

- Business traveler
- Motivation of participants
- Participants' perception
- Participant satisfaction
- Marketing
- Technical support and necessary equipment

It is important to emphasize that communication between clients and event management in the hotel is of great importance. Clients expect hotel event managers to organise events exactly according to their specific requirements, providing all necessary elements – from technical equipment and coffee breaks to meals and optimal layout of presentation space (Han et al., 2024). Effective project management in this context ensures that all aspects of event organization are coordinated and aligned with the client's requirements, thereby reducing the risk of errors and increasing client satisfaction. The communication process between the event manager and the hotel's field sales department is essential, because during this period the hotel should demonstrate to the client the ability to meet all requirements and take full responsibility for the successful realisation of the event. The client must have a sense of security and trust that he can fully rely on the hotel. The manager must possess exceptional negotiation and communication skills so that all potential problems are successfully resolved and everything goes exactly according to the wishes of the clients.

Employee motivation is of crucial importance for providing high-quality service

to service users (Cvijanović et al., 2018). Employees must be adequately motivated to deliver the highest quality service, which directly affects guest satisfaction. By achieving a high level of staff motivation and commitment, the hotel can ensure that guests receive superior service, which is essential to the hotel's success. Effective project management in employee training and development can enhance motivation and alignment with quality standards, while strategic management can aid in shaping long-term goals that integrate the workforce of different generations. Implementing targeted strategies for motivation and professional development can significantly improve overall service quality while simultaneously addressing challenges arising from different generational preferences and expectations. It is extremely important that employees are motivated to deliver quality service, which confirms that employees and management have the same goal, which is to achieve positive business results and continuous improvement of quality service (Ali et al., 2020). There is often a problem of overcoming differences between generations of employees in the hotel industry. Older workers bring valuable experience, while younger workers bring energy and enthusiasm. The introduction of new generations into the workforce of the hotel industry also brings certain challenges. Although younger workers bring energy and enthusiasm, they often lack the level of commitment and quality of service that characterized previous generations (Thommandru et al., 2023). In the past, employees were more focused on providing superior service and guest satisfaction, while today many young workers, engaged in part-time jobs, may be more motivated by short-term financial benefits than long-term goals of quality and guest satisfaction. Precisely because of these differences, it is essential to develop training and mentoring programs in order to better integrate the new generation of workers into organisational goals and quality standards (Mair et al., 2018). Combining experience and knowledge can bring

significant advantages. Different generations of employees bring different perspectives, skills and experiences, but can also cause challenges in communication and collaboration (Hitka et al., 2019).

Trainings have an extremely positive impact on employee motivation, it is a vital tool for improving work performance (Xu, Luo, 2023). In order to achieve organisational goals professionally and successfully, management is obliged to provide training for its employees to keep them abreast of the rapidly changing trends in the hospitality world. In return, it helps them reduce anxiety and frustration caused by work overload and improve their skills for efficient performance of tasks (Shkoler, 2020). In addition, effective project management within the training process ensures that resources are efficiently allocated and training programs are systematically executed, which further enhances employee skills and job satisfaction. Moreover, aligning training programs with strategic management goals helps in integrating employee development with the organisation's long-term objectives, leading to a more cohesive and motivated workforce.

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG)

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) is a global leader in the hotel industry, with a rich history and a broad portfolio of brands spanning various market segments. Founded in 2003 as the successor to Bass PLC, IHG is today one of the world's largest hotel companies. IHG has 6,368 hotels and 946,382 rooms globally. Also, it is important to emphasize that this hotel group consists of 19 brands, namely Six Senses, Regent, Vignette collection, InterContinental Hotels & Resorts, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants, Hotel Indigo, Voco, Hualuxe, Crowne Plaza, Iberostar Beachfront Resorts, Even, Holiday Inn Express, Holiday Inn, Garner, Avid, Atwell Suites, Staybridge Suites, Holiday Inn Club Vacations and Candlewood Suites.¹

¹ <https://www.ihgplc.com/en/about-us/what-we-stand-for> (visited on: 29.07.2024)

