

## **THE INFLUENCE OF HOTEL ONLINE REVIEWS ON CUSTOMER DECISION MAKING BEHAVIOUR**

**Gao Yan Jing**

*Huanggang Normal University, China*  
625343265@qq.com

**Ye Jun**

*Huanggang Normal University, China*  
3801271@qq.com

**Ye Shuang**

*Huanggang Normal University, China*  
2738412176@qq.com

### **ABSTRACT**

*With the continuous changes of people's consumption level and concept under the development of Internet, big data and other network technologies, the service industry presents a new trend, and the way of hotel reservation is becoming more and more diversified. In recent years, with the sharing of online information on hotel booking platforms such as Ctrip and Qunar, online reviews have become an important reference for consumers when booking hotels, and they have played an increasingly important role. This study takes groups of people who have had hotel booking experience on OTA booking platforms such as Ctrip or Qunar as the research object, constructs a model of the influence of online reviews on consumer decision-making behaviour and proposes hypotheses combined with current consumer decision-making research. SPSS 22.0 statistical analysis was used for factor analysis and regression analysis to verify the model and hypotheses. The results show that the content quality, quantity, timeliness and scores of the reviews have a positive impact on the decision-making behaviour of consumers, while the experience value characteristics of the reviewers do not show a positive impact on the decision-making behaviour of consumers. Finally, according to the conclusions, the corresponding management suggestions are proposed for the third-party platforms and hotel industry.*

**Keywords:** *Hotel online reviews; Customer decision-making behaviour; Impact study.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background of the Study**

With the rapid development of network technologies such as the Internet and big data, the way consumers' book hotels has changed. More and more consumers book hotels through online platforms and publish online reviews. Compared with the over-exaggerated product information provided by hotel merchants, consumers are more willing to learn the true information of hotel products through user reviews on online platforms. To some extent, consumers' online reviews will be more acceptable and trustworthy for other consumers (Chen et al., 2021; Nicosia, 1996). Customers' choice and experience of hotels or hotel products make them willing to share their purchase and experience process with other consumers by leaving comments or pictures (Engle et al, 1995; Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2009). In order to attract more customers and increase revenue, hotels need to pay attention to the management of online reviews. Through the big data analysis of the evaluation information of reservation website, it can more scientifically meet the needs of consumers, improve the efficiency of information, better present products, and thus expand the marketing channels of products. For hoteliers, online reviews can help them change their marketing strategy and improve the quality and image of the hotel. For the third-party booking platforms, the evaluation system can be effectively improved to help consumers effectively screen hotels.

### **Objective of the Study**

Taking Huanggang City as an example, a questionnaire survey was conducted to investigate the impact of hotel network evaluation on consumers' decision-making behaviour and the importance of influencing factors. Based on the research results and the reality of social development, some suggestions on the hotel online evaluation are put forward.

### **Research Questions**

With the rapid development of Internet, big data and other network technologies, the way consumers book hotels has changed. More and more consumers book hotels through the network platform and give online evaluation. In order to attract more customers, improve the quality and image of the hotel, and improve the revenue of the hotel, the hotel is paying more and more attention to the management of the evaluation information of the reservation website. However, there are many problems such as not responding in time, responding content is not targeted, and replying way is single. For the third-party booking platform, a good evaluation system can improve the page viewing rate and promote the transaction. However, there are still problems such as the lack of abundant system functional modules, serious formalization, and whether the reply content is true or not. Therefore, only by studying which factors of hotel online reviews affect customers' decision-making behavior and to what extent, can we better promote the improvement of the evaluation system of the reservation platform and improve the reservation rate and income level of the

hotel. In this paper, the following issues are discussed:

- Q1: What factors affect the decision-making behavior of customers in hotel online reviews?  
Q2: Whether there is any difference in the degree of the impact of the various factors on the decision-making of hotel booking?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Online Reviews**

Online Review is one of the most important forms of online word-of-mouth in the internet era. This form can appear on the company's product website, personal website or a third party platform. Generally speaking, online reviews are consumers' comments on consumer products or services after experience. The premise is consumers' perception after use experience. Meanwhile, online reviews can also provide some reference for other potential buyers.

