

# 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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# Infographic: Qualtrics Hotel Pain Index Study 2017

Download full resolution infographic [here](#).



# Summary:

## Qualtrics Hotel Pain Index Study 2017

### 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.S<sup>1</sup>., 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% |
| No hot water          | 19% |
| Unknown extra charges | 19% |

### *Other noteworthy responses:*

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Bed bugs                | 15% |
| Bodily fluids on sheets | 12% |

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thrillist.com/travel/nation/america-s-10-most-popular-states-california-florida-and-nevada-top-our-list>

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 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 sneaked your pet into a hotel room that didn’t allow them?

- 19% have sneaked 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% |

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**Contact**

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