The feature of this hotel chain is the continuous improvement of the offer through adaptation to dynamic changes in the market, which is why it is the leader in the hotel industry. During 2023, the hotel's strategy was improved by strengthening the corporate structure, which means that the hotel's portfolio was expanded from 11 to 19 brands. Also, the IHG One Rewards loyalty program was improved and transformed, new partnerships were concluded, web and mobile offers were improved, and the new "Journey to Tomorrow" program was established - a ten-year plan, the goal of which is a sustainable way of doing business. This strategic plan not only aligns the business with sustainable development goals (SDGs) across five key areas (people, community, carbon dioxide, waste, and water), but also ensures that all strategic initiatives are integrated with the hotel's long-term objectives, thereby enhancing its competitiveness and sustainability. This program respects the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through 5 key areas, namely people, community, carbon dioxide, waste and water. The actions described in the responsible business plan "Journey to Tomorrow" contribute to the preservation of the planet's biodiversity, either through reducing energy and water consumption in hotels, minimizing the use of disposable products, or engaging suppliers that drive positive change.

In order to respond to market changes in the best way, IHG has defined key goals and performance indicators (KPIs - Key Performance Indicators). The goals that need to be met in 2024 relate to the continuity in the growth and development of the brand, through the expansion of the market presence of Avid Hotels, Atwell Suites and Garner. It is necessary to continue to improve the personalised experience of service users through additional investment in IHG One Rewards. Also, during 2024, the focus of business success is on providing support to employees through the professional development of leadership skills through various trainings and events (KPIs, 2023).

Illustration 1 Strategy of the IHG hotel chain



Source: Internal material of Hotel Holiday Inn City Centre Munich

The Holiday Inn brand includes 1,195 hotels and has a total of 214,330 rooms. Holiday Inn has been ranked as the most trusted brand in the travel and hospitality sector in the United States, according to global data analysis and market research group Morning Consult.² Within this research, examples of best practice in organising conference events at the Holiday Inn City Center hotel in Munich, the capital of Bavaria, are presented. This prestigious hotel is located within touching distance of Marien platz the heart of Munich, which is a great advantage and it can be reached on foot or by subway, whose station is located within the hotel complex. Also, the main train station is 10 minutes away, while the airport takes 30 minutes by metro. Hotel location is often a key factor for visitors, thanks to its exceptional accessibility. Especially for business tourists, the proximity to the main train station and the airport is a significant advantage. The hotel is located in the immediate vicinity of the main tourist attractions, restaurants and business centers, which allows guests to easily carry out their duties and enjoy the city without the need for long journeys.

² <https://www.ihgplc.com/en/about-us/awards> (visited on: 29.07.2024)

The hotel has 582 modernly equipped accommodation units, the key feature of which is the panoramic view, which includes the entire old part of the city. Single, double, family or business guest rooms contain everything needed for a pleasant stay, which meets high standards.³

The hotel's conference rooms represent the most significant competitive advantage in Munich and in the entire country. The surface area is 2 300m², it has 18 conference and meeting rooms, which are air-conditioned and equipped with free wireless internet. These rooms, equipped with the most modern technical equipment and adapted to different needs, enable the hotel to meet the demands of even the most demanding business users and event organisers, which makes it stand out from the competition. Moreover, strategic planning and project management play a crucial role in optimizing the use of these spaces and resources, ensuring that each event is organized to the highest standards and meets client needs. In addition to technical facilities, the hotel also provides expert support from its professional events team, which is available to ensure the flawless realisation of any event. Meeting and conference rooms can be adapted to different types of events, from small business meetings to large conferences and seminars.⁴

What sets this hotel apart from others is the high-quality staff. Employees are supported by a set of values that are important to both IHG and hotel guests. While working as a team with all interested parties, these shared values provide a sense of common purpose that directs the hotel's business towards one goal, which is to achieve successful business results in all fields. Competent project management also contributes by ensuring that training and employee development are systematically integrated into daily operations, enabling better coordination and implementation of strategies that support the hotel's core values. This recognition stems from a focus on attracting and retaining top talent in the industry and most importantly supporting employees through training and professional development training.