At present the study of online comments have focused on technology research and the behaviour guidance research two angles (Zhang, 2011), a technology oriented research mainly concentrated in language processing, text, and comment on content mining and other fields, based on the review of automatic analysis, found behind the online review reflects the consumption of main body of the views and opinions of certain goods or services, but it is not sure online reviews on product sales, the influence of the performance and economic aspects of online business, also fail to comment on the text mining features to estimate the economic value of online reviews. Behavioral orientation research mainly focuses on two aspects: one is to explore the effect of the number of online reviews, overall rating and other factors on consumer decision-making; Secondly, with the help of text analysis tools, consumers' feedback information can be obtained through online reviews to study the impact of online reviews on consumers' decision-making (Yin, 2012).

In terms of analytical methods, scholars' studies are mainly divided into two parts. One is to extract and analyze keywords and emotional representatives in comments by text analysis method (Dou, 2019). The other part adopts the quantitative analysis of indicators such as rating and number of comments (Du et al, 2016). Text analysis can accurately reflect the critic's psychology, emotion and attitude, but it is not accurate in some aspects. Quantitative analysis can more accurately reflect the attitude of the critics, but means limited, the connotation is not abundant, in the era of big data driven new Internet, on the analysis of online reviews research should combine two methods of analysis used, both in the need analysis of reviewers emotional use of text analysis, and the need to precise expression reviewers will use quantitative analysis, and use the large amount of data, in order to improve the accuracy of quantitative analysis (Chen et al., 2021).

The online reviews studied in this paper mainly include the text information, overall score, and number of reviews and attribute scores of third-party online reviews. The decision-making process of

hotel consumers is studied by analyzing the influence of online reviews on the behavior orientation of hotel consumers.

### **Consumer Decision-Making Behaviour**

Consumer decision refers to the process in which consumers rationally evaluate the related attributes of a certain product, brand or service and make purchase with the least cost (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2009). Engle et al (1995) and Kotler et al (2005) conducted studies on all behavioral activities of consumers in the shopping process, including before, during and after purchase, and proposed consumption on this basis. Nicosia (1996) is among the first scholars to establish consumer behaviour decision model, he thinks the product manufacturers through various media pass product related information to customer, after the judgment of the trade-off consumers into a basic attitude and intention of consumers about the product, after the product has caught the interest of consumers, with the help of online reviews related information to specific product perception from several aspects, and purchase intention, finally produce the actual purchase behavior (Kotler et al, 2005). On the basis of predecessors' research, Kollat et al (1970) further research, and put forward the EKB model of Consumer Behaviour Theory, the model proposed consumer purchase decision process consists of five parts action: need recognition, information search, project evaluation, choice of purchase, purchase behavior, after EKB model has become the Consumer Behaviour Theory in one of the relatively complete and system model. Kotler (2007) summarized the decision-making process of consumers into three parts: external marketing environment and other stimuli, internal factors and consumers themselves, and analysed the decision-making process of consumers by integrating the internal and external factors that affect the decision-making of consumers.

### **The Impact of Online Hotel Reviews on Consumer Decision-Making Behaviour**

For experiential online products such as hotels, online reviews are seen as one of the important channels for consumers to reduce risk. Yuan (2003) believed in his research that compared with other general online shopping scenarios, hotel consumers were more likely to accept online reviews, and believed that such information was the true feelings of personal experience and service, with high credibility and less prejudice. Qiang et al (2009) analysed the relationship between online hotel reviews and hotel sales volume in their research, and proved and proposed that the relationship between the two was very significant by empirical method. The research results also showed that there was a significant positive relationship between the emotional tendency of online reviews and hotel bookings. Beverley et al (2010) and Li (2008) pointed out in their research that positive online reviews can promote the increase of hotel consumer bookings, and there is a significant negative correlation between negative reviews and consumer decisions. They also analysed the moderating effect of trust between the two and conducted an experimental proof. Vermeulen (2009) found that hotel online reviews are beneficial to improving the good image of customers, and positive online reviews are more conducive to improving consumers' purchasing decision-making behavior. In this paper, Zhang (2011) summarized the influence degree of hotel evaluation in the study. In detail, the study mainly verified the influence degree of hotel customers' purchasing decisions from three aspects, namely, the characteristics of online review information source,

