

Qualtrics Hotel Pain Index Study 2017

Most of us have had a terrible night in a hotel—whether it's from a broken air conditioner, leaky pipe, or noisy and inappropriate neighbors. Qualtrics conducted a survey of more than 1,000 recent hotel guests to determine which factors most improved or diminished their hotel stay.

Methodology

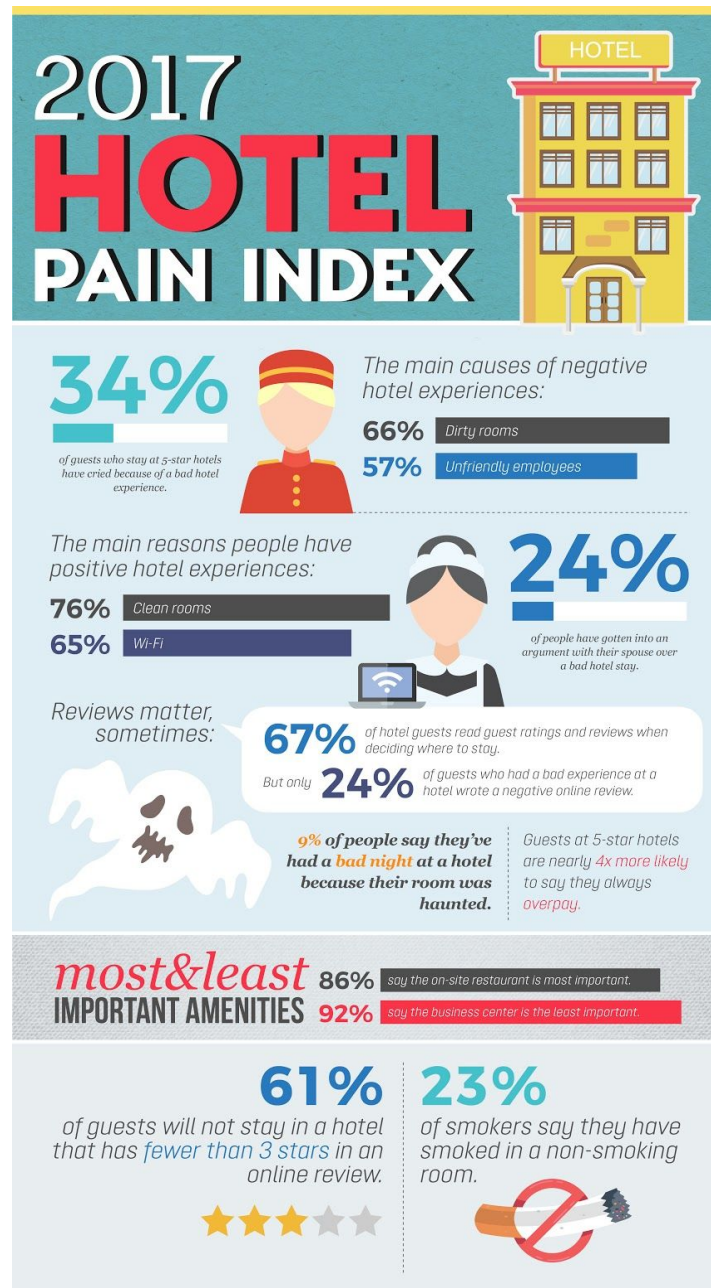
Qualtrics surveyed over 1,000 recent hotel guests in a multinational study to determine which factors improved or diminished their hotel stay and learn about their experiences. The study was conducted in April 2017 and has a margin of error of +/- 3.1% at the 95% confidence level.

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Download full resolution infographic [here](#).



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Wi-Fi is more important than free food

Instagram is more important than instant oatmeal as guests enjoy Wi-Fi more than free breakfast.

Which are most likely to cause you to have a positive experience at a hotel?

Highest ranked responses:

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Room cleanliness | 76% |
| WiFi | 65% |
| Quiet room | 63% |
| Free breakfast | 62% |
| Free parking | 57% |

Hotel guests still want clean, friendly and quiet

Shiny lobbies and fancy restaurants won't compensate for a dirty room, unfriendly employees or noise.

Which are most likely to cause you to have a negative experience at a hotel?

Highest ranked responses:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Dirty room | 66% |
| Unfriendly employees | 57% |
| Uncomfortable bed | 56% |
| Unexpected fees | 51% |
| Thin walls / loud neighbors | 50% |

Who is most likely to be bothered by thin wall and loud neighbors?

- Women are 31% more likely than men to be bothered.
- Guests over 51 years old are 48% more likely than younger guests to be bothered.

Room regret

With regular rate increases, additional resort fees and other unexpected charges, hotels run the risk of upsetting the price/value balance.

How often do you check out of a hotel thinking that you overpaid for your stay?

- 82% of guests check out thinking they overpaid for their stay at least sometimes.
- Guests at 5-star hotels are nearly 4x more likely to say they always overpay.

Driven to tears

Trouble in paradise can start in the hotel room. From arguments to tears, hotels can be anything but relaxing for some guests.

Has your experience at a hotel ever been so bad it drove you to tears?

- 13% of guests say they have had a hotel experience so bad they've cried.
- That goes up to 34% of people who regularly stay at 5-star hotels.
- 14% say their hotel experience has been so bad their kids have cried.

Has a bad experience at a hotel ever triggered an argument between you and your partner/spouse or ruined your vacation?

- 24% say their hotel experience has been so bad they argued with their spouse/partner over it.
- 18% overall say their hotel experience has been so bad it ruined their vacation.
- 34% of 5-star hotel guests say they've had a hotel experience has been so bad it ruined their vacation.

Guests want to resolve problems more than post about them

Hotel guests are more likely to request a room change or complain to the manager about a problem than they are to post a negative review about the problem.

