

**What business Travelers Require in Hotel Room
while Traveling on Business Trip**

By

Witchanee Vuthipongse

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**The Graduate College
University of Wisconsin-Stout
Menomonie, WI 54751**

ABSTRACT

	Vuthipongse	Witchanee	
(Writer)	(Last Name)	(First)	(Initial)

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Imagine today's business travelers jetting around the globe, using laptop on the flights, rushing into the hotel business center to send a fax or an e-mail or to run a computer program, being on the telephone while laying on the bathtub, using a computer in the hotel room, etc. Those would be the imagine when people think about this group of traveler.

In assessing the current needs and wants of the business travelers, the main purpose of this study was to determine the in-room service amenities that business travelers need at a hotel when they travel on business.

The specific objectives of the study were: 1.) To model current use pattern of amenities in hotel room; 2.) To assess the relative important of the in-room amenities to business travelers; 3.) To determine the future trend of service amenities that business travelers want in their hotel room.

Questionnaires were used as the primary data collection instrument for this study. The questionnaires were developed based on previous surveys of Weaver and Oh (1993) and Sammons, Moreo, Benson, and DeMicco (1999). The subjects were international business travelers who stayed over at least one night in a hotel in Bangkok. Respondents of this study were randomly selected at Bangkok International Airport between January 11 to January 20, 2001. The total number of respondents was 170.

The finding of this study would assist hotel managers in adding or eliminating service amenities in the hotel guestroom to serve the need of business travel.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Thailand, a nation of more than 60 million people, is in the middle of mainland Southeast Asia. It is the center for international businesses, official offices, famous schools, high-rise office buildings, shopping malls, and luxury hotels. During the 1860s, Thailand opened the country officially to trade with the western countries. This brought more business travelers and pleasure travelers to Thailand. Tourism continues to be Thailand's top foreign exchange earner and an important source of interregional and international revenue, faithfully supported by both government and private business (Travel Industry World Yearbook, 1999). In 1998, the Thai Tourism Industry made 242,177 million Baht and 253,018 million Baht in the following year.

The growth of business and industry along with a rapid increase of tourism has resulted in rapid expansion of hotels in Thailand. However, with continuing oversupplies of hotels and economic crisis in 1997, the hotel business in Thailand has experienced some dramatic changes. The challenge of operating hotels profitably has become important. While aiming to make a profit, the reputation of the hotel depends upon the quality or standard of the services and the facilities. In order to make more profit, hotels are expected to both understand and satisfy all guests' needs, wants, and problems.

“An insightful understanding of the marketplace is crucial for hoteliers to make the correct decisions for both comprehensive marketing programs and designing product and service offerings...Indeed, the best use of resources...demands that hotel managers have a keen understanding of the segments they are selling” (Sammons, Moreo, Benson

and DeMicco, 1999, p.66). Offering products and services for specific markets will attract and maintain a customer base.

One important market in the hospitality industry is the business traveler. At present, hotels have recognized the business travelers' market as the fastest growing market in this industry (Sammons et al., 1999). In the United States, the volume of business travelers increased thirty-three percent from 1985 to 1995 (Travel Market Report, 1995). Moreover, the World Tourism Organization's forecasted the world business travel market would grow from 51.5 million bookings in 1992 to 63.5 million bookings in 1997, a growth rate of 4% compared with a 6% growth rate for the leisure market (O'Brien, 1993).

The business or pleasure traveler markets are often presented as a homogeneous group of customers, but it is increasingly recognized that these markets are a heterogeneous in character (Callan, 1995). This paper attempts to show that business travelers are a significant market for hotels to attract. Hoteliers see business travelers as either some one who requires special treatment, or they view them as being little different from a leisure traveler in terms of service need.