the characteristics of online review content itself and the characteristics of online review recipients. Chen et al. (2021) and Min (2016) analysed and discussed the influencing factors of customers' decision-making behaviour in online comments through theory and practice, and came to the main conclusion that the content, effectiveness and source characteristics of comments have positive and negative relations with customers' decision-making behaviour. Liu (2018) analysed the weight of hotel reviews in the psychological process of customers' purchase by combining the price and quality of hotel products as the adjustment on the basis of constructing the model. The research shows that the distance between the hotel and the destination and the price of the hotel will have a positive impact on the purchase decision of the hotel customers from the perspective of consumer utility.

Different scholars from different perspectives have used various methods to explore the influence of hotel online reviews on customer decision-making behaviour. At present, the research on the impact of online hotel reviews on the hotel industry is still at the primary level, and the characteristics of online hotel reviews need to be further analysed. There is still room for improvement in the model, and it is not common to explore the influence of online reviews on hotel customers' decision-making behaviour from a more detailed perspective.

### **Research Hypotheses and Model**

Chen et al (2021) constructed theoretical model of hotel online reviews and customer decision-making behaviour, and verified that four variables of evaluation, namely quantity, quality, reviewers' trust degree and timeliness, had a significant positive impact on customer purchase decision-making. On the basis of previous studies by scholars, relevant hypotheses for this study are proposed:

#### **Content quality of hotel reviews**

Zhang (2011) proposed four dimensions of online reviews, and the quality of reviews was a very important aspect to influence customers' decisions. The quality of hotel reviews refers to whether the description of texts and images of the hotel are consistent with the information displayed on the hotel website. The more detailed and specific the content of one review is, the higher the quality will be, and the more impressed the customer will be when browsing the information, which will affect the customer's decision-making behaviour to a certain extent. Therefore, this study proposes the hypothesis that customer decision-making behaviour will be positively affected by the content of hotel reviews. Based on the research of Zhang (2011), six indicators or questions including the hotel's location, facilities, service attitude, degree of cost performance, environmental sanitation and hygiene and room type are used to measure the hotel.

H1: Content quality of reviews has a positive impact on customer decision-making behaviour.

#### **Hotel review score**

The review score refers to the rating given by a reviewer after the actual experience of the hotel. The higher the rating, the better the reviewer's experience of the hotel is, and to a certain extent, the psychological needs of customers visiting the hotel will be met, which further affects the decision-making behaviour of consumers (Luo, 2019; Dou, 2019). Therefore, we assume that customer decision-making behavior is positively affected by review scores. Five indexes including comprehensive score, location score, facility and equipment score, service quality score and environmental sanitation score are used for the measurement.

H2: The score of reviews has a positive impact on customer decision-making behaviour.

### **Timeliness of hotel reviews**

According to Chen et al (2021), users were more inclined to read earlier reviews and thought that such information was more authentic and credible. Yuan (2003) proved that the number of days of online reviews had a positive effect on usefulness, and the longer the number of days was, the more useful it was to consumers. Sun and Xue (2011) and Vermeulen and Seegers (2009) found that the earlier reviews were posted, the more useful votes they received. The timeliness of reviews refers to the length of space for evaluating information. Service products, especially experiential products such as hotel rooms, will fluctuate seasonally and will develop over time. The closer the review is published, the greater the impact on customers' decision-making behaviour will be. Therefore, we assume that customer decision-making behaviour is positively affected by review timeliness. Based on the experience of the above scholars, this paper adopts the measures of whether the review is published in time, whether the review is recently published, and whether the review reflects the latest product information.

H3: The timeliness of reviews has a positive impact on customer decision-making behaviour.

### **Quantity of hotel reviews**

The quantity of hotel reviews refers to the number of reviews on Home Inn reflected on the booking website. The more the number of hotel reviews is, the more the number of people staying in the hotel it reveals, which makes it easier to attract customers' attention. The contents of hotel reviews are relatively large, which can make customers more likely to obtain effective information, and affect customers' decision-making behaviour. Hence, we assume that the customer's decision-making behavior is positively affected by the number of reviews. Drawing on the research of Du et al (2016), five indicators are used to measure, namely the total cumulative number of reviews, the number of positive reviews, the number of negative reviews, and the number of reviews with pictures.

