

Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center hotel online review analysis

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<p>The aim of the thesis is to find easily implemented solutions to better the online reviews of Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center. Guest reviews are a valuable marketing tool for online reputation for hotels. Online reviews have a direct effect on sales and therefore the revenue of the hotel.</p> <p>The thesis starts by introducing Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center hotel and the reasons for this study. Then it takes a general look of online reviews and the importance of them. Background is provided on the platforms of online reviews and the methods they are posted. Theoretical look is taken at the process of the feedback, customer satisfaction and guest-centricity. Then the thesis goes on to provide results of data analysis, conclusion of the results and suggestions based on them.</p> <p>The research method used is quantitative in nature. The online review sample is gathered from reviews submitted in March 2017. Then the sample is heat mapped using online reputation management tool TrustYou. From this heat mapping the reviews will receive a numerical value for different categories. From these results it is analysed what the hotel should do in order to highlight the positive and eliminate the negative.</p> <p>The results showed that the main reason that is bringing the review score down is the quality of the hotel room. This was established in the thesis, but as the goal is to find easily implemented changes, renovation of the rooms was not considered key finding.</p> <p>Several small but instrumental findings were made based on the review analysis. These are best described by small factors like the temperature of the pool or the marketing of the pub. These small but easily implemented findings were the main target of the thesis.</p> <p>Ultimately the key finding was about service and how it possibly affects multiple categories of the results. Service culture was found to be the key element on improving the review rate for the hotel.</p> <p>Then the thesis suggests changes to daily duties where improvement on online ratings can be made. These suggestions include service culture, food consistency and simplifying the booking process.</p>	
Keywords Online review analysis, customer satisfaction, guest generated content,	

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1 Introduction

As the duty manager of the Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center hotel the author is constantly thinking of ways to improve the business. For quite some time now the feeling has been that daily duties have become too much of a routine. This ignited the feeling that something needed to be done in search of improvement. A thought came up that the hotel receives a good amount of feedback in the form of online reviews. The data is available but it is not properly mined in order to get the relevant information for fine-tuning the operations.

The importance of online reviews generated by previous guests is high at this time and projected to grow, as the consumers are all the time getting more comfortable with internet services. When asked most of the travellers are ready to pay more for a hotel with higher review rating (Ady & Quadri-Felitti, 2014). It is common for a potential guest to visit multiple travel sites in order to make the decision of which hotel to book. TripAdvisor alone states that they have over 500 million reviews on their platform (TripAdvisor , 2017).

This thesis focuses on finding the elements that are affecting positively to the hotels star rating and the elements that are bringing it down. The goal is to find things that can be corrected by changes to the daily duties of the hotel staff. The data has been available for the hotel for quite some time already, but it has never been analysed like this to find concrete solutions. The competition at the Helsinki-Vantaa international airport area is ever growing and in order to retain the competitive edge the rating has to be raised.

The thesis was chosen to be research using a quantitative method. To analyse the reviews the help of TrustYou online relations management tool was used. This leader of their field was found to be really useful in handling the high amount of online reviews. A sample was gathered from reviews submitted during March of 2017.

Research problem

The idea was simplified into a research problem:

Reviews from previous guests are available but it is not mined to find improvements to the hotel.

The research problem then created multiple questions that were introduced to help the thesis find answers to the desired issues:

1. What aspects guests find positive at the hotel?

2. What aspect guests find negative at the hotel?
3. What could be done to highlight positive aspects?
4. What could be done to eliminate negative aspects?
5. How the accommodation experience is perceived and how it could be bettered?

Case company introduction

Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center is a hotel located near the Helsinki-Vantaa international airport. The hotel has 278 guest rooms and a congress center with 48 meeting rooms. The hotel restaurant services both the hotel guests and the large conference groups. The hotel is part of Restel Oy that operates 43 hotels and over 240 restaurants in Finland. The hotel was previously known as Rantasipi Airport, but with new branding strategy the hotel got a new name. Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center is practically a business hotel during weekdays. The facilities for big meetings are without competition in the area. This combined with the possibility of accommodation within the same building provides a large flow of business travellers to the hotel. During weekends when the business travel is slow the hotel accommodates mostly leisure travellers. The closeness to airport brings in a lot of guests from further north that are travelling abroad for a holiday. The hotel serves as the perfect pit-stop before an early flight. The services include a free airport shuttle and an option to leave your car parked at the hotel lot for the duration of the trip. Partnerships with local leisure companies, such as spas and activity parks, also provide a steady flow of leisure travellers for the weekend.

Thesis structure

The introduction of this thesis explains why the theme and topic was chosen. The research problem is introduced also to give the reader the starting impression where the topic came to be. The problem then created questions which are also introduced.

In the theoretical framework the reader will become familiar with online reviews. The online reviews in general will be explained and sources for gathering online reviews will be introduced. The framework then goes on to the relevancy of the online reviews. The thesis will explain why online reviews are important and what the effects for the hotel are. The framework is used to give the reader a general impression of the online review world before going in the results of the analysis.

The methodology chapter describes the quantitative method of research shortly. The reasons are given why the research was done in this manner. The methodology chapter also gives justification why the research method was chosen.

The following chapter, findings, presents the results of the review analysis. Several tables are provided where performance is measured. These findings were reached by heat mapping the reviews gathered.

Discussion chapter then takes the findings and breaks them down to concrete actions. The positive and negative aspects are taken from the results and the reasons for the performance are discussed.

The conclusion chapter then goes back to the research problem and the questions it creates. Here the results are put into the initial goal of the research. The author of the thesis then makes suggestions for actions that could be implemented in the daily process of working. The conclusion also presents possibilities for future research and finally acknowledges the limitations of this study.

2 Theoretical framework

Theoretical framework will first take a look of the online reviews in general. Then the chapter goes on to introduce the platforms of online reviews. Then the chapter goes into what effects online reviews can have for the business and why analysing the reviews is important.

2.1 Online reviews in general

The purpose of online reviews is to share experiences with fellow travellers. The easy access to internet provides everyone the chance to share, and more importantly read the reviews of past guests. TripAdvisor states that they have over 500 million reviews of hotels, restaurants and attractions (TripAdvisor , 2017). Online reviews are a great way to research the area or hotels of intended travels.

The importance of online reviews has already grown to be very important factor. As Internet is readily available for majority of the world, especially for the potential customers of an airport hotel, the importance of the reviews will keep growing. According to TripAdvisor's research in 2015 96% of users consider reading reviews important before booking. 83% will always read the reviews before booking. More than half of the users go on to say that they would never book a hotel without any reviews. (TripAdvisor, 2015)

There has also been discussion about integrating guest reviews to the official star ratings. World Tourism Organization UNWTO made a report on the subject and found out the importance regarding guest reviews and star classification as shown on the below table.