Need for the Study

Improving hotel profitability can be done in several ways such as gaining market share, earning customer loyalty, improving a brand's reputation, selling more to current markets, increasing margin, and other techniques (Reid, 1989). The management team, however, needs to understand all guests' needs, wants and problems. It is important for the hotel industry to understand what kinds of service amenities are significant to the

hotel guests. Therefore, doing research in this area will contribute to knowledge and satisfaction for the need of the guests. This information is important because service amenities are useless if the guests do not need them.

Of all the different types of travelers, business travelers are an important market segment since most of them stay in hotels and most spend more than pleasure travelers (Seo, 1997). Even though there have been some studies related to business travelers conducted on the hotel services for a long time, there were few studies conducted in Bangkok, Thailand. Moreover, most of these studies had been done before the economic crisis in July 1997. Therefore, the situation in Bangkok has changed. There were more business travelers in Bangkok regarding joint-venture companies and privatization in state enterprises. However, business traveler research has received little consideration. Therefore, the hotel business in Thailand needs information about the characteristics of the business travelers' needs and wants. Therefore, the subject in this study would be the business traveler.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this research is to determine hotel service amenities that business travelers need from the hotels. This study will, through a review of the relevant literature, identify service amenities which are considered important to business travelers. It will be conducted by survey questionnaires. The results of this study should be helpful to management when providing services to hotel guests.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Model the current use pattern of hotel room amenities by business travelers
2. Assess the relative importance of the in-room amenities to business travelers.
3. Determine the future trend of service amenities that business travelers want in their hotel room.

Definition of Terms

Traveler

A visitor who visits a place away from his/her own home, for business or leisure purposes, stays away from home more than twenty-four hours, and intends to return home again (Seo, 1997).

Business Traveler

A business traveler in this study means an individual who travels for business purposes such as sale, technical consultation, scientific expeditions, conventions, company travel and education travel.

Leisure Traveler (Tourist)

An individual who travels for pure pleasures; includes a vacation traveler.

Amenities

Amenities are the extra items, facilities, and services made available to guests that are not included in the basic accommodations of a room and bed (Rushmore, 1989; Griffin, Shea, and Weaver, 1996, p.6)

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter was to examine and integrate concepts and research findings related to business travelers and in-room amenities for business travelers. The topics from the literature included a definition of business travelers, the characteristics of business travelers, today's business travelers' needs, amenities in hotel rooms, hotel selections, business travelers in Bangkok, the number of business travelers in Bangkok, and future trends of business travel. The intent was to document support for the choice of the theoretical framework used in the present study and to examine what has been found in the recent past.

Definition of Business Travelers

Long before the concept of traveling for pleasure became widespread people travelled for business (Harssel, 1998). Today, the number of travelers who travel for job-related reasons is increasing. Some travel to meet prospective clients, while others travel to attend meetings or conventions. This group of travelers has been called “the business traveler”.

The business traveler may be defined as " an overseas or domestic visitor who stays overnight away from home for the purpose of conducting business" (Beioley 1991, p. b7). Seo (1997) defined a business traveler as an individual who travels for business purposes. The definition included general business trips, incentive groups, and people attending exhibitions and conferences.

Moreover, Medlik (1993) defined business traveler as employees who make trips and visit others in the course of their work, including attending meetings, conferences and exhibitions. Metelka (1990) said business travelers involved a special market requiring some special services (typist, meeting rooms) and expectations that differ from travelers of the purely-for-pleasure.

The Characteristics of Business Travelers

The primary characteristic of business travelers was that they stayed fewer nights than pleasure travelers (Seo, 1997). However, they stayed more frequently in the same hotel. Business travelers were known in the United States as “road warriors”. They had particular preferences, such as convenient locations, comfortable rooms and previous experience when selecting hotels (Abbey, 1989; Sammoms et al., 1999). There were differences between business and pleasure travelers in terms of their usage of business amenities. Usually business travelers required more service amenities and attention from the hotels. Special equipment was necessary to ensure they did not lag behind in this time-is-money era, especially on their business trips.