H4: Quantity of hotel reviews has a positive impact on customer decision-making behaviour.

### Experience of hotel reviewers

If customers post comments on the reservation platforms, they must register to be users first, so the experience value will be reflected when customers browse information. It is generally believed that the higher the reviewer's experience is, the richer experience the reviewer has, the more professional the review will be and the more it will attract the attention of customers. Therefore, we assume that the decision-making behaviour of customers is positively influenced the experience of reviewers. Learning from the research of Du et al (2016) and other scholars, the reviewer's membership level is used to measure.

H5: Experience of hotel reviewers has a positive impact on customer decision-making behaviour.

### Model Construction

Based on the above hypotheses and previous research, the research model is constructed, as shown in Figure 1.

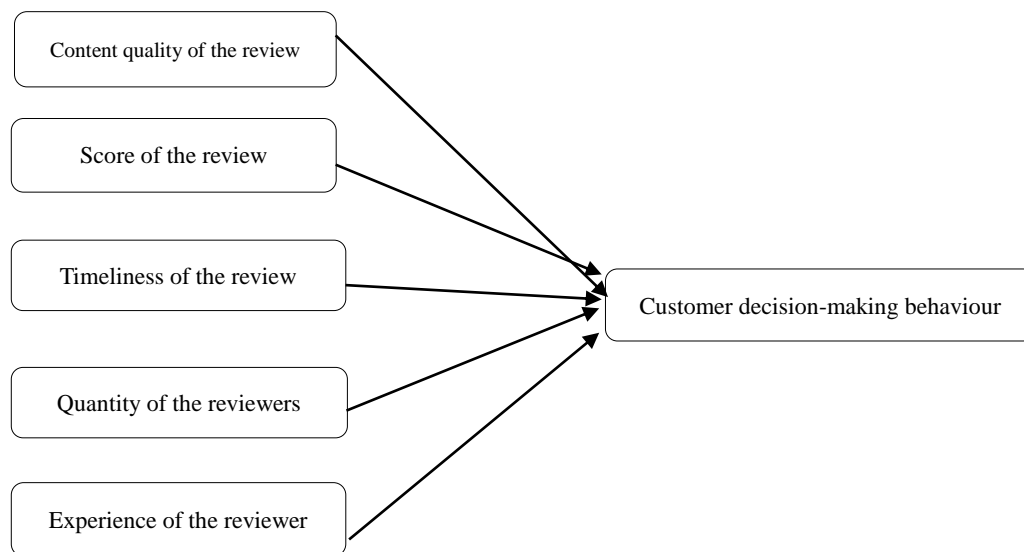


Figure 1: Research Model

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To ensure the scientific of questionnaire design and the validity of survey data, at first referred to the relevant literature and carry out the preliminary design of the questionnaire; Then, asked for expert opinions, including 8 experts in tourism; Finally, after two rounds of consultation and modification, the questionnaire was determined, it includes three parts: personal information, the influencing factors of hotel online reviews, behaviour preference. The main instrument used in this study is close-ended questionnaires. The variables were measured on a five-point Likert Scale to identify how strongly the

respondents agree or disagree with the statements. Responses from the questionnaire were coded and tested using SPSS version 22. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to test on the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Subsequently, descriptive statistics, correlation of the variables and multiple regressions were analysed according to the proposed conceptual framework.

## **Research Design and Sample Characteristics**

### **Data Sources**

In this study, questionnaire survey was adopted. From July 2, 2020 to July 6, 2020, 285 copies were distributed and 285 were recovered in Dongpo Chibi Park and Yiai Lake Park in Huanggang, Hubei province. There were 269 valid questionnaires, with a response rate of 94.39%.

The descriptive statistics of 269 sets of valid sample data obtained are as follows: In terms of gender, females account for 46% and males for 54%; Regarding age, the majority are young people aged 18-28 and middle-aged people aged 29-39, accounting for 63% and 29% respectively. In the aspect of education level, the proportion of undergraduate students is the highest, accounting for 70.05%, indicating that the education level of hotel booking through the network is generally higher now; In terms of disposable income, and it is mainly between 3,000 yuan and 5,000 yuan, accounting for 45.1%. Respondents mainly make online reservations on online platforms such as Ctrip, Meituan and eLong, accounting for 31%, 31% and 22.1% respectively. Booking volume of the hotel's official website is significantly lower than that of third-party websites.