Table 1 (UNWTO, 2014)

	Great Britain	USA	Germany	France	Australia
Guest reviews to hotel booking decision					
Very important	61	69	51	39	69
Important	21	17	21	31	23
Guest review site clearly indicates official classification/star rating					
Very important	60	61	49	40	60
Important	21	20	21	25	23
Value of integrating guest reviews as part of official classification/star rating					
Very valuable	59	67	44	42	60
Valuable	21	17	20	24	22
Importance of hotel official classification/star rating when selecting hotels					
Very important/valuable	55	64	51	45	67
Important/valuable	20	22	21	24	21

2.2 Online review sites

The internet is full of review sites. It is up to the consumer to decide if the information on the site in question is trustworthy. The notable one is TripAdvisor which as previously stated claims to have over 500 million reviews (TripAdvisor , 2017). The online travel agencies are also publishing reviews from guests. The best sites are the big players, Booking.com, Hotels.com and Expedia. The online travel agents are trustworthy as they require confirmation that the person writing the review actually stayed at the property. Booking.com says “The only way to leave a review is to first make a booking. That’s how we know our reviews come from real guests who have stayed at the property” (Booking.com, 2017). The fact that online travel agents regulate the review system provides security to the hotels and at the same time makes the reviews worthy for possible future guests.

These big online review sites for hotels also offer a nice feature allowing the hotels to respond to the reviews. For the sender of the review it adds that they get confirmation that their voice has been heard. For the hotel it gives a nice platform to communicate with the guests. For the reader that is still contemplating whether to stay at the property or not, the chance to read the hotel staff answer adds to the gathered information. The European Commission’s study on online consumer reviews in the hotel sector states that “hotels have recognised the importance of online reviews to consumers’ travel decisions, they have engaged with review platforms in order to enhance their business profiles and interact with potential guests” (European Commission, 2014).

2.3 Customer satisfaction and loyalty

The online reviews are a part of measuring customer satisfaction and loyalty. In order to understand the meaning of the guest reviews we need to take a look at the basics of customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction has been defined for a long time and will be studied as long as the business world exists. One way of defining customer satisfaction is, when put into the accommodation business, that a customer has certain expectations of the quality of the hotel. Then these expectations are measured against the actual experience at the hotel. If these expectations of the service and the room are met, then we can say that the customer is satisfied. This theory is quite famous for customer satisfaction issues and is called the “expectancy disconfirmation theory” (Elkhani & Bakri, 2012)

From the below figure 1 we can see a more detailed structure of customer satisfaction, which in turn is then leading to customer loyalty. The factors leading to customer satisfaction are service quality, product quality and price. Managing these issues within the hotel will lead to customer satisfaction. As the thesis studies customer reviews the box where most influence can be had is the service quality in figure 1.

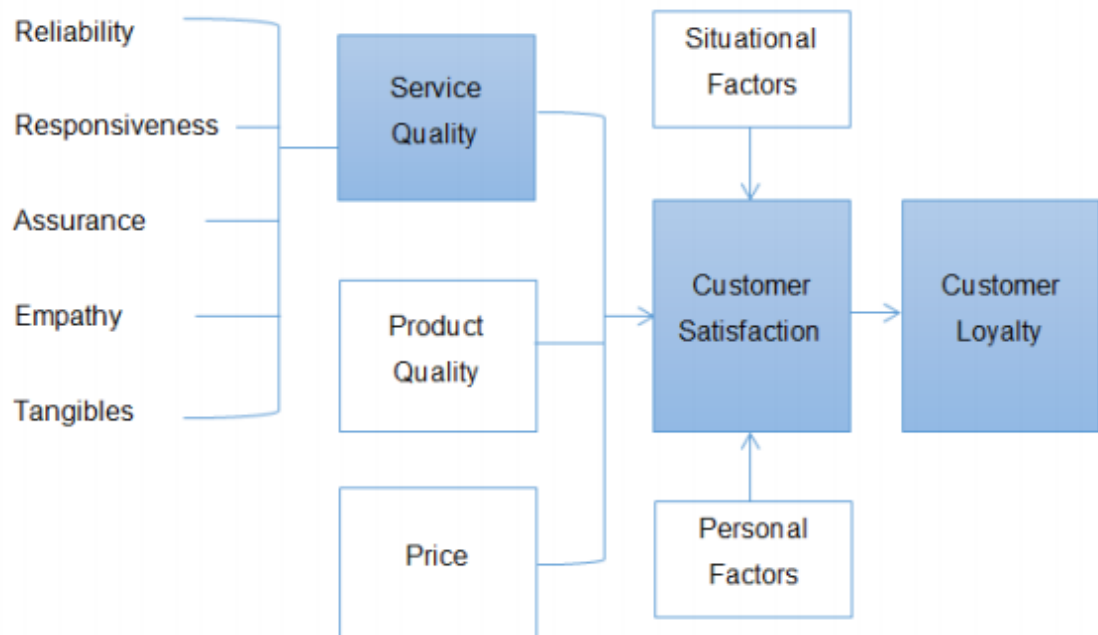


Figure 1 (Zeithaml, 2006)

The need for analyzing guest reviews from the customer satisfaction point of view comes to play as the competition gets harder and harder. Today consumers want more and more from the services and this makes it harder to meet the expectations. When the expectations raise the development of the products and services must be priorities to reach customer satisfaction (Bergström & Leppänen, 2014).

The customer satisfaction then leads to customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is built with multiple steps. The first step in building customer loyalty is to know the company. In this step the potential guest realizes that the hotel in question is located in the optimal place regarding her needs. At this point the guest has yet to visit the hotel. The second part of building loyalty is to have the guest stay at the hotel for the first time. From the first visit the guest has impressions on how the accommodation went. At this first experience the customer satisfaction is very important. When the guest returns on the bases of being satisfied the first time, and has now used the accommodation services for a few time. At this point we can say that the customer relationship has been formed. Then to the final step which is committing the customer. The last step is crucial in customer loyalty. When

the customer is committed and expectations are that they will return multiple times to the hotel, can customer loyalty perceived to be reached (Ylikoski, 2000). To reach the loyalty stage marketing strategies are important. For example various loyalty cards will make the difference from a guest who uses the accommodation services now and then to a guest that is committed using the same services every time when needed.

