

**CRIEFF HYDRO HOTEL: THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY AND THE GUEST  
PERSPECTIVE**

Sílvia Daniela Gonçalves Portal

**PLACEMENT REPORT**

Masters Degree in Hospitality Management

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Crieff Hydro Hotel



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Declaration of authorship of work

Declare that I am the author of this work, which is original and unpublished. Authors and works consulted are properly cited in the text and listed in the included list of references.

Signature .....  .....

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“You have to read the customer and give them what they want. Make them think that what they’re getting is special. They all want something that’s just for them at that moment.”

**Fred Sirieix, general manager at Galvin at Windows.**



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## **List of Acronyms**

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B&E – Banqueting and Events

CHH – Crieff Hydro Hotel

DBB – Dinner, Bed and Breakfast

F&B – Food and Beverage

H&B – Health and Beauty

IT – Informatics technology

PM accounts - groups/parties main bill

S/HE – she or he

SVQ – Scottish Vocational Qualification

SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

## **Acknowledgment**

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First of all my thanks go to Crieff Hydro Hotel, with a special thank you to Janice Sneddon (human resources assistant manager) and to Wendy Johnston (front of house manager) for giving me the opportunity of doing this placement in Crieff Hydro Hotel and also for being available to teach me and help me during my stay.

I also would like to express my gratitude to all my teachers from my master degree from Universidade do Algarve, with a special thank you to Prof. Doutora Cláudia Henriques and Prof. Doutor Carlos Afonso that helped me throughout this work being always available to guide me.

Last but not least, to my family and friends especially to my parents that gave me the strength to be far away from home and from my confort zone in order to improve my knowledge and follow my dreams.



## Abstract

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The purpose of this report is to do a presentation of the hotel where I will be working, characterising the reception department and all the activities that I developed during this placement. On this placement at the CHH (Crieff Hydro Hotel) – family 4 stars resort, my goal is to have an experience in hospitality, in special in reception.

This placement is carried out from my Master degree in *Direcção e Gestão Hoteleira* (Commercial branch) at the University of the Algarve – Campus Penha.

For this report it was also intended to do an analysis of the guest experience in hospitality and for that it was necessary to do a literature review adequate for my area of work in the hotel giving importance to the guest experience in the hospitality.

For my analysis regarding the guest experience in hospitality, I used data collected from the surveys answered by the guests that stayed with us in the hotel. To analyse the data it was necessary to do a categorial analysis technique.

After this year of placement in the hotel and after this analysis, as results I have the opportunity to continue my work in the hotel and also the possibility of a better position in a near future.

Last but not least, this report demonstrates my work path and also helps to have a better understanding of the satisfaction perceived by the guest in order to give us tools to improve it. From what we can see, the guests' satisfaction is highly rated on both surveys.

Keywords: Crieff Hydro Hotel, placement, report, experience in hospitality, satisfaction.



O relatório pretende fazer uma apresentação da unidade hoteleira onde foi realizado o estágio, descrevendo o departamento da recepção e as respectivas actividades desenvolvidas no decorrer do estágio. Neste estágio no CHH (Crieff Hydro Hotel) – *family 4 stars resort*, tenho como objectivo passar por uma experiência em hotelaria, em especial na recepção. Este estágio realiza-se no seguimento do Mestrado em Direcção e Gestão Hoteleira no ramo Comercial da Universidade do Algarve - Campus da Penha.

Pretende-se igualmente fazer uma análise da experiência dos clientes na hotelaria e para tal foi necessária uma revisão da literatura adequada à área onde estou inserida no hotel dando importância à experiência do cliente na hotelaria.

Para a minha análise sobre a experiência dos clientes na hotelaria, foram usados dados recolhidos a partir dos questionários respondidos pelos clientes que estiveram na unidade hoteleira. Para analisar os dados foi utilizada a técnica de análise de conteúdo por categorias.

Após este ano de estágio no hotel e após esta análise, como resultados tenho a oportunidade de continuar a trabalhar na unidade hoteleira com a possibilidade de subir de posto dentro do meu departamento de recepção.

Para finalizar, este relatório demonstra o meu percurso de trabalho e serve também para melhor compreender a satisfação percebida pelo cliente para assim poder melhorá-la.

Pelo que é possível analisar, a satisfação dos clientes é bastante elevada.

**Keywords:** Crieff Hydro Hotel, estágio, relatório, experiência em hotelaria, satisfação.



# Chapter 1

## Introduction

---

Professionally I always worked in hospitality, so when University of the Algarve opened a new Master Degree in “Hospitality Management”, it made all sense to me to join this degree. Since I already have some background in finances I chose to explore a new area for me, so I decided to go to the commercial area of this master.

I started the Master Degree in September 2012. During one year we had classes where we learnt a lot about the commercial side of the business, so by the end of that academic year it was time to choose between a project, a placement or a dissertation.

I decided to go for the placement since it was my wish to apply what I had learnt.

My placement started on September 2013 with a duration of one year. For me the best part about the placement is to apply what we learnt on paper into the work reality. I decided not to do my placement in Portugal because I am familiar with the Portuguese reality in hospitality. So, I decided to go abroad in order to experience a completely new reality from the Algarve hospitality business that I am familiarised with. The hospitality in Scotland gives me a completely new reality of this business, here there is no “sun and beach tourism” and having my placement in the leading family resort in Scotland, the CHH, seems to be a great place to learn and grow.

After speaking with human resources and the reception manager we decided that my placement would be as a front of house assistant. For this hotel this is a very important position and for me as well. Working in the front of house I have the chance to contact with all different types of guests and all departments in the hotel. Reception is a very important department since we have to know everything about every department in the hotel to be able to inform the guests correctly and, more importantly, we are the first and the last contact that the guest has with the hotel, so we can make a good first and last impressions. As mentioned above the front of house department is one of the most important in the hotel due to the contact we have with the guests, we are the ones that can understand if something is wrong and pass the message to the correct department so the guests leave the hotel knowing that we did everything that we could to give them a great time for their holidays.

For me the contact with the guests and the different departments is great. Having my placement in this department makes me speak English all the time making it the best way

to improve it and of course having contact with all the departments in the hotel and the duty manager allows me to see how the business is run.

With this placement as a front of house assistant, I am able to improve my knowledge in hospitality and also being outside my country will make me improve my English, get in contact with different cultures and different procedures as well as making me be more independent.

My placement will be mainly as a receptionist dealing with all the day-to-day tasks, I will also have the opportunity to shadow the shift leader to learn the tasks and experience night shifts as a night auditor and to help in Big Country (childcare facilities).

At the end of my placement I would like to achieve a bigger and better level of independence, self-confidence, knowledge in general, knowledge in the hospitality world and a better understanding of the English language and Scottish culture.

### **1.1. Goals and Motivations**

My main purpose and motivations to do this placement are to improve my knowledge in hospitality but also in a different language and culture than my own. Being already familiar with the Portuguese hospitality reality, especially in the Algarve with the hotels practically only working in the summer time, I wanted to understand what makes a hotel be open all year and always so busy at all times. We do have very busy hotels in our country but normally they are more focused in one market segment and in a specific area. So, how could a hotel in a little Scottish town be so busy all year round? This was one of my motivations, to understand how they do it, what type of guests they have and why they keep coming back to the hotel.

For me, it is really important to experience a different reality than the one that I am used to. Being in a different culture, with a different language, will help me see other ways to make business and other ways to work in hospitality.

For this placement I will be working as front office assistant from 16th of September of 2013 until 16th of September 2014 in CHH. I was employed as any other employee of the hotel and I am expected to work as any other employee despite being in a placement. I am expecting to learn all aspects of the hotel and of the Scottish hospitality by working in the reception. It will be a great learning experience for me as I will improve my English and my knowledge in hospitality. I will also work in the Big Country department, these childcare facilities are the biggest in Scotland and I have the chance to learn all aspects

of childcare, especially the rules in Scotland but I will also have the chance to play with the children and learn from them.

## **1.2. Methodology**

In order to have my final analysis for my report I followed a few steps before to have a better understanding of the overall reality. First of all it was necessary to do a literature review associated to the experience of economy with special attention on the touristic experience in hospitality. It is crucial to understand what the experience is, what the perceived quality is for the guest and what moves them. After searching and studying the tourism and the guest experience I did a characterisation of the hotel (CHH) where I spent the last year working, on a placement, as a front office assistant. For the overall analysis of the guest experience it is important to understand the hotel. On this characterisation I realised a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), where I could understand the overall reality of the hotel. To be able to elaborate this analysis I relied on the Tourism Scotland 2020 document, on the surveys completed by the guests that stayed at the hotel and also with a small survey elaborated by me and directed to three managers of the hotel. I chose to ask the questions to these particular managers due to their positions in the hotel. I elaborated two direct and open questions regarding the SWOT analysis. My purpose with these queries is to have the managers' perspective on the opportunities and the threats that the hotel faces. Because they are Scottish they have a better knowledge of the Scottish reality and of the hotel and I was able to understand the problems that the hotel will possibly face but also the opportunities that lie ahead. With the document of the Tourism of Scotland I had the perspective of the owner of the hotel regarding the future of the hospitality in Scotland. Last but not least, with the answers from the surveys I was able to understand the strengths and the weaknesses of the business. With all this information I was able to elaborate the SWOT analysis.

Hospitality is not an exact science and this fact makes this a hard business to work in but at the same time quite interesting. This is the reason why I was eager to study the guest and the guests' satisfaction since I arrived at this hotel.

To be able to do a study of this kind I had access to eight months' worth of surveys from the guests that were kindly given me by the hotel. At this point I had to analyse all these surveys, the survey has 15 open and closed questions regarding the overall stay in the hotel, as it will be explained ahead. For my study I analysed all the questions in the

surveys to develop my categorial analysis. Since this survey has open and closed questions I decided to complete a Bardin analysis in order to gather and treat all the relevant data from these surveys translating it into models that can be easily read and analysed.

All these steps were essential for the overall purpose of the report to truly understand the experience of economy and the guests' perspective.

### **1.3. Report Structure**

This report is divided into five chapters, being the first one the introduction. The second chapter is where I have my literature review to base my study on. On this chapter I make an analysis about the guest experience and the key of hospitality, following a categorial analysis technique.

The third chapter is where I make a characterisation of the hotel, their mission, vision, values and overall organisation. On the next chapter I will describe all the activities that I developed during this year working in Scotland, my work in the different departments and my study regarding the guests' satisfaction during their stay in the hotel. Last by not least, on the final chapter I will present some final considerations regarding this report.

## Chapter 2

# Hospitality Experience: Literature Review

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For my scientific analysis it is necessary for me to do some literature review to base my search on. My study will be based on the guest experience and expectations, therefore I will do some scientific research as it is explained ahead.

Only recently studies about the customers' experiences started to appear. This subject is becoming more and more important and some studies and debates regarding the experiences are emerging (Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007).

### 2.1. The Experience

Europe is without a doubt the world's most important tourism market, according to the World Tourism Organisation, Europe will continue to be the most important tourist destination and tourism generating region (Ecorys, 2009).

As the ECORYS document (2009) refers there are eight "megatrends", such as: globalisation; demographic change; access to information; experience economy; customisation; sustainability; health and wellness and low cost business models. For my report I will focus my study on the experience economy, as per the author the supply is abundant and it is not always easy to differentiate products and services based on quality. The design, meaning, creativity of the products and service have been gaining more importance in the overall experience.

Over the years we have seen the economic system suffering an evolution in order to adapt to a new cycle (Nahas, 2014). The capitalism forces this system to change constantly in order to innovate, change and create new consumption habits. That is why we have the experience, nowadays the focus of hospitality is to exceed expectations and emotions. The guests need to feel, see and listen in order to escape from the routine and be surprised and seduced. For the experiences the exclusivity is the most important thing making the guest feel, this way, truly special.

For the author (Nahas, 2014), we are able to split the economic history into four big developmental stages: agrarian, industrial, services and experiences. This evolution can be explained in a simple way, in the beginning, on the agrarian cycle, at a birthday party the mothers would be baking the birthday cake from scratch, being the cake the main

event in the birthday. On the service cycle, people started to prefer to buy the cake paying a higher price. Currently, people are busy so it is more usual to hire a company that will organise the entire party, so we have the buffet, the atmosphere, decorations and shows, and the cake is no longer the main focus of the party.

We now realise that the experience is a show, where the main focus relies on emotions, exclusivity, awakening of the senses and to be mesmerised at each moment. The major difference between the experiences and the products or services is that the experiences are personalised and the others are external to the consumer. For example a person can have different reactions to the same event, depending on his/her psychological state at any particular moment (Nahas, 2014).

(Hosany & Witham, 2009) According to the Oxford dictionary the term experience is “an event or occurrence which leaves an impression on one”. For the Maslow’s theory of motivation posits, people seek unique experiences through a desire for self-fulfilment. Experience originates a set of complex interactions between the customer and a company or the product that the company is offering. It is also possible for the customer to co-create his/her own unique experience, in this case the company/hotel needs to provide the guest with artefacts and contexts for the guest to shape his/her own experience.

We can divide the customer experience in five dimensions: sensory experiences (sense); affective experiences (feel); creative cognitive experiences (think); physical experiences, behaviours and lifestyles (act); and social-identity experiences (relate) (Hosany & Witham, 2009).

The tourists want to get away from their busy lives and work routines, so going on holidays means that they are looking for an authentic experience. We can consider that the experience has four dimensions, such as (Hosany & Witham, 2009):

- Education – learning something new: in this situation the guest wants to learn something new, do to a new activity and have a new experience. This educational experience should engage the mind of the consumers, intrigue them and appeal their desire. The guests that will do this will learn something new, will have their knowledge increased and/or their skills improved;
- Escapism – Diverging to a new self: this type of experience can be defined as when the guest is completely engrossed and absorbed in the activity, this type of activities requires an active participation;

- Entertainment – Being entertained: this is the oldest form of experience and often involves a passive involvement of the guest. The entertainment needs to have different programmes to appeal different age groups, normally entertainment could be music shows, gambling or children activities such as magic shows, art crafts, among others.
- Esthetics: Indulged in Environments: this subject is regarding the guests' interpretation of the physical environment, which we can classify in three dimensions: ambient conditions; spatial layout and functionality and signs, symbols and artefacts. As we know in tourism the physical environment plays an important role in determining the guests' attitude, intention and willingness to recommend to others.

Nowadays with the hospitality competition it is not easy to attract guests and to create long lasting competitive advantages. So, for the hotels and companies it is time to develop some competitive advantages (Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007). Hospitality business is not the same like years ago, believing that differentiating the price, product or quality is no longer a sustainable competitive advantage, nowadays providing the customer experience plays a much major role.

Being a part of an experience or activity is not just being there. A person needs to be involved not only in the activity itself but in the whole environment, as the book "The Experience Economy" reflects "But even people who turn out to watch a ski race are not completely passive; simply by being there, they contribute to the visual and aural event that others experience" (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p. 30).

Every business has their focus on the customer (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), being in the hospitality the main focus is the guest and what we can provide them with to make them loyal. A hotel needs to keep improving and adding new things to attract the guests. A guest can return just because it is good for a relaxing weekend, but if a guest is coming to do activities, after a few times, they will look for a different hotel that has something else to offer, so it is important to keep adding new activities and new offers that will provide more opportunities to attract the same guest over and over but also new guests generating this way more wealth and even the possibility to create new job roles.

It is also important to understand that a stay in a hotel is not the same as buying something of the shelf and taking it home. Staying in a hotel is not something that is tangible, so hospitality is a market of making memories (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

For the same author (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), if we think in a simple way, hospitality is simply a service or a transaction between the hotel and the guest, in this way the guest gives money in exchange of an intangible service provided by the hotel. More and more we cannot think this way. This was what happened on the beginning of hospitality and tourism, nowadays the guest gives money and in exchange they expect much more than a simple service. They are expecting to be surprised and mesmerised, having this way memories for the future to come.

As the scientific article “The Tourist in the Experience Economy” (Andersson, 2007) refers an experience cannot be bought. The hotel can only provide inputs that the tourist may turn into an experience, but it is impossible to know in advance how successful the experience will be.

More and more the tourism provides innumerable opportunities and experiences (Hosany & Witham, 2009), people go on holidays to escape from their day-to-day lives and look for experiences to compensate their “inauthentic lives” that they have at home and at work. The tourist is willing to travel the world hunting for a satisfying and authentic experience.

## **2.2. The People**

*“A happy employee will stick with the company, give better service to the customer, and recommend company products to others.”, Sears Roebuck study of employee attitudes, Managing the guest experience in hospitality, Robert C. Ford & Cherrill P. Heaton, 2000.*

Having highly trained staff is no longer enough (Ford & Heaton, 2000), guests want to be far away from standard hotels with standard staff that act like robots. More and more the guests are not only interested in their holidays but also in having a connection to the place itself. When travelling to a new country people look to connect and to learn a little bit more about the cultural aspects of the place.

From my experience in this placement, the guests that come to CHH are interested in knowing the staff and normally even at check-in it is very common for me to hear the question “Sorry, but where are you from?”. Guests are becoming more interested in getting to know the staff as individuals and not only as someone that will deliver a service.

Increasingly the hotels are not looking only for degrees when hiring, now they notice the personality and the love that the candidate shows for the job. It is important to hire a person that loves what s/he is doing because the guest will notice that. You can train someone but you cannot teach them how to love their job (Ford & Heaton, 2000).

*“A smile costs nothing – and in hospitality industry, it means everything”*, Bryan D. Langton, Chairman & CEO, Holiday Inns Worldwide, *Managing the guest experience in hospitality*, Robert C. Ford & Cherrill P. Heaton, 2000. In this hotel there is a permanent concern if the staff is happy with their jobs, rotas and even if they are experiencing problems in their personal life. The managers and human resources’ staff will do their best to help the staff in any way if someone is going through any troubles. The hotel also has various discounts so the staff can use all the facilities. If the staff is happy they will be in a better mood to deal with guests and that will make a difference in the work.

As mentioned before, the guests after checking-out the hotel will receive a survey<sup>1</sup> about all the departments. It is important that each department has good grades and in my department we are made aware of the percentage that we had and what were the bad and the good comments about our work and what we need to do to improve. If the guest mentions positively our name we will receive 5£<sup>2</sup> extra on our payslip. This is a simple reward that can make a difference, people become motivated to have more guest mentions than their co-workers so everyone will try harder to provide a better service.

Also, the human resources’ staff puts a list with the names of the people with guest mentions in the canteen. Everyone will see the list and try harder to see their names there as well. Of course, a person will receive it if they provide a good service, so if the staff is happy they will be happy at their work and guests will have a better experience.

Understanding is the key word (Ford & Heaton, 2000), when a guest is complaining it is important to make them aware that we understand them, which will eventually calm them. We need to make them sure that we understand their point of view even if we cannot provide what they wanted or expected.

### **2.3. The Guest**

Due to the internet development it has become more important to read the guest (Ford & Heaton, 2000). It is important to understand if they are enjoying their stay because if the

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<sup>1</sup> See annex 1

<sup>2</sup> See annex 2

guest is not happy and does not say anything to us, he could simply leave the hotel and add a bad review on any of the important websites about the hotel. If we manage to read the guest and ask if s/he is enjoying the stay and find that there is a problem we can still try to solve it and change the guest's negative impression. Even if we cannot solve it, if we do everything in our power to provide an option, the guest will not complain anymore because they know that we did our best to give them what they were expecting, even if they do not accept the option.

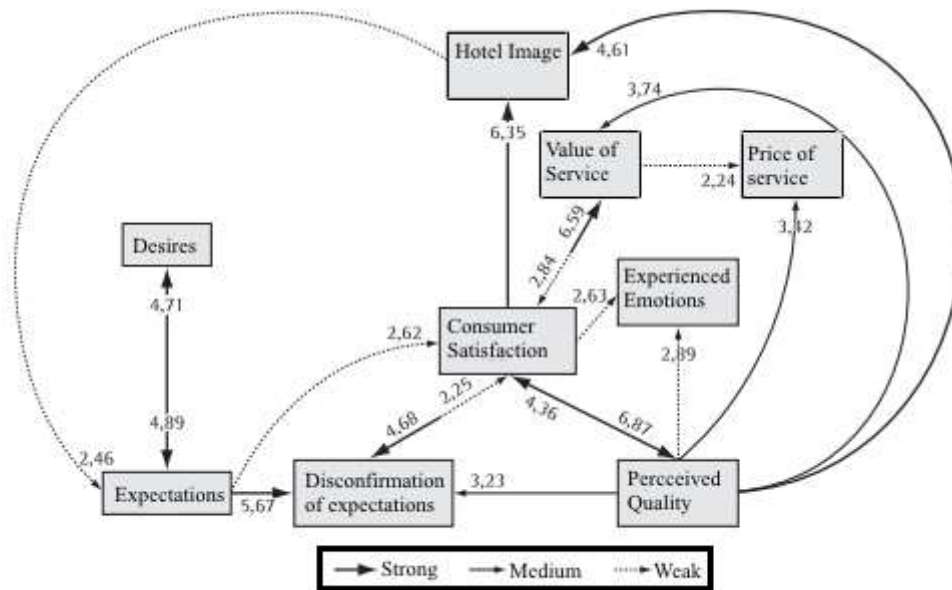
At the end of the day it is important that the guest leaves the hotel happy and knowing that they had what they paid for, meaning their expectations were satisfied (Ford & Heaton, 2000). But, if it is possible for the staff to go that extra mile it can make all the difference. For example, in the CHH if a guest is checking-in and after a short conversation they mention that they are here for a special occasion, why not upgrade them if we have rooms available? Or if there is nothing that we can offer, why not simply congratulate them and wish them a nice celebration and a nice time with us? Those are simple things that make the guest start their stay with the right foot thinking that someone genuinely wishes them a nice celebration, and those are the values that the CHH wants their staff to stand for.

#### **2.4. The Key for Hospitality**

The majority of the hotel managers will agree when we say that the key for hospitality is "people", people as guests and people as staff. With the amount of competition that the hotels have, providing a standard service is no longer enough. Meeting the guests' expectations and exceeding them allied to a great service is better and cheaper than the best marketing publicity (Ford & Heaton, 2000).

If a couple stays in the hotel and has a great experience they will talk about it with their friends, parents and family or even buy them a stay as a Christmas gift. This is much better than any publicity, in this case the CHH does not have much publicity because the hotel does not need it. Of course we have our page on Facebook (Crieff Hydro Resort Facebook, 2014d) like every hotel and store nowadays. But, the majority of our guests comes to the hotel because their family or friends recommended, and a big part of them has vouchers that they received on Christmas or birthdays to come and stay at the hotel. This attracts new guests and if they have a nice stay with us we do not need to make any publicity because these guests will return.

**Figure 1 - Satisfaction in Hospitality Services**



Model of association between what determines the satisfaction in hospitality services

Source: Branco et al. (2014).

In the figure above (Branco et al., 2014), regarding the model of association between what determines the satisfaction in hospitality services, the relations that show a number major than four are considered strong, between three and four are medium and weak for numbers under three. This model shows a relation between perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. As we can see in the image, the perceived quality allied to the disconfirmation of the expectations create the consumer satisfaction, creating a triangle. As the image shows if we have an increase in the perceived quality this will create an increase in the disconfirmation of expectations and also the consumer satisfaction.

We can also see from the image above that the hotel image creates expectations in the consumer and when those are met through the service delivery they origin satisfaction, which will increase the hotel image. This also suffers influence from the perceived quality, because the perceived quality interferes with the satisfaction and also with the hotel image. We can also deduct from the image that the emotions at the moment that the service is delivered depend on the consumer satisfaction and his/her perceived quality. It is also visible that the consumer expectations are made by their desires and hotel image. On the other hand the appreciation of the price depends on the perceived value and

perceived quality. From this figure we can conclude that any change in any of the inputs will make a difference in the others as they are all connected.

According to the same author (Branco et al., 2014) in the majority of times guests arrive at any hotel with preconceived ideas, they know what they paid and they know what they are expecting to receive. When they are receiving a service their emotions will depend on their satisfaction at that moment. Regarding their expectations, these are based on the hotel image and desires and the price is a price based on the quality that the guest understands (perceived quality).