## **Reliability and Validity Analysis**

### **Reliability Analysis**

Reliability is used to judge whether the questionnaire is reliable, which is generally expressed by Cronbach's  $\alpha$  reliability coefficient. In the preliminary survey, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was used as the reliability test of the questionnaire, and the questionnaire data were input and analyzed mainly by taking consumers with consumption experience as respondents.

Table 1 shows the reliability analysis results of this questionnaire. The coefficient value of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is 0.935, indicating that the data is very reliable. The coefficient value of " $\alpha$  coefficient with deleted items" has not been significantly improved, indicating that the item can be retained and the research reliability is relatively high.

To sum up, the reliability coefficient value of the research data is higher than 0.9, and the value of the reliability coefficient will not significantly improve after the deletion of the item, which comprehensively indicates that the data reliability quality is high and can be used for further analysis.



**Table 1: Reliability coefficient of research variables**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items	Items
.935	.935	23

**Validity Analysis**

The validity of data means that the results are consistent with the assumptions and the data is structurally valid. The aim of the questionnaire is to obtain efficient data. Factor analysis is used to verify the results. Firstly, KMO value is used to verify the value to judge whether it is suitable for factor analysis. If the value of KMO is less than 0.5, it is not suitable for factor analysis. If the value of KMO is greater than 0.8, factor analysis is effective. As shown in Table 2, the KMO value of this questionnaire is 0.878, and the significance level of sphericity test is 0.000, which is suitable for factor analysis.

**Table 2: Sample KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity**

KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.878
Approx. Chi-Square		2131.165
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	253
	Sig.	.000

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Factor Analysis**

In this study, exploratory factor analysis is used to extract the construct validity of the common factor test questionnaire, where factor load represents the contribution to this dimension. The larger the factor load value is, the closer the relationship between the item and the measurement dimension will be. It is stipulated in statistics that the cumulative variance contribution rate of common factors should be at least 40%. Each variable should have a load value greater than 0.5 in one of the common factors. As shown in Table 3, among the reviews' content characteristics, quantity characteristics, timeliness, score characteristics, reviewers' experience characteristics, the factor load coefficient value of each item in the influence on the decision is greater than 0.5, indicating that it conforms to the model fit of this paper and that the assumed research variables conform to this model, which is of research significance. These factors contribute more to the field and have greater explanatory power, so these questions can be retained. After analysis, it can be seen from the results that the overall structure validity is also good.

**Table 3: Load coefficient of factors**

	Elements					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hotel's location for traffic	.792					
Are the facilities of the hotel perfect?	.732					
Is the hotel service attitude good?	.657					
Is the hotel cost-effective?	.527					
Is the hotel clean and hygienic?	.526					
Is the hotel room type good?	.517					
Total cumulative number of reviews		.628				
The number of positive reviews		.603				
The number of negative reviews		.569				
The number of reviews with pictures		.545				
Does the review reflects the latest product information?			.543			
Is the review recently published?			.766			
Is the review published in a timely manner			.635			
Comprehensive score				.668		
Location score				.661		
Facility and equipment score				.559		
Service quality score				.557		
Environmental sanitation score				.509		
Membership rating of the reviewer (novice, master, review expert, hotel regular)					.526	
Provides some things that have never been paid attention to						.791
Let your decision become clear from hesitation						.560
Let you change the image of this hotel in your mind						.527
Affect your confidence in booking hotels online						.686

*Extraction method: principal component analysis.*

*Rotation method: Caesar normalization Varimax.*

*a. The rotation converges after 13 iterations.*

**Correlation Analysis**

**Table 4: Person Correlation Analysis Coefficient**

	Content characteristics of the review	Quantity characteristics of the review	Timeliness characteristics of the review	Score characteristics of the review	Experience characteristics of the reviewer	Customer decision-making behavior
Content quality characteristics of the review	1	.788**	.717**	.769**	.555**	.780**
Quantity characteristics of the review	.788**	1	.632**	.746**	.365**	.754**
Timeliness characteristics of the review	.717**	.632**	1	.675**	.392**	.728**
Score characteristics of the review	.769**	.746**	.675**	1	.504**	.752**
Experience characteristics of the reviewer	.555**	.365**	.392**	.504**	1	.464**
Customer decision-making behavior	.780**	.754**	.728**	.752**	.464**	1