The most frequent reason for business traveling in the United States in 1996 was to attend a meeting, conference, or trade show. The next largest reasons for business trips were consulting, sales, company operations, physical work, and management (Cholewka, 1996). In this regard, the conventioner was a significant market for the hotel industry (Travel Industry World Yearbook, 1996).

One of the main characteristics of business travelers was that they stay fewer nights than leisure travelers. However, they traveled more miles than leisure travelers

and stayed more frequently. Therefore, what they lack in length of stay, they made up in frequency of stay. According to Travel Market Research (1995), business travelers spent an average of 3.1 nights on each trip in 1995. In contrast, leisure traveler's stayed an average of 3.8 nights. Business travelers traveled 1,022 miles on average round trip compared to 781 miles for leisure travelers (Travel Market Research, 1995).

There were also differences between business and leisure travelers in terms of their usage of the business amenities. Usually, business travelers used other services such as sending and receiving faxes, express check in/out and concierge services more frequently than leisure travelers. Additionally, nineteen percent of business trips were booked with a travel agent and sixty six percent of business travelers used hotels. In contrast, only six percent of leisure trips were booked with a travel agent and thirty-nine percent of leisure trips involved hotels in 1995 (Travel Market Report, 1995).

Today's Business Travelers Needs

Business travelers are looking for a home away from home and an office away from the office (Seo, 1997). This concept was spreading through the hotel industry to serve the needs of business travelers. Most business travelers wanted hotel rooms to make them feel like they were at home. Therefore, they wanted cleanliness, comfort, safety, attentive service and peace and quiet (Pierson, 1996). According to Spano (1998), security seemed to be a primary factor. An increasing number of consumers demand a safe and secure environment while patronizing a hotel (Clow, Garretson, and Kurtz, 1994).

Moreover, business travelers needed to be productive when they travel for business. Business facilities—such as secretarial services, copying machines, fax machines, cable services, computers, telephone jacks for computer modems, and other types of service and equipment—were increasingly needed and were expected by business travelers (Spano, 1998).

According to Stephens (1990), business travelers are usually in a hurry and want fast service in every department of the hotel. Automatic check in/out and quick, efficient breakfasts were good examples. According to a business traveler survey by Hotel and Motel Management, in-room checkout showed the highest percent of response which was 63.7 percent (Taninecz, 1990).

Amenities in Hotel Rooms

Surveys of hotel users indicated that the bedroom was considered more important than the public areas – including restaurants, bars, and leisure facilities (Foster 1993). Of the bedroom facilities, the size and general layout, lighting, individual control of the heating and ventilation, and the provision of a desk for business travelers were considered important factors. The need to place special emphasis on bedroom design was clearly important. Hotel room design should therefore be in response to what the customer really wants as opposed to what hotel companies find convenient to think they want.

The standard facilities found in the bedrooms in three and four-star hotels are tea and coffee making facilities, trouser presses, hair dryers and in-house movie channels (Foster, 1993). Also, the provision of a guest services office or business center is common in most major city center hotels such as Bangkok. The inclusion of executive

rooms offering higher quality facilities and service is another common feature offered by most first class hotels today.

Business travelers who normally stay in hotels make conscious decisions as to which hotels they would be stay in. These decisions are typically based upon past experience, recommendations, advertising, and hotel characteristics (Griffin, Shea, and Weaver, 1996). However, hotel characteristics are usually recognized as amenities. “Amenities are the extra items, facilities, and services made available to guests that are not included in the basic accommodations of a room and bed” (Rushmore, 1989; Griffin, Shea, and Weaver, 1996, p.65).

Research by the Marriott group indicated that seventy percent of over 1,000 frequent business travelers used their room as an office when they were travelling for business (Hill, 1996). Seo’s study (1997) also found that 81.8 percent of respondents worked in their hotel room when they travelled on business. To meet the needs of the guests at the Starwood Hotel in Taiwan, guest room amenities include workspace with large desks, telephones with data ports, coffeemakers, irons and ironing boards, and complimentary newspapers (Lenhart, 2000).