## **2.5. Guestology**

*“Guestology means in essence treat customers like guests and manage the organization from the guest’s point of view.” (Ford & Heaton, 2000, p.5).* As already mentioned before, it is important for the hotel to read and carefully observe the guest and his behaviour. We have 3 services in hospitality (Ford & Heaton, 2000): the “service product”, the “service setting” and finally the “service delivery”. It is important for these 3 services to be in syntony. The guest wants a certain service that we are delivering in a certain environment. The term “guestology” studies what the guest is expecting and plans ahead to deliver what the guest wants without the guest even entering the service setting, providing this way a more enjoyable experience.

In this way, reading the guest and trying to overcome their expectations could be sometimes tricky, like I said it is important to read and understand the guest. Some guests simply do not want to be annoyed and trying to give more and more to that particular guest could become unpleasant for him. In hospitality it is hard to define a value, the value and the quality can only be defined by the guest (Ford & Heaton, 2000).

As mentioned before the service in hospitality has 3 steps being the second one the “service setting” which is probably the most important one (Ford & Heaton, 2000). It is on this setting that the guest has the experience itself and where everything needs to be in place to provide a better experience. For example in this particular hotel when a guest books a “combat”, they are expecting to have laser guns and adequate equipment, but the “service setting” is really important for the experience so all the environment needs to be in syntony. So, the activity will be in the woods with shelters, places to hide and all sorts of things that will help to create the environment that would exist in a real combat. This will help the guest have the full experience, this also makes it easier to enter the character.

If the correct setting is available it will help to influence the guest's expectations even before the actual service has been delivered (Ford & Heaton, 2000). Another important part of the setting is the staff. The staff is also very important, if they are happy with their job they will create a better experience for the guest. In hospitality we are providing the same services everyday and sometimes the same activity several times a day, but we need to remember that although we are doing everything to provide that activity in the same way the guest himself/herself may influence it if s/he is not in the right mood or just due to his/her personality and that can affect the whole group.

More and more it is necessary to use strategies to further involve the guests in the organisation. The guest can be involved in several ways such as a consultant or source of expert information, as part of the environment for other guests, as coproducer of the experience or as manager of the service providers and systems (Ford & Heaton, 2000). It is quite normal for the hotels to ask the guests what they liked and what they did not like and CHH is no exception. As soon as the guests leave the hotel they receive a survey asking what they liked and did not like, turning, this way, the guest into an "unpaid consultant". This feedback is very important to the organisation and it is based on this that the hotel makes some changes to some departments after analysing the guests' reviews (Ford & Heaton, 2000). We can describe guests as part of the environment as people that do not like to go to an empty hotel or an empty restaurant to eat, they will think that maybe something is wrong or that place is not good enough or not trendy enough. And let us be honest, people like to go to places that everyone raves about and that are trendy. So, these people create an environment for the other guests.

Having guests as coproducers (Ford & Heaton, 2000) is becoming increasingly common as it is usual in some places for the guests to serve themselves from a buffet for example. In this hotel we have the children's high tea where parents need to help the children with their meal and we also have the carvery lunch on Sundays which is a special lunch but is buffet style so again the guests need to serve themselves. This way the hotel does not have to pay one or more employees to serve the guests and at the same time we are improving the guests' experience.

These particular cases help the hotel reduce costs with employees and also avoid complaints from guests (Ford & Heaton, 2000). If the guests are choosing what they like from the buffet and putting the amount they want into their plates they will not complain about the service or the food because it is exactly what they chose and the amount they

wanted. This situation places some of the service “responsibility” on the guest, as they are preparing their plate the way they like it.

Of course there are always disadvantages in any situation and this is no exception, a guest for example can burn himself in a buffet and this can cause huge problems to the hotel. Concerning the last situation, “guests as substitute for management” or as supervisors, the guest is giving feedback (either positive or negative) to the employee regarding the service at the moment of delivery. When the guest is giving a good feedback to the staff member this can be very motivating and make the staff go that extra mile (Ford & Heaton, 2000).

**Figure 2 - Advantages and Disadvantages of guests coproducing the service**

FOR GUESTS		FOR ORGANIZATION	
<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>	<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
reduces service costs	may frustrate guest	reduces labor costs	increases liability risk
increases interest	may diminish service level	improves quality	guest training costs
saves service time	may not have needed KSA's	reduces service failures	increases employee costs
improves quality	learning curve	new market niche	increases design costs
reduces risk		enriches employee jobs	interferes with other units
chance to show off			variability in guests

Source: Ford and Heaton, 2000

As we can see from the image above regarding the advantages and disadvantages of coproducing, for the guests there are several advantages such as them becoming interested in the experience and saving some of their time and money. On the other hand some guests may be frustrated due to having to serve themselves. For the organisation/hotel it means reducing staff and therefore wages, reducing failures and improving quality. Some of the more notable disadvantages are the variability of the guests and the costs of training them.

*“If your customer is irritated or angry about a service failure, fixing the problem is at least as important as getting it right the first time”*, (Ford & Heaton, p. 334). When the guests book the rooms/activities they are expecting to get what they paid for, to have their expectations met and to return home happy and satisfied with the service. But we all know that unfortunately for the hospitality business not every guest leaves the hotel on a happy note and this is where the issues start. An unhappy guest can tell up to eight or ten people negative comments about the hotel (Ford & Heaton, 2000) and as we all know nowadays

with the social media it is very easy to reach many more. On this business we expect everything to run smoothly but because we have people working this does not always happen. It could be that the staff member was upset and gave a harsh answer to the guest, there are several different reasons and factors that could lead to a complaint. Also, the guest's personality or mood influences their reactions on any particular moment and contributes to a complaint.

When confronted with a complaint it is important to take it seriously and show the guest that we understand their point of view and that we will try to fix whatever is wrong or if we cannot fix it at least provide some option to the guest or give them some compensation. If we can solve this issue we may be able to turn this negative situation around.

Of course we will not exceed the guest's expectations anymore but at least s/he will leave on a happier note than before knowing that we did what we could. Most likely they will give us another opportunity in the future and return to stay with us. Fixing the issue is as important as making everything right at the first time and when given a second chance we cannot fail again (Ford & Heaton, 2000).

Another possible scenario is when the guest is completely unhappy with the service but simply does not tell anyone in the hotel about it. These guests are really hard or even impossible to read and they will not complain to us but they also will not return and they will share their negative experience with friends and family or even social media. This scenario is really bad for the industry because the hotel does not have the chance to solve this guest's problem and we will lose the customer.

## Chapter 3

### The Crieff Hydro Hotel

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CHH (2014a) opened for business in 1868 under the management of physician Thomas H. Meikle and was named “Strathearn Hydropathic Establishment Company”. In the Victorians times it was believed that swimming in the freezing spring waters was good for the health. 140 years later, the business (now named Crieff Hydro Hotel) is owned by Mr. Stephen Leckie, the fifth generation of Dr. Meikle. After £40 million of investment the business is growing like never.

This is a family hotel to their 550 employees (Crieff Hydro Hotel, 2014b) and guests. The employees fell like a big family and the guests fell at home with us.

CHH is really close to two big Scottish cities, Edinburgh and Glasgow. From the hotel to Edinburgh airport (Google Maps, 2014a) it is just 52,3 miles. When leaving the hotel it is necessary to follow the A822 and A9 in direction to the M9 in Dunblane, then following the M9 to Glasgow Road A8 to Edinburgh city exiting in the first exit in the M9. From the hotel to Glasgow International airport is 57,7 miles (Google Maps, 2014b) we need to follow first the same road in direction to Dunblane, then follow the M80 and M8 in direction to Paisley taking the exit 28 from M8. The hotel is also really close to Perth around 33 minutes driving just following the A85 and A9 and also very close to Stirling just 39 minutes driving on the A822 and A9. Both cities are much bigger than the town of Crieff and have other facilities that Crieff does not such as shopping centres, cinemas and hospitals.

CHH has a sister hotel, the MurrayPark Hotel (2014a). Just 5 minutes walking distance, this small hotel has a bar and a restaurant. The guests staying here are more than welcome to visit the CHH and use all the facilities and activities.

The management has big plans for this family hotel. So in 10th of February 2014 (Daily Record, 2014; The Scotsman, 2014; Herald Scotland, 2014), the management team at CHH revealed big news to all the staff in the Crieff Hydro hotel: until the end of the month the CHH would be the owner of two new hotels and manage four more (Table 1). In total CHH goes from having two hotels (Crieff Hydro Hotel (CHH, 2014a) and the MurrayPark Hotel (2014a)) to having eight hotels (Peebles Hydro Hotel, 2014; The Park Hotel, 2014; and be the manager of Ballachulish, 2014; Isle of Glencoe, 2014; Oban

Caledonian, 2014 and Yorkshire hotel, 2014)<sup>3</sup>. A big step and a big investment, but this way it smashes the competition keeping the most important hotel “The Peebles Hydro Hotel” under its wing. This hotel has a great location, just 20 minutes driving from Edinburgh. This hotel is very similar to CHH, but the lack of investment during many years made the hotel lose its clients, but now step by step the hotel will be renovated and be part of the growth of CHH.

**Table 1 - Company Hotels**

<b>Main Hotels</b>	Crieff Hydro Hotel
	MurrayPark
<b>New Acquisitions</b>	Peebles
	Park Hotel
<b>Under Management</b>	Ballachulish
	Isle of Glencoe
	Oban Caledonian
	Yorkshire

Source: the author

### 3.1. Mission, Vision and Values

According to Nakagawa (2014), a vision needs to show where the hotel wants to be in the years to come and is necessary that the hotel has this well-marked. The vision is important to the hotel (Nakagawa, 2014) because it will help keep the staff motivated and focused on the business as well as giving the possibility to evaluate all the progress.

The mission is very important to a company or hotel, it needs to be short and easy to understand. It is basically a key sentence that needs to show what the goals of the hotel are.

For the same author the values of a hotel are based on the behaviour of the company and they are what the staff should stand for (Nakagawa, 2014).

Unfortunately the CHH was not able to share their vision and mission for this work, from what we can deduct from their website and from their recent acquisitions we can see that their vision is to grow. According to Stephen Leckie, the hotel owner (Tourism Scotland 2020, 2014), the vision or strategy is not only the growth but growing with quality and

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<sup>3</sup> See annex 3

authentic visitor experiences. I could have access to the hotel values as they are what they transmit to us on our staff magazine (Smiler)<sup>4</sup>, in our canteen and in our pdr (appraisal). The values of the hotel are based on the word “Smile” as smiling is really important in the hospitality business and often guests comment that the staff was really happy and smiley and that made a difference to the overall experience. The word “smile” is an acronym the whole staff needs to follow, meaning:

**S**imple;

**M**emorable;

**I**ndependent;

**L**ean;

**E**ngaging.

By simple they mean that the whole process should be simple, everything needs to be simple for the guest. As for M, what is important is to create memories. The majority of the guests has been coming here since they were little, some have been returning every year for more than 30 years and they all have memories about the hotel and about their family’s holidays. As by independent they want the staff to work as a team but to be independent enough to work on their own and find solutions for problems. For lean it is getting involved, all the staff is more than welcome to participate by giving ideas and suggestions and last but not least for engaging they encourage the staff to be themselves, to put their own personality into their job, to make it unique and personal (CHH People, 2014).

### **3.2. Organisational Structure**

According to Assis (2014), an organisational structure is the way that a hotel or company presents themselves visually. With this form of presentation the hotel is able to have an easy structure of power and management. There is no right way to do an organisational structure, it really depends on each hotel or company’s reality but normally they are divided by departments being the most important on top.

Below it is demonstrated the top managers of the CHH (Crieff Hydro Hotel, 2014a) followed by the organogram of all the departments showing, this way, the hierarchy in

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<sup>4</sup> See annex 4

the hotel. It is important to have the hierarchy well defined so the staff knows whom they have to answer to, making all the processes faster and easier.

**Chief Executive/Owner** – Stephen Leckie

**Operation manager** – Marcus Kenyon

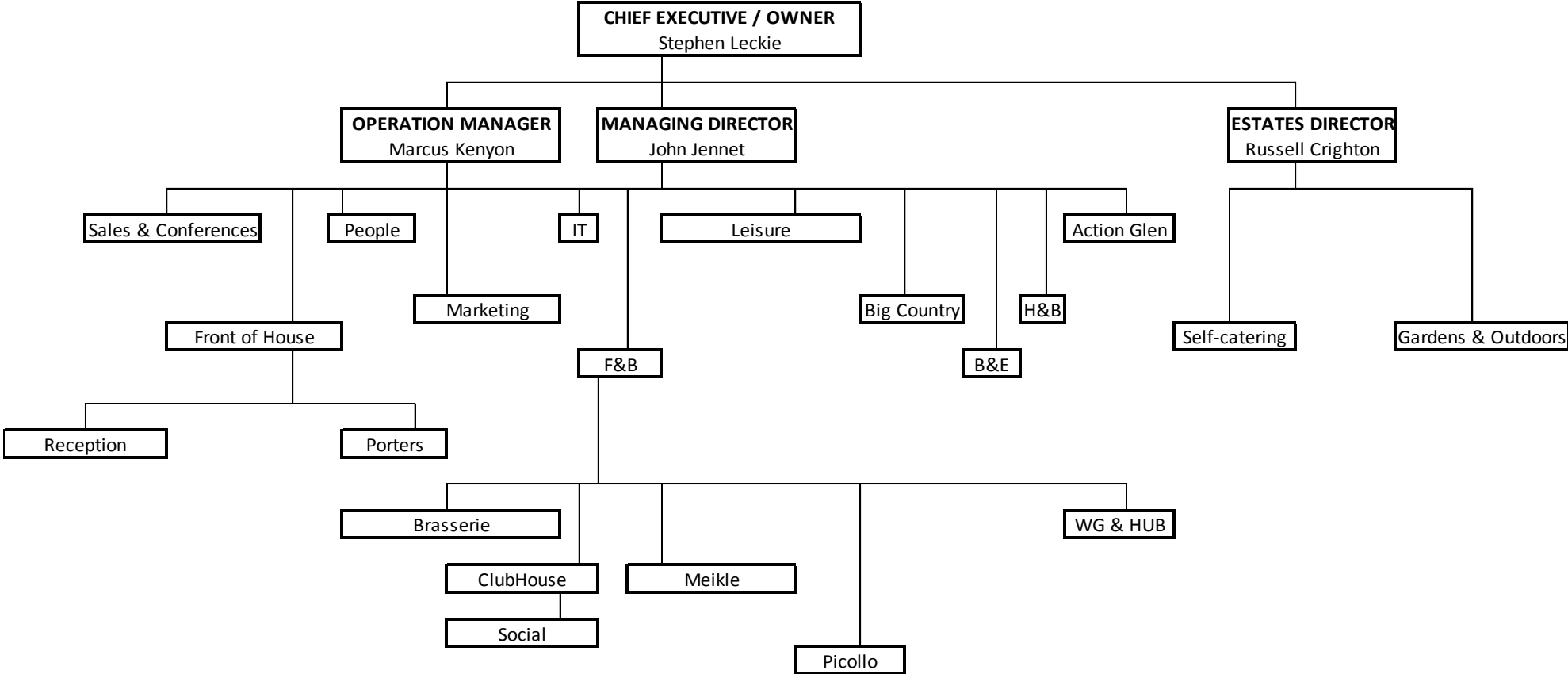
**Managing Director** – John Jennett

**Estates Manager** – Russell Crighton

As demonstrated on the organogram below (Figure 3) we can see that the business does not have several manager positions. There is the owner as chief executive and then we have the three most important managers: operation manager and managing director, that both control everything inside the hotel and also the estates director that controls the self-catering units and all the surrounding areas. The Front of house department includes reception and porters, having one manager for both, and the F&B (Food and Beverage) department controls all the restaurants (Meikle, Brasserie, Picollo and Clubhouse) and cafes (Winter Garden and Hub). The Clubhouse controls the Social (staff bar).

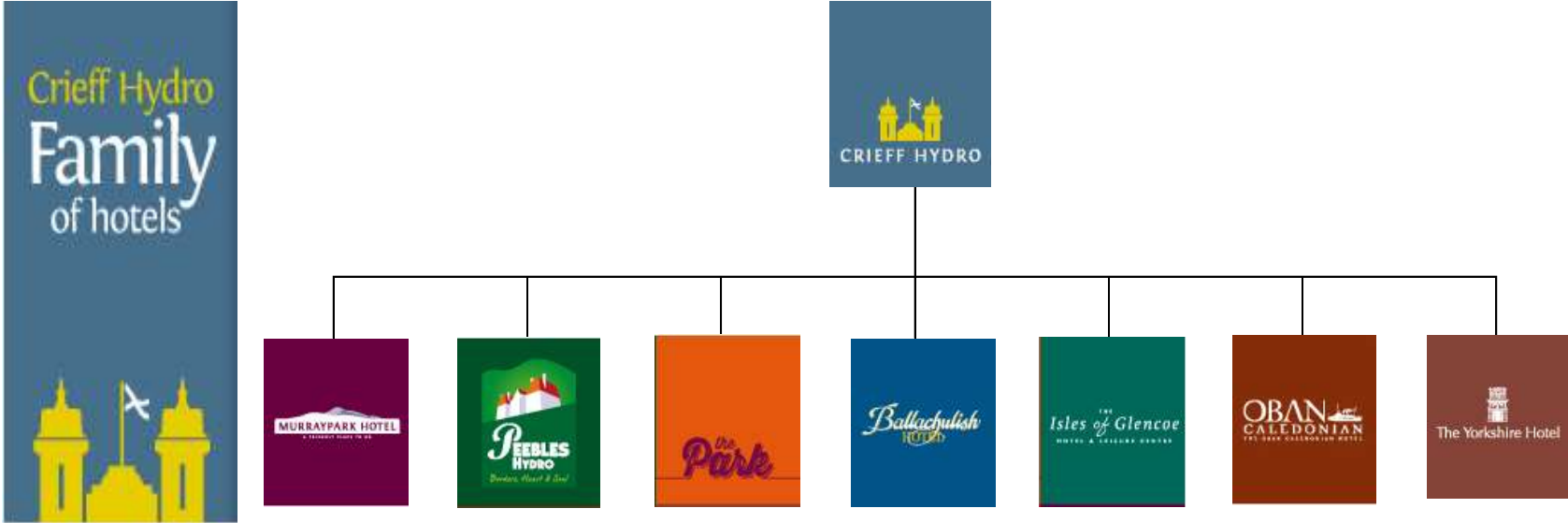
The next organogram (Figure 4), represents the Crieff Hydro family of hotels, being the CHH the hotel that dictates the rules for the whole family.

**Figure 3 – CHH Organogram**



Source: the author

Figure 4 - Crieff Hydro Family Organogram



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel (2014a), the author

### 3.3. Characterisation and Services

CHH (2014a) is the proud owner of his sister hotel MurrayPark (MurrayPark Hotel, 2014a) and also, as mentioned before, on February this year the “Hydro” took a big step on growing, going from two hotels to eight in total. So now, CHH is the “head hotel” of the Crieff Hydro Family of hotels. All the other hotels will go by the CHH rules and standards. The CHH is now the owner of the MurrayPark Hotel, Peebles Hydro Hotel, the Park Hotel and also the manager of the Ballachulish, Oban Caledonian, Isle of Glencoe and The Yorkshire hotel.

**Figure 5 - Crieff Hydro Family of Hotels**



Source: Crieff Hydro website (2014)

The MurrayPark Hotel (2014a) is our sister hotel with a total of 21 rooms. This hotel is just five minutes walk from the Hydro (CHH). This is a small hotel with a bar (that allows pets) and a restaurant. The guests staying here are more than welcome to use all the facilities of the Hydro without any extra charges.

The Peebles Hydro Hotel (2014a) has a great location, just 22 miles from Edinburgh and 50 miles from Glasgow. This makes this hotel close enough to the big city centres. This hotel has three room types: standard; feature rooms and signature rooms. The signature rooms, as we also have in CHH, are the rooms more adequate for couples on a romantic getaway. These rooms have a unique style and furniture with his and her’s sink, shower and bath and beautiful views with great balconies. This hotel has a cocktail bar, two lounge areas for some snacks and two restaurants. The main dining room is open for breakfast, dinner and once a month for Sunday’s carvery lunch. All the products served in the restaurant and bar are Scottish products, including a selection of the finest whiskies. The hotel has plenty of activities for everyone’s taste such as spa treatments, hair and

beauty salon, pool area, tennis, game room, fishing, golf, cycling, horse riding. There are all different types of activities for everyone, so if someone prefers to stay and read a book or go out and do some horse riding this will be the place to stay. The hotel is perfect for a single stay, a romantic break or family holidays but also events or meetings with six meeting rooms (Ballroom; Edinburgh Suite; Regency; Bannockburn; Glentress and Manor) that can accommodate from 250 up to 400 people. The hotel is not only requested for meetings but also for weddings and four of the meeting rooms are just perfect (Ballroom; Edinburgh Suite; Regency; Bannockburn) and can accommodate a wedding of more than 150 guests.

The Park Hotel (2014a) is the Peebles Hydro Hotel sister hotel, much smaller with just single and double rooms but with free access to all the facilities at the Peebles. This hotel also provides its guests with fresh Scottish products in their dining room at breakfast and dinner; at the lounge serving afternoon tea and drinks and at the bar for the finest whiskies and some light snacks.

Ballachulish (2014a) is now under Hydro's management. This hotel is located at Glencoe and has the Isle of Glencoe (2014a) as his sister hotel. This is a small hotel with only 53 bedrooms, between single, double standard rooms and feature rooms. The guests can bring their pets on holidays as well, as they are welcome in the hotel. The guests can have their meals in the Bulas Bar & Bistro with a variety of options ranging from hot meals to snacks. These hotels can also accommodate wedding receptions and have plenty of activities to do such as walkings to the lochs, mountains, glens and rivers, mountain biking and horse riding. All the guests accommodated here can use all the facilities at the sister hotel where they have the pool and spa.

The Isle of Glencoe (2014a) is a pet friendly hotel with stunning views to the Loch, Pap of Glencoe and the mountains of Morven. It only has one restaurant, the Lochside, that serves typical dishes in an informal environment. The guests staying in the hotel can relax by the pool or go for an activity in the leisure centre, such as a walk to Glencoe Lochan, mountain bike or golf.

Oban Caledonian (2014a) is a 3 stars hotel offering standard, feature and signature rooms. The guests can have a meal in the Caledonian restaurant (formal) or in the café Caledonian (informal). The surroundings have plenty to see such as monuments, castles and bird-watching and activities such as hiking, fishing, golf among other outdoor sports.

The Yorkshire Hotel (2014a), located in the heart of Harrogate in England, has 80 feature, standard and signature rooms. The guests can have a coffee or afternoon tea in the lounge

or a meal in the Hg1 Brasserie. There is so much to see in the area. There are beautiful gardens such as Harlow Carr, the Stray, Newby Hall and the Valley. Other places of interest include the Theatre, the Turkish baths, museums and Betty's Tea Room.

Table 2 - Hotels Company and its characteristics

Hotels/Characteristics	Crieff Hydro Hotel	MurraPark Hotel	Peebles Hydro Hotel	The Park Hotel	Ballachulish	Isle of Glencoe	Oban Caledonian	Yorkshire
<b>Stars</b>	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
<b>N° of Rooms</b>	215	21	132	24	53	59	59	80
<b>N°. Of self-catering</b>	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Restaurants</b>	4	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Bars</b>	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Spa</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Golf</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Outdoor Activities</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Meeting Rooms</b>	9	-	6	-	-	-	-	-

Source: The author, booking (2014)

Figure 6 - Location of the Crieff Hydro Family



Source: The author

### 3.3.1. The Crieff Hydro Hotel

On this project I will focus on the Crieff Hydro Hotel (2014) since it is where I am doing my placement. This hotel is most likely the biggest of the “family” and it is the leading family resort in Scotland (Crieff Hydro Resort Facebook, 2014d). This hotel is family oriented with activities for the entire family. The hotel has more than 60 (Crieff Hydro Hotel, 2014a; CHH, 2014c) outdoor and indoor activities for the guests to choose from, and it is easy to say that there is an activity for everyone’s taste.

The main hotel has 215 rooms, 10 of them are adapted for disabled people, 9 of them are executive studios with capacity for four guests and some of the rooms are the signature rooms (lovely rooms in our Leigh building just outside the main building, these unique rooms have a completely different decoration being more luxurious) and last but not least 55 self-catering units. The main hotel is 4 stars with some of the self-catering units being 3 stars and the rest 5 stars. Our self-catering has units for all sizes and tastes, where it can sleep two up to 16 people. Some units are very similar on the inside but the majority of them has its own unique decoration. This year the Hydro added a new unit to its list. They completely refurbished a cottage called “Netherleigh”, and this new unit has 6 rooms where it can sleep up to 12 people.