³ <https://www.meet-inn-munich.com/> (visited on: 28.07.2024)

⁴ <https://www.meet-inn-munich.com/veranstaltungsraeume/> (visited on: 28.07.2024)

Illustration 2 Goals for 2024

Targets 2024



Source: Internal material of Hotel Holiday Inn City Centre Munich

It is very important to emphasize that the Holiday Inn hotel has the Green Key certificate, which significantly contributes to its reputation and improves the quality of the overall service. Green Key is an internationally recognised certificate awarded to hotels and other hospitality establishments that have demonstrated a high level of environmental responsibility and sustainable practices. This prestigious certificate confirms that the hotel not only meets, but also exceeds standards in the area of environmental protection, which has multiple benefits. Strategic planning related to sustainability enables the hotel to continuously improve its environmental initiatives and integrate them into all aspects of its operations, ensuring a long-term positive impact on the environment. Having the Green Key certificate strengthens the hotel's image as a leader in sustainable tourism, which additionally attracts guests who value environmental responsibility. Through a

systematic approach within strategic management, the hotel successfully aligns its environmental goals with business strategies, contributing to the enhancement of service quality and guest satisfaction. Also, the certificate is proof of the hotel's commitment to the preservation of natural resources, as well as the implementation of environmentally friendly practices that improve the overall service and experience of the stay. The Holiday Inn hotel implements the following steps in its sustainable business: ⁵

- 1) Minimizing resource consumption (energy, water and waste)
- 2) Implementing a recycling protocol and providing an incentive for guests to contribute to the preservation of the environment with their participation
- 3) Implementation of sustainable technologies

⁵ <https://www.meet-inn-munich.com/en/projekt/environment/>
(visited on: 29.07.2024)

- 4) Minimizing the use of plastic
- 5) Increasing the use of organic and local food
- 6) Promotion of environmentally friendly products
- 7) Focus on animal welfare when purchasing products
- 8) Raising awareness of responsible travel among users of hotel services

Event planning at Holiday Inn City Centre Munich

The Holiday Inn hotel is renowned for its top-class conference rooms, which cover an area over 2000 square meters. This impressive space includes 18 flexible conference rooms that can be flexibly adapted to different events. Strategic management in the event organisation sector allows the hotel to optimise the use of space and resources, ensuring that all events are organised to the highest standards and meet client needs. The importance of the income that the event and conference sector brings to the Holiday Inn Hotel in Munich is extremely important. Clients who book spaces for their events in the hotel often additionally book hotel rooms, which significantly contributes to the hotel's overall business success. Project management in this sector aids in precise planning and coordination of all aspects of events, which further enhances efficiency and client satisfaction. Achieving the budgeted annual revenue or exceeding it, is the key goal of every hotel business. The conference events sector contributes to the hotel's total revenue with a significant share of 30%, which confirms its key role in the hotel's overall financial performance.

However, it is not only the space and equipment that influence the clients' decision to choose this particular hotel for holding their events. The key reason is the professionalism of the employees, especially the management, who deliver a high quality service. Strategic planning and effective project management are key factors in consistently meeting and exceeding client expectations,

leading to exceptional satisfaction and long-term loyalty. In this research, the process of organising and managing the event is presented, where the organisers have become loyal and return to this hotel every year, because they know that their expectations will be met, and often exceeded.

According to Kimes (2001), the organisation of the event includes a series of steps that must be followed in order for the client to be satisfied:

- 1) Understanding the client's requirements and needs

Understanding the requirements and needs of clients is key to success in organising an event. Precise recognition and interpretation of their wishes enables the adaptation of services and resources to meet their specific requirements. This not only ensures a satisfactory experience for customers, but also contributes to building long-term business relationships and increases the likelihood of repeat services.

- 2) Development of a detailed event plan

The field sales department is obliged to be in constant contact with clients. It is their responsibility to determine all the details that need to be done and prepared for the event. This includes understanding the specific requirements of clients, coordinating all aspects of planning, as well as providing timely information to ensure that each event is successfully realized.