2.4 Customer feedback process

This chapter takes a look into customer feedback handling. As the figure 2 below shows there are five steps to handling the feedback. First step is to collect all the feedback from multiple sources. This is covered in the hotel industry by the online review platforms. There are countless travel agents and other sites publishing guest experiences. Then all customer feedback is gathered and processed for the need of immediate reaction. The third step is to possibly rectify the situation on a single feedback if necessary. This requires contacting the customer. Fourth step is to analyse the feedback. From the analysis of the feedback should be found the key factors on customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Those points are then used in the final step to develop the services or products (Aarnikoivu, 2005).

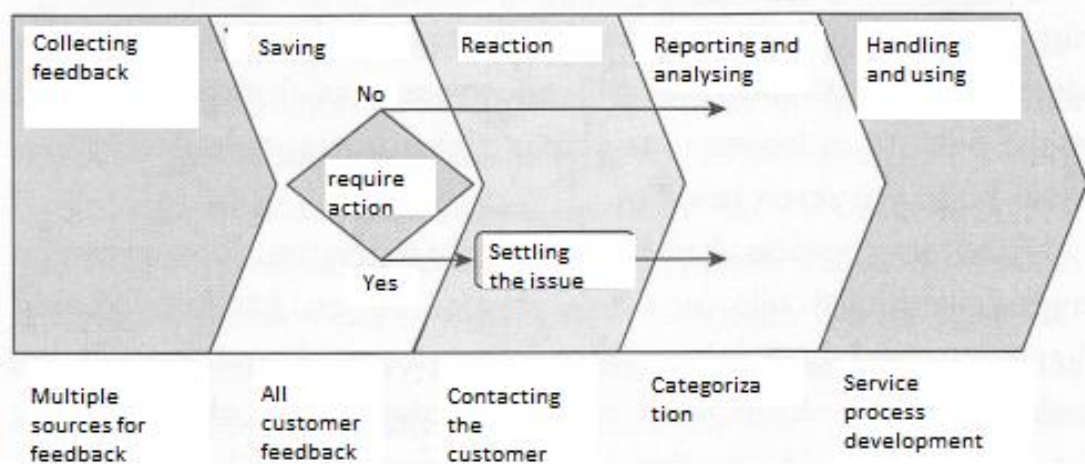


Figure 2. Translated. Handling of customer feedback (Aarnikoivu, 2005)

2.5 Trustworthiness of online reviews

The trustworthiness of online reviews is always a question. How can the reader be certain that the reviews have been written by an unbiased guest? Although the online travel

agents require some confirmation about a booking, not all travel sites do this. There might be reviews from people who have other agendas.

The hotel for example might choose to boost their own reviews by making their own. There have actually been cases where a hotel has gotten a good review even before it opened. There are many benefits to hotels to have good reviews and scores on the online review site. The hotel is more visible for potential customers. (UNWTO, 2014)

The other part of false reviews is the negative ones. The competition in the hotel industry is tough in places and others may seek a competitive advantage by posting a negative review for the competitor. There are some filters in place on all of the online review sites, but it is sometimes impossible to spot the ill intended review from the real. This way the hotels rating on the website can be lowered and potentially sales harming fabrications can be published.

The false reviews are fortunately perceived minimal. PhoCusWright study shows that 98% of the people who participated in their study find the reviews they read on TripAdvisor to be accurate. The same study shows that 87% of the participants agree with a statement "guest reviews on TripAdvisor help me feel more confident in my decision". The importance of the online reviews is found once more with the study showing that 53% of the respondents will not book a hotel if there are no reviews at all. This shows that even the negative reviews have value in the image for the hotel. (Quinby & Rauch, 2012)

2.6 The Effect of reviews

The effect of the online reviews is hard to measure. What exactly is the hotel gaining or losing because of online reviews? There is a research done by Margaret Ady and Donna Quadri-Felitti called "The Effect of Reviews on Hotel Conversion Rates and Pricing. The study takes hypothetical situation to examine the hotel choices people make based on price and reviews. The study used TrustYou review platform to get to the results.

There were 513 participants in the study. The study takes four scenarios where hotels are priced differently and the review score is different for each one. Then the sample group is asked to book a hotel for each scenario. A hypothetical online travel agent was built for the study. This way the study got information about how the review score affected the choice. The key findings were:

- Travellers are 3.9 times more likely to choose a hotel with higher review scores when the prices are the same.
- When hotel prices are increased for hotels with better review scores, travellers are more likely to book the hotel with the higher score even when it costs more.
- 76% of travellers were willing to pay more for a hotel with higher review scores, when asked explicitly.

(Ady & Quadri-Felitti, 2014)

The findings show that online reviews have a clear effect on the revenue of the hotel. This alone is enough for hoteliers to shift more concentration on online reviews. The results show that online reviews are very important marketing tool for hotels.

2.7 Online review management

First thing to consider in online review management is the source of online reviews. The reviews are based on the experience the guest has at the hotel. To avoid a negative review the accommodation experience must be made satisfying. This can be achieved by asking feedback during the guests stay, so that negative things can be resolved before the guest leaves the hotel. Another important factor in the preliminary management of online reviews is to be accurate on all marketing. The services must be described accurately to not inflate the guest expectations (Nguyen, 2015)

The second part of online review management after the managing of the initial experience is to encourage the guest to give a review. When the stay has been a positive experience the guest is likely to give a positive review. Positive reviews in turn can lead to more bookings as potential guests see the new review. The staff can help directing the guest to a platform where the review can be sent (Nguyen, 2015).

After these pre review processes it is important for the hotel to monitor the reviews. The hotel has to constantly know the public's opinion of the hotel in order to find relevant issues that can be bettered. This gives the hotel a constant opportunity for development. With this step it is very usefull to have the use of TrustYou online reputation management tool. (Nguyen, 2015).

At this point the hotel has the information of positives and negatives. The online review management would be pointless if no actions were to be done in result of it. Here the analysis of the reviews will pinpoint the departments that need improving and the ones

that are producing positive feedback. It is then up to the hotel to correct the negative issues. This way the online review management goes forward and new information can be gathered in the never ending search for perfection (Nguyen, 2015).

2.8 Reasons for review analysis

A hotels business is all about the guests. The more guests the better the business. As stated before, online reviews are an important factor in the selecting of a hotel. This chapter provides information about reasons to analyse the reviews.

In the PwC's global hotels report can be found out that online reviews provide valuable information on where to improve. For example if travellers are giving negative feedback on cleanliness, the feedback is gotten easily and issues can be attended to (PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, 2015). The topic was seen from the destination management point of view, but it applies straight to hotels as well. Albert Barreda and Anil Bilgihan give a more generalized reason to analyze the user generated content. They state that The feedback from user generated content gives an opportunity for hotel managers to understand consumer reactions to their product (Barreda & Bilgihan, 2013).