The hotel also has:

- 75 horses, one outdoor and one indoor arena;
- Stables;
- Kennels;
- 4 restaurants ( Meikle restaurant, Brasserie, Piccolo and Club house);
- 2 cafés (The Hub and the Winter Garden);
- A sister hotel, MurrayPark Hotel, with 21 rooms plus a restaurant;
- Rooms for conferences (Barvick Room; Earn Room; Drawing Room; Loggia; Drummond Room; Highlandman Room; Ferntower Suite; Ferntower Upper; Melville Hall; Murray Room; Tower Room);
- Weddings (Drawing Room; Loggia; Ferntower Suite; Melville Hall);
- Private dinners (Drawing Room; Loggia; Drummond Room; Highlandman Room)
- 6 Tennis courts;
- 3 Squash courts;

- 3 swimming pools (a big one for the entire family, a small one for babies and the victorian spa pool that is adults only);
- Spa (treatments, sauna, steam bath, hot tub);
- Hair and Beauty Salon;
- Indoor and outdoor football court;
- Leisure club;
- Gym;
- Golf;
- Big Country (childcare and babysitting);
- Courtesy wi-fi in hotel and self-catering
- Courtesy bus from self-catering units to the hotel or to the MurrayPark Hotel (five minutes away).

The majority of the business for this hotel derives from the family tourism, the hotel even won the award of best family resort of Scotland, as mentioned on the website page and facebook page (Crieff Hydro Resort Facebook, 2014d). The biggest attraction is Big Country, the largest registered childcare provision in Scotland. Unfortunately, the hotel was not able to provide me the information of the origin of their guests on time for this report, but from my reception experience I notice that the majority of the guests is from Scotland, especially from Aberdeen, Inverness, Edinburgh and Glasgow, followed by guests from England and a minority but still significant number from Switzerland, Germany, USA, France, Spain, Portugal and Brazil.

### **3.4. Internal and External Analysis of Crieff Hydro Hotel**

To better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the CHH I decided to develop a SWOT analysis. Despite my research it was hard to understand where the first studies from the SWOT started, according to the book “A look into the SWOT Analysis as a tool of Strategic Planning” (Fernandes, 2014) there is no precision of the origin of this analysis. Although according to the same author this is a very important analysis and is used in a lot of hotels and companies. This is a simple analysis that really helps to understand the strengths and weaknesses of any company, making it easier for the management to identify problems and put plans into action to improve.

The SWOT demonstrates the internal and external analysis of a hotel or company. On the internal side we have the strengths and the weaknesses. And on the external side we have the opportunities and the threats (Fernandes, 2014).

For this analysis I relied on eight months of surveys (CHH, 2014a) with 15 open and closed questions. For the strengths and weaknesses and for the opportunities and threats I relied in the Tourism Scotland (Tourism Scotland 2020, 2014) where the owner of the hotel explains what the plans are for the future of the hotel and of Scotland. And finally, I developed an interview with two open questions directed to three managers of the hotel chosen by me due to their relevant positions (Queries to the Managers, 2014).

From working and living in the area I realise that the hotel does not have a direct competitor in town and the managers also agree. The CHH only has as its big competitors the Gleneagles – 5 stars hotel (Gleneagles, 2014) and the Hilton Dunkeld House – 5 stars hotel (Hilton, 2014). What makes the difference is the CHH brand and the tradition and memories from this hotel. Another threat will be the costs with the staff, the hotel is always hiring new people, but it will become more difficult due to the rising of the minimum wage.

On the opportunities we have this great family hotel with 900 acres of ground (Crieff Hydro Hotel, 2014a) that leaves plenty of space to expand. Also, the possibility of new hotel acquisitions as the brand wants to expand and has capital to refurbish the hotels.

On the weaknesses, we have the characteristics of this old building that makes it hard to compete with a new hotel built from scratch. Another weakness is regarding the staff as most of them come from different countries that do not have English as their first language which results in communication problems.

On the other side, one of the strengths is the staff. It can be a bit of a contradiction because the staff is also on the weakness side due to the language but they are really friendly and passionate about their jobs and the guests really notice that. The staff is always happy to help and happy to go that extra mile to make the guests' holidays extra special. This is a very old hotel, full of history and memories that give the guests the family environment that they need for their holidays, making that one of the biggest strengths.

To be able to develop the following SWOT analysis it was necessary for me to collect all this information from different sources.

Figure 7 - SWOT analysis of CHH

		STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free childcare</li> <li>• Activities for everyone</li> <li>• Refurbished and continuous refurbish of the majority of the rooms</li> <li>• Friendly staff willing to go that extra mile</li> <li>• Family environment</li> <li>• The history behind Crieff Hydro</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff from different countries and cultures</li> <li>• Old rooms waiting for refurbish</li> <li>• Old building</li> <li>• Lack of information and training of some of the staff</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 900 acres of estate</li> <li>• Space to expand</li> <li>• Tourism of Scotland</li> <li>• Capital to invest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area to expand and add new activities</li> <li>• Capital to invest in refurbishing</li> <li>• Overnight visitors increasing by 9%</li> <li>• Family hotel (acquisition of new hotels or new management contracts for the future)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff from other countries, not having English as first language</li> <li>• Building characteristics</li> <li>• Time and money to train new staff for the other hotels</li> </ul>
THREATS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gleneagles ( 5 stars hotel )</li> <li>• Hilton Dunkeld House ( 5 stars hotel )</li> <li>• Politics</li> <li>• Costs with the staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More modern hotels as competitors with new constructions and designs</li> <li>• Scotland being a strong and secure country</li> <li>• Hotel able to hire new staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building from 1868 hard to update</li> <li>• 4 stars hotel competing with 5 stars hotels</li> <li>• Scotland referendum about independence</li> <li>• Minimum wage rising sharply</li> </ul>

Source: the author, based on: Tourism Scotland 2020, 2014; Queries to the Managers, 2014; CHH, 2014

### **3.5. The Town of Crieff**

The town of Crieff (in Gaelic – “Craoibh” which means tree) (Crieff, 2014a) is a very small market town with 6,579 inhabitants in 2001 and 7,050 in 2006, located in Perth and Kinross council, Scotland. It is just one-hour drive from the big cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. The tourism in this city has grown mainly due to whisky, being here the oldest distillery in Scotland – The Famous Grouse.

The city has a few tourist attractions such as the Caithness Glass Visitor Centre, where people can go and make their own piece of art with hot glass and where they can buy souvenirs from Crieff; Loch Turret, with beautiful views to the loch; Innerpefferay Library established in 1680, Scotland’s oldest lending library; St. Mary’s Chapel (1508); the Famous Grouse Distillery which is the oldest distillery in Scotland and MacCrosty Park for some relaxing family time by the river or for a nice walk.

This town has its history based on the Highlanders (Crieff, 2014b) coming to Crieff to sell their black cattle whose meat were eagerly wanted by the growing population in Lowland Scotland and north of England. Every year in October Crieff received the “Tryst”, an event where all the cattle was gathered, transforming this small town into a “wild west”. This event, with thieves and killings, made a mark to Crieff as the town started to be known throughout Europe. Many years after, in the nineteenth century, the town became known as a destination for tourists visiting the Highlands especially for wealthy businessmen from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Aberdeen, among others. The majority of this tourism was travelling to Crieff to stay at CHH that opened, as mentioned already, in 1868 due to its therapeutic waters. Every year the “Crieff Highland Games” are hosted in the town of Crieff with music and dance competitions and feats of strength. The town has a few schools as well (Crieff, 2014a). The most popular is the private school, Morrison’s Academy, then there is also the Ardvreck School, St. Dominics RC Primary School, Crieff Primary School and the Strathearn Community Campus.

The town was even immortalised by William McGonagall by writing the following poem:  
“Ye lovers of the picturesque, if ye wish to drown your grief,  
Take my advice, and visit the ancient town of Crieff”.

Crieff is home for a lot of other famous people like Ewan McGregor; Denis Lawson; Saul Marron; John Craig; Jackie Dewar; Eve Graham; Fiona Pennie and Jessie Smith just to

name a few. Recently Crieff was the host of the visit of Prince William and Kate. They visited the MacCrosty Park, the school and the Famous Grouse distillery.

Also, quite close to Crieff is Comrie (Crieff, 2014b) where there is a very popular attraction, the Auchingarrich Wildlife Centre, with all types of animals again for some more quality family time.

To start my placement in CHH (the leading family resort in Scotland) it was first necessary to have an induction day where I could learn about the hotel and surrounding areas. For the hotel, it is really important to do theme days to get the team together to really evince the family values that the company stands for.

### **4.1. Company Training**

The first weeks working are to understand the hotel and all the procedures that is why, during my training, I had to shadow other colleagues to learn the ropes of the business. My training will be mainly as a receptionist but I will also be learning the shift leader role, the night auditor, how to train new staff and support the Big Country (childcare facilities). All of the activities developed in this one year placement are revealed below.

#### **4.1.1. Induction Day**

I arrived at CHH, Scotland, and I had my “induction” in the hotel on the 16th of September 2013. There were 16 people on the “induction”, all starting that day even though for different departments. On the “induction day” we filled in all of the paperwork needed to start working here and then we had to learn about the business. The staff from human resources gave us a friendly welcome and showed us around. We watched several videos about the hotel and how to treat guests and they explained us how this business works. After that we had lunch in one of the restaurants, the most casual one – the Brasserie. We had an “à la carte” menu and we had lunch all together to get to know each other and the facilities.

After lunch time we were separated into two groups. One group went around the hotel with a quiz looking around for the answers, meanwhile the other group went with Dick (the person responsible for doing the transports) on a mini bus around the estate to get a look at the self-catering units and how huge the grounds are (900 acres)!

After the induction each one had to go to their own department and speak with their managers and get their rotas (working schedule).

#### **4.1.2. Development Day**

After two weeks I had my “development day”. I was back in the meeting room with the staff that started on the same day as me and the human resources’ staff. We did several learning games, trust games and team games, just a way for them to see if we do not give up and if we can work as a team.

We also needed to do a project, we were divided by groups and each group had a challenge. My group had to go around the hotel trying to find what pregnant ladies could do in the hotel and program a whole weekend for them. After all the information was gathered each group had to present their ideas to the others.

At that point it was time for lunch and right after that we went to the activity centre to do one of the 60 outdoor and indoor activities that the hotel has to offer to the guests. In this case, we did archery<sup>5</sup>. We had our instructor explaining all the safety rules and how to use the arch and then it was our time to try. It is really nice to try an activity that the guests will do, because this way if a guest asks me how it is i can explain it with knowledge.

#### **4.1.3. Department Day**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of March we had our department day. The Melville hall (big space used for football or big events) was closed for the Hydro staff. All departments had some space where we needed to present what we did during the year and what we want to do for the next year but we had to do it in a creative way. My team – reception, together with the porters (front of house department) - decided to do something unexpected, a flashmob<sup>6</sup>. We had one afternoon to get together, decide the choreography and film it so everyone could practice at home and five days later it was the big day. Saturday afternoon the music started and we began our dance moves at the sound of “Happy” from Pharrel Williams. A lot of the guests heard the music and came to see what was happening, some of them even danced with us. On department day, much to the staff’s surprise, we showed our dance video and our theme “How do we know if reception team are happy workers?! Easy we put a hidden camera at the desk!”. It was a really nice day for all the staff, we could see every departments’ ideas and experiment some food and cocktails<sup>7</sup>. We also had lunch at the event and could try some of the salads and pizzas from the new restaurant – Piccolo.

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<sup>5</sup> See annex 5

<sup>6</sup> Video of flashmob available in media support

<sup>7</sup> See annex 6

## 4.2. Reception

When we think about “Reception” we normally imagine a big desk by the main door of the hotel, where the guests do their check-in/out and get all the information that they need for their holidays. Any big or small hotel needs to have a reception department or front office department, as it is often called (Chakravati, 2008). This is a really important department as we all know the reception department is the face of the hotel and the reception and receptionist tend to be the first and last contact a guest has with the hotel. The reception normally keeps an eye on all the activities in the hotel to best inform the guests.

According to the prior author it is impossible for any hotel to function without a reception. The receptionist role is very important because their help and guidance could make or break the hotel’s reputation.

When we think about a “Receptionist” we think of a person that is the “face” of the hotel, who needs to be presentable, smiley and approachable. The receptionist is often seen as the main contact for the guests to the hotel (Chakravati, 2008).

To be a receptionist the person needs to have certain skills (Shiells-Jones, 2014); the most important is to be multitasking. In this job the staff has to deal with several guests at all times and different questions and requests, so it is important to be ready. As the author emphasises no two guests are the same. Everyone is different in their interaction with us so it is important not to be a robot and adapt to different guests in order to make them feel valued and appreciated.

In this hotel what they transmit to us is to be unique (CHH People, 2014). Of course, we need to go by the CHH standards but they encourage us to show our personality. For the guests in CHH the reception is the main contact that they have and they will come to us for any queries or requests. For the hotel the receptionist role is very important, as we are the face of the hotel.

During my experience as front office assistant/receptionist I can see why this position is so important. We are the first contact that the guest has with the hotel, we are their reference point for any question with the reception area being the main area of the hotel. Although the guest during his/her stay is exploring the hotel they always have in their memory the first impression, the day that they arrived. That is why this job is so important, if the guest had a long trip to get to the hotel and his/her accommodation is not ready yet, we as front office can offer to store the luggage and give them a tea or coffee in our Winter

Garden so they can relax from their tiring journey. This simple gesture will create a memory on the guest, and they will remember something that was not positive (the accommodation not being ready) as something positive (the accommodation was not ready but the receptionist took care of our luggage while we were having a hot drink). As a receptionist we can change a potentially bad situation into a better memory, a receptionist needs to have skills to “read” the guests.

Also, during the stay if they need any information they will come to us, to ask about entertainment or even advice on activities to do. One of the good things about this specific hotel is that the staff can use all the facilities with a nice discount, so when the guest comes to us to ask about activities we can tell them our experience. That makes a big difference and can make a sale much easier than if the staff has not tried the activities. Everyone can look at the brochure and describe how the activity is going to be but if I tried it and I am explaining it to the guest I will be transmitting also my emotions and feelings and these are memories, and hospitality is a memories business.

This is one of the big differences that I experienced working here and having worked previously in Algarve-Portugal in hospitality. The majority of the hotels in Portugal does not allow the staff to use the facilities so when the guest asks for information the staff can only go by what they read from the brochures. In this hotel we can transmit emotions and a real experience and from what I can see the guests really like that. I already spoke with different guests about my experience doing archery and they were very interested. Then after they had their experience they came back to me at the desk and they wanted to tell me what they experienced. This creates a very positive and close relationship between staff and guests, and makes the guests feel like their experience counts and we are there for them instead of us seeing them as only numbers or profit.

I started my work as a front office assistant on the day right after the induction. I have to deal with all types of guests and being in a different culture this has been a good way to grow and to learn.

To start I had to learn how to use the hotel software, Opera and Avenista.

The whole reception works with the Opera software to deal with anything regarding bookings, the Avenista software is used to book the guests for the restaurants.

On the first four days I was a “shadow”, I was following my colleague Becky’s steps. I needed to be close to her to see how she does her job. I was two days shadowing her in check-ins, by the second day I started to do some check-ins under her supervision. Plus two more days shadowing check-outs and by the second day I was doing on my own

under her supervision. On the fifth day of work I was on my own, but always with someone close by if I needed.

This hotel is always very busy, normally it has an occupancy of more than 75% (as seen in the pms software Opera). The majority of the times the occupancy is around 90%, in a very busy day we could have up to 240 check-ins (due to confidentiality the CHH was not able to provide me with these details on paper, but I had access to them on the system).

### **4.2.1. Check-in**

The normal procedure in a check-in has a few steps. First of all the guests do not need any confirmation, they just need to tell us the surname of the booking. Using the Opera software<sup>8</sup> I write the surname on “arrivals” and it will come up. Next I have to tell the guest how many nights they are staying and how many adults and children are in the room, if everything is correct I open the profile on the booking. On the profile we have a few personal details of the guest. We need to ask the guest to confirm the first line of his/her address. We also have to ask the car’s registration because a lot of guests park in the wrong place or sometimes even leave windows open or the car working. So, it just makes it easier to know the registration. If we need we go to the Opera software and click on miscellaneous, we do a search on the guest reports by car registration and we are able to know the guest’s room.

Next step on the check-in is to print the registration card and ask the guest to read and confirm the details and give us two signatures. The guest will keep the bottom part of the registration card with the key cards on it and we keep the upper part. This process helps us for example if the guest charges something to the room we can check if the signature from the dockets is the same as the signature on the registration card. Next step is to open the booking itself, here we need to see on which package the guest is, there are too many packages in the hotel. It is very hard to keep a note of them because the sales team is always creating new ones, the most popular package I could say is “DBB” meaning dinner, bed and breakfast. In this package if the children are 11 years old or under they are entitled to a pack lunch which they can get everyday except on the day of departure. The pack lunches can be collected from the Winter Garden or Hub. For the pack lunch the children can choose between a ham or cheese sandwich and the rest of the pack has juice, yogurt, fruit, raisins and crisps. For the children’s dinner they can go for their high

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<sup>8</sup> See annex 7

tea in the Meikle restaurant from 4.30 until 6pm where they have a buffet style dinner with hot dishes. If the parents want the children to have dinner with them in one of the restaurants it is possible as well, each child gets 4.60£ allowance to use towards the children's menu.

The adults on dinner, bed and breakfast can choose any of the restaurants. The main and most popular restaurant is the Meikle, it is the formal one where the guests have a three set course meal. The guests can also decide to go either to the Brasserie (menu a la carte, more casual); the Piccolo (casual, pizzas and pastas); Club house (casual, lighter menu) or the MurrayPark Hotel. If they choose any of those they each get 21.50£ allowance and they just pay the overage and drinks. The following figure demonstrates how the DBB (dinner, bed and breakfast) package works:

**Table 3 - Package allowances DBB**

<b>Restaurants</b>	<b>Children (11 years old or under)</b>	<b>Adults (12 years old onwards)</b>
<b>High Tea (Kids only from 4:30pm to 6pm) Meikle Restaurant</b>	Buffet	n/a
<b>Meikle (After 6pm)</b>	£4.60	3 Course Meal
<b>Brasserie (All day menu)</b>	£4.60	£21.50
<b>Piccolo (After 5pm)</b>	£4.60	£21.50
<b>Club House (All day menu)</b>	£4.60	£21.50
<b>MurrayPark</b>	£4.60	£21.50

Source: adapted from CHH, 2014b

The allowance is only to be used on food, all drinks need to be paid separately due to Scottish alcohol rules. The children on DBB are allowed as well to have a pack lunch, as mentioned before, but if they prefer they can have lunch with the parents in one of the restaurants and they have £3.50 allowance for the food. Most of the times it is necessary to remind the guest about this allowance when they are booking their meal. We do explain it at check-in but because we provide a lot of information it is important to remind them.

If we do not, sometimes this can cause a complaint because then they think they have the meal included anywhere with no limits.

Finally to finish the check-in it is necessary to confirm if the guest has some balance left to pay or not. If so, it is necessary to proceed with the payment. If the guest has a debit card we need to charge the amount of the accommodation right away and after the payment is processed we need to pre-authorize their card in £20 to allow them to do room charges which they can pay when they check-out. If the guest has a credit card we pre-authorize the amount of the accommodation plus £20 and they pay everything when they check-out. Finally it is necessary to cut the keys to the room and give the guest a welcome pack with a round up<sup>9</sup> with all the activities happening in the hotel that day and if necessary a map<sup>10</sup> of the outdoors and indoors. Regarding the check-in to the self-catering units it is executed in the same way, except that the units are only ready after 4pm. We can keep the guests' cell phone numbers and when the units are ready we give them a call (we also provide the guests with a self-catering map<sup>11</sup>). Some of our guests like to go for walks so we also have a map of all grounds and with all the walks that they can do inside the estate.<sup>12</sup>

### **4.2.2. Check-out**

When we have more than 80 guests to check-out they each receive an express check-out under their door, this way they just need to check their bill and sign the envelope and give to us at reception when they are leaving.

The majority of the guests prefers (even if having the bill) to stay in the queue and do the proper check-out. So, the process of checking-out is normally quick, all I have to do is ask the room number, print their bill (if they do not have it with them), ask them to confirm and sign. If everything is ok with the bill I ask if the guest wants to pay with the credit/debit card that they gave us on arrival and if I can send a copy of the invoice to their email instead of printing one for them.

While I wait for the system to process the payment I normally ask how their stay was and if they are still staying in the hotel to enjoy the facilities for a little longer. Normally the guests stay longer in the hotel to do some more activities before going home.

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<sup>9</sup> See annex 8

<sup>10</sup> See annex 9

<sup>11</sup> See annex 10

<sup>12</sup> See annex 11

All our guests are more than welcome to stay until 5pm in the hotel and use all the facilities, even Big Country for the little ones.

When a guest is not happy with their bill the whole process takes longer, it is necessary to understand why they are not happy and if they are right or not. Sometimes they are very sure that they did not have those drinks or that snack, so it is necessary to look for the dockets and see if it is the guest's signature. If we have the docket they usually remember and agree with the bill. In other cases, it can be difficult when some do not want to pay because they did not like the food or because they thought it was a different thing or price. In those cases I need to speak with my manager or shift leader and explain the situation and wait for their instructions; if they agree we remove the value from the bill, if not we need to call the duty host to deal with the guest.

Because I have been here for some time my manager is confident in my judgement to decide to take off some amount from the guest's bill, so I have some autonomy to do it instead of calling the duty manager right away.

### **4.2.3. Night audit shifts**

As part of my placement I am doing some shifts with the night team, as a night auditor (from 11pm until 7am). It is really interesting to see what happens in the night shifts, we could think that at night there is not much to do but nights are sometimes almost as busy as day shifts.

The night auditor's job is really important, it makes all the difference for the day team's job. It is during the night that the guests' bills are done and inspected for any mistakes so at morning, during check-outs, everything goes much easier and faster. Also, if there are more than 80 check-outs the night team will do "express check-outs" so the guests will receive the bill at their room and in the morning they just need to sign the bill and leave it at the reception desk.

At night we do need to rely more on the staff that is working for any help, there is one night auditor, three porters and four night cleaners. And of course one night duty manager that on days off is replaced by the night auditor.

#### **4.2.3.1. Tasks**

The night auditor shift starts at 11pm with the day team handing over any work or situations left to deal with. After that it is time to print the following reports:

- "Guest Mobility Request";

- “Room List” (2x);

These reports will be used in case of a fire. The first report will help the team to know which rooms need help to be evacuated and the second report will be used in case of a fire of huge proportions. It is extremely important to have the name of the guests with reduced mobility so the staff members can help them get to a fire exit safely.

After printing the reports it is necessary to see how many rooms are left to check-in and print all the registration cards of any remaining check-ins. The guest may still appear but if not the registration cards are already printed for the day team to deal with the “no shows” and charge the accommodations. Also, it is important to check and take note of some rooms that are available just in case of any walk-ins or in an event of some emergency where we will need to use any available room.

Next we have to check the PM (groups/parties main bill) accounts. These are accounts that were set up for groups, events, weddings, big parties, so what we need to do is check these accounts and see which ones have any amount (could be a negative or positive amount). The ones that have any amount need to be extended, basically it is just necessary to open the pm account reservation and where the dates are we change the number of nights. The number of nights to be extended for is decided by the night auditor. If it is a big event the pm can be extended for 21 days and smaller events can be extended for one or two days, the night auditor has the freedom to decide. After extending the pm accounts it is necessary to take note on the sheet for the night auditor tasks.

After the pm accounts it is time to separate all the dockets by room and place them by the guest registration cards in the reception drawers and separate the discount dockets and sort them out on the system.

With the discounts we have different accounts and it is necessary to open the account, check the docket and see if the docket is on the system and if it was correctly posted. The accounts are 9170 for staff discounts, 9173 for members' discounts, 9174 for house account and 9175 for guest complaints (this data is on the CHH Opera PMS). So any staff discounts, member discounts, owner's discounts or guest complaints (only about food and drinks) they need to be posted on the right account and have the correct amount discounted. What the night team does is to check all dockets one by one, see if the discounts are correct and adjust the accounts by code until the account's value is zero, then print the full account and put the dockets together. All the dockets go to the day auditor that will check them again. If there are dockets missing or any wrong discounts we need to fill a report that needs to be sent to the day auditor, food and beverage

department and the cellar assistant. This report will help to detect problems and help the managers to take some actions.