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As can be seen from the above Table 4, Pearson Correlation Coefficient is used to represent strength and correlation analysis is used to study the correlation between the influence on decision making and the characteristics of the reviewers' experience, score characteristics, timeliness characteristic, quantity characteristics of the review and the content characteristics of the review. Specific analysis shows that: All of them show significant correlations between the influence on decision making and the characteristics of the reviewers' experience, score characteristics, timeliness characteristic, quantity characteristics of the review and the content characteristics of the review. The correlation values are 0.464, 0.752, 0.728, 0.754, 0.780, and they are all greater than 0, which means that there is positive correlations between the influence on decision making and the characteristics of the reviewers' experience, score characteristics, timeliness characteristic, quantity characteristics of the review and the content characteristics of the review.

## Regression Analysis

**Table 5: Model summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Errors in standard	
				estimates	Durbin-Watson
1	.849 <sup>a</sup>	.720	.712	.38277	2.109

*a. Predictive variables: (constant), content characteristics of the review, quantity characteristics of the review, timeliness characteristics of the review, score characteristics of the review and experience characteristics of the reviewer.*

*b. Dependent variable: Customer decision-making behaviour.*

Linear Regression Analysis is performed by taking content characteristics of the review, quantity characteristics of the review, timeliness characteristics of the review, score characteristics of the review and experience characteristics of the reviewer as independent variables and impact on decision-making behaviour as a dependent variable. It can be seen from Table 5 that the model R square value is 0.720, indicating that content characteristics of the review, quantity characteristics of the review, timeliness characteristics of the review, score characteristics of the review and experience characteristics of the reviewer can explain 72.0% of the change in the impact on decision-making behaviour.

When F test is carried out on the model, it is found that the model passes the F test ( $F=89.509$ ,  $P=0.000<0.05$ ), which indicates that at least one of the experience characteristics of the reviewer, score characteristics of the review, timeliness characteristics of the review, quantity characteristics of the review, and content characteristics of the review will influence the decision-making.

**Table 6: Linear Regression Analysis - Table of Coefficient<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Significance
	B	Standard error	Beta		
1(Constant)	.043	.170		.252	.801
Content quality characteristics of the review	.228	.090	.210	2.542	.012
Quantity characteristics of the review	.274	.076	.258	3.618	.000
Timeliness characteristics of the review	.253	.058	.261	4.355	.000
Score characteristics of the review	.216	.078	.195	2.754	.007
Experience characteristics of the reviewer	.038	.037	.052	1.040	.300

As shown in Table 6, the regression coefficients of content quality, score, timeliness, quantity and experience of reviewers are 0.228, 0.216, 0.253, 0.274 and 0.038 respectively by calculating the model formula. In the experience of the reviewers, the P value 0.300 is greater than 0.05, which fails to pass the test of the model, indicating the decision-making behaviour of customers is not significantly affected by the reviewers' experience. P values of the score, timeliness, quantity and content of the reviews are 0.007, 0.000, 0.000 and 0.012, which are all greater than 0.05 and pass the model test, showing that the score, timeliness, quantity and content of the reviews all have a positive influence on the decision-making behaviour of customers.

The model formula is:

*The influence on the decision-making behaviour = 0.043 + 0.038\* reviewer's experience characteristics + 0.216\* review's score characteristics + 0.253\* review's timeliness characteristics + 0.274\* review's quantity characteristics + 0.228\* review's content quality characteristics.*

The final regression analysis results are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: Results of hypothesis verification**

Hypothesis	Content	Result
H1	The content of reviews has a positive impact on customer decision-making behavior	Tenable
H2	The number of reviews has a positive impact on customer decision-making behavior	Tenable
H3	The score of reviews has a positive impact on customer decision-making behavior	Tenable
H4	The timeliness of reviews has a positive impact on customer decision-making behavior	Tenable
H5	The experience value of reviewers has a positive impact on customer decision-making behavior	Untenable