The details that need to be established relate to the exact date of the event and/or alternative dates, so that the conference rooms are reserved for the client. Bearing in mind that it is necessary to follow-up continuously in order to determine all the elements for the event, because there are often changes in the organisers' plans, the field sales department must be extremely engaged. For this reason, the event sales department should contact the organisers two months before the event and two weeks before the arrival of the participants to clarify any last details.

The Client is obliged to submit the agenda which indicates timetables of lectures, meetings, coffee breaks, lunches and other content which is relevant to the event, considering that a large number of departments in the hotel are involved, including the kitchen, the food and beverage sector (F&B), the field sales sector, as well as the staff responsible for hosting the conference. Optimized coordination through strategic project management ensures seamless integration of various departments and guarantees that all aspects of the event align with specific requirements and schedules. Effective communication between all departments is critical, for the event to go according to plan. The maximum commitment of all employees is expected in order to exceed the expectations of the event organisers. That is why it is necessary that everyone has a common goal - achieving business success at all levels. Strategic management contributes to a unified goal and the coordination of efforts across all staff, facilitating success at every level of the business.

3) Provision of technical equipment

Quality and modern technical equipment is essential for providing high quality service in the event sector. Equipment that complies with the latest standards enables the flawless implementation of the event and contributes to the overall satisfaction of the clients.

4) Execution of events

Realisation of the event is a key stage in the organisation of conferences and similar manifestations, which involves a series of coordinated activities in order to achieve maximum satisfaction of the participants.

Management constantly monitors the performance of events and responds to unforeseen situations. Furthermore, management also maintains communication during the event with the organisers and participants of the conference in order to provide all relevant information and, most importantly, support and assistance during the entire event. Effective project management enables the management team to quickly identify and resolve issues, ensuring that any changes to

the original plans are promptly implemented and that the event logistics remain aligned with new requirements. If there is a change in the originally established plans, it is the management that solves every problem with its quick reaction and adjusts the logistics of the event.

Communication with the participants during the event is extremely important, because it is at that moment that the organiser can decide whether to choose Holiday Inn again for future events. Effective and transparent communication contributes to creating a positive impression and strengthening relations with clients. Through strategic planning and effective project management, the hotel management ensures that all aspects of the event are carefully coordinated and that participants' needs are addressed. The Conference manager with his team has a key role in this process, their ability to instill confidence and establish trust cannot be overstated, through a professional and attentive approach, managers demonstrate their commitment and ability to improve the overall experience. When participants see that every aspect of the event is carefully coordinated and that their needs are a priority, it creates a sense of trust and security.

Because of this commitment and ability to provide a seamless experience, Holiday Inn has become a market leader. The quality of service and the ability to meet and exceed client expectations have made this hotel the first choice for organising events, thus cementing its position as a leader in the industry.

5) Event evaluation and feedback collection

After the end of the event, it is important to collect feedback from participants and organisers in order to evaluate the success and identify possible areas for improvement. Effective event evaluation allows the hotel not only to improve its services, but also to build long-term relationships with clients through continuous improvement of experiences. Strategic management of the evaluation process and the implementation of improvements based on feedback plays a crucial role

The role of management in the successful organisation of conferences

One of the key elements that differentiates the Holiday Inn Munich City Centre from the competition is its communication structure. According to Darren Jarman, conference manager, the main difference between the Event & Meetings department and competitive field sales departments at other hotel is its understanding of a clear and precise communication with clients.

The challenge lies within the nature of a conference booking, there are more elements and variables involved than for example a one to one on a reception or in a restaurant, a typical face to face interaction. In contrast, in the event organisation sector, the banquet manager does not interact directly with the client, instead, the first contact is between field's sales and the client, which then hands over the information on to the Event & Meetings department. Clients i.e. Event organisers also collaborate with their partners or agencies involved in the planning and organisation of the event. This complex network of communication makes the event organisation process significantly more complicated and requires additional coordination and attention to ensure successful implementation.