After all these tasks we need to wait until 1am to close the system. After 1am the bar is not allowed to accept cash or bank cards (only room charges) anymore as it is time to close and run the system. To close the system we need to log in to the computer as “nightauditor” and go to the opera pms and “night time close”, then click start and the system starts running. The system will ask to confirm how many check-ins are left and to print the registration cards that we already did previously so we just need to close. Then the system will ask to confirm the pm accounts, we need to check if they all have zero balance and “check-out zero balances”, so the system will close them. After that the system will run alone.

Then we can start by checking in all the pm accounts that we adjusted before. So all the accounts that have discounts and all the ones for credit cards (for guests’ payments), we only have to go to “arrivals” and write the name of the pm accounts and check them in. After they are all checked in, we go to “in house guest” and look again for all the pm accounts and one by one go to “options” and “add on” and we are going to add on one extra night, one by one. This is a long process and needs to be done one by one and manually. It is very important not to miss any pm account, if we do some of the system may not work during the day.

Next we have to print three newspaper reports for the driver, the porters and the night audit folder. It is necessary to check all the newspapers for the morning and post the charge on the rooms. After, we need to print “in-house guest by room report” for the Meikle restaurant for the breakfast and the weather report, three of those for food and beverage department, cellar and night audit folder. After all these tasks are done, the system has already stopped running so it is time to check all the bills for the guests that are checking out in the morning.

It is easier to check the bills by party because in the majority of times it is one person that is paying for everything or for all accommodation so it is easier to see the party’s rooms together. As soon as the parties are checked we have to see the rest of the bills one by one and check for any strange numbers, for example numbers that do not end in zero, five or nine and check the dinners allowance and if they were correctly posted. If something is incorrectly posted we need to fix it and charge the correct amount or take the wrong post from the bill. Also sometimes the system separates the bills which makes it confusing so we need to put all those charges together to make it easier for the guest to understand. It

takes a lot of time to check the bills because we need to see every little detail and take off allocation or any posting error by any other department. After the bills are correct, if we have more than 80 check-outs we need to print the bills one by one again and put them in express check-out envelopes. If the guest did not leave a card on the system we put the bill in a white envelope. The night team porters will deliver the bills at the guests' rooms one by one. All this process takes time but it will make the day team's work much easier. Next we go and deliver all the reports and dockets into the people office and pigeonholes and we need to go to the IT office and run the backup system. After that we only need to print the 7am mobility guest request report and our job is done.

### **4.2.3.2. Fire alarm**

If a fire alarm occurs during the night the alarm sounds at that exact moment (during the day the porters and the duty manager have about three minutes to check where the alarm is to confirm if it is a real fire, if not they can stop the fire alarm on time. At night time there is no time, the alarm will sound right away). If the alarm goes off during the night, the night auditor has to call 999 immediately (emergency number) so the fire department will come right away. At that point the rest of the team is already directing the guests to the main foyer. Since the night team is short on staff, everyone knows where to go and what to do in an event of a fire. The guests need to be evacuated to the reception area or outside the hotel. Each of the night team members has a yellow vest and radios to be easier to control the situation and to be able to communicate with other staff. Also, if needed there are other staff members living in the grounds and they can be called for help, and even the hotel owners.

### **4.3. Shadowing shift leader**

I spent a couple of days shadowing a reception shift leader<sup>13</sup> to learn her tasks. When the shift leader starts at 8am s/he needs to check how many "no-shows" there are from the previous night and charge the guest(s). If the guest has only one night booked the shift leader only needs to charge the accommodation, if the guest has more than one night booked it is necessary to call the guest and see if they will still come to the hotel. The majority of the times when we are processing a credit or debit card from a no-show the card comes up as declined so in these situations we cannot reinstate the reservation.

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<sup>13</sup> Diane McColm

After that the shift leader needs to check-in any remaining pm account and extend the dates of the ones previously checked in. Finally it is necessary to have a look into the bills to make sure everything is correct.

The evening shift of a shift leader is from 3pm until 11pm. In this shift it is necessary to do an update on the “event folder” and see if any event was altered. After that, with the event folder we can do a daily sheet for the next day with all the events, conferences, weddings or any meetings occurring in the hotel so the reception team knows where to direct people to. Finally we also have to do a “trace” report and a package report to look for any cakes, cards, wines, chocolates arriving for guests or any late departures or early departures. These reports are very helpful because we need to check if everything was done correctly and if the guests have everything they ordered in the room before arrival.

#### **4.4. Training new staff**

As part of my placement I need to spend two weeks training the new students that just arrived. The new staff is joining the reception team for one year, on a placement. On the first week I will show them how we deal with the guests and with the bills at check-out. On the following week I need to show them how we do check-ins and how we explain the packages. It is important to show the new employees how to speak to a guest and how we deal with any issues, we need to be role models and behave accordingly. In two weeks I can teach the basic and the rest will be learnt with time. After the training, the new staff member will be able to deal with basic queries about bills, room types and packages and will have been trained on how to act when the fire alarm goes off. Although the shadowing period is just two weeks we do not leave the new staff alone, there is always someone close by willing to help with any issues.

#### **4.5. Conferences**

When we have big groups or conferences checking-in the process is much quicker, we do not need to explain all the facilities because they do not have the time to enjoy it, we just need to fill the paperwork and direct them to the room or/and to the party.

The check-out of groups and/or conferences is very quick as well, the majority does not add anything to their room bill and so only a few will come to reception to pay for some drinks. The whole bill is in a “pm account” and that is controlled by the accounts team that after the event send it to the person responsible for the payment. The reception team

does not do anything regarding the pm accounts, the only thing is the shift leader in the morning shift needs to extend the accounts, which is a very basic procedure in the software, it is just adding one day to the reservation.

#### **4.5.1. Dundee University Conference**

I am giving this particular conference as an example because it was a very big conference and it was necessary some preparation to receive them. There were around 250 guests checking in to the hotel at the same time, so on the previous day I had to prepare the big check-in. Using Microsoft word I wrote on big sheets of paper the letters “A – D”; “E – L”, “M – S” and “T – Z”, so we could put in big boards to direct people to the right table to check-in. We did not do the check-in at reception as normal, because they were too many and it would cause big queues and disturb other guests. We set up four registration tables with the big boards with the letters at the ballroom (the ballroom is a big area close to one of the cafes normally where we have entertainment in the evenings) and we also had an area in the middle of the room ready for them to have refreshments. So, my shift leader and I had to print all their registration cards and put them in order in some boxes. On the morning of their arrival we took the boxes with the registration cards to the right tables and we waited for their arrival. The porters were there waiting as well to store their luggage. Previously the hotel had sent them a form of an express check-in so each person could fill in their details, address, phone number and email. This way they only need to sign the registration card and their check-in is done.

With a group this big we do not have time to explain any of the facilities to them, it is a fast check-in just ask the name, two signatures and it is done. The guest keeps a small docket with their name and room number and we need to tell them to go to the main reception after 2pm to get the keys to their rooms. After we check them in, they go to their conference and we have all the rest to do. When we are back to reception and while dealing with other guests we need to take the registration cards and start updating the conference guest profile and checking them in one by one, because so far we only did it on the paper nothing was done on the system. It is quite complicated to do because we have other guests checking in at the same time or making queries, so we need to be as fast as possible. On a day like this we are around six working in reception at the same time.

#### **4.6. Management Meetings**

The CHH has their own management meetings everyday in the hotel, where the managers get together and go through everything that will happen that day in the hotel. It is a way to ensure every department is aware of everything that is happening throughout the hotel. So far there was only one big meeting for all the staff, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February, in which the CHH announced the acquisition of two hotels and the management of four more (Daily Record, 2014; The Scotsman, 2014; Herald Scotland, 2014).

The CHH already has the sister hotel MurrayPark Hotel and now purchased Peebles Hydro Hotel and The Park in the Borders and will be managing the Yorkshire hotel in Harrogate, the Isles of Glencoe Hotel & Leisure Centre, the Ballachulish Hotel and the Oban Caledonian. This is a very big step for the company.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2014 the Hotel announced on the official Facebook page “Crieff Hydro announced as the winner of the family hotel of the year at the Scottish hotel awards programme for the hotels and accommodation industry, celebrating excellence and outstanding character”(Crieff Hydro Resort Facebook, 2014d).

#### **4.7. Payday and Smiler Magazine**

A detail that makes the difference, in my opinion, is that at the end of the month on our “payday” we have a special dessert in the canteen or even a special lunch.

On the same day we also receive our payslip and a magazine, the “Smiler” (CHH People, 2014)<sup>14</sup>, where we can read all the latest news about the hotel such as new staff discounts, new faces or departments in the hotel, information about taxes and the employees that have been promoted. There is a segment for pictures of the staff members in maternity leave with their newborn babies, as they are now part of the Hydro’s family! It is just a small magazine but has useful information for all the staff. Attached to the payslip and magazine, some of us also receive a letter<sup>15</sup> informing us of our “guest mentions”. When the guests leave the hotel they receive a small survey and whoever they mention as having delivered a good service receives a letter from the human resources. The letter is a thank you note and a 5£ bonus is added to the payslip. The employee also receives a small box of smarties with the following wording on it “The guests love me...”. A list of employees

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<sup>14</sup> See annex 4

<sup>15</sup> See annex 2

that received guest mentions is put on a board in the canteen for everyone to see. This makes a huge difference since it is a recognition of our hard work.

The hotel also has the “employee of the month” like the majority of the hotels. In this case the managers nominate employees for the prize and when they have a few names the managers vote and the winner gets 100£ prize and a new badge with the title “Employee of the month”. It is a great way to motivate the staff to keep giving their best for the hotel and for the guests, happy staff means happy guests and for the Hydro, being the family hotel that it is, they want the staff to feel at home.

#### **4.8. Extra work in Big Country**

Big Country<sup>16</sup> is a dream for kids and, of course, parents. The big attraction to this hotel lies on the six hours a day of FREE childcare.

The Big Country is a huge department (Big Country, 2014; CHH, 2014b; CHH, 2014c) that has a big area with all sort of toys, books, castle, ball pools and everything that a child can dream of.

All children up to the age of 12 are welcome in Big Country, the children are divided into groups:

- First Group: Creche - children under 2 years old;
- Second Group: From 2 up to 4 years old;
- Third Group: From 5 up to 7 years old;
- Fourth Group: From 8 up to 12 years old;

The first group normally has less contact with the others, they normally spend all the time in the creche area where they have all the facilities and toys adapted to their age. The second group up to four years old spends most of the time in the “farmyard”, this is a very big area with lots of toys and even a fish tank and a tractor. The third and the last group spend the majority of the time in the “muster area”, again this is a huge area with table tennis, pool table and a few other things for the more grown up.

There are three sessions a day that the children can attend, the first one starts at 09.30h until 12.30h, the second one from 13.30h until 16.30h and the last one from 18.30h until 21.30h. When the children are in the session they start on their own area for the first half an hour and they go changing from area to area. So for example, the kids start on the “muster area”, after that (if the weather allows) they will spend some time outside in the

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<sup>16</sup> See annex 12

garden, then in the castle (with a big slide, trampoline and two ball pools), farmyard and then theatre. All of the groups rotate through the areas, it is much easier having the children spend time in all areas because they easily get bored being in one place so it is necessary to give them something new to see and play with.

This is a very important department, it is a big responsibility to take care of children especially the little ones that cannot express themselves that well. On each session the children also have a break to have their snacks, this is again very important and there are rules for the staff, the children can only have a snack if the parents bring them and the children are not allowed to share any food due to food allergies. The snack time has to be supervised at all times, children like to share and do not understand the risks that can occur due to allergies. Because of these situations the parents have to fill a medical sheet about each child with their allergies and medical problems so the staff is aware and can double their attention.

We can say that one of the biggest attractions of this hotel is the Big Country facilities. Being in reception I have a lot of contact with the guests and I can speak with them and listen to their comments about the hotel and a lot of times at check-in when we are talking about Big Country they say that finally they can leave their children in a fun place while they have some alone time as a couple. This is why the evening session is one of the most popular, the parents can feed the children at the high tea in the Meikle restaurant between 4.30pm and 6pm and then the children go to Big Country while the parents have a drink and a relaxing dinner.

The facilities have capacity to accommodate 140 children at the same time. All groups have a team leader that has a clipboard with the children's names, age and allergies on, this person also has a radio to communicate with reception or any first aider if needed.

Some of the staff are trained as a first aider so they can give the first medical care to a child in need.

The staff needs to have a SVQ (Scottish Vocational Qualification) to work with children and all the key time support staff needs to present their police report (disclosure) to be able to help in this department. Since we are working with children it is necessary to have some security measures, the door handles are much higher than normal, the cabinets with the cleaning products are locked and the doors that connect to the inside of the hotel are protected with a code that changes daily. Also, cell phones and cameras are not allowed in the area at any time, neither for staff or children.

There are big differences between Portugal and Scotland and childcare is no exception. There are simple things here in childcare like cutting the fruit for the child that we can easily do in Portugal and we cannot do it here. To even be able to prepare the fruit for the children here it is necessary to have a food certificate, if not the staff cannot prepare the fruit. Another curiosity is related to the sun cream protector. The staff is not allowed to put sun cream on the child in case the child gets a sunburn and the parents come to complain that the staff did not apply the cream properly. Due to all of these situations the staff has meetings and trainings frequently and even key time staff, like me, needs to attend some of the training to keep doing shifts at Big Country.

#### **4.9. Evaluating the guest experience**

CHH has a big concern with the guests regarding their satisfaction, which is why the hotel has two surveys. The first one, called “Tell us and tell the world”, is sent to the guests’ email as soon as they leave the hotel. The other survey is available on paper at reception but only when guests request it.

The first survey is the most used and has 15 questions, such as:

1. How satisfied are you with your recent break with us?
2. Would you consider staying with us again?
3. Would you be happy to recommend us to others?
4. Please tell us how you made your booking and how you’d rate the experience
5. Did our reception team impress?
6. Were our team of Porters visible and helpful?
7. Tell us what you thought of our housekeeping skills too.
8. If you stayed Self Catering, how would you rate the following?
9. Tell us what you thought of the meals you ate with us.
10. If you stayed with us as a family, how well did we feed the wee ones?
11. If you gave any activities or facilities a go while you were here, we’d love to know your thoughts on anything you experienced.
12. Was there a particular person who impressed you while you were here?
13. Let us know if we met your environmental expectations, or share your thoughts on how we could improve
14. If you have a tip on where we can improve, or just want to get something off your chest, let us know

15. Was this your first visit to Crieff Hydro?

Five of the questions above are closed questions, the rest being open questions where the guests can add their opinion.

Below I will analyse the month of August, being one of the busiest.

The answers are analysed on a scale of 0 to 10 being 0 “not at all” and 10 “being very”.

Regarding the first survey<sup>17</sup> we can see that 22,94% of the guests graded the hotel with a 10, followed by 33,03% of the guests that graded it with a 9, in third place we have 18,35% and none of our guests graded the hotel with 0, 1 or 3. So, we can conclude from this graphic that the majority of the guests is satisfied with their stay.

On the second question<sup>18</sup> 92,66% of the guests answered “Yes”, they will consider staying with us again, leaving 7,34% of the guests that say they would not stay with us again.

For the third question<sup>19</sup> of the survey 95,33% of the guests said they will recommend the hotel to others.

On the following question<sup>20</sup> regarding how the guests made the booking (separated in two categories) the first one is “warmth”. Here we can see that the guests who booked on our website rated 39,62% as the warmth being great, 45,28% as being good and 15,09% as being ok. We can see that the numbers are higher on the guests that booked over the telephone being 59,38% great, 32,81% as good and 6,25% as ok. Guests booking through third parties rated 40% on great and good and 20% on poor. From the graphic we can see that the majority of the guests booked through telephone. On the “service” category for the booking through our website 37,29% of the guests rated as great, followed by 55,93% as good. By telephone the guests gave 60% for great and 33,33% for good. On the bookings through third parties 33,33% of the guests rated as great and good and 25% as ok. It is visible from the graphics that the majority of the guests prefers to book directly with us instead of booking through third parties.

The fifth question<sup>21</sup> about the reception team 53,64% of the guests rated our service as great while 34,55% rated as good. The sixth question<sup>22</sup> regarding the porters they have 32,22% as great, followed by 31,11% as good and 27,78% as ok.

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<sup>17</sup> See annex 13

<sup>18</sup> See annex 13

<sup>19</sup> See annex 13

<sup>20</sup> See annex 13

<sup>21</sup> See annex 13

<sup>22</sup> See annex 13

The seventh question<sup>23</sup> of the survey, regarding the service of the housekeeping department, is divided in three categories. On the first one about the suitability the guests rated as great the bathroom with 63,41% and the bedroom with 52,38%. The second graphic is about the interior and decor, curiously the rates of the bathroom are again superior to the rates of the bedrooms. 62,20% rated the bathrooms great against 43,53% for the bedrooms. Rated as good was higher in the bedrooms with 38,82% against 25,61% for the bathrooms.

The eight question<sup>24</sup> was again divided by categories, this question is regarding all subjects from the self-catering units. For the unit itself 50% of the guests rated it as great followed by almost 40% that rated it as good. The next category was the equipment provided with the great and the good rated with 40%. The standard of the housekeeping, less than 40% rated as great and more than 50% as good. Regarding the furnishing and decor over 30% rated as great followed by 40% for the good. The next category, grounds and gardens, almost 60% rated as great and more than 30% rated as good. On the last category, the overall experience, almost 50% rated as great and 40% as good. At reception we really can see that this data is real, because self-catering units are really popular and the guests really enjoy them because they feel more independent as they are not in a busy hotel and they have amazing views to the country side and mountains.

The eating and drinking question<sup>25</sup> regards all the restaurants and cafes' facilities in the hotel and grounds. Overall, regarding the quality we can see that almost 50% rated the Meikle restaurant and the Brasserie as great, followed by the Winter Garden with over 40% and just behind the Piccolo restaurant with slightly less than 40%. Rated as good we have the Hub café with almost 60%, followed by the Clubhouse with over 50% and the Meikle restaurant with more than 40%. On the same question but regarding the presentation we have again the Meikle and the Brasserie with over 50% rated as great and with almost 60% we have the Clubhouse rated as good. On the last category of this question we have the service. Graded great we have the Meikle restaurant with more than 50%, this is the main restaurant of the hotel and has great views and decor so it is easy to see why the guests are pleased with it. Next we have the Brasserie with more than 40% rated as great, this is a more casual restaurant perfect for families with children where they can have a relaxed meal. With the highest rates as good we have the Clubhouse with

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<sup>23</sup> See annex 13

<sup>24</sup> See annex 13

<sup>25</sup> See annex 13

more than 60% followed by the Hub with more than 50%. Overall the rates are really high concerning the food, quality and service.

The tenth question<sup>26</sup> is again divided by categories which the guests rated as great (more than 30%) and more than 40% as good. Regarding the menus more than 50% rated as good and only a few more than 20% rated as great. Followed by 20% as ok, from the guests' comments heard at reception they mainly complain that they cannot have the adult meal at the same time as the kids have the buffet. The majority has rated the menus highly but what they prefer and rated as almost 50% good and 20% as great are the pack lunches (boxed lunches). It is really convenient for the customer to be able to get a pack lunch for the child included in the package. They just need to ask for a pack lunch at one of the cafes and some guests even prefer to get this meal on the last day so they can take it on the journey back home.

Concerning the activities on the availability category<sup>27</sup> we have with the highest rates (great 75%) the fitness suite, 74,42% the Big Country (childcare facilities) and 73,91% the Victorian spa. Rated as good we have the tennis with 62,50%, 55,56% the gallery followed by the soft play with 50%. Regarding the overall experience we have the highest rating as great for fitness suite (81,82%), with 76% the horseback riding and with 70,21% the outdoor activities. The twelfth, the thirteenth and the fourteenth questions are open questions. Therefore, I am going to analyse the last question "Was this your first visit to Crieff Hydro?"<sup>28</sup> and in this month of August we had 48,18% (based on 53 answers) saying that it was their first stay and 52,73% that already have visited us before (based on 58 answers).

Concerning the paper survey<sup>29</sup> with twelve questions, three of them are closed questions, eight are semi-open and one is open. These queries I was not able to analyse for my work as the hotel only provided me with one survey filled by a guest. It was not possible for the hotel to share this information because they include the details of the guests and those details are confidential. The survey I have has received great rates from the guests in every question. The questions are:

1. On a scale of 0 to 10 (0 being not at all and 10 being very) how satisfied are you with your recent break with us?

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<sup>26</sup> See annex 13

<sup>27</sup> See annex 13

<sup>28</sup> See annex 13

<sup>29</sup> See annex 1

2. We hope we'll see you again and that the feeling's mutual. Would you consider staying with us again?
3. Would you be happy to recommend us to others?
4. Please tell us how you made your booking and how you'd rate the experience.
5. We hope we gave you a warm greeting and excellent service. Did our reception team impress?
6. Were our team of porters visible and helpful?
7. If you stayed in the hotel, did we match you with a room you'd choose for yourself? Tell us what you thought of our housekeeping skills too.
8. If you stayed self catering, how would you rate the following?
9. Eating and drinking are two of life's pleasures – especially on holiday. Tell us what you thought of the meals you ate with us.
10. If you stayed with us as a family, how well did we feed the wee ones?
11. If you gave any activities or facilities a go while you were here, we'd love to know your thoughts on anything you experienced.
12. We like to recognise our staff for excellent service. Was there a particular person who impressed you while you were here?

To be able to evaluate the guest experience, I took note, from January to August, of all the surveys. That leaves me with eight months' worth of material to work with, it is not easy to treat this information that is why it is important to do a further analysis. According to Bardin (Bardin, 2014a), this type of data needs to be treated and translated in to models that can be read more easily. This technique makes us focus on a certain period of time to do the analysis and have material to interpret. It is better to use this technique when we have a lot of information.

For Bardin (Bardin, 2014b) nowadays the scientific rigor is by the measure. The same author still defends two approaches, the quantitative and qualitative. On the first one, the information obtained is measured by the frequency it appears. On the second one, qualitative is the presence or lack of presence of a certain feature.

Following this analysis I treated the data regarding the survey<sup>30</sup>, it is not easy to treat this type of data, being an open question results in subjective answers and even lack of relation

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<sup>30</sup> See annex 13

to the question. Although I have a lot of material to work with, the final numbers are much smaller than we would expect.

For the first category regarding question 4 – “Please tell us how you made your booking”. Analysing the guests’ answers we have the following table<sup>31</sup>:

**Table 4 - Booking types**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	TOTAL	%
Different Booking Types	Reservation in person	19	34,55%
	Reservation online	18	32,73%
	Reservation by phone	14	25,45%
	Reservation by third parties	4	7,27%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

Source: the author, based on guests’ survey (CHH, 2014a)

From the table above it is clear that the majority of the guests staying at CHH makes the reservation in person. From the feedback I get, most of the guests book their next holidays while they are staying with us. Next we have 32,73% of the guests that book in our website followed by 25,45% by phone with us. The minority are bookings by third parties with 7,27%. Working at reception allows me to learn that it is not that usual for guests to book through other parties, the majority booked through us. This is a very positive situation for the hotel, having the guests booking through us allow us not to pay commission fees to other companies.

For the next category there were three questions<sup>32</sup>:

- Q5 – Did our reception team impress?
- Q6 – Were our team of Porters visible and helpful?
- Q9 – Tell us what you thought of the meals you ate with us.

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<sup>31</sup> See annex 14

<sup>32</sup> See annex 14

**Table 5 - Satisfaction with the Staff**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	TOTAL	%
Helpful and Friendliness	Helpful staff	73	42,69%
	Friendly staff	53	30,99%
Adaptation and efficiency	Adaptation of guests' needs	3	1,75%
	Informative Staff	12	7,02%
	Quick and Easy solving problems	30	17,54%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

Source: the author, based on guests' survey (CHH, 2014a)

On this table I am analysing the staff in reception, restaurants and the porters. It is evident that the guests think the staff is very helpful with 42,69% followed by the friendliness with 30,99%. The guests also rated the staff being quick at solving problems with 17,54%. The adaptation of the guests' needs with 1,75%, although it is a low number we still try to adapt to the guests' needs, the issue is we need to please the majority of the guests but unfortunately sometimes is not possible to please all of them.