Barreda and Bilgham found out the importance of analysing online reviews in their study. They state that because of the growth of online reviews and electronic word of mouth it is important that hotels dedicate time and recourses to monitor the reviews. The comments and reviews provide information on what guests are saying about the property. The analysis helps to identify areas that need improving. Improving these areas will lead to better customer satisfaction, service and product quality, brand image and brand positioning. By analysing the reviews hoteliers can find the underlying motives for positive and negative reviews and by going with them the review score can be bettered (Barreda & Bilgihan, 2013).

2.9 Responding to reviews

Most of the review sites give opportunity for the hotel to respond to the reviews. Responding to the reviews gives the hotel many great opportunities. First the person who left the review will get a feeling that they have been heard. This gives the guest a feeling that the hotel cares. If the guest feels that they have a connection with the hotel they are more

likely to return. Second the hotel has an opportunity to maybe correct some facts for possible future guest who are looking to book accommodation in the area. Third the review answers are great places to showcase the services that make the hotel stand out. When answering the personnel just have to keep in mind that the answer will be read by all the customers that are shopping for a hotel online.

Responding to reviews is tricky at times. Specially answering to negative reviews can be hard. TrustYou online reputation management company has put together a report on answering negative reviews. In the report they tell that 78% of travellers say that management responses to reviews show that the hotel cares about the guests. They go on to tell that 84% of the travellers say that good response to a bad review improves the impression of the hotel. This is why they have introduced the short report on answering negative reviews. There are three steps to answer a negative review. First is to always thank the guest. Even in the negative reviews the feedback must always be appreciated. Second is to admit and apologize about the things that led to the bad review. Let the guest know what will be done to correct the situation. Third is to invite the guest back to the hotel to make the experience right. And with this the answer must always be properly signed to show that the hotel truly cares. (TrustYou, 2014)

Answering to positive reviews is important as well. Revinat, another online reputation management company has made instructions on how to make a working response to a positive review. Answering positive reviews can encourage loyalty. The guest has already had a positive experience. Then the response deepens the connection and the guest is more likely to return. The positive review already suggests that the guest likes your brand. Answering the review can make the guest tell about the hotel to other potential customers. Then again the response is shown to all travellers reading the reviews. It gives a positive outlook to them as well that the management cares about the guests to answer the reviews. Revinat gives three simple steps to build the positive review answer. First is to thank the guest by their name. It gives a personal touch to the answer. Second is to personalise the answer to the review. This is important as having a readily constructed answer will show up on the same webpage multiple times creates the feeling that reviews are not read and appreciated. Third is to thank the guest again and make them feel welcome to return. It is always important to promote loyalty to have repeat customers. (Murphy, 2014)

2.10 Customer-centricity

All the literature from above strongly suggest that hotels of today should be aiming more customer-centric models. The customer-centric model means the hotel management has to shift the thinking from what can we think to make the business better, to finding out from the guests what they want. This means that the role of social media increases. Guest review platforms are an ideal place to engage with guests and show potential customers that the hotel cares for its guests (Denihan)

Focusing on customer-centricity the hotels will shift from the traditional way of doing things to concentrate more on creating experiences for the guests. The hotel can function as much more than just a place to sleep. The hotel can offer much more to the guest in order to reach satisfaction. For example Airbnb arranges trips where the guest can enjoy a tour with a habitant of the city as the guide. This trend of customer-centricity may lead to the fact that value of brands may diminish. Hotels of the future need to be able to provide tailor made services targeted to the guests of the specific hotel (Ting, 2016).

This highlights the value of guest reviews. As it now looks the future of the business is going to be more customer-centric, hotels need to put more effort on recognising the improvements their guests are proposing. The online reviews are the best place for gathering this information.

3 Methodology

To find the answers to the research problem and the questions it creates the thesis follows a framework. The coming chapters will explain the framework that was used to conduct this research. The framework was chosen to find straightforward answers to the research problem and questions.

3.1 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is used to get numerical, statistical or mathematical measurements from the collected data. Quantitative research aims to finding the numerical data in a group to find explanations or answers to a phenomenon (University of Southern California). The reason this thesis uses quantitative method is that the aim is to find simple, easily applied, small fixes to better the customer service. The reason to use quantitative method against qualitative method is that the data sample will be larger. The information gathered with qualitative research would be more specific, but the aim is to have a large sample to find more general answers to please a large customer base.

3.2 Qualitative research

As the thesis ventures slightly to qualitative research model with the verbal aspect of the reviews the method is also presented. Qualitative research method gives value to quality of the entity. As Quantitative method always measures something qualitative method aims to find reasons behind the phenomenon. Qualitative method investigates the relationship between causes. As quantitative research takes hard facts to measure, qualitative research relies on personal experiences and opinions. The qualitative method is unique to every study. Qualitative research method are used to study interviews for example. The method goes deeper in to the data and produces more detailed answers (University of Southern California).

3.3 Justification

The sample will be collected from several online review platforms. The reviews will be collected using the platform of online reputation management company TrustYou. Using the TrustYou platform will allow the reviews from several review sites to be analysed together. Reason TrustYou was selected is that the target hotel uses the platform to manage the online reputation. Reason this was chosen is that the thesis aims to find concrete solutions to the specific hotel and not in general to all accommodation units.

The reason to use multiple online review sites was made to get the largest possible sample size. The sample size was already limited as it was restricted to reviews made within one month. The one month time was decided to get answers to issues that were relative. The sample size could be grown by allowing older reviews in the sample, but then the findings would not have been as relative as some of them could have already been fixed or outdated. That is why within the one month as many platforms as possible were included in the sample reviews. All together 19 review platforms were used to get the sample.

3.4 TrustYou

TrustYou is a online marketing reputation tool. The feedback platform collects online guest reviews from multiple platforms. The collected data is then produced into reports and data visualizations for the customer hotels. The company was founded by Benjamin Jost and Jakob Riegger when the two were both looking for a perfect hotel and decided that there must be a better way (TrustYou). For this thesis TrustYou gathered information from 19 different online review platforms. Also the answers from the Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center staff were included in order to get results for the response rate.

Trust you is the largest online reputation management company for hotels. The platform takes the reviews and produces analysis for the hotels. The hotmapping algorithm of TrustYou can analyse the verbal reviews to produce summaries for large quantities of reviews. The program then tells the hotel which aspects are getting praises and which are getting complaints (Hotel Online, 2017). TrustYou also separates the reviews so it is easy to see for which reviews it is possible to respond. This saves time in responding to reviews as it is not necessary to go through each platform and each review. The staff can go in order through all reviews that require responding.

TrustYou was used in the thesis to analyse the 271 reviews gotten in the sample month. By using the program the handling of so many reviews became possible. TrustYou also enabled more detailed research from the reviews as it is able to break down the sentiments in multiple categories. TrustYou will also be useful in following the effects if suggested changes are implemented. The reviews can be analyzed monthly and progress can be monitored. The future analysis can be based on this thesis and therefore doesn't require much time.