Therefore, it is essential that communication between departments is seamlessly coordinated to ensure customer satisfaction. It is necessary to transmit information in a timely and accurate manner in order to avoid potential errors that could negatively affect the realisation of the event. Any irregularity in communication or inaccuracy in the transmission of information can lead to problems in the execution of the event, which can result in customer dissatisfaction and damage to the hotel's reputation. Therefore, continuous coordination and clarity in mutual communication between the sales sector, the event organisation sector and all relevant departments are key aspects of the successful execution of the event. Perfect communication enables efficient resolution of all challenges and ensures that all phases of event organisation run smoothly, thus guaranteeing

a high level of service and exceeding the clients expectations. Strategic management plays a crucial role in aligning communication between different departments, ensuring that all aspects of event organisation are consistent with the hotel's long-term business goals and standards.

Team Building and Development at Holiday Inn Munich

According to Darren Jarman, conference manager, the key qualities a manager should possess include the following roles, which are essential to his function:

- Training
- Coaching
- Managing

The most important quality that a manager should possess is the role of a coach. As a coach, the manager recognizes and develops the potential of employees in a way that contributes to their professional development and directs them towards achieving high standards and perfection.

An effective manager understands that employees are individuals and therefore must apply a specific and individualized approach to each team member. He should not only be a leader, but also a mentor, adviser and colleague, adapting his approach to the unique needs and characteristics of each employee. In the context of strategic management and project management, it is crucial for the manager to develop and implement strategies that ensure optimal resource utilization and coordination of team efforts towards the project's set goals. Such a manager creates a working environment in which employees feel that they can be trusted and that they can rely on the manager's support at any time. Developing a relationship based on trust is the key to creating agreeable and positive atmosphere in the workplace. This approach allows employees to feel supported and motivated, which is essential for achieving common goals and team success.

Only after successfully fulfilling the role of coach, the manager should switch to the role of trainer. As a trainer, the manager is responsible for training and developing the

skills of his employees. He provides and shares his knowledge, teaching workers all the necessary skills that are essential to efficiently perform daily work activities in a professional manner. The trainer not only imparts technical skills and knowledge, but also develops abilities that enable employees to successfully face challenges and responsibilities in their work. Through systematic training and mentoring, the manager ensures that employees can improve their productivity and contribution to the team by acquiring new skills. Strategic management plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the training and development programs are aligned with the long-term goals of the organisation, thereby facilitating both individual growth and the achievement of broader business objectives. This process is crucial for the continuous professional development of employees and for maintaining a high level of performance within the organisation.

Only after successfully fulfilling the roles of coach and trainer can the manager take on the role of conference manager. As a conference manager, his task is to effectively manage all aspects of event organisation, including planning, coordinating and supervising all activities required for the successful execution of the event. This role requires the alignment of previous skills and approaches to ensure that all elements of the event work harmoniously and achieve set objectives. The conference manager uses his experience and expertise gained in the roles of coach and trainer to optimize this processes, solve problems and provide an outstanding experience to clients and participants.

According to Darren Jarman, a manager should not adopt a superior attitude that can create a rift between himself and the employees or between himself and the conference hosts. A manager is not just an authority figure that balances between discipline and coaching; he should also be a mentor to his employees. Such an approach contributes to building a positive working environment and strengthening mutual relations. Strategic management emphasizes the importance of

aligning leadership with organisational goals to ensure that the management style supports the long-term success of the organisation. A manager who acts as a mentor, not just a superior, creates an atmosphere of trust and cooperation, which enables better understanding and more effective communication within the team, as well as the event clients. This approach helps build harmony and motivation, which is essential for delivering a high quality event.

On the other hand, an conference manager is not just a service provider for conference organisers; its role is much broader. The manager stands side by side with the event organisers, aiming to improve the quality of their conference and provide support and security whenever needed. It often happens that event participants are not completely sure of their wishes or do not have enough experience, which can lead to decisions that are not optimal. Strategic management plays a crucial role in this process, as it helps in identifying and implementing best practices for event management, ensuring that every decision and action aligns with the organisation's long-term goals. In such situations, the manager's suggestions can significantly alleviate the current problem and influence the final opinion of the guests. Effective and professional management guidance can direct organisers to the best solutions, which increases the likelihood that the same organisers will choose the same hotel again for future events. Such a proactive and supportive attitude of managers towards event organisers plays a key role in building long-term business relationships and client satisfaction.