For the third table of my analysis I used the following question of the survey<sup>33</sup>:

- Q7 – If you stayed in the hotel, did we match you with a room you'd choose for yourself? Tell us what you thought of our housekeeping skills too.

**Table 6 - Quality of the rooms**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	TOTAL	%
Quality of cleaning service	Great	12	9,09%
	Bad	14	10,61%
Quality of the room facilities	Great	63	47,73%
	Bad	30	22,73%
Deficient acoustic	Bad acoustics of the interiors	13	9,85%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

Source: the author, based on guests' survey (CHH, 2014a)

Regarding the quality of the cleaning in the rooms, 10,61% of the guests rated it as bad and 9,09% as great. This is due to guests complaining about carpets with stains which is one of the issues in the non-refurbished rooms. The CHH has been updating and renovating rooms every year but unfortunately it is still a work in progress. This is a common issue among old buildings but the hotel is well aware of the situation and step

<sup>33</sup> See annex 14

by step all the rooms will be refurbished. On the other hand, rated with 47,73% we have the quality of the rooms, the hotel has amazing rooms with great views. 22,73% of the guests rated the rooms as bad but, again, those rooms are next to be refurbished. The bad acoustic with 9,85% is mainly on interconnecting rooms as even with the door closed sometimes it is possible to hear some noise.

For the next table I used again one question from the survey<sup>34</sup>:

- Q8 – If you stayed self catering, how would you rate the following?

**Table 7 - Exterior facilities**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	TOTAL	%
Exterior Facilities	Bad Paths and Roads	8	53,33%
	Great Paths and Roads	7	46,67%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

Source: the author, based on guests' survey (CHH, 2014a)

The ratings of bad paths and good ones are quite close, the great getting 46,67% and the bad 53,33%. The issue is that some of the self-catering units are further away from the hotel, which can be a 15-minute walk. Not easy, especially when the guests have little children. The fact is that the hotel tries to make this distance shorter by offering the guests a free wheel service that runs from 6pm until late. On the other side the guests really like the outdoors, the hotel has great places for walks and exercise.

For the following analysis were used the following questions<sup>35</sup>:

- Q9 - Tell us what you thought of the meals you ate with us.
- Q10 – If you stayed with us as a family, how well did we feed the wee ones?

**Table 8 - Restaurant facilities**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	TOTAL	%
Quality of the facilities	Great	121	65,05%
	Bad	31	16,67%
Menus	Limited Menus	24	12,90%
Prices	Overpriced	10	5,38%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

Source: the author, based on guests' survey (CHH, 2014a)

<sup>34</sup> See annex 14

<sup>35</sup> See annex 14

We have a good number of people (65,05%) that loves our food and restaurant facilities. But we also have a small number (16,67%) that does not like the food or has had a bad experience, the majority of the people that complain is regarding the delay of the service that made the food to be cold. There is also 12,90% of our guests that think that we do not have a big variety on our menus especially concerning vegetarian choices. Our kitchen team is more than happy to change anything necessary to make the food suitable for everyone. And when the guests know that the kitchen team is available to make changes more suitable for them, they become more relaxed that they can still have what they want. A really small number of guests, 5,38%, thinks that the food is becoming overpriced. From my analysis I could deduct that the guests felt that more in the Winter Garden and Hub cafes than in the restaurants.

For the last table I analysed the following question<sup>36</sup>:

- Q11 – If you gave any activities or facilities a go while you were here, we’d love to know your thoughts on anything you experienced.

**Table 9 - Outdoor and Indoor facilities**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	TOTAL	%
Outdoors and Indoors facilities	Bad facilities	16	14,68%
	Very busy facilities	20	18,35%
	Great facilities	73	66,97%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

Source: the author, based on guests’ survey (CHH, 2014a)

The majority of our guests (66,97%) really enjoys all of our activities and entertainment. The biggest complaints are that the facilities are too busy or fully booked (18,35%), this happens on the busiest times for the hotel like school holidays. To avoid complaints when the hotel is too busy the sales team usually calls the guests in advance to advise them to make dinner or activities reservations. This way the process is much easier for the guest and avoids waiting lists for the activities.

A small percentage of guests (14,68%) thinks some of the facilities are becoming dated, like the spa pool or the squash courts. Hopefully with time these will be refurbished as well.

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<sup>36</sup> See annex 14



## **Chapter 5**

### **Final Considerations**

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When I started this placement I had a few objectives and motivations in mind. I came to Scotland to improve my knowledge in hospitality and in English language but also to become more independent. Working as a front office assistant made me understand how the hotel is run, learn about all the departments in the CHH but also to have contact with different people with different nationalities. It is noticeable that this particular hotel is constantly busy all year. I decided to study more to understand why the guests come to stay in this hotel and quite often the guests come every year. This is a small town and is not as attractive as big cities like Glasgow or Edinburgh. So why this hotel?

This was one of the reasons that I decided to study the guest and the economy of experiences. To achieve results first it was necessary to follow some steps.

To start my work, I did a literature review on the hospitality experience where it became clear the evolution in hospitality achieving now the experience. It is obvious that the guests do not look anymore for the ordinary, they look for the experience. They want to be surprised at every moment.

From my study it is also perceptible that people are the key to hospitality, not only the guests but also the staff. We need people as guests to come and stay at the hotel and experience all the facilities but we also need people as staff to “dress the part”, to help create the atmosphere necessary for the activities, to motivate and to captivate the guests into the experience itself.

I realised a depth study about the hotel where I completed a SWOT analysis and I studied all the new hotels in the group. It is very helpful to elaborate this analysis to better understand the hotel internally and as well externally. With this analysis it is also visible why the guests like the hotel and we become able to comprehend why they return.

All of these steps were necessary to achieve my overall purpose to evaluate the guest experience. For that I relied in the Bardin analysis and in the guests’ surveys of the hotel and almost question by question I elaborated a Bardin table to truly understand what the guests’ motivations on coming to the CHH are. First of all it became clear that the guests prefer to book the accommodation directly through us, this way we avoid paying commission to third parties which is very beneficial for the company. It was also

noticeable that the staff and the characteristics of the building are the soul of this business. Everyone that stays here can notice that the staff is friendly, informative, smiley and ready to help and this makes all the difference. Next on my analysis were the rooms, the cleaningness is not rated as the best (in the month of August) but on the other hand the quality of the rooms is rated highly by the guests. Overall the restaurants and the outdoors and indoors facilities also have high rates, the only issue is that in the high peak of holidays the majority of the activities is fully booked so some guests are upset that they cannot book activities.

Now I can understand why the guests come to the CHH, they want memories and experiences. They come here to be mesmerised, to be surprised but also to celebrate their occasions with their loved ones and to have memories for years to come of those lovely times.

For me it was obvious from the beginning that studying hospitality is not an easy task, this type of business is not an exact science. We cannot have strict procedures to follow for a specific situation because everytime it happens we will need to deal with it in different ways. As previously mentioned the hospitality is a business for people, for guests and also for staff. People are different, people have bad days and good days, what could happen today does not mean that would happen the same way with a different guest or even with the same guest in a different day. People do not act the same way everyday of their lives, and this is what makes this business so interesting to me.

In order to provide a great service we need to know our guests, what they want, what moves them and why they choose us. When we know this information we are able to provide a great service and, by knowing what is expected from us, we can go that extra mile and exceed their expectations.

The best way to know what the guests expect is by reading the comment cards and this is also the cheapest way for the hotel to analyse the strengths and the weaknesses. Of course, the majority of the guests' replies are complaints but this is a way for the hotel to learn their faults and how or where to improve.

From the beginning it is important to make the guests feel as part of the experience or organisation. If the guest is part of the process it makes them feel they are involved and they have some power. It gives them a positive experience and makes them loyal to the organisation as they feel part of it. As soon as the guest enters the hotel, even before any contact with us, s/he is evaluating everything. Nowadays with the internet development guests can easily comment their stay online and reach a wider audience. Due to that the

guests are becoming more critical and harder to please so for the hotel and staff it is increasingly important to be perfect and exceed their expectations all the time.

Each day it becomes more important to be there for the guest, to provide them with what they want and here is where guestology comes in. We need to know our guests, what do our guests want? What do they expect? That is why we need to study them. If we know our guests we know what they need. In this hotel in particular we have the Big Country, the outdoor activities, weddings and celebration parties and a family friendly environment.

From what I studied regarding the guest experience this is exactly what the guests want, they want to arrive at their wedding, celebration or activity and be surprised. At the end of the day, the guests will leave the hotel with memories for the future to come, and this the CHH knows how to do best.

The hospitality industry should not only be concerned on providing a great service, but an experience as well.

As mentioned, in my one year working in the CHH I was hired like any other employee and was expected to work as any other staff member. Although I am in a placement, I am paid for my work and it needs to be done by their standards. All the staff is frequently evaluated and I am no exception, my manager had a meeting with me to see if I achieved what was expected from my performance. On this meeting she did my appraisal.<sup>37</sup>

During this year on my placement I grew personally and professionally. It was really important and beneficial to me to be able to work in such a busy and awarded hotel and to base my study on the guest experience. It is a very interesting subject to study which is why I decided to do this analysis. I would still like to have the opportunity to develop this study. For the future, I would like to have a chance to develop a study on the staff's experience. Studying the staff when they are providing the experience to the guest: how they provide the experience and what their perspectives on the guests' perceived quality are. But also having the staff doing the exact same activity and studying their perspective and how they react.

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<sup>37</sup> See annex 26

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Annex 1

Figure 8 – Guests’ Survey (Front)




# WIN A LUXURY SPRING BREAK

I trust your break at Crieff Hydro was a memorable one.

If we have your email address we will be sending you this survey shortly after your stay. If not then simply fill out this form and hand to a member of our team. If we did things well I'd love to hear from you, if we can improve for next time then I want to hear about it more.

.. takes about 90 seconds to tick the boxes, a bit longer to fill the space with your own comments. **Plus you'll be entered into our prize draw for a luxury Spring break.**

Make sure you rebook before you go for the best value.



Stephen Leckie

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**If we can do it better, we want to know!**

1. On a scale of 0 to 10 (0 being not at all and 10 being very) how satisfied are you with your recent break with us? *(Please circle)*

0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

2. We hope we'll see you again and that the feeling's mutual. Would you consider staying with us again? *(Please circle)*   Yes   No

Yes   No

3. Would you be happy to recommend us to others? *(Please circle)*

Yes   No

4. Please tell us how you made your booking and how you'd rate the experience. *(Please tick)*

	Warmth				Service			
crieffhydro.com	Great	Good	OK	Poor	Great	Good	OK	Poor
Telephone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third party	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____								

5. We hope we gave you a warm greeting and excellent service. Did our reception team impress? *(Please circle)*

Great   Good   OK   Poor

Anything to add? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Were our team of Porters visible and helpful? *(Please circle)*

Great   Good   OK   Poor

Anything to add? \_\_\_\_\_

7. If you stayed in the hotel, did we match you with a room you'd choose for yourself? *(Please tick)*  
Tell us what you thought of our housekeeping skills too. *(Please tick)*

	Suitability				Interiors and decor				Cleanliness			
Bedroom	Great	Good	OK	Poor	Great	Good	OK	Poor	Great	Good	OK	Poor
Bathroom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other feedback _____												

f
crieffhydro.com
t

Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Figure 9 - Guests' Survey (Back)

8. If you stayed Self Catering, how would you rate the following? (Please tick) *N/A*

	Great	Good	OK	Poor		Great	Good	OK	Poor
Your cottage or chalet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Furnishings and decor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Equipment provided	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Grounds, gardens and pathways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Standard of housekeeping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Overall experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anything to add?									

9. Eating and drinking are two of life's pleasures - especially on holiday. Tell us what you thought of the meals you ate with us. (Please tick)

	Quality				Presentation				Service			
	Great	Good	OK	Poor	Great	Good	OK	Poor	Great	Good	OK	Poor
Breakfast	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Brasserie	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meikle restaurant	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wintergarden cafe	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hub cafe	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clubhouse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anything to add?												

10. If you stayed with us as a family, how well did we feed the wee ones? (Please tick) *N/A*

	Great	Good	OK	Poor		Great	Good	OK	Poor
Kids Restaurant menus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Kids high tea	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kids Cafe menus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Boxed lunches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kids Clubhouse menu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
Anything to add?									

11. If you gave any activities or facilities a go while you were here, we'd love to know your thoughts on anything you experienced. (Please tick)

	Availability				Overall experience			
	Great	Good	OK	Poor	Great	Good	OK	Poor
BIG Country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cinema	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entertainment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fitness Suite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gallery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Golf	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hair and Beauty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Horseback riding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lagoon pool	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Playpark	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Soft play	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victorian Spa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<i>WALKING ROUND GROUNDS - IMMACULATELY KEPT.</i>							

12. We like to recognise our staff for excellent service. Was there a particular person who impressed you while you were here?

*EVERYONE EXCEPTIONAL.*

YOUR NAME: *VERA WILSON*

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_ Room No. *141*

Thanks for taking time to tell us how we're doing. If you have a tip on where we can improve, or just want to get something off your chest - say the word and we'll be in touch.

Yes, please get in touch. My name, email address and/or phone number are in the box above.  No need to contact me.

Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

## Annex 2

### Figure 10 - Sílvia's Guest Mention Month of July



Silvia Portal  
Reception

25 July 2014

Dear Silvia

Well done, you've delighted our customers and they've named you as someone who has delivered exceptional service to them. You've four special mentions in the month of July and an extra £20 will be added in your next wages as a thank you.

This is great to hear and keep up the good work!

Yours sincerely

*P.P. N. Trews*

**SARAH SUMMERS**  
**SENIOR PEOPLE BUSINESS PARTNER**

Crieff Hydro Ltd, Crieff, Perthshire, Scotland, PH17 3LQ  
Registered in Scotland. Company number SC000268. Registered Office: Strathearn House, Crieff, PH17 3LQ  
crieffhydro.com

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Source: Author guest mention letter

Annex 3

Figure 11 - Crieff Hydro Hotel website page



Source: print screen of crieff hydro's (2014a) website

Figure 12 – MurrayPark Hotel website page



Source: print screen of murraypark's (2014a) website

Figure 13 - Peebles Hydro Hotel website page



Source: print screen of peebles hydro's (2014a) website

Figure 14 - Park Hotel website page



Source: print screen of park hotel's (2014a) website

Figure 15 - Ballachulish website page



Source: print screen of ballachulish's (2014a) website

Figure 16 - Isle of Glencoe website page



Source: print screen of Isle of Glencoe (2014a) website page

Figure 17 - Oban Caledonian website page



Source: print screen of Oban Caledonian (2014a) website page

Figure 18 - Yorkshire website page



Source: print screen of Yorkshire (2014a) website page

Annex 4

Figure 19 - Smiler Magazine



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Figure 20 - Smiler Magazine (continuation)



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

**Annex 5**

**Figure 21 - Development Day 2013 (Archery)**



Source: Sílvia Portal in the picture, the author (2014)

**Annex 6**

**Figure 22 - Department Day**



Source: the author

**Figure 23 - Department Day (continuation)**



Source: the author

**Figure 24 - Department Day (continuation)**



Source: the author

**Figure 25 - Department Day (continuation)**



Source: the author

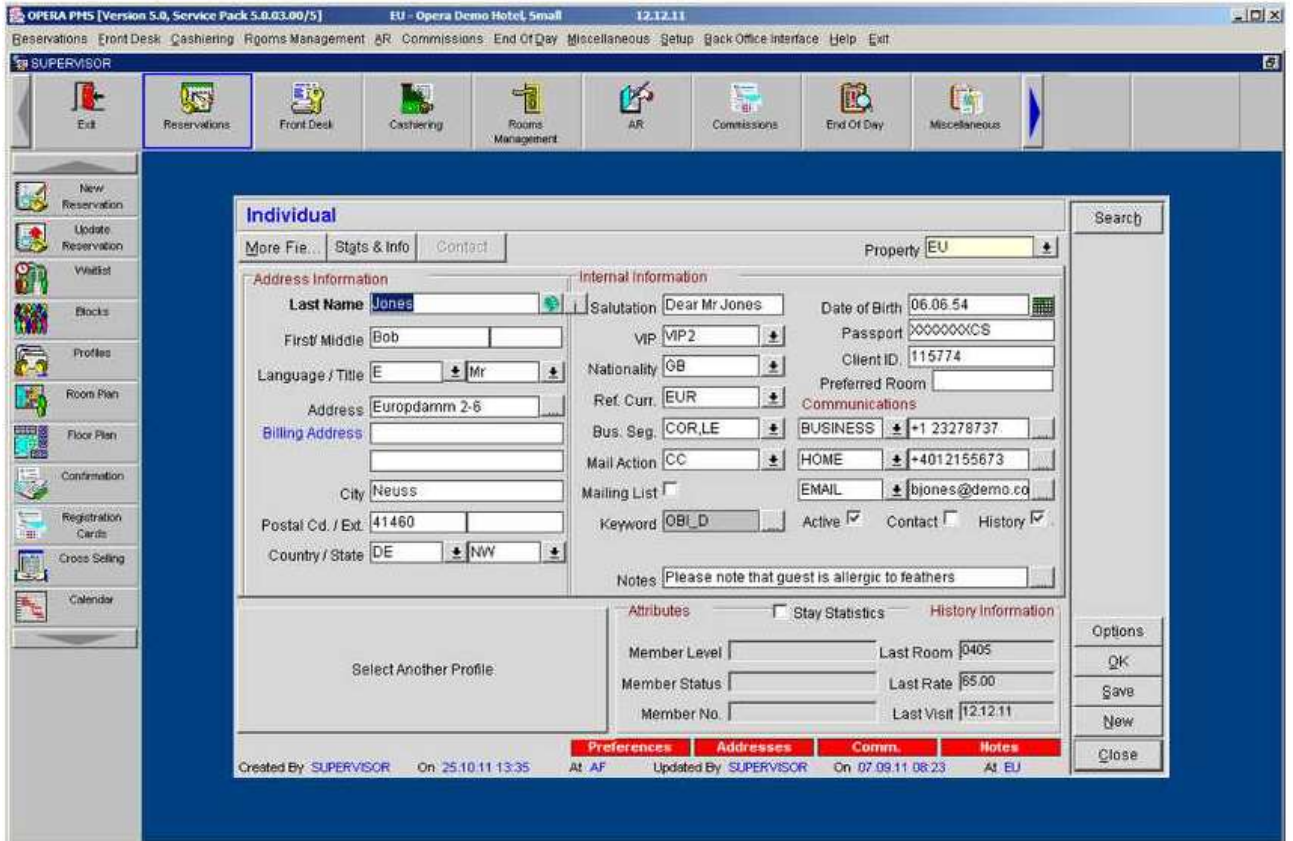
## Annex 7

Figure 26 - Opera Software (Home Page)



Source: OPERA, 2014

Figure 27 - Opera Software (Check-in Page)



Source: OPERA, 2014

Figure 28 - Opera Software (Room List Page)

OPERA PMS [Version 5.0, Service Pack 5.0.03.00/5] EU - Opera Demo Hotel, Small 12.12.11

Reservations Front Desk Cashing Rooms Management AR Commissions End Of Day Miscellaneous Setup Back Office Interface Help Exit

SUPERVISOR

Exit Reservations Front Desk Cashing Rooms Management AR Commissions End Of Day Miscellaneous

Date: 12.12.11 Room Type: Floor: Assigned Rooms: Unassigned Rooms: Partially Assigned Rooms: Vertical Zoom: Horizontal Zoom: Component Rooms

Property: EU Room Class: Rooms: Features: Smoking

Room	Status	Rm. Type	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
			12.12.11	13.12.11	14.12.11	15.12.11	16.12.11	17.12.11	18.12.11	19.12.11	20.12.11	21.12.11
0101	Inspected	STW	**	Jemili, Khaled	**							
0102	Clean	SKI	Nicolas, Ma	**	Fenger, Christian	**			Atkins, George	**		
0103	Clean	STW	**	Lantos, Tom	**							
0104	Inspected	SKI	Babotin, Guillaume	**	Fengler, Martin G	**						
0105	Inspected	STW	Ndungu, Winnie	**					Bellaton, Nicolas	**		
0106	Pickup	SKI	Chan, Noel	**			Ziesewoltz, Sergey	**				
0107	Inspected	STW	**	Jemili, Khaled	**							
0108	Clean	SKI	**	Atkins, George	**			Fares, Osama	**			
0109	Inspected	STW	**					Bacchi, Guillermo	**			
0110	Dirty	SKI	**	Dabrowska,	Arza, Douglas	**						
0201	Clean	STW	Barale, Miro	**	Bizjak, Nadia	**						
0202	Inspected	SKI	Abnie, Eros	**			Albert, Francis	**				
0203	Dirty	STW	**		Tahiri, Eric	**						
0204	Dirty	SKI	Ledret, Emad	**			Al Far, Jalal	**				
0205	Dirty	STW	Barale, Miro	**	Valle, David	**						
0206	Inspected	SKI	Havard, Ron	**	Valle, David	**						
0207	Inspected	STW	Orabe, Jose	**			Baloga, Istvan	**				
0208	Clean	SKI	Young, Jane	**	Riad, Sam G	**						
0209	Inspected	STW	**	Gsbameier, Herbert	**							
0210	Inspected	SKI	Alexandre, M	**			Estrologo, Paul	**				
0301	Inspected	STW	Fana, Joram	**	Talvar, David	**						
0302	Inspected	SKI	Bardos, Lajos	**						Gabameier, Herbert	**	
0303	Clean	STW	**	Scharpenseel, Dorothee	**							
0304	Inspected	SKI	Deakin, Ped	**				Smith, Edgar	**			
0305	Inspected	STW	**	Patanjali, P	**							

Babotin, Guillaume

Statistics Edit Rm Assign Check In Options QOO / OOS Calendar Close

Source: OPERA, 2014

Figure 29 - Opera Software (Availability Page)

Property: EU  
Start Date: 12.12.11

	Mon 12.12.11	Tue 13.12.11	Wed 14.12.11	Thu 15.12.11	Fri 16.12.11	Sat 17.12.11	Sun 18.12.11
Total Physical Rooms	156	156	156	156	156	156	156
Out of Order	>> 4	4	4	4	4	4	0
Inventory Rooms	152	152	152	152	152	152	156
Overbooking	>> 160	160	160	160	160	160	160
Deducted Blk. Rooms Not P/U	0	4	1	0	0	0	0
Deducted Block Rooms P/U	31	34	28	18	15	10	10
Sell Limits	>> 312	312	312	312	312	312	316
Total Deducted Rooms	85	89	75	52	34	24	20
Non Deducted Blk. Rms Not P/U	5	6	56	5	5	5	27
Non Deducted Blk. Rooms P/U	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Non Deducted Rooms	5	6	56	5	5	5	27
Out of Service	>> 2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Available Physical Rooms	67	63	77	100	118	128	136
Maximum Availability	227	223	237	260	278	288	296
Minimum Availability	222	217	181	255	273	283	269
Min. Occupancy %	55.92	58.55	49.34	34.21	22.37	15.79	12.62
Max. Occupancy %	59.21	62.50	86.18	37.50	25.66	19.08	30.13
Total Rooms Reserved	85	85	74	52	34	24	20
Event	>>			City Fair	City Fair	City Fair	City Fair
Adults In-House	99	102	94	70	45	32	28
Children In-House	7	9	10	10	9	9	9
People In-House	106	111	104	80	54	41	37
Day Type	>>MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Arrival Rooms	76	47	30	1	3	0	2
Arrival Persons	96	58	43	1	3	0	2

Source: OPERA, 2014

Figure 30 - Opera Software (Accommodation Prices Page)

Monday, December 12, 2011; 1 Nights, 1 Rooms, 1 Adults, 0 , 0 , 0

Room Types	SKJ	STW	DKJ	DTW	DSU	JKI	JTW	CSU	ROYAL	
Include Overbooking	1	18	11	7	9	6	7	3		
Physical Inventory	1	18	11	7	9	6	7	3	0	
DAILY	EUR	<<H>>	<<H>>	155.00	155.00	185.00	170.00	170.00	200.00	215.00
RACK	EUR	120.00	130.00	140.00	140.00	200.00	160.00	200.00		
ADV/DYNAMIC	EUR	89.00	89.00	95.00	95.00	120.00	112.00	128.00		
DYNAMIC	EUR	<<H>>	<<H>>	112.00	112.00	160.00	128.00	160.00		
TIER	EUR	<<H>>	<<H>>	150.00	150.00	150.00	90.00	90.00		
COMP	EUR	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
HOUSE	EUR	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
WEBPROPOSAL	EUR	100.00	100.00	130.00	130.00	130.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00