4 Findings

This chapter takes the results from the heatmapping of the online reviews. The results are put into table forms providing numerical results. The chapter takes different categories of the results and provides multiple tables to analyze further.

4.1 Sources and sample













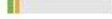

This chapter looks at the sources of the reviews and the size of the sample. The following table provides all the review platforms and how many reviews were gotten from each of them. As we can see from table 2 (appendix 1) the results were gathered from 19 different review platforms. The table also indicates that reviews were gotten from only seven.

4.2 Praises and Complaints

This chapter shows the findings for which individual things got praises and complaints in the sample reviews. Table 3 (appendix 2) shows the positive and negative amounts. From the table we can clearly see what categories got praises and complaints and how much.

Table 4 will then go on to break down the praises and complaints to sentiments for different categories. From here we can see the performance score as well. The score gives a good overall indicator of what things are appreciated and what are found negative.

Table 4 (TrustYou, 2017)

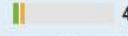
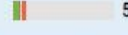

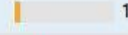

Sentiment						
Category ▼	Performance	Trend	Mentions	Positive	Neutral	Negative
▶ Amenities	↑ 44	+131.6%	 9	4	0	5
Bar and Beverages	0	0%	 1	0	0	1
▶ Cleanliness	↓ 52	-3.7%	 21	11	0	10
▶ Comfort	70	0%	 33	23	5	5
▶ Food	↓ 65	-14.5%	 91	59	9	23
▶ Hotel	↑ 75	+33.9%	 48	36	0	12
▶ Location	↑ 94	+11.9%	 65	61	0	4
Pool	↓ 50	-33.3%	 6	3	0	3
▶ Price	↓ 73	-7.6%	 40	29	0	11
▶ Room	↓ 35	-18.6%	 111	39	13	59
▶ Service	↑ 85	+6.3%	 61	52	4	5
▶ Vibe	↑ 33	+83.3%	 24	8	1	15
▶ Wellness Area	↓ 88	-12%	 8	7	0	1
WiFi	↓ 50	-39.8%	 2	1	1	0

4.3 Front office

The following table will show the positives and negatives considering the front office in the reviews. The table goes further to break down the numbers reached in table 4 to give more levels in the front office category.

Table 5 (TrustYou, 2017)

Front Office - Sentiment

Category ▼	Performance	Trend	Mentions	Positive	Neutral	Negative
▼ Service	This main category is not relevant to Front Office, only some of its subcategories are.					
Booking Process	50	0%	 4	2	2	0
Reception	↓ 80	-13%	 5	4	0	1
Shuttle Service	100	0%	 8	8	0	0
Tour Guide	0	0%	 1	0	1	0
Front Office	↓ 78	-12.4%	 18	14	3	1

4.4 Food & Beverage

The following table will present the results for food and beverage section. The findings for the category are divided into different segments. This helps to understand the aspects where the score is positive and where negative. From table 6 (appendix 3) we can clearly see the items that are performing well, and items that are not.

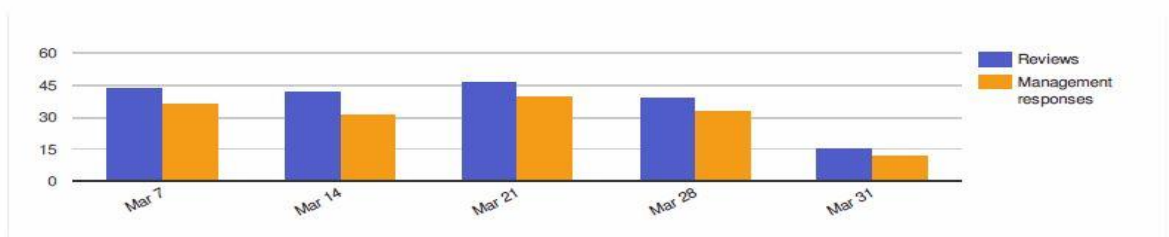
4.5 Response rate and competitors

The following table will provide results for the response rate of the hotel. The table provides a breakdown on how many of the total number of reviews was answered. It also gives information on the nature of the review that was responded to. On a side note for table seven, although the table says star, the meaning is not from the traditional star rating. The scale is taken from the review platforms that all ask the guest to give an overall score for the reviewed hotel.

Table 7 (TrustYou, 2017)

Responses

	1 star ★	2 stars ★★	3 stars ★★★	4 stars ★★★★	5 stars ★★★★★	Total
Reviews *	4	7	53	92	31	187
Management responses	2	6	38	81	25	152
Response rate	50%	86%	72%	88%	81%	81%



* Here we only count the number of reviews that can be responded to.

Then the response rates and overall scores are compared to competitor set from the same area. The next table will provide results regarding competitors. Response rate for Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center will be compared to a competitor set.

Table 8 (TrustYou, 2017)

Competitors					
Name	Overall Score	Performance	New reviews	New responses	Response rate
Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center	72	↓ 71	271	152	81%
Competitor Average	80	↑ 80	142.88	23.25	26%
Complindex	0.9	0.89	1.9	6.54	3.07

5 Discussion

In the previous chapter the results of the research were introduced. The findings provide valuable information regarding the research problem and questions it created. In this chapter the findings will be discussed using the literature that was introduced before.

5.1 Sample and sources

The sample size is delightfully large for a months' worth of reviews. Table 2 shows 271 reviews in one month, which is a lot for a Finnish hotel. The sample should be able to provide trustworthy information for the thesis.

Table 2 shows that indeed data was collected from 19 sources as previously mentioned. It also shows that data was actually gotten from only seven. This is a clear indicator for which sites the target hotel is getting bookings from. From that the hotel can also see which sites to target the review answers.

5.2 Praises and complaints

From Table 3 we can see that from the 271 reviews 78 were categorized as negative. From the same table we find out that TrustYou has analysed there to be 333 praises and 187 complaints. Clearly the highest amount of complaints comes from the room itself. This shows the hotel that the guests are not satisfied with the level of the room. In order to raise the overall score from the online reviews something has to be done to make the room reach guest expectations. However renovations or room amenities are not something to be implemented in the daily functions for the hotel. To improve the room a higher management decision needs to be made to commit to a larger project. The ratio for vibe can be explained with the same issues as the room. The building is very old and has not been renovated in decades. Good places to improve and acknowledge but hard to better with daily tasks.