Principles of effective event management

One of the most important aspects of providing exceptional service in the organisation of conference events is consistently delivering on promises made. Strategic management in this context highlights the need for precise planning and clear communication channels to ensure consistency in fulfilling promises. If the employees succeed

in ensuring that the conference participants feel that everything is smoothly running, the event organisers will be extremely satisfied with the service provided. This ability to deliver on promises is key to maintaining and enhancing customer loyalty. Effective fulfillment of promises not only contributes to a high level of satisfaction of event organisers, but also significantly affects long-term relationships with clients, thus ensuring their continued commitment and repeat co-operation.

According to Darren Jarman, conference manager, the key to successfully organising the best conference is:

1. Taking action and responsibility

The manager must actively take initiative and responsibility for all aspects of conference organisation, ensuring that all tasks are completed effectively and in a timely manner. This includes not only taking personal responsibility, but expecting the same from all employees. Each team member should take responsibility for their tasks in order to meet guests' expectations. The manager must ensure that all employees understand the importance of their role in the overall process, take ownership from all, and adhere to the quality standards set for the event. Strategic management plays a key role in aligning resources and activities to ensure that every part of the organization operates synchronously.

2. Providing suggestions and advice to the clients

A manager should use his experience and professional knowledge to provide useful suggestions and advice to his clients. It often happens that clients are not sure which option is best for their needs. In such cases, the manager must provide advice and suggestions to help them make informed decisions. Also, if the client is not completely satisfied, the manager should be ready to solve the problem and provide additional options in order to satisfy the client's needs and ensure a high quality of service.

3. Understanding the needs and wishes of the client

The manager should make an effort to get to know the customers thoroughly in order to be able to provide a service that is in line with their specific needs and desires. A detailed understanding of the client's requirements allows the manager to personalize the service and adjust all aspects of the event organisation to meet and exceed the client's expectations. This level of commitment enables the provision of high quality service and contributes to overall customer satisfaction.

4. Creating a team atmosphere

A manager should create a work atmosphere that motivates employees to achieve the best possible performance. Creating a positive and supportive work environment is key to encouraging employees to continually improve and give their best. The manager should ensure that all team members are aligned with the common goal of providing exceptional service, thus ensuring consistency and a high level of quality in the organisation of the conference.

SWOT analysis of the business of the Holiday Inn City Center Munich hotel

Within this scientific paper, the SWOT analysis of the Holiday Inn hotel will be presented. This analytical approach, which includes an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, is essential for a detailed understanding of a hotel's strategic position within the hotel industry. A systematic examination of internal and external factors enables the acquisition of valuable insights into competitive advantages, areas requiring improvement, potential opportunities for growth, as well as threats that may affect the hotel's success. The importance of this analysis is reflected in the identification of key elements that shape the performance and long-term sustainability of the hotel, which contributes to making informed strategic decisions and improving the overall efficiency of the business.

Table 1 SWOT analysis

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location in the city center • Direct access to public transport within the building complex • The main train station is 10 minutes away • Airport accessible in 35 minutes • Possible accommodation for large groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness area • Business facilities for airlines, such as Pop up Club Lounge and separate check-in
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited capacity of restaurant • The terrace is not big enough, it is not suitable for meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest brand awareness • Not enough employees • Corporate rate increase for 2024, but less compared to IHG's 'double digit strategy'

Source: Internal material of Hotel Holiday Inn City Centre Munich

The Holiday Inn hotel faces significant competition in its immediate surroundings. Major competitors include Hilton, Novotel, Maritim, Four Points by Sheraton, Leonardo Royal and Hyperion hotels.

The Hilton Hotel, located in the immediate vicinity of the Holiday Inn, has 483 rooms. In comparison, Novotel Hotel offers 378 rooms, Maritim Hotel 349, Four Points by Sheraton 481, Leonardo Royal 424, while Hyperion Hotel has 272 rooms. One of the key strengths of the Holiday Inn is its room capacity of 582, making it one of the most spacious hotels in the area in this regard.

Also, the Holiday Inn hotel stands out for the number of conference rooms, with the largest room having a capacity for over 500 people. Compared to this, the Hilton Hotel can accommodate up to 360 people, the Novotel 50 people, the Maritim 380 people, while the Hyperion Hotel can accommodate 192 people.