Have you ever taken any of the following actions resulting from a hotel stay?

Highest ranked responses:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Requested to change rooms | 45% |
| Complained to the manager | 39% |
| Wrote a negative review (TripAdvisor, Google, Facebook, or other sites) | 24% |

Online reviews tip the scales

Online reviews hold a considerable amount of influence on swaying purchase consideration. Only 14% of hotel guests are willing to stay at a hotel with a online rating of two-stars or lower.

The lowest online hotel rating you are willing to stay at?

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| One star | 3% |
| Two stars | 11% |
| Three stars | 47% |
| Four stars | 26% |
| Five stars | 13% |

Sleepless nights

Many people can recall a sleepless night in a hotel, whether it was because of a saggy mattress, “romantic” noises from the room next door, or that awful 4am alarm clock buzzer still programmed from the previous guest.

In fact, 34% of hotel guests say they have spent one of the worst nights of their life in a hotel. An uncomfortable bed (45%) and unsafe room (45%) tied for the top reasons.

Notable write-in responses to causes for a bad night in a hotel:

- Skunk outside
- Window fell out
- Hordes of roaches
- The cops were looking for someone at the hotel
- Bats
- Felt like being in a brothel
- Padlocks on the outside of doors
- Unsavory patrons
- Room switched while we were out to dinner
- It was a pigsty
- Note: 9% claim to have had a bad night because their room was haunted

Reviews attract or repel guests

Hotels can no longer sweep complaints under the rug because today unhappy guests can make a lot of noise online. Guest reviews expose the hotels that provide poor experiences and rewards the hotels that do better.

Most common ways to decide which hotel to stay at?

Highest ranked responses:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|-----|
| Read guest ratings and reviews | 67% |
| Search hotel websites | 57% |
| Get recommendations from friends / family | 43% |

People still love Hotel California

California and Florida, the top two tourism states in the U.S¹., are also top for providing the best hotels.

Where was the best hotel you ever stayed at?

Highest ranked responses:

- California (16%)
- Florida (16%)
- New York (15%)

Hotel Horrors

While “creepy twin girls” was not an response option in this question, guests say noises from the hall still top their list of hotel horrors.

Have you ever had any of the following hotel horror stories happen to you?

Highest ranked responses:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Noise from hall | 44% |
| No air conditioner | 23% |
| Scary neighborhood | 20% |

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<https://www.thrillist.com/travel/nation/america-s-10-most-popular-states-california-florida-and-nevada-top-our-list>

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| No hot water | 19% |
| Unknown extra charges | 19% |

Other noteworthy responses:

| | |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|
| Bed bugs | 15% |
| Bodily fluids on sheets | 12% |
| Middle-of-the-night fire alarms | 11% |
| Rodents in room | 7% |
| Found underwear from previous guest in room | 6% |

Most important hotel amenities

Guests say on-site dining and parking are the most important hotel amenities. The least important amenities are a business office, gym and bar.

That said, men are 71% more likely than women to think it's important to have an on-site bar.

What are the most and least important hotel amenities?

Highest ranked responses:

Most important hotel amenities

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| On-site restaurant(s) | 86% |
| Parking | 83% |
| Pool and spa | 68% |

Least important hotel amenities

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Business office | 92% |
| Gym | 81% |
| On-site bar | 71% |

Hotel Experience Apathy

Over one third of guests say hotels don't put a lot of effort into providing a great guest experience. That percentage jumps to half among those staying in lower star-rating properties. Nearly one in four 5-star guests say hotels don't work hard enough to provide a good guest experience.

How hard do you think the hotels you stay at try to provide you a great experience?

Guests don't think hotels put a lot of effort into providing a great guest experience:

- 35% of overall hotel guests feel effort is lacking
- 50% of one and two-star hotel guests feel effort is lacking
- 37% of three and four-star hotel guests feel effort is lacking
- 22% of five-star hotel guests feel effort is lacking

Breaking the law

Some guests consider hotel policies merely as "suggestions" and don't adhere to them.

Have you ever snuck your pet into a hotel room that didn't allow them?

- 19% have snuck a pet into a hotel room
- 67% of the time it was a dog
- 1% of the time it was a reptile or snake

Have you ever smoked in a non-smoking room?

- 23% of smokers say they have smoked in a non-smoking room
- Guests at 5-star hotels are 68% more likely to smoke in a non-smoking room than guests at lower-star hotels

Have you ever crowded more people than was allowed into your room?

- 23% say they have over crowded their hotel room
- 5% of those who have crowded their room had over 8 people.

Most important hotel policies

Perspective changes everything as hotel policies can enhance the experience for one guest or diminish the experience for another.

Which hotel policies are most important to you?

Highest ranked responses:

Early check-in

84%

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Late check-out | 82% |
| Cancellation policy | 78% |

Which hotel policies are least important to you?

Highest ranked responses:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Rollaway beds/cots | 91% |
| Smoking allowed | 81% |
| No pets allowed | 78% |

Hotel room first impressions

You don't get a second chance to make a first impression, and neither do hotels. The cleanliness, room size and smell need to be right the moment guests arrive.

What is the first thing you pay attention to when you walk into your hotel room for the first time?

Highest ranked responses:

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| The cleanliness | 45% |
| The room size | 20% |
| The smell | 17% |
| The bed quality | 5% |
| The view | 5% |

Services most valued

Most guests are pragmatic in the services they need at a hotel and value practical, not premium, services.

Which hotel services are most important to you?

Highest ranked responses:

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| Room service | 90% |
|--------------|-----|

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Transportation shuttle | 78% |
| Concierge | 63% |

Which hotel services are least important to you?

Highest ranked responses:

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Valet parking | 88% |
| Turndown service | 77% |
| Spa service | 73% |

Contact

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