The highest amount of praises went to the location. The location is clearly important for an airport hotel. This aspect also was decided in the late seventies when the hotel got built. There is nothing to be done to change this aspect, and fortunately the reviews tell that there is no reason for that either. To make this even clearer location got the best praises to complaints ratio of all.

Then to food and beverages. This one is interesting as the categories are high up on both sides. When looking together the categories F&B and food, the complaints almost get to same level as the room. Then again when put together, the praises surpass the complaints clearly. There is always going to be some complaints in there also but when the ratio is like this something needs to be done. The numbers tell that the restaurant is performing well but there are some consistency issues. What needs to be done is to look at the praises in detail and put some consistency plan in place. This way the restaurant services can maintain the high praises and lower the amount in complaints, which in turn will result to higher ratings in the online reviews.

The ratio for service is a positive one. The praises outnumber the complaints multiple times. This is a good indicator that right things are done regarding service. Same thing

can be said about front office as the comments for front office are always about service. The service level needs to be kept same even when other things will get more attention. Here we need to remember that many things are excused if the service is good.

The housekeeping of the hotel is outsourced. Obviously the cleanliness has a major impact on the image of the hotel. Housekeeping and cleanliness categories get about an even ratio. This needs to be looked and the consistency needs to be monitored. The hotel management needs to follow the results and demand better from the providing company. An even ratio is not good enough for the standard of the hotel. Decisions have been made before to have the cleaning outsourced, possibly due to the amount of hotels in the chain. When looking at the results and thinking what it could do to the reputation of the hotel if the housekeeping and cleanliness can be made to shine, one must wonder weather in house housekeeping could perform better. These are again investment issues but in the long run choosing to have the housekeeping within the same company could prove to be profitable. To add to this consideration the outsourced housekeeping only works during the days and making it internal the service points would rise if there was a housekeeper available in the evenings as well.

5.3 Front office

When looking at the sentiment for the front office in table 5 one thing is clear, the service provided by humans is working. The booking process itself is weighing the score down. It is clear that even when receiving mostly positive mentions for the service and still trending down the service standards are in good shape. More attention needs to be put to the booking process. Booking a room should be easy. There should be no confusion about it and it has to be quick. The score hints that the booking system needs to be made simpler. The thing that is missing is an app. Today's traveller is very likely to make the booking with their phone, and not by calling with it. To get the ratings better for the process an app should be designed to make the booking easier and also promote customer loyalty.

The thing that stands out from the front office category is the shuttle service. The shuttle service received a perfect score, and more amazingly the trend after the sample month is level. Some might say that the shuttle service is not part of the front office, but all the information a guest gets for the service comes from the reception. The information about duration and timetables are a big part of the shuttle service totality. This result is a clear sign that the hotel should in no circumstances change the shuttle service.

5.4 Food & Beverage

The food and beverage sentiment in table 6 shows the same story at the praises and complaints. There is a lack of consistency. For example the side dishes got a performance score of 0. The trend shows that it is a complete turnaround from previous reviews. The breakfast is on almost a 15% downs on trend although it got a fairly good score. This all shows a lack of consistency. If the consistency of the products can be bettered slowly the rating will get up.

Another important thing to notice is that the menu got a good score and more praises. Then the actual food product got a lower score and is trending downwards. From this can be determined that the menu items read good and are liked by guests when ordering, but then when getting the actual dish it is a bit disappointing. To better the dish to actually be good on the menu and then deliver in regards of reaching or passing the expectations the customer satisfaction can be raised. To do this more detailed research is needed to get the information on what exactly is not reaching the expectations. The portioning could be an issue or then the taste just isn't there. One thing is sure based on these reviews. The side dishes need to be rethought and made satisfactory.

5.5 Responses and competitors

The response rate for the reviews is fantastic. The results show that the hotel has taken the issue seriously and realised the importance of answering the reviews. As we can see from table 7, the response rate is 81% which is really high. It is also important to notice that the replies to reviews have been produced evenly within the month. This shows that the process is constant and reviews are being answered on time.

The only issue is that the negative one star reviews have considerably lower response rate. This means that the reviews that point out a serious flaw or unfortunate single incidents are not being responded as often as the rest. This might be alarming to a potential guest. If the responded reviews give an impression that the good is highlighted and the bad is being ignored. The good of course should be highlighted but there has to be a balance to show that all reviews are appreciated and that the hotel cares for the customers.

Comparing the results to a competitor set in the area it is clear that the overall results are in favour of the competition. This should be alarming for the target hotel. Seeing that the competition is getting about a 10% advantage on overall score and performance, as can be seen on table 8. This shows that there indeed is a need to tweak the products and ser-

vices in order to catch up with the competition. The positive side with the competitor comparison is that Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center is getting and responding to much more reviews. The target hotel received almost double the amount of reviews in the sample month. The response rate is over three times higher than the competitor average. This shows that online guest relations are given more importance than the competitor. This opens the possibilities to have an edge over the competitor if the services can be bettered to reach the same levels.

6 Conclusion

The main problem for the thesis was that there was a lot of information in the form of guest reviews and the data was not mined to find out the pin pointed issues that should and could be bettered. The research problem created sub questions to which the thesis aimed to find answers. The sub questions were:

1. What aspects guests find positive at the hotel?
2. What aspect guests find negative at the hotel?
3. What could be done to highlight positive aspects?
4. What could be done to eliminate negative aspects?
5. How the accommodation experience is perceived and how it could be bettered?

The sub chapters below will provide answers to the questions.

6.1 Sub questions

This chapter takes the sub questions which the research problem created and provides answers to them. Here the thesis provides answers to the actual things that have to be done better to achieve a better review score.

6.1.1 What aspects guests find positive at the hotel

The best results in the research were found to be with service friendliness, distance to airport and shuttle service. The location also got the highest performance score of 94 and the service got a respectable 85. The things to take from the location is to be happy that it is perceived as good as it is, but there is nothing to be done to improve the rating on that part. Appendix 4 shows an example of the review where location is praised.

The service in good shape but there is always room to improve. In order to better the overall rating for the hotel the service needs to be looked at as well. The quality of service

can effect to other categories immensely. Therefore at the suggested changes chapter will look at the service also to be the back bone for future changes.

6.1.2 What aspect guests find negative at the hotel?

The three worst rated categories were room maintenance, bathroom and old/new room. This tells a sad story of the conditions of the actual guest rooms. All categories point to the fact that the rooms are not up to par with the standards and are seriously harming the online reputation of the hotel. There is a desperate need to change the rooms in order to remain competitive. But as stated before the aim is to find the details to be tweaked in the daily duties the room situation is not analysed further. An example review where the room is mentioned can be seen in appendix 5.