All of the listed hotels offer access to fitness centers and saunas, which is a standard feature in this category of hotel.

The Holiday Inn hotel is in a competitive position compared to the surrounding hotels. Its huge advantage lies in its exceptional location, large number of rooms, capacity of conference rooms and quality of employees, which makes it a market leader. Although the lack of a swimming pool may be a weakness compared to some competitors that offer ad-

ditional facilities, the superiority of the Holiday Inn in key aspects such as capacity and infrastructure for events allows it to stand out as a significant player in its category.

Conclusion

The event industry is a key factor for successful hotel business. Quality infrastructure for events, including conference rooms, seminars and banquets, significantly contributes to increasing the hotel's revenue by hosting business meetings, corporate gatherings and private events. Strategic management must focus on the optimal use of these resources to ensure that event infrastructure is continually updated and aligned with market needs. Effective management of capacities and tailoring services to clients' specific needs enables the hotel to remain competitive and maximize revenue from the events sector. This type of offer not only attracts different clients, but also creates additional opportunities for providing services such as catering, technical support and accompanying activities. Effective event management can improve a hotel's visibility, increase capacity occupancy and contribute to its long-term market success.

The event industry plays a key role in the successful business of hotels, and this is particularly proven by the example of the Holiday Inn hotel. This hotel is successfully positioned on the market thanks to its exceptional

location, large number of rooms, as well as the capacity and flexibility of its conference rooms. These characteristics allow the hotel to maintain a high level of service quality and to meet the various needs of clients. However, the key success factor of the Holiday Inn hotel lies in the quality of the employees, that is, the role of management in the organisation and management of events. Hotel management creates a working atmosphere that encourages teamwork and a common goal: achieving maximum customer satisfaction. This synergy between employees and management makes it possible to provide high-level service and overcome challenges that arise in the hotel industry, such as problems with unskilled labor. Motivated employees who are committed to providing quality service have a positive effect on the work atmosphere and transfer their enthusiasm to their colleagues. This cohesion and common goal contribute to the creation of a pleasant and productive work environment, which is essential for achieving long-term success and competitiveness in the market.

The working atmosphere at the Holiday Inn hotel is successfully organised thanks to the management that plays a key role as a coach. The management is distinguished by its ability to recognize and develop the qualities of its employees through training and further improving their skills and competencies. As a coach, the manager does not position himself as an authoritarian boss, but as a friend and mentor to his employees, which creates an atmosphere of trust and open communication. This role of coach represents the first step, while the manager, after successfully fulfilling this role, moves into the role of coach. In this phase, the manager focuses on training and improving the business skills of his employees, providing them with the necessary tools for professional development. Only after these roles are successfully implemented, does the manager assume responsibility as a superior, with full authority to lead and supervise his department. This approach not only improves the efficiency and motivation of employees, but also contributes to the creation of a positive working atmosphere, which is crucial for successful hotel operations.

Regardless of the weaknesses and threats that the hotel faces, as well as the competition in the market, the key factor of the hotel's success lies in its employees. They represent the hotel and with their work and dedication contribute to the fact that guests and service users visit the hotel again and become loyal to the brand. Management, which successfully runs the business of the event department, plays a key role in this process. Their ability to build trust and create a cohesive team with their employees ensures a high level of service and professionalism. This synergy between management and employees creates a positive experience for guests, which motivates them to return and use the hotel's services again. In this way, the trust and loyalty of clients is strengthened, which contributes to the long-term success and recognition of the hotel on the market. Additionally, due to its exceptional strategic management and top-notch project management, the Holiday Inn hotel stands out as a leader in the events industry, setting high standards that competitors strive to achieve. Constantly improving strategies and innovations in project management enable the hotel to stay ahead of the competition and provide an outstanding experience for its clients. This commitment to excellence and continuous improvement makes the Holiday Inn not only a choice for numerous clients but also a benchmark in event industry practices. Through long-term strategic planning and adaptation to market trends, the hotel manages to continuously enhance its operations and ensure sustainable growth in a dynamic environment.

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