In 2000, because of the newly developed technologies such as the computer and the Internet, most hotels were planing to add business amenities to guestrooms. Marriott was putting high-speed Internet access in more than 500 hotel rooms in their properties (Business Travel News, 2000). The high-speed Internet access allows guest to be on the Internet and on the telephone at the same time.

Hilton Hotel created the “Smart Desk” room for business travelers in 1996. The Smart Desk plan provides a PC loaded with all sorts of software, fax services, access to

corporate e-mail and network service on-line, printing from business software/laptop, business software, and a 24-hour toll free support hotline (H&MM, 1996). However, Hilton Hotels soon found that a computer with a variety of software in the Smart Desk was not exactly what business travelers wanted since many business travelers carry their own laptops.

Thus, instead of computers, Hilton started offering larger desks, Internet access from its lobby and through the television set in guestroom, and multiple telephone lines. Hilton's Garden Inn, which is in the new budget segment of Hilton, would have a fax machine, a computer printer, and desk with a built in electrical outlet (Bigness and Dahl, 1996).

Moreover, Camanco Communications, creators of PC Room Link, installs PC and a high-speed Internet connection in hotel rooms (Shaw, 2000). When guests check into a room they can access their e-mail accounts. Guests can also access Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint to work on presentations. They can send the entire document to a laser printer at the front desk. Guests can also save their work to the local hard drive or to a diskette. When the guests check out their documents will be erased from the hard drive.

In Bangkok, most of the luxury hotels such as Grand Hyatt Erawan, Novotel Siam Square, Grand Pacific, Central Grand Plaza and Siam City Hotel are starting to provide high-technology communication facilities to meet the growing demand by business travelers (Jariyasombat and Intarakomalyasut, 2000). A high-speed Internet Service-called World room Connect-in is provided in the guestrooms and meeting rooms. Guests can simply plug their laptop into a desktop connection, and then they will access the

Internet immediately. The hotel operator claims that not only business travelers but leisure guests also require this kind of service.

Hotel Selection

There have been several studies of business travelers in the past few years examining what services they looked for when selecting hotels. However, the results of the studies have been mixed. Knutson (1988) found that business travelers consider the following factors when either selecting a hotel for the first time or for repeat patronage:

- Clean, comfortable, well-maintained rooms;
- Convenient location;
- Prompt and courteous service;
- Safe and secure environment;
- Friendly and courteous employees.

The report indicated location as the most important factor influencing the decision to stay at a hotel. Cleanliness was considered to be the most important factor to entice repeat usage of a hotel. Taninecz (1990) reported that cleanliness was the top selection criterion for business travelers.

A study by Sammons (1999) on preference of female business travelers in the selection of lodging accommodations found that cleanliness of hotel, comfortable mattress and pillow, and safety were the most important factors when they select hotels. However, some of the in-room amenities—good lighting to read/work, telephone by bed, express checkout, and easily accessible electrical outlets—were categorized as important factors also.

From a study by Weaver and Oh (1993), infrequent and frequent business travelers were compared in terms of what they considered important with regard to hotel service. The objective of this study was to discover the most and least important hotel service as a comparison between frequent and infrequent business travelers

The services considered important to business travelers were:

- Convenient to business;
- Good reputation;
- Friendly staff;
- Cleanliness;
- Safety and security of facilities;
- Well-maintained furnishings;
- Comfortable mattresses and pillows;
- Good quality towels;
- Personal care amenities;
- Wake-up calls;
- Free cable TV;
- Free local telephone;
- No surcharge for long distance calls;
- Free newspaper;
- Family restaurant;
- On-premises parking;
- Pre-arranged check-in;
- No-smoking rooms.