Rate Shopper: 99.00

Average Rate  
  Total Rates  
  First Night  
 Closed  
  Best Available  
 Negotiated  
 Day Use

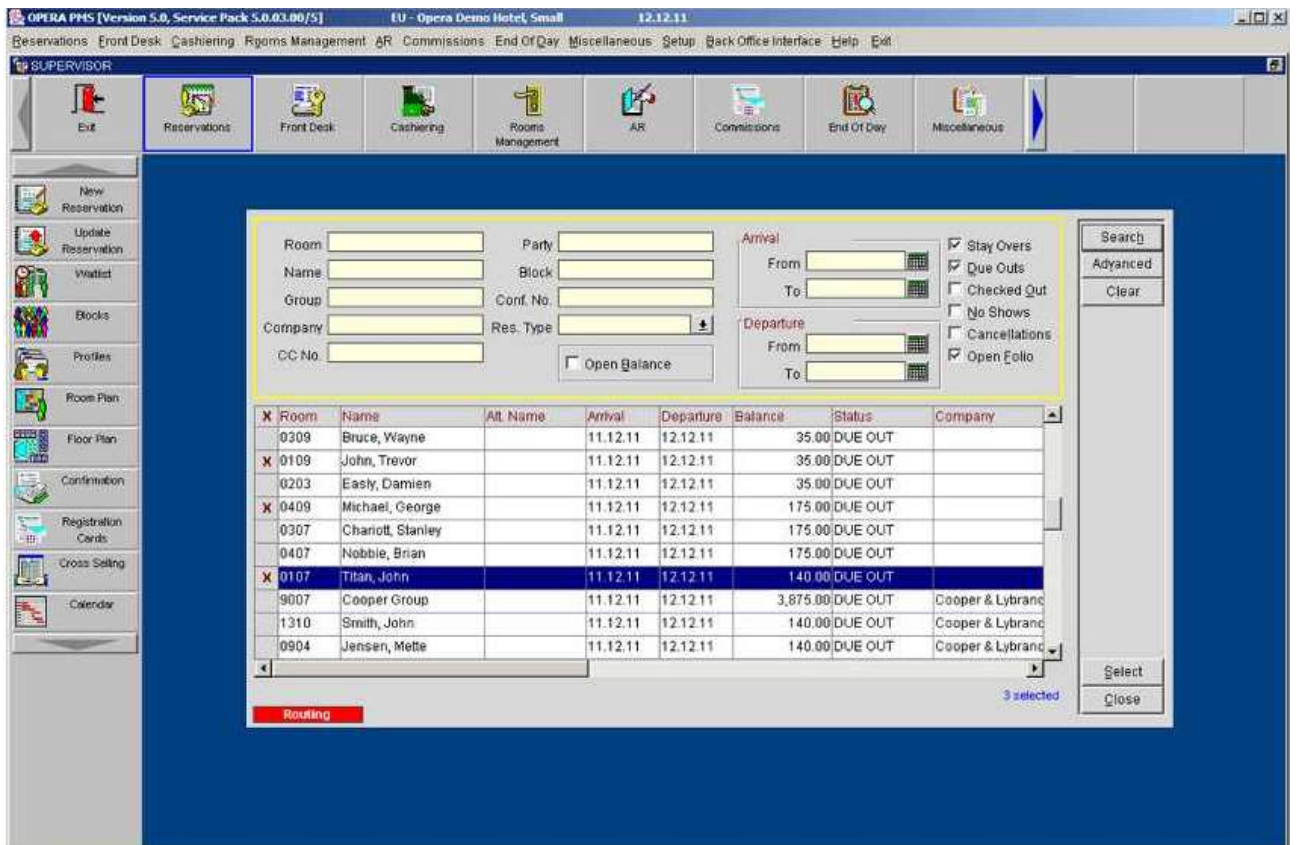
Info: Daily Rate, Standard King

Sell Msg: Upgrade special is only an additional 50 EUR and includes breakfast.

Events:

Source: OPERA, 2014

Figure 31 - Opera Software (Billing Page)



Source: OPERA, 2014

Figure 32 - Opera Software (Billing Page)

OPERA PMS [Version 5.0, Service Pack 5.0.03.00/5] EU - Opera Demo Hotel, Small 12.12.11

Reservations: Front Desk Cashing Rooms Management AR Commissions End Of Day Miscellaneous Setup Back Office Interface Help Exit

SUPERVISOR

Balance 404.65 Arrival 11.12.11 Company Rate Code GULLMERS EUR Prs 1  
 Status DUE OUT Depart 12.12.11 Group Sand Senior Group Rate 54.00 Rm. Type STW

(1) Mr John Titan				CA	133.65	(2) Mr John Titan				54.00
X	Date	Code	Description	Amount	X	Date	Code	Description	Amount	
	12.12	6521	Reflexology Massage	65.00		12.12	1800	Accommodation	54.00	1
	12.12	3305	Telephone (M)	3.65						2
	12.12	3000	Laundry	65.00						3
										4

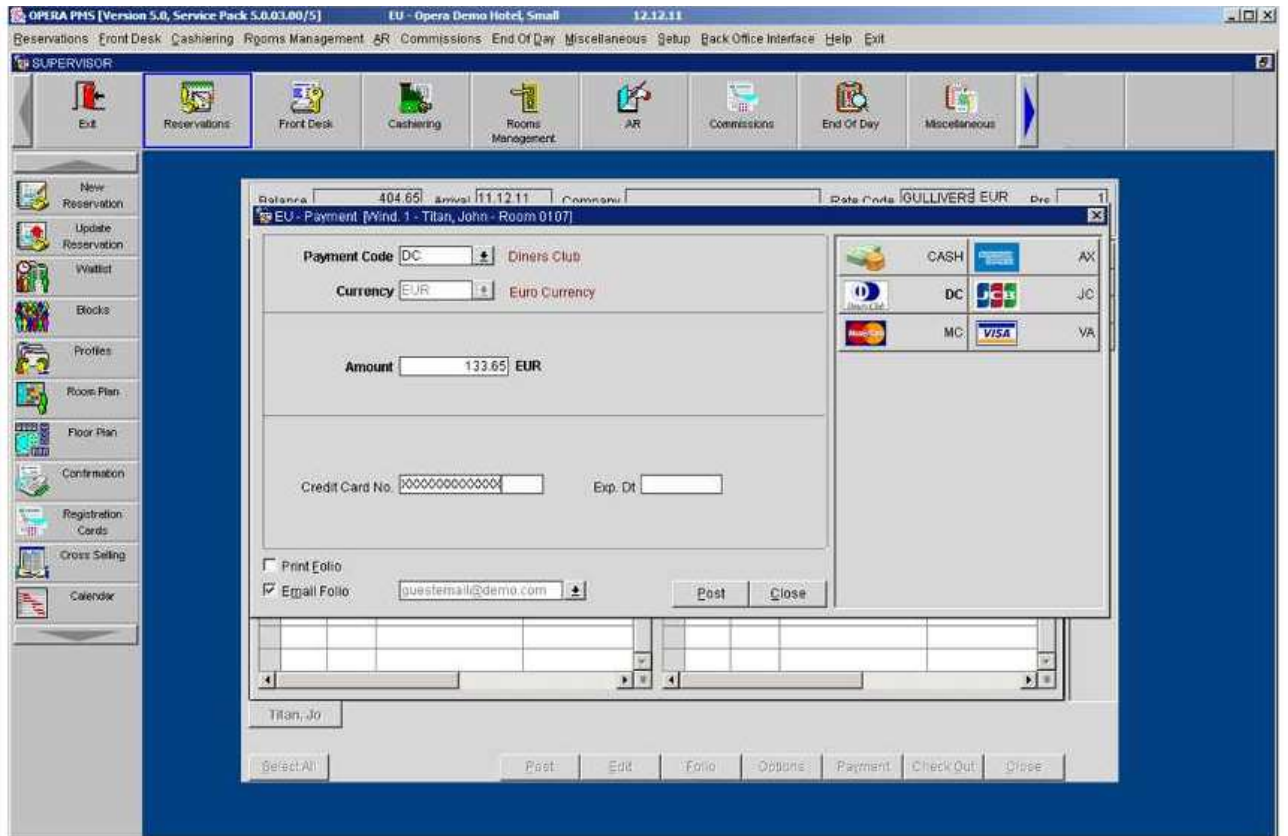
(3) Mr John Titan				29.00	(4) Mr John Titan				188.00
X	Date	Code	Description	Amount	X	Date	Code	Description	Amount
	12.12	2350	Private Bar (M)	5.00		12.12	2252	Room Service Dinner (M)	28.00
	12.12	2350	Private Bar (M)	4.00		12.12	2050	La Mamma Bfst (M)	20.00
	12.12	2350	Private Bar (M)	20.00		11.12	2150	Lobby Bar Lunch (M)	140.00

Titan, Jo John, Tr Michael, Ge

Select All Post Edit Follo Options Payment Check Out Close

Source: OPERA, 2014


Figure 33 - Opera Software (Billing/Payment Page)



Source: OPERA, 2014

Annex 8

Figure 34 - Daily Round Up (Front Page)




OUR DAILY RESORT INFORMATION FOR YOUR BREAK AT CRIEFF HYDRO

# isunday

Your Duty Hosts are: Daryl Thomas and Daniel Booth

**WEATHER**



**USEFUL CONTACTS**

Accommodation sales	3700
Boutique	1611
Brasserie	1666
BIG Country	1661
Entertainment team	1707
Golf clubhouse	1611
Golf tee bookings	1622
Hair health & beauty	1609
Horse riding	1616
Housekeeping	1703
Leisure Club	1624
Lost property	1703
Meikle restaurant	1666
Murraypark Hotel	2000
Outdoor activity centre	1622
Restaurant reservations	1666
Reception	8000
The Hub	1617
Resort Activity bookings	1707

**SPECIAL MENTION**

Happy Birthday Gran!

From Anna, Abby, Sophie, Eve and Ava! X

## Refuel

Sunday Carvery lunch today:

Served from 12.30 - 14.30 in the Meikle restaurant - £15.95

BOOK NOW

## Relax

Unwind in the Twilight Spa, our adults only spa pool with steam room, sauna and spa bath £7.00pp (5.30pm onwards).

BOOK NOW

## Explore

Fun for the whole family today at **Action Glen** including: Archery 6+ and Air rifles 8+ (£26.00pp or 4 for the price of 3).

booking essential on Ext. 1622

## Refresh

Loose leaf teas, not bags. Daintily cut sandwiches, whisky, cream eclairs, mini macaroons, and bite size scones.

**Afternoon Tea in the Winter Garden from 14.00-17.00** is all about the details.

From £9.50 pp

**Local Church Services**

Scottish Episcopal Church: 08.00, St.Fillans Catholic Church: 09.30, Crieff Parish Church: 10.50, St.Fillans Catholic Church: 11.00, Scottish Episcopal Church: 11.15, Baptist Church 10.30 and 18.30

Our Trampoline is in the Squash Courts - how high can you bounce? Under 16s, parental supervision required. No booking necessary.



Have your finger on the pulse - follow us on our Facebook page to enjoy great competitions, special deals and up-to-date news.

**Local attraction**


**The Famous Grouse Tours.** A BAFTA award winning interactive tour and a wee nip for the grown-ups, (30 minute walk from the hotel). Ask at reception for details.

**wifi**

Connect and surf. Free wifi available to all our guests.

 FOLLOW US ON
  AND AT

[crieffhydro.com](http://crieffhydro.com)



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Figure 35 - Daily Round Up (Back Page/continuation)



WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	WHO	DETAILS
Parent and Toddler Play	09.30-17.00	Theatre	Families	Come along and play with our selection of books and toys.
Puppet Craft	10.30- 11.00	Theatre	Age 3+	Come along and create your own puppet character to take home. (£2.50)
Sand Art	11.30-12.30	Theatre	Age 3+	Come along and design your own picture with our colourful sand. (£3.50)
Soft Play Fun	11.00 -13.00	Big Country	Under 12s	Our three storey indoor soft play includes a ball pool and a slide!
Photo Frame Craft	14.00- 15.00	Theatre	Age 3+	Come along and design your own photo Frame to treasure your holiday memories. (£2.00)
Splash Time	14.30-16.00	Lagoon Pool	All	Splish, Splash and Slide.
Face Painting	15.00- 15.30	Theatre	Age 3+	What would you like to be today? (£2.50)
Soft Play Fun	15.00-18.00	Big Country	Under 12s	Our three storey indoor soft play includes a ball pool and a slide!
Children's High Tea	16.30-18.00	Brasserie	Under 12s	Feed the children from our freshly cooked buffet.
Ernie Thomson Disco	20.00-23.00	Ballroom	All	Dance the night away to music with Ernie Thomson. Request your favorite songs.

• All activities are under parental supervision unless otherwise stated.

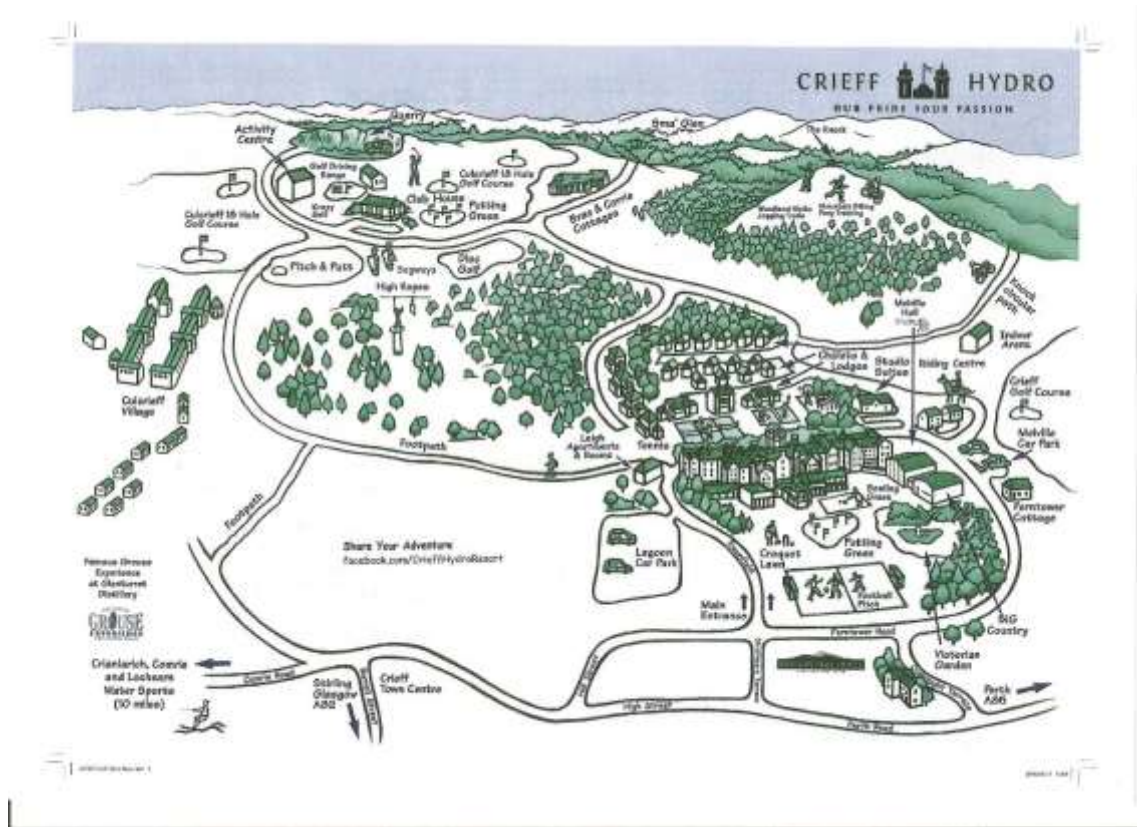
Cinema Times
10.00- <b>The Incredibles (U)</b> : A family of undercover superheroes, while trying to live the quiet suburban life, are forced into action to save the world.
13.00- <b>The Princess and the Frog (U)</b> : A fairy tale set in Jazz Age-era New Orleans and centered on a young woman named Tiana and her fateful kiss with a frog prince who desperately wants to be human again.
19.30- <b>The Bling Ring (15)</b> : Inspired by actual events, a group of fame-obsessed teenagers use the internet to track celebrities' whereabouts in order to rob their homes.



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Annex 9

Figure 36 - Resort Map (Front Page/Outdoor Map)

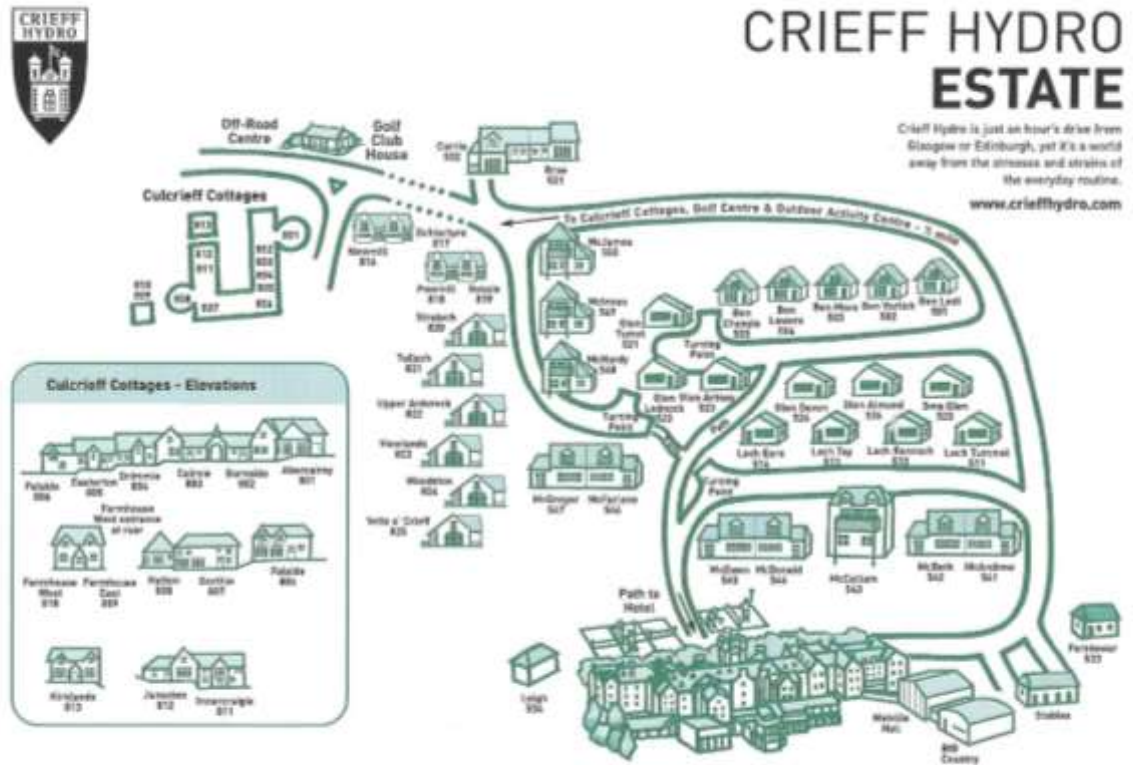


Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel



Annex 10

Figure 38 - Self-Catering Map



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel



## Annex 12

### Figure 40 - Big Country Information Sheet



## Welcome to Big Country...

Big Country is a 700m<sup>2</sup> registered child care facility that offers a safe environment for you to leave your children in the capable hands of our experienced team. We will help your children to experience new things, build new friendships and have an exciting and enjoyable holiday, whilst ensuring the grown-ups have an enjoyable relaxing stay too! Inside Big Country the children will come across our adventure castle, three storey soft play area and child friendly multi media centre, to name but a few of the activities they will get up to!

#### SESSION TIMES

Children aged between 2 and 12 staying at Crieff Hydro Hotel or in our lodges can take advantage of six hours of complimentary daily childcare by booking into any two of the following sessions:

Session 1: 9.30am – 12.30pm      Session 2: 1.30pm – 4.30pm      Session 3: 6.30pm – 9.30pm

If a session time is full we employ a waiting list, therefore your booking will only be held for the first 30 minutes of each session unless you let us know otherwise.

#### CHILDCARE CHARGES (For 2 - 12 year olds)

Two daily sessions are included in the package price for Crieff Hydro guests, however if the children are enjoying Big Country so much you can book in for the third session at an additional supplement of £15.00 per child.

Murraypark Guests - £15.00 (Monday – Thursday) £18.00 (Friday – Sunday) per session.  
Day Guests - £18.00 (Monday – Thursday) £21.00 (Friday – Sunday).  
Leisure Members - £3.50 per hour.



#### BIG COUNTRY TOURS

Available daily between 9.00am – 9.15am, 1.00pm – 1.15pm and 5.00 – 5.30pm.

#### CRECHE (suitable for 0 – 2 year olds)

Children under 2 are welcome in our supervised crèche between 9.30am – 11.00am, 11.00am – 12.30pm, 1.30pm – 3.00pm and 3.00pm – 4.30pm daily. We are happy to change nappies, give bottles or help get you child off to sleep but please remember to bring the appropriate equipment. Each session is charged at £15.00.



#### SOFT PLAY AREA

Our three storey soft play zone with ball pool and slide is open to hotel guests from 3.00 – 6.00pm daily. Parental supervision is required.

#### CHILD MINDING SERVICES

We can also arrange for a child minder to come to your room. For further details, please speak with our Reception team who will be happy to give further information and prices.