Looking at table 4 beyond the room and table 3 about the complaints, the negative aspects are clearly on the general vibe at the hotel and food and beverages. It is interesting to see the vibe category receiving a performance score of 33. The vibe is heavily affected by the service which received a high score. There has to be something done about this situation as clearly the data is suggesting that the service is found to be adequate but not exceeding expectations. We'll come back to this in the suggested changes chapter.

Surprisingly the pool has received a rather low performance score of 50. Being an airport hotel and having a relatively large pool it is a shocking result. There is clearly a lot of room to improve the score with the pool.

Looking to the restaurant side we have figured out that there are some inconsistencies with the food product. We also found out that the data is telling us that the menu is promising but the food under delivers. Now looking at table 6 we can see that the fish/seafood category is getting a performance score of 0. We see that there is no positive, and no negative reviews, only neutral ones. The overall score can be raised with a small fix on the fish dishes for the restaurant. We can also see that the dining experience category has received a performance score of 0. This can also be related to the same issues as the performance scores for the vibe and service.

6.2 Suggested changes

This chapter will suggest what changes on a daily level the hotel should do in order to raise the performance rate. The issues will be considered individually for the changes to be as simple as possible. This chapter answers to research sub questions what can be done to highlight the positive aspects and eliminate the negative aspects.

6.2.1 Service

As we have found out throughout the thesis the location of the hotel is superb. We have also found out that the room needs renovation but chose not to focus on a change that needs major construction. Therefore we have come to a realization that the service is still the best aspect to improve. Improving service ultimately affects the ratings on several categories such as vibe and dining experience and also put the service category to an outstanding level.

The level of service is now ok but it needs to be more personal. The future of service is evolving and this needs to be addressed at the hotel. Bobby Stuckey the Master Sommelier and owner of the restaurant Frasca Food and Wine explains perfectly where the service level should be heading. In his TED talk Bobby Stuckey says that the service should go more towards hospitality. He explains that perfect service is when you deliver the food to the table in perfect manner and wish the guests a good meal. This means that you have served them perfectly. By hospitality he means that the thinking has to be taken away from the waiter's performance and directed into making the guest feel something. He goes on to tell a good example. He was dining in a Parisian three star restaurant and ate "a perfect" meal. Still at the end of the night something was missing. Next day he travelled to Modena, Italy and ate at the Osteria Francescana, another three star restaurant. But at Osteria Francescana the chef, Massimo Bottura, personally went to every table to make sure everything was ok. Then he noticed a customer taking a photo of the dish. This customer, a young line chef, was then taken to the kitchen and shown how the entire dish was prepared (Stuckey, 2014). This long example is to showcase where the service at the hotel should be taken in order to get the customer satisfaction to rise and in doing so produce better reviews. The example is at the high end of the spectrum. But the idea can be taken in to small things. Noticing the customer and providing individual service. The staff in the whole hotel complex needs to be shaken out of their old habits and trained to provide this hospitality instead of the old fashioned service.

6.2.2 Front office

From the front office the booking process was the category that received the lowest points. Most of the bookings come through the web site. In order to make the booking process more simple Taylor Smariga from Netaffinity suggests the following things. She calls attention to simpler navigation, shortening the reservation form, reduce the amount of room types, reduce the volume of rate plans and to have the price clearly displayed (Smariga, 2016). This is a good guideline what needs to be done. The amount of rate plans is too high at the moment. There are several bonus card rates and packages. The guest can be looking at a long list of rate plans only to find out at the hotel that they are not entitled to the one chosen. This creates confusion and even feeling of misleading. By making these changes the booking process can be made simple and ratings get higher. An example review of booking processes can be seen in appendix 6.

6.2.3 Pool area

The surprising low score can be explained with a single fact. The pool is too cold. By looking at the reviews it becomes clear that the saunas are well liked but the pool is not enjoyed as it is too cold. This is exactly the kind of small and easy fix the thesis set out to find. With the quick adjustment to the pool temperature the hotel can actually raise the review score. And raising the review score leads to potential customers and better revenue. All this from the simple task of making the pool a little more accommodating. An example review of the pool can be seen in appendix 7.

6.2.4 Food & Beverages

The results showed that the performance rate for the food is vulnerable for drastic swings. That can only be explained by uneven consistency of the food products. In order to maintain higher level of satisfaction for the food a consistency plan needs to be made. The kitchen management need to go through the menu items with each chef so that the quality of the food is what is intended and remains like that every night. The location is known to have drastic changes to customer amounts due to the proximity of the airport. The contract with the airlines and ground handling companies state that the restaurant needs to be ready to serve dinner to guest they send at the hotel. This puts pressure to the kitchen to quickly make dinner for tens or even hundreds of new guests, but in order to improve the online rating this cannot affect the consistency of the food served at the restaurant. Contingency plans need to be rethought for situations like this.

The surprising results from table 6 gives the bar and beverages a performance rate of 0. This is due to only one review for the category. This is very alarming because the hotel has a fairly new Hemingway's pub. The data suggest that this comfortable hideaway at the hotel is actually hidden too well. The management needs to put extra effort to make the guests and potential guests aware of the pub. A quick look of the hotels pages at booking.com confirm this. There are no pictures of the bar and no mention of it in the description. Visit to hotels.com page give the same results. There is only one picture from the bar where it does not become clear that it is a bar. There is clear place to get the ratings higher by just updating the photos and description. This will also be helpful on raising the vibe category rating.

6.3 Future research

Future research would be beneficial in order to monitor the results of the changes. The process of analysing the sentiments of future online reviews will let the hotel to keep track of the situation and make adjustments accordingly. The performance report should be analysed monthly in order to do this.

Future research is also needed to pinpoint the areas that are creating the negative reviews. Research could be conducted using qualitative methods instead of quantitative. This could include in depth interviews with returning customers and even the staff. The staff, when given the opportunity, might have insight on areas that are lacking, and when interviewed surprising results can be found.

I believe also the results have showed that a need for renovations is high. Research on only the rooms should be conducted. A questionnaire could be done to find the shortcomings of the rooms and changes that would be appreciated. Valuable information could be gathered for the renovation.

6.4 Value of findings

I personally believe that the findings in this thesis were very useful for future actions. I believe the literature showed how important the reviews are and how beneficial making changes accordingly can be. As the duty manager of Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center I feel that I am in a position to implement some of these changes and bring others to higher management's attention.

Some of the findings are quickly fixed, for example the pool temperature. Others will require training of the staff and giving new guidelines for operation. Training the staff and giving them information on the findings will be a key element on improving review results in the future. Empowering the staff would also be helpful. When the staff knows the issues it is easier to them to recognise the situations where improvement is needed. Empowering the staff will help them to take action to make the situation better. There should be no thinking of should or can I do like this but the feeling of I will do this in order to provide a better service. All in all I believe great value can be produced from the findings of the analysis of the online reviews in this thesis.