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Through the above analysis, it can be seen that the content quality, quantity, score and timeliness of online reviews have a positive impact on the decision-making behaviour of hotel customers, while the experience of reviewers does not have a positive impact on the decision-making behaviour of hotel customers. The more real and concrete the review content is, the more it can influence the decision-making behaviour of customers. The score of the review on a hotel directly reflects the purchase tendency of customers, the higher the score is, the positive effect it will have on the decision-making behaviour of customers; on the contrary, the lower the score is, the negative effect it will have on the decision-making behaviour of customers. The higher the number of reviews is, the more attention consumers pay to the hotel and the more they stay, the more they can be influenced for their decision-making behaviour. The better the timeliness of the review is, the more it can influence the decision-making behaviour of customers. However, the experience value of the reviewer has no obvious influence on the decision-making behaviour of the customer, and the customer will not pay special attention to the rating of the reviewer when choosing a hotel. Based on the above conclusions, the following suggestions are proposed:

### **Suggestions to Third-Party Websites**

#### **Establish a supervision system for online review content**

This study shows that the authenticity, specificity and comprehensiveness of hotel review content have an indispensable influence on customers' decision-making behaviour. Then the hotelier needs to carefully filter and judge the content, and the platform should limit or delete the content that is considered harmful. Extreme malicious reviews should be regulated to ensure that consumers view healthy reviews. The information with high repetition rate should be reintegrated, and the information should be released in a clear and orderly manner. Secondly, hoteliers should think from the perspective of consumers about what kind of review information can have a substantial impact on customers when they book hotels. Hotels can set up a professional information group to collect and evaluate customers' psychological expectations, provide high-quality information to consumers, and attach importance to the management of review content.

#### **Timely update online reviews**

This study indicates that the timeliness of reviews will have an impact on the decision-making behaviour of customers to some extent. Customers tend to focus on whether the reviews reflect recent product information, and whether the reviews are recently published. Therefore, the platform should adopt certain incentive measures to encourage consumers to actively evaluate and share the experience after enjoying the hotel, and consumers who actively comment can be awarded membership points or awarded some honorary titles. For consumers who make reviews in a timely manner, hotels can also level up their corresponding membership, improve the authenticity of information and the enthusiasm of consumers.

### **Build their own features and enhance prestige and popularity**

Under the background of the Internet and with the support of national policies, increasingly more OTA platforms like Ctrip and Meituan are flourishing. With the increase of competitiveness, these platforms tend to converge. Therefore, they can improve the registration of users and attract more potential customers by developing their own website features and establishing unique evaluation system and rules. In the context of the rapid development of the Internet, niche websites will be eliminated if they cannot upgrade in time to follow the trend. Most consumers pay more attention to the booking platforms with high popularity, so it is necessary for websites to expand popularity and enhance its prestige.

### **Suggestions to Hotels**

#### **Develop their own websites to improve competitiveness**

In addition to booking hotels through OTA platforms, hotels strive to build their own brands and establish their own websites. With the enhancement of the competitiveness of OTA platforms, hotels should pay attention to the construction of their own brands, establish hotel mobile App, WeChat official account and other channels for booking through the hotel's cultural concept, and allow customers to evaluate on the official website of the hotel and obtain feedback information in a timely manner.

#### **Actively make use of third-party websites as marketing platforms**

The empirical study of Home Inn shows that some well-known websites, such as Ctrip, Meituan and Qunar, are more able to convince customers of the authenticity of the reviews. On the official website of the hotel, customers are more likely to see the hotel's overly exaggerated product information and evaluation information, which reduces the trust of customers, so the hotel cannot ignore the cooperation and marketing with third-party websites when building its own brand features. Based on third-party websites, customer reviews are more free and authentic. From the perspective of hoteliers, in order to obtain authentic reviews, hotels should arrange relevant professionals to timely respond to customer reviews or questions, and finally give feedback to the hotel as a reference for hoteliers' daily decisions.