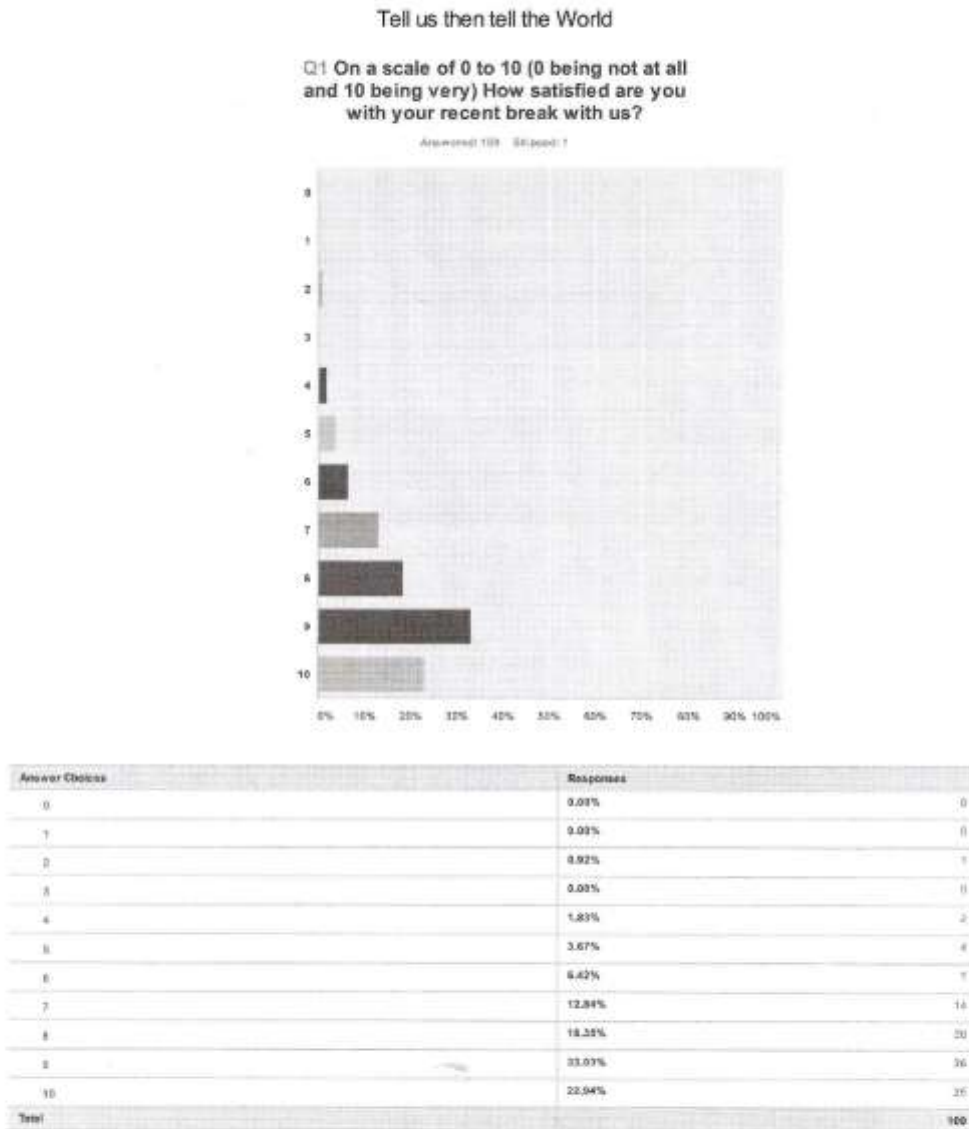
PLEASE NOTE: PARENTS ARE REQUESTED TO REMAIN ON THE COMPLEX IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

For further information and to book your sessions please contact BIG Country on 01764 651663 (ext 1663 from your room) or [big.country@crieffhydro.com](mailto:big.country@crieffhydro.com)

Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Annex 13

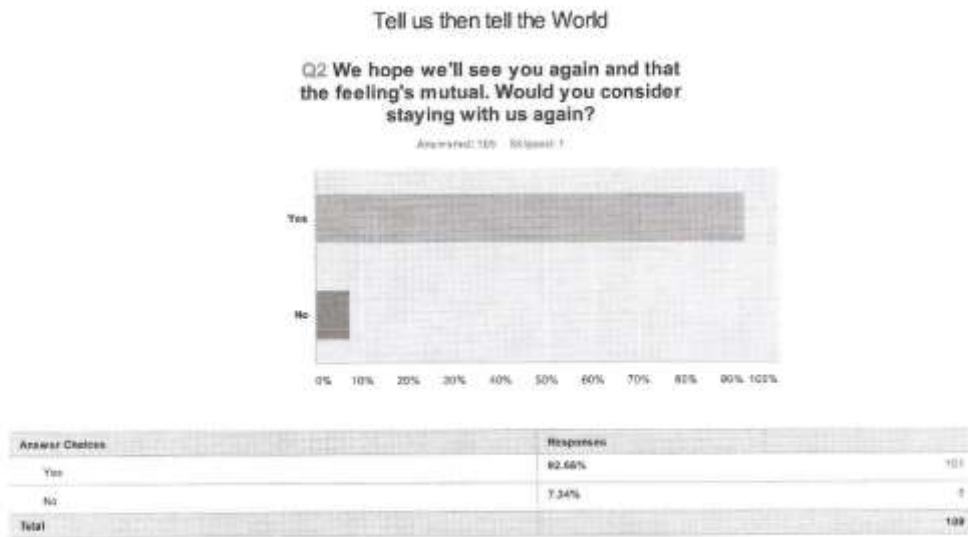
Figure 41 – Guests’ Survey



1 / 33

Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

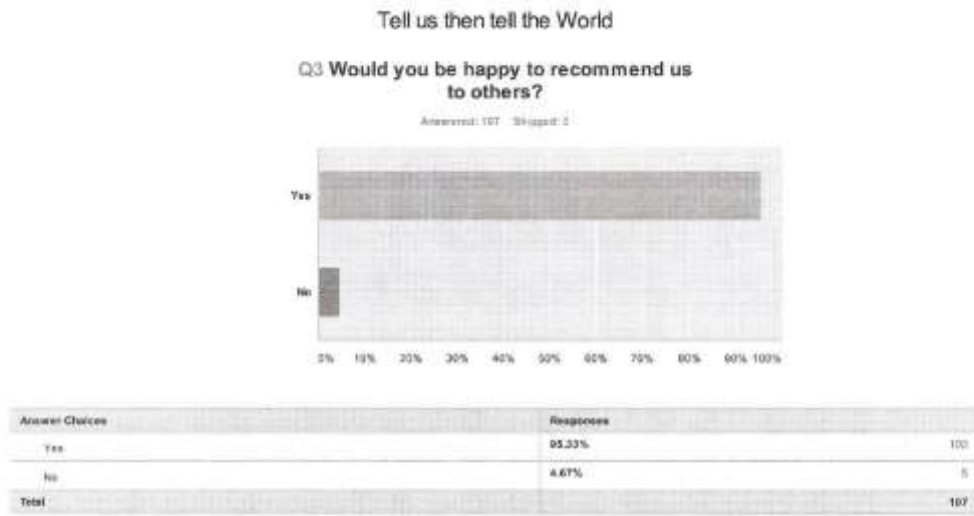
**Figure 42 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)**



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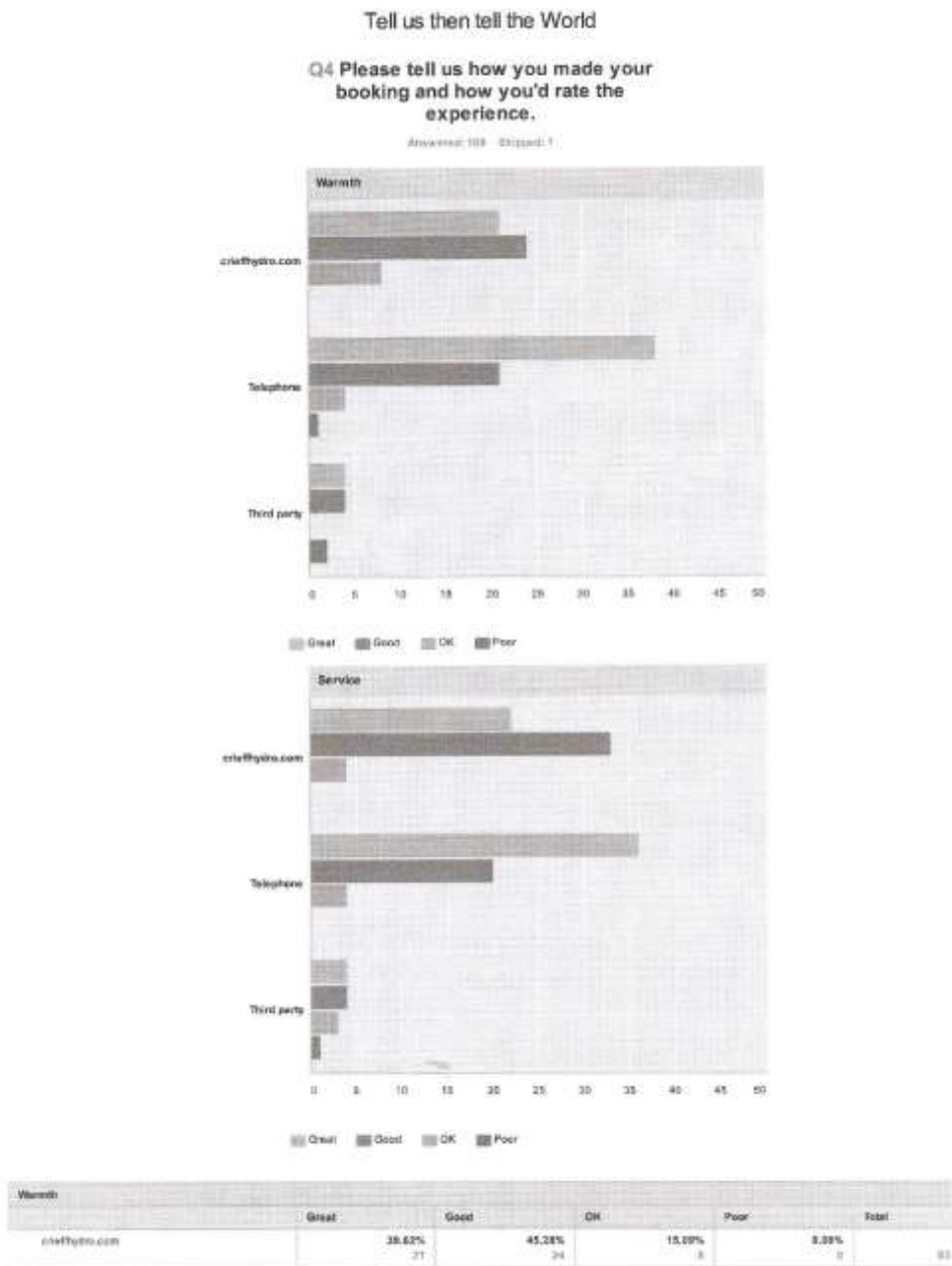
Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Figure 43 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Figure 44 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



4 / 33

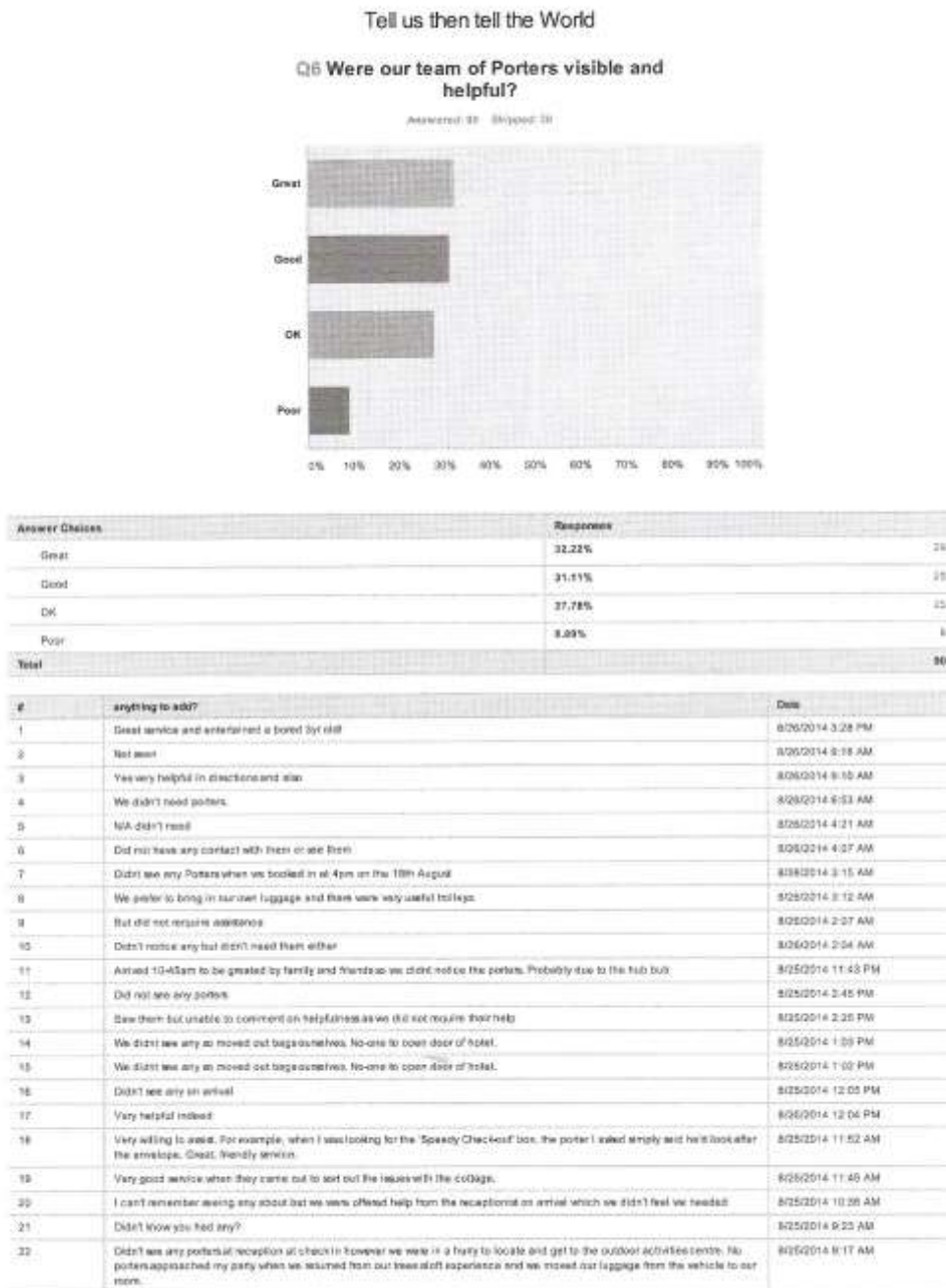
Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Figure 45 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

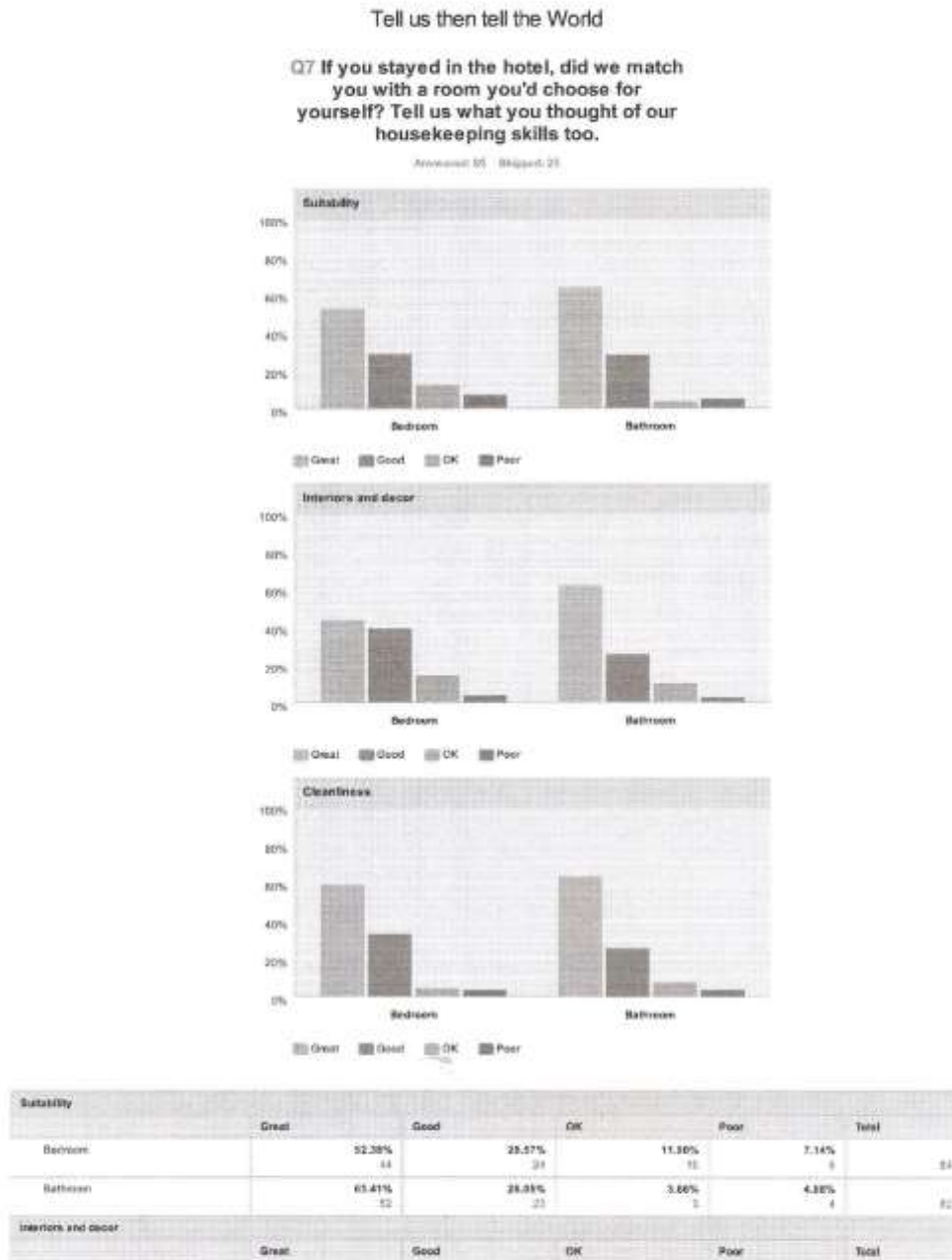
Figure 46 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



8 / 33

Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

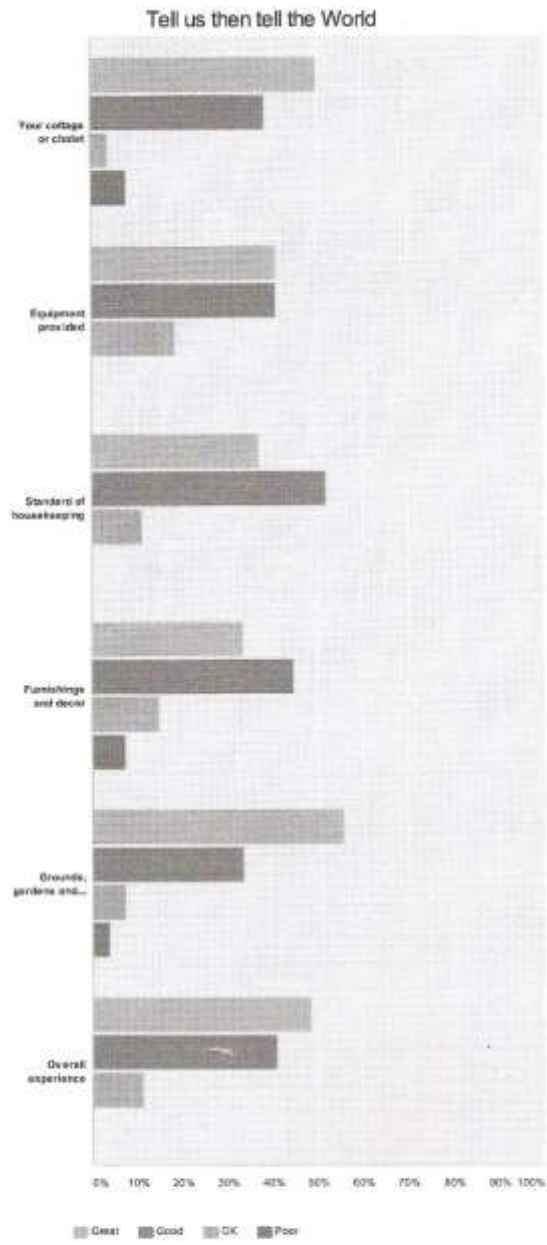
Figure 47 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



10/33

Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

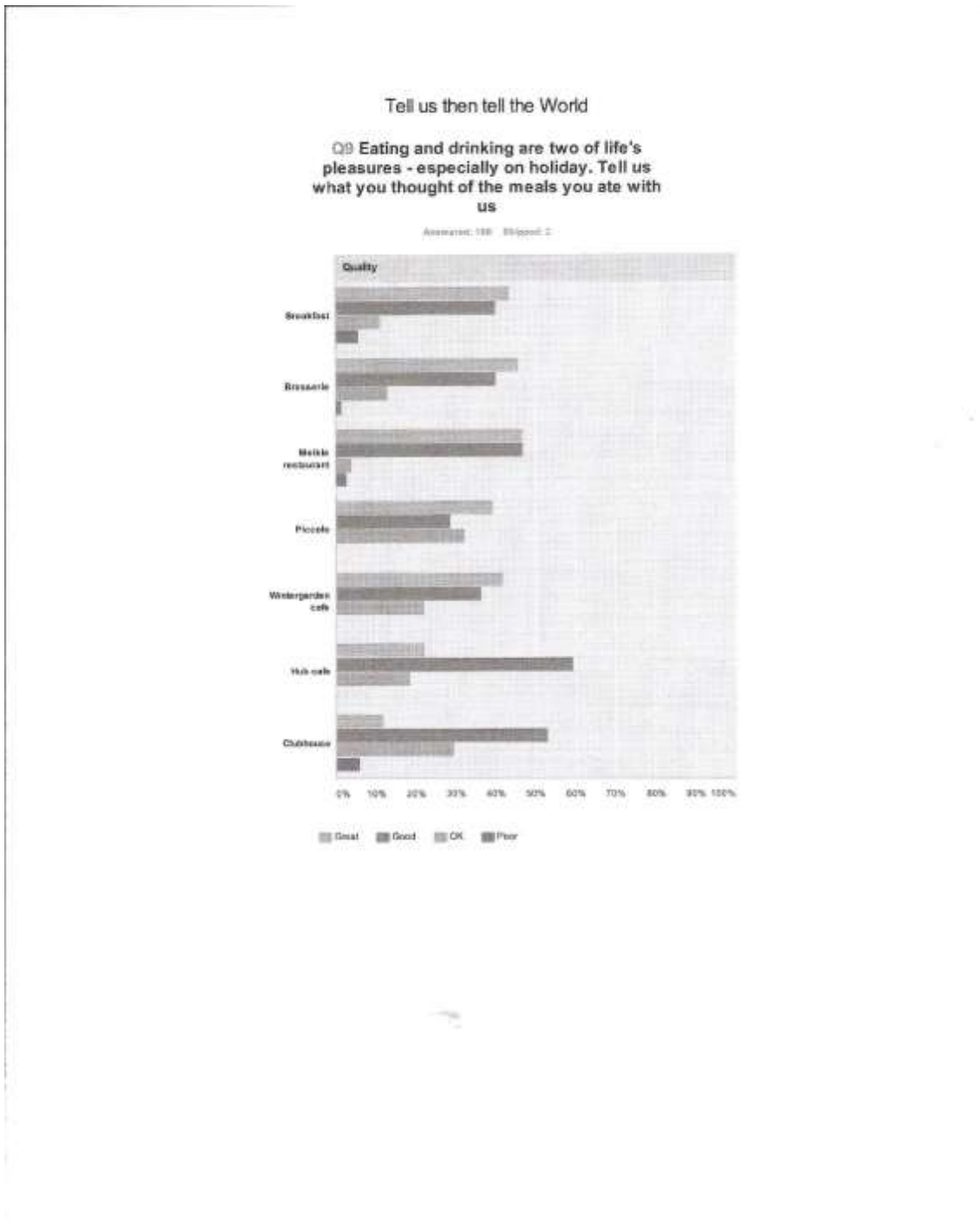
Figure 48 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



14 / 33

Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

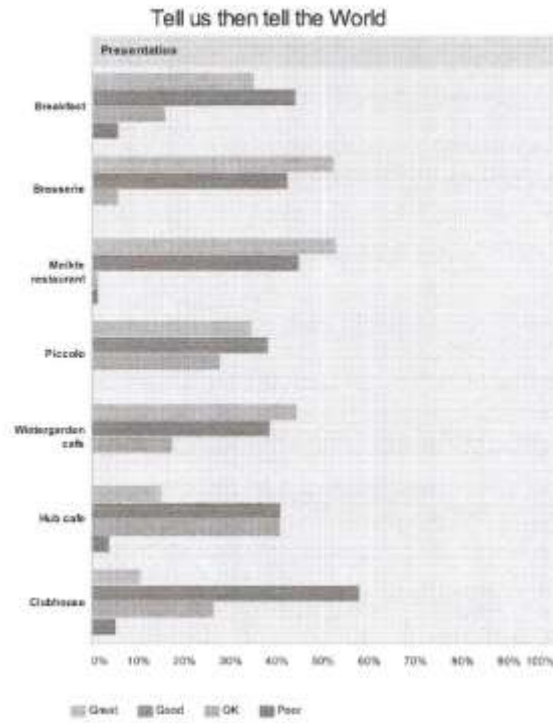
Figure 49 – Guests' Survey (Continuation)



16 / 33

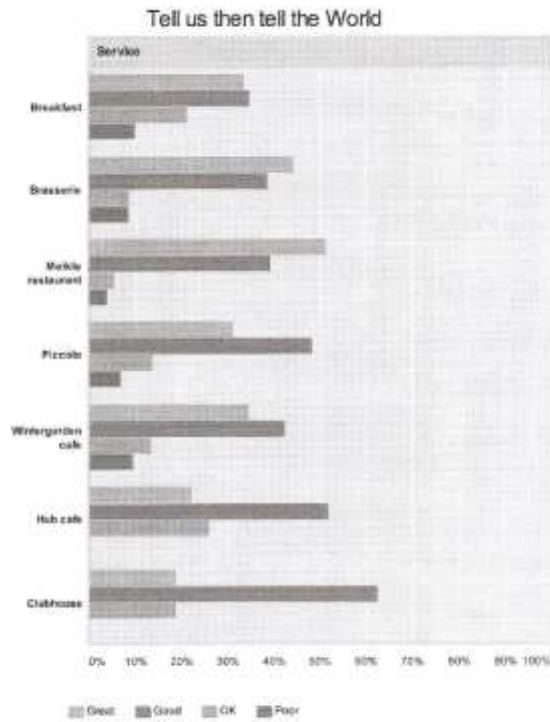
Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Figure 50 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