I will take the findings and present them to the hotel manager of Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center. I believe that together we can discuss the implementations of some of the changes and the manager can then in turn present some changes higher up in the chain. As the hotel is part of one of the biggest chains in Finland the process for change is quite slow. The mentality of saving resources is also strong and therefore extra costs are managed tightly. Hopefully the findings will provide reinforcement to the point of view that ultimately the changes will be profitable to the company. I strongly believe that these changes will strengthen the competitiveness of the hotel in the area which in turn will be profitable.

6.5 Limitations of the study

The method of getting the numbers from the data is a limitation of this study. The TrustYou report that collects the reviews and then uses heat mapping to analyse them might interpret some reviews wrong. The system takes key words like fantastic, all right and bad to determine the sentiment of the sentence. Essentially we trust a program to interpret whether the comment is positive, neutral or negative. This could have some effects on the results, especially on the categories that received a small number of sentiments.

Lack of prior research for the target hotel is a limitation as well. The online reviews for the target hotel has not been analysed before. Therefore there is no experience whether changes based on online reviews should be implemented. The findings should be tested and reviewed and then the study should be duplicated in the near future to confirm the findings.

Trustworthiness of the data is also a limitation. The reviews are all provided by third parties. Travel agents and review sites. The hotel has no control on the source of the re-

views. This can lead to false reviews getting in the data. The reviews themselves can be exaggerated or made with malicious intent. Most of the reviews are likely accurate but the result of the study can change if false data is accepted.

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8 Appendices

Appendix 1: Table 2 (TrustYou, 2017)

Source Name	Overall Score	Trend	New reviews		New responses	
Overall	72	-0	↑	271	↑	152
Booking.com	74	0	↑	186	↑	90
TrustYou Survey	69	0	↑	43	↑	43
Google	70	↑ 2	↑	22		0
Hotels.com	74	0	↑	11	↑	11
Expedia	76	0	↑	4	↑	4
TripAdvisor	70	0	↑	4	↑	3
HRS.de	64	↓ -2	↑	1	↑	1
LateRooms.com	-	0		0		0
Orbitz	75	↓ -1		0		0
Ab-in-den-Urlaub	-	0		0		0
Atrapalo.com	77	0		0		0
TOPHotels.ru	90	0		0		0
Hotel.de	74	0		0		0
Trivago.de	77	0		0		0
Reisen.de	-	0		0		0
HolidayCheck	75	↓ -3		0		0
Quehoteles	90	0		0		0
Travelocity.com	76	0		0		0
Facebook	-	0		0		0

Appendix 2: Table 3 (TrustYou, 2017)

Reviews	
271 <u>New reviews to check</u>	78 <u>Negative reviews</u>
Category details	
187 <u>Complaints</u>	333 <u>Praises</u>
▶ 72 Complaints about Room	▶ 61 Praises about Location
▶ 33 Complaints about F&B	▶ 60 Praises about F&B
▶ 32 Complaints about Food	▶ 59 Praises about Food
▶ 16 Complaints about Vibe	▶ 52 Praises about Service
▶ 12 Complaints about Hotel	▶ 39 Praises about Room
▶ 12 Complaints about Housekeeping	▶ 36 Praises about Hotel
▶ 11 Complaints about Price	▶ 29 Praises about Price
▶ 10 Complaints about Comfort	▶ 23 Praises about Comfort
▶ 10 Complaints about Cleanliness	▶ 14 Praises about Front Office
▶ 9 Complaints about Service	▶ 11 Praises about Cleanliness
▶ 5 Complaints about Amenities	▶ 11 Praises about Housekeeping
▶ 4 Complaints about Location	▶ 10 Praises about Spa
▶ 4 Complaints about Front Office	▶ 8 Praises about Vibe
▶ 4 Complaints about Spa	▶ 7 Praises about Wellness Area
▶ 3 Complaints about Pool	▶ 4 Praises about Amenities
▶ 1 Complaints about WiFi	▶ 3 Praises about Pool
▶ 1 Complaints about Wellness Area	▶ 1 Praises about WiFi

Appendix 3: Table 6 (TrustYou, 2017)

F&B - Sentiment

Category	Performance	Trend ▼	Mentions	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Bar and Beverages	0	0%	 1	0	0	1
▼ Food	↓ 65	-14.5%	 91	59	9	23
Menu	↑ 71	+86.8%	 7	5	0	2
Breakfast Prices	↑ 40	+21.2%	 5	2	0	3
Fish/Seafood	0	0%	 4	0	4	0
Desserts & Fruits	50	0%	 2	1	0	1
Vegetarian & Vegan	100	0%	 1	1	0	0
Snacks	0	0%	 1	0	1	0
Dining Area Cleanliness	0	0%	 1	0	0	1
Dining Experience	0	0%	 3	0	0	3
Breakfast	↓ 75	-14.8%	 61	46	3	12
Side Dishes	↓ 0	-100%	 2	0	0	2
▼ Service	This main category is not relevant to F&B, only some of its subcategories are.					
Restaurant Service	100	0%	 1	1	0	0
▼ Price	This main category is not relevant to F&B, only some of its subcategories are.					
Breakfast Prices	↑ 40	+21.2%	 5	2	0	3
▼ Cleanliness	This main category is not relevant to F&B, only some of its subcategories are.					
Dining Area Cleanliness	0	0%	 1	0	0	1
F&B	↓ 65	-14.5%	 93	60	9	24

Appendix 4: 71/ 100Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center • Vantaa

2017-03-24 [Booking.com](#) Published on 2017-03-24

Good location

good location , free airport shuttle every 20 minutes

Appendix 5 : 40/ 100Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center • Vantaa

2017-03-13 [TripAdvisor](#) Published on 2017-03-15

Tired and Shabby

We stayed at this hotel on two occasions and found it to be adequate but nothing more than that. We understand that it is currently undergoing renovation and I would say this is definitely needed. We requested a double bed but we're given a room with two singles. When we asked about this we were told we could have a double bed if we paid for an upgrade. The rooms were okay but very basic. Breakfast was fine and the free bus service to the airport was excellent.

Appendix 6: 33/ 100Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center • Vantaa

2017-03-25Booking.comPublished on 2017-04-05

Poor

Puhelimella ei saanut varmistettua huonevarausta j huone jäi käyttämättä.

Appendix 7: 60/ 100Cumulus Resort Airport Congress Center • Vantaa

2017-03-30TrustYou SurveyPublished on 2017-04-02

Ulma-altaan vesi oli kuin kylmäaltaassa, ei uintikelpoista. Sama tilanne oli myös Tampereella