#### **Timely improve negative reviews to enhance customer satisfaction**

The hotel shall promptly collect and respond to customers' online reviews. In view of favorable reviews, some preferential policies or incentive measures can be adopted to make customers continue to pay attention to the hotel information, and try to establish a long-term cooperative relationship, so that more beneficial customers can promote the hotel, improve the competitiveness and influence of the hotel. In

response to negative comments, the hotel should timely find and reflect problems, and address them. Due to the fast propagation speed of the network, if the bad reviews are not solved in time, in terms of the timeliness of the reviews, the hotel's negative reviews are likely to appear on the website for a long time, affecting the purchase decisions of other customers. When necessary, the hotel can provide certain compensation, such as hotel reservation coupons, complimentary breakfast, to prevent the loss of customers and the collapse of the hotel brand image. The hotel must pay attention to the negative impact of online reviews and make good use of the online review means to attract and bring more customers to the hotel.

#### **Funding:**

*Science and Technology Research Project of Hubei Provincial Department of Education (Q20 02902); Project of Dabie Mountain Tourism Economy and Cultural Research Center, Humanities and Social Science Research Base of Colleges and Universities in Hubei Province (201715603; 202014803); Project of philosophy and social science prosperity plan of Hubei Provincial Department of Education (20D097).*

#### **REFERENCES:**

- Beverley, A., Sparks, & Browning, V. (2010). Complaining in cyberspace: The motives and forms of hotel guests' complaints online. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 19(7), 797-818.
- Chen, C., Tan, Z.Y., & Chung, J.F. (2021). A Comprehensive Evaluation of County Tourism Development Level in Huanggang, China. *Berjaya Journal of Services & Management*, 15(January, 2021), 52-63.  
[https://journal.berjaya.edu.my/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Jan-2021\\_52-63.pdf](https://journal.berjaya.edu.my/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Jan-2021_52-63.pdf)
- Dou, Zixin. (2019). *Research on Product Sales Forecasting Based on Online Review Text Emotional Polarity Analysis*. Guangzhou University.
- Du, Xuemei, Ding, Jingyu, Xie, Zhihong, & Lei, Lifang. (2016). Research on the influence of online reviews on consumers' buying intentions. *Management Review*, 28(03):173-183.
- Engle, Blackwell & Miniard. (1995). *Consumer Behavior*. The Dryden Press.
- Hawkins, D., & Mothersbaugh, D. (2009). *Consumer Behavior Building Marketing Strategy*. McGraw-Hill.
- Kollat, D. T., Engel, J. F., & Blackwell, R. D. (1970). Current problems in consumer behavior research. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 7(3): 327-332.
- Kotler, P. (2007). *Marketing Management*, 17(1): 99.



- Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., & Saunders, J. (2005). *Principles of Marketing* (4th European Edition).
- Li, H. (2008). *The Impact of Negative Word-of-Mouth on Hotel Customers' Purchase Decisions*. Zhejiang University.
- Liu, Shasha. (2018). *Research on the Impact of Online Reviews on Hotel Consumer Decision-Making*. Chongqing University.
- Luo, Minyao. (2019). *Research on the Impact of Online Reviews on Consumers' Purchasing Decisions*. Guangdong University of Technology.
- Min, S.H. (2016). *Research on the Impact of Online Reviews on Hotel Consumers' Purchasing Decision-Making Behavior*. Nanjing Normal University.
- Nicosia, F. M. (1996). Consumer decision processes: Marketing and advertising implications. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 5(3): 334.
- Qiang, Y., Law, R., & Gu, B. (2009). The impact of online user reviews on hotel room sales. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28(1), 180-182.
- Sun, W., & Xue, B. (2011). Factors influencing the usefulness of online reviews by consumers in the field of books. *Journal of Jiangsu Commerce*, 5, 58-60.
- Vermeulen, I. E., & Seegers, D. (2009). Tried and tested: The impact of online hotel reviews on consumer consideration. *Tourism Management*, 30(1):123-127.
- Yin, Yingzi. (2012). *Hotel online review participation behavior based on TAM*. Ocean University of China.
- Yuan, Yazhong. (2003). Discussion on tourism word-of-mouth marketing. *Journal of Central South University of Forestry and Technology (Social Science Edition)*, 14(3), 41-42.
- Zhang, N. (2011). *Research on Online Reviews of Budget Hotel Customers' Purchasing Decisions*. Dongbei University of Finance and Economics.