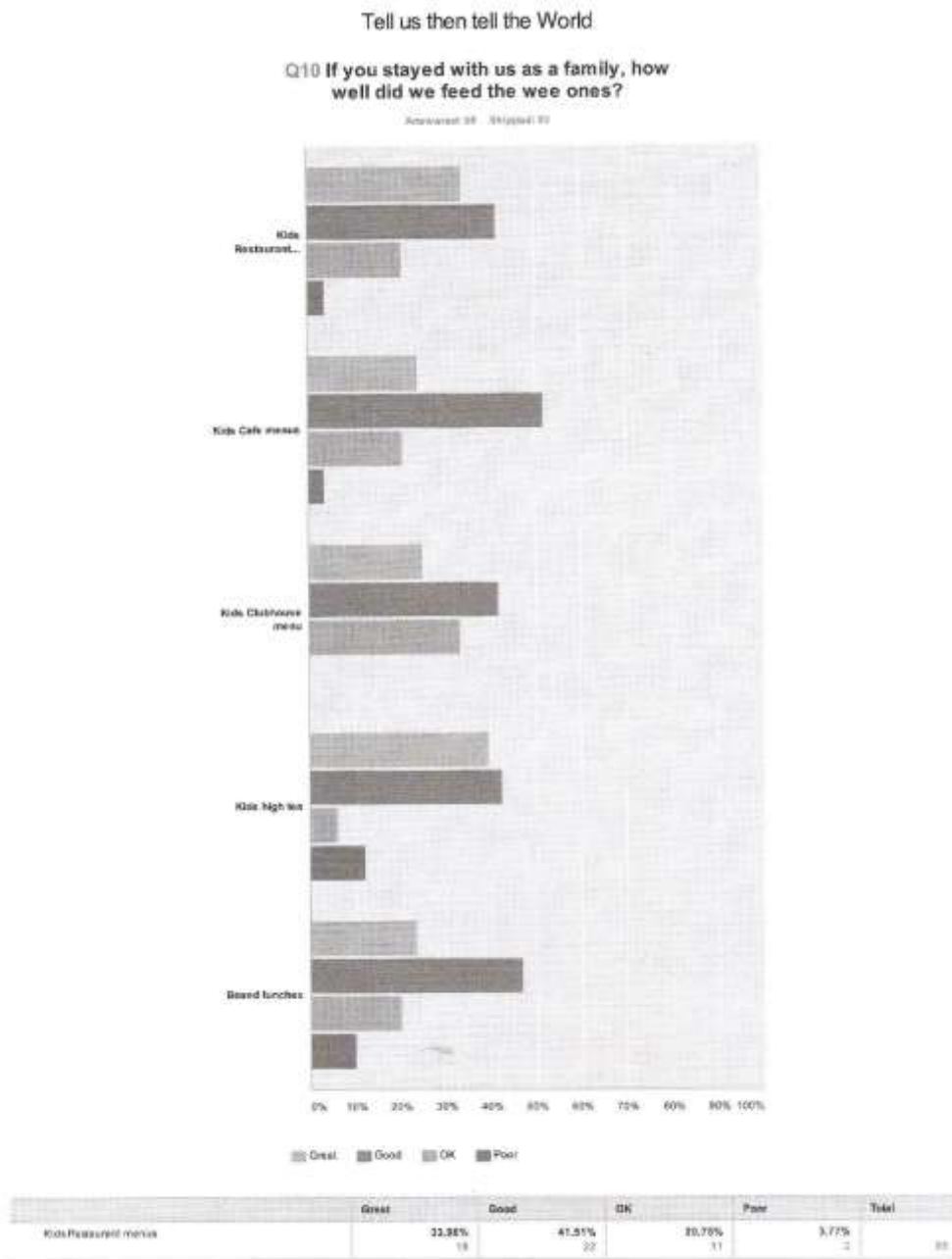
Figure 51 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



Quality	Great	Good	OK	Poor	Total
Breakfast	42.33% 33	49.99% 38	11.11% 10	5.96% 5	86
Brasserie	48.71% 22	48.09% 38	12.86% 9	1.43% 1	70
Mokka restaurant	46.67% 31	46.67% 35	4.09% 3	2.87% 2	79
Pizzeria	29.29% 11	39.37% 30	32.14% 24	0.86% 0	75
Wintergarten cafe	41.82% 33	36.36% 28	21.82% 17	0.86% 0	88
Hub cafe	22.22% 9	59.26% 46	18.52% 14	0.89% 0	77
Clubhouse	11.76% 2	52.94% 41	29.41% 23	5.88% 4	70
Presentation	Great	Good	OK	Poor	Total
Breakfast	34.83% 27	43.82% 34	15.73% 12	6.82% 5	88
Brasserie	52.11% 37	42.25% 30	5.63% 4	0.88% 0	71
Mokka restaurant	52.78% 39	44.59% 33	1.35% 1	1.35% 1	74
Pizzeria	34.48% 10	37.93% 28	27.89% 21	0.88% 0	79

Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

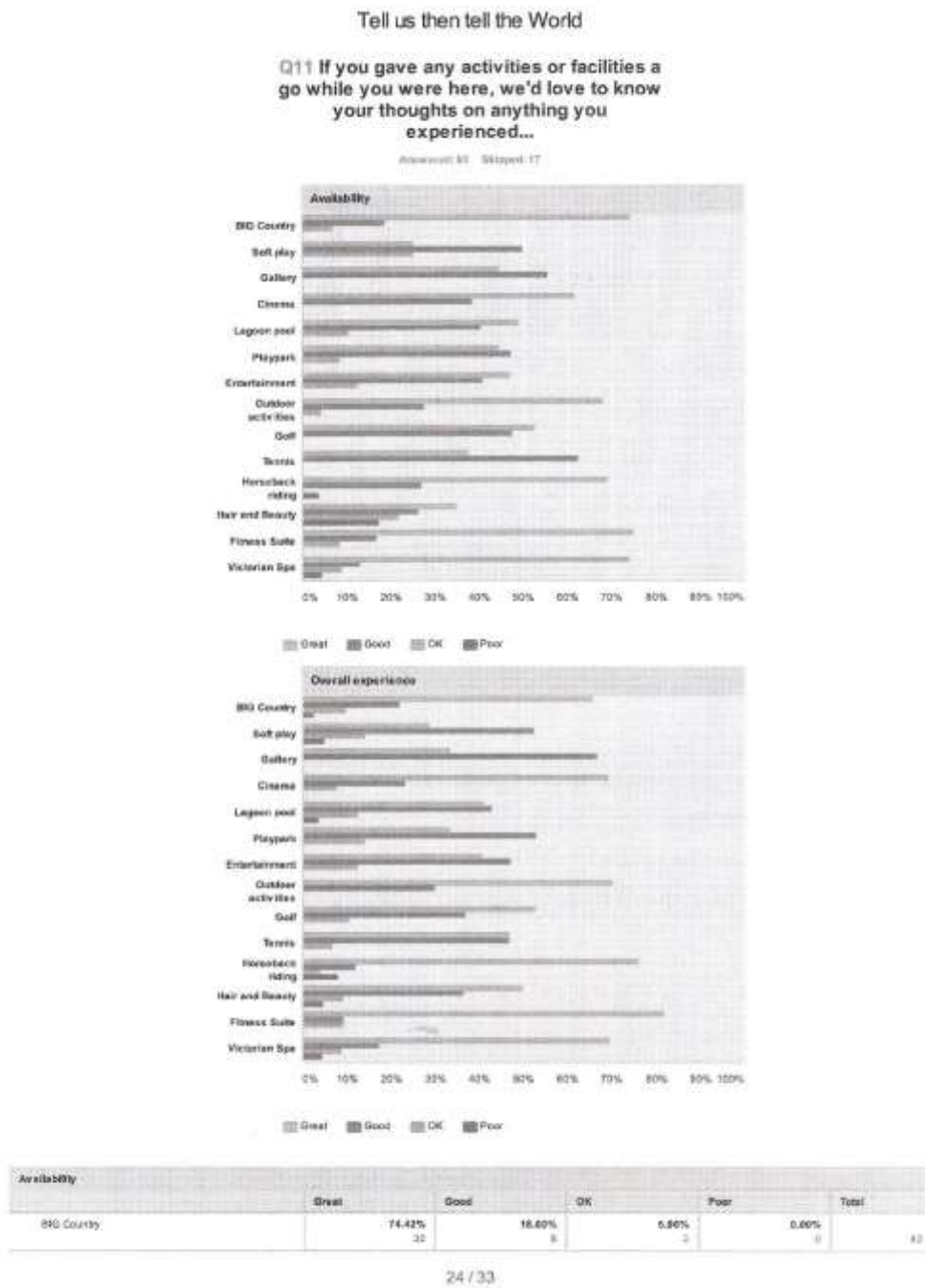
Figure 52 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



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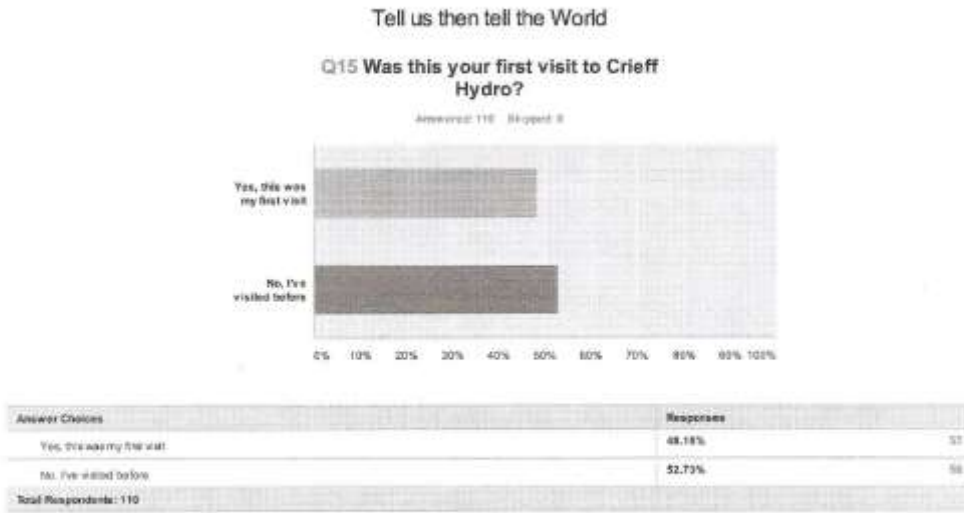
Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Figure 53 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Figure 54 – Guests’ Survey (Continuation)



Source: Crieff Hydro Hotel

Annex 14

Figure 55 – Categorical analysis

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11	E12	E13	E14	E15	E16	E17	E18	E19	E20	E21	E22	TOTAL	%	
Different Booking Types	Reservation in person	2	4	1				1	1	1	1	1	1		2	2	1			1				19	34,55%	
	Reservation online	1	1	2		2		1	1	1	2	1	1		1					1		2	1		18	32,73%
	Reservation by phone	1	2			2	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		1							1		14	25,45%
	Reservation by third parties								1	1							1				1				4	7,27%
																							TOTAL	55	100,00%	

Source: the author

Figure 56 - Categorical analysis

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11	E12	E13	E14	E15	E16	E17	E18	E19	E20	E21	E22	E23	E24	E25	E26	E27	E28	E29	E30	E31	E32	E33	E34	E35	E36	E37	E38	E39	E40	E41	E42	E43	E44	E45	TOTAL	%
Helpful and Friendliness	Helpful staff	4	3	4	3	1	3	3	4	4	1	2	2	3	1	4	3	4	1	2		2	3	1		2	4	3						1	1		1	1		1				1	73	42,69%		
	Friendly staff	3	3	2	2	1	3	1	2	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	1		2	1		1	1		1			1		1						1			1	53	30,99%	
Adaptation and efficiency	Adaptation of guests' needs		1			1	1																																							3	1,75%	
	Informative Staff	1			1	1	1	1		1	2				1					1											1															12	7,02%	
	Quick and Easy solving problems		2	3		1		1	1	2	3	1	4		1					2	1	2		1			1	1	1										2				1				30	17,54%
																							TOTAL	171	100,00%																							

Source: the author

**Figure 57 - Categorial analysis**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11	E12	E13	E14	E15	E16	E17	E18	E19	E20	E21	E22	E23	E24	E25	E26	E27	E28	E29	E30	E31	E32	E33	E34	E35	E36	E37	E38	E39	E40	E41	E42	E43	E44	E45	TOTAL	%			
Quality of cleaning service	Great		1	1			1		1			1			2						1	1			1		1					1																12	9,09%		
	Bad	2	3		1		1			2												1											1										1		1					14	10,61%
Quality of the room facilities	Great	2	2	1	1	3	1	3	1	3	2	4	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	4	2		4		1		1		2	1	1				1				1				1				63	47,73%
	Bad	3	1	2	2	1	1		3		2	2	1	2			1	2	1						1											1	1														30
Deficient acoustic	Bad acoustics of the interiors	2	1	1				1							1		1		1				1				1		1			1																	13	9,85%	
																																													TOTAL	132	100,00%				

Source: the author

**Figure 58 - Categorial analysis**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11	E12	E13	E14	E15	E16	E17	E18	E19	E20	E21	E22	E23	E24	E25	E26	E27	E28	E29	E30	E31	E32	TOTAL	%				
Exterior Facilities	Bad Paths and Roads	1	1	2	1						1					1	1																			8	53,33%		
	Great Paths and Roads		1					1						1			1		1											1				1			7	46,67%	
																																					TOTAL	15	100,00%

Source: the author

**Figure 59 - Categorial analysis**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11	E12	E13	E14	E15	E16	E17	E18	E19	E20	E21	E22	E23	E24	E25	E26	E27	E28	E29	E30	E31	E32	E33	E34	E35	E36	E37	E38	E39	E40	E41	TOTAL	%
Quality of the facilities	Great	4	2	4	4	5	3	5	3	4	2	3	2	3	4	2	4	2	4	6	4	3	1	1	5	3	3	4	2	5	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	3	2	3	4	2	121	65,05%
	Bad	2	3	2	1	1	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	31
Menus	Limited Menus	3	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	24	12,90%
Prices	Overpriced	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	5,38%
		<b>TOTAL</b>																																								186	100,00%	

Source: the author

**Figure 60 - Categorial analysis**

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11	E12	E13	E14	E15	E16	E17	E18	E19	E20	E21	E22	E23	E24	E25	E26	E27	E28	E29	E30	E31	E32	E33	E34	E35	TOTAL	%						
Outdoors and Indoors facilities	Bad facilities	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	16	14,68%		
	Very busy facilities	1	1	1	3	3	3	2	3	1	2	3	5	3	3	4	4	2	4	2	2	1	2	3	1	3	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20	18,35%
	Great facilities	1	1	3	3	3	2	3	1	2	3	5	3	3	4	4	2	4	2	2	1	2	3	1	3	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	73	66,97%
		<b>TOTAL</b>																																								109	100,00%	

Source: the author

Annex 15



Figure 61 - Appraisal (PDR)

We're all going on a journey!  
 Your ticket to success!

**SMILE**  
 YOUR PERSONAL  
 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW  
 GOING FOR GROWTH

To maintain our competitive advantage and deliver our business objectives, we rely on having high performing individuals and teams who can achieve results, even in tough economical climates. We want a motivated and talented workforce to drive the business forward. The objectives and goals we achieve are just as important as the attitudes and behaviours displayed in achieving these.

The SMILE values are central to Crieff Hydro's "Going for Growth strategy" and our aspiration to be Scotland's leading leisure resort - "A great place to stay, a great place work and a great business to invest in".

John Jennett  
Managing Director

Your Name	SILVIA POETA
Your Department:	RECEPTION
Job Title:	RECEPTIONIST
Appraising Manager:	WENDY JOHNSTON
Personal Development Review (PDR) Date:	26 8 14

1

Source: Reception Manager Appraisal

Figure 62 - Appraisal (PDR/continuation)



It's important that you and your manager both do your bit to complete your PDR. Here's how it works:

1. Complete pages 3, 4 and 5 using the instruction below, this is your own assessment of yourself.

You'll need to think back throughout the last year and rate yourself honestly, on each of the standards, whether you either:

A (Always), B (Sometimes), C (Rarely) or D (Never) meet the standards.

Place an X in either box A, B, C or D to reflect what you think best describes your performance against each of the standards.

2. Next, complete sections 1 and 2 of the Action Points and Areas for Development Page and have a think about your objectives for the next 6 months.

Leave out sections 3 and 4 as you'll complete these with your manager at your personal development review (PDR).

3. Pass your form back to your manager a minimum of one week before the date of your PDR.

At this personal development review, your manager will discuss and agree your ratings with you and will mark each agreed rating box with a tick. This is also the opportunity to discuss your career aspirations and personal development planning.

Finally, here's a reminder of the ratings:

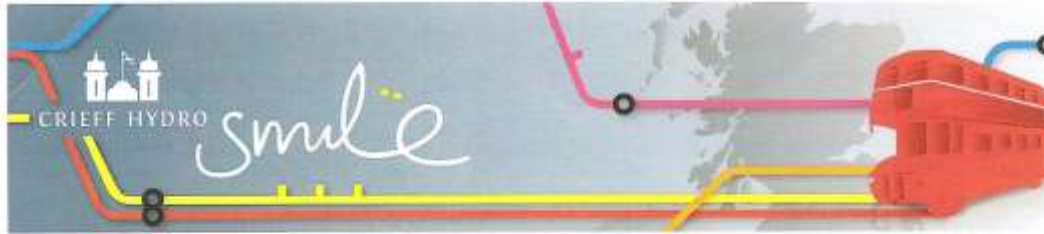
A – Always



B – Sometimes

C- Rarely

D – Never

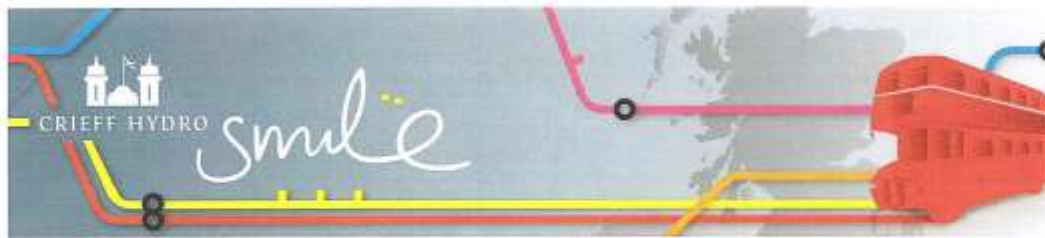
Figure 63 - Appraisal (PDR/continuation)



 <b>The SMILE standards</b> 	A	B	C	D
<b>SIMPLE</b>				
I meet my department's quality standards consistently	✓	X		
I complete all the tasks required of me in my set timescales	✓	X		
I've gone out of my way to share my knowledge to help others			X	
Employee's examples Ensuring all processes are easier and faster to the guests and making sure they have a pleasant and memorable stay.				
Manager's comments Silvia has gained many guest mentions during her time with us. 4 for July alone, she is currently training our new student & is confident & clear in her instruction.				
<b>MEMORABLE (CUSTOMERS CAN BE YOUR COLLEAGUES AS WELL AS GUESTS)</b>				
I'm passionate and confident about my work	✓	X		
I've shown a flexible approach to work to make sure customers are satisfied	✓	X		
I use a variety of techniques to make people feel special	✓	X		
Employee's examples I'm passionate about the hospitality industry and I enjoy the contact with different people. I always make sure I give each guest the attention/information needed making sure everyone feels acknowledged.				
Manager's comments Working through the reception rotation Silvia has shown a real passion for all areas. Main reception & Night Audit have worked well for Silvia giving her a rounded knowledge base.				
⚡ B correct at current time but expected to go to <sup>3</sup> A once training with new student complete.				

Source: Reception Manager Appraisal

Figure 64 - Appraisal (PDR/continuation)



<b>INDEPENDENT</b>				
I've met Crieff Hydro's attendance and timekeeping expectations	✓	X		
I've had positive feedback on my work performance	✓	X		
I have a good attitude to working on my own and as part of a team	✓	X		
<p>Employee's examples                      I always make sure to be on time for work and to <del>(keep)</del> respect the department/hotel rules during my placement. Hospitality is a team's work and reception team works well together making the job easier.</p>				
<p>Manager's comments                      Silvia is always on time &amp; dressed correctly ready for the day ahead. She is confident on the desk &amp; with guests &amp; staff working well with others but can be felt to work on her own completing all tasks given.</p>				
<b>LEAN</b>				
I've gone to my manager with solutions to problems I've identified	✓		X	
I've either saved money or increased sales at work	✓	X		
I look for more work if I'm able to do more	✓	X		
<p>Employee's examples                      I always promote our restaurants and that allows me to make more sales. When guests come with requests (e.g. room upgrades) I try to find a solution on my own and on the end ask for my shift leader/Manager approval.</p>				
<p>Manager's comments                      Silvia will resolve any issues on her own, only seeking advice at the end of her production. Silvia is top of the upselling board often but has a natural way to sell rather than 'pushy'. More experience with shift leader tasks will help in this area.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">4</p> <p>Working in other departments has helped with her overall knowledge.</p>				

Source: Reception Manager Appraisal

Figure 65 - Appraisal (PDR/continuation)



ENGAGING				
I've gone out of my way to make new people feel welcome	X			
I enjoy working under pressure	X			
I've wowed customers or colleagues with my great levels of service	X			
Employee's examples Always try my best to make guest and staff feel part of the hydro family. Working under pressure allows me to find solutions to help my job and also keeps me busy and motivated.				
Manager's comments A busy shift can be demanding, but Silvia deals well under pressure. Training Kate will help motivate Silvia and develop her knowledge & confidence.				

Source: Reception Manager Appraisal

Figure 66 - Appraisal (PDR/continuation)



**Action Points and Areas for Development**



1. Have you any experience, skills or knowledge you're not making good use of in your job? If so, what are they and how could they be used?

*Degree in several areas of the hotel + would like to explore different areas. Maybe through MDT. As long as able to continue with guest communication as enjoy this area.*

2. Where can you improve your performance? Anything we can do to help you with this?

*With our own inhouse training plan it would be beneficial for Silvia to attend relevant courses*

3. Agree and circle a box, discuss where you'd like your career to go next and how Crieff Hydro can help with this?



Source: Reception Manager Appraisal

Figure 67 - Appraisal (PDR/continuation)



4. Write down any thoughts on the box you circled :  
 Although no current supervisory role available at Reception Silvia would be more than ready to step up to the next level should a vacancy arise .

**Your development planning objectives**  
 Using your notes above, outline your development planning objectives and agree timescales to achieve them (these may include training, mentoring, job shadowing, projects, scholarships)

SMILE:	Your development planning objectives:	Agreed timescale:
Simple (Make people's lives really easy)	learning the role of receptionist so you are able to assist any guest on your own	End of Oct 13
Memorable (Make memories and surprise people)	Having the confidence to help a guest on arrival + making the stay better because of that	End of Nov 13
Independent (Letting your personality shine through)	Gaining guest mentions every month + being recognised as a valued member of the team	End of July 14
Lean (How to do things better)	Learning Night Audit + completing a rotation of nights, having the confidence to do on own	By End June 14
Engaging (with customers and colleagues)	Training new student + helping them gain confidence + knowledge to deal with queries	By End Aug 14

Employee's overall comments:

- Upgrading elder family members here for a special occasion<sup>7</sup>
- making dinner arrangements for big parties
- recognising special events on arrival .

Source: Reception Manager Appraisal

Figure 68 - Appraisal (PDR/continuation)



I'm happy with my role and with what was discussed in the meeting.  
I'm looking forward to learn more to have the chance to progress to a shift leader role as soon as the opportunity arrives.

**Manager's overall comments:**  
I am very happy with Silvia's progress through the year. She has taken each new challenge on and enjoyed the different aspects. Gaining confidence with each new section of the placement I am happy she has decided to stay on + help others learn the role.

Employee's signature: *Silvia*  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Manager's signature: *[Signature]*  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_