From the study of Weaver and Oh (1993), the following items were the services that business travelers considered unimportant with regard to hotel service:

- Impressive advertising;
- Airline frequent traveler program;
- In-room VCR;
- In-room mini-bar;
- In-room whirlpool/tub;
- Iron and ironing board;
- Hair dryer;
- Secretarial service;
- Computer;
- Audio-visual equipment;
- Games room;
- Handicap accessible room

Hotel operators should be aware of the items falling in the unimportant category as well as those in the important category when it comes to pleasing business travelers. The hotelier can get valuable information about which services and amenities fall in the unimportant category. Therefore, spending money or adding services that belong to the unimportant category may not be an effective way to please the average business customer.

Moreover, a study by Kulcharoen (1995) in Thailand found that value for money, convenience of location, friendliness of staff, housekeeping, and business services were the most important factors influencing business traveler satisfaction.

From the studies above, in-room amenities including in-room computers, data ports, working spaces, phone services, etc. were not mentioned or considered to be less important than basic factors such as location, safety, cleanness, and comfort. These findings suggest that business travelers considered basic services more important than in-room technology services. On the other hand, the results of a survey conducted by Opinion Research Corp. conducted for Integrated Network Technologies Inc. in Minnesota presented that 66 percent of the 300 frequent business travelers said they would choose a hotel on its in-room technology services (Johnson, 2000).

These different results were likely to be due to the fact that most of these studies were several years old. The Internet revolution really took off only a few years ago. Another reason was that the focus of the studies was not on in-room amenities alone. Since the basic amenities provided by hotel were important for their success, it was not surprisingly that when given a list of features, business amenities score less than basic

features such as location, cleanliness and safety. Therefore it was necessary to study current business travelers' wants and needs especially related to room amenities.

Hotel Industry in Bangkok

Thailand's capital and gateway city is Bangkok. Bangkok was established as Thailand's capital in 1782. Bangkok occupies a total area of 1,568 square kilometres. It is located on the banks of the Chao Phraya River. The other name for Bangkok is Krungthep which means "The City of Angels". The name "Bangkok" is used by the international community. Today, Bangkok is a major center for international businesses, regional business official offices, the United Nation Regional Headquarter, famous schools, shopping malls, luxury hotels, etc. Moreover, Bangkok has become the principal gateway and prime tourist attraction for both domestic and international travelers. Bangkok is an important center for business conventions in the Asia-Pacific region. There have been many international conventions held in Bangkok. In addition, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (1999) showed 97.02 percent of international travelers stayed at hotels. Moreover, domestic business travelers also stayed at hotels while doing business away from home. These statistics showed why hotels needed to develop special services and amenities to meet the business travelers' needs.

Tourism has been Thailand's highest foreign exchange since 1982, having grown at a healthy 16 percent per annum since 1980. In 1994, visitor arrivals reached a record 16 million. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has worked closely with other agencies to develop tourism resources in the most efficient way. For example, the Board of Investment periodically reviews policy regarding promotion of investment in tourist-

related facilities, it also works with funding institutions to determine which tourism projects should receive investment.

According to Kulcharoen (1995), a long time ago, travelers from other cities who came to Bangkok usually stayed overnight at a relative or friend's house. Official guests would stay in the King's palace, the dynasty house, or a government official's house. During the 1860s, Thailand opened the country officially to trade with the Western countries. This caused more foreigners to visit Thailand. The first hotel of Thailand was built in 1863 to support the need for a place to stay. The first hotel in Thailand was the "Union Hotel". Since then there are both foreign and domestic hotel operations in Thailand.

The components of products and services offered by first class and luxury hotels in Bangkok include the following (Kulcharoen, 1995):

- Rooms. There are three kinds of rooms; single rooms, double rooms, and suites. Single and double rooms are divided into three levels; standard, superior, and deluxe. But some hotels offer only standard rooms and superior rooms. Suites are divided into 5 levels; studio, junior, executive, deluxe, and royal.
- Food and Beverages. They are important for four and five star hotels. The four and five star hotels in Bangkok usually have at least two restaurants. Besides the restaurants, these hotels also provide bars, clubs, lounges, and coffee shops.
- Meeting Facilities. These facilities have become the major income for the hotels because Bangkok has become a major center of business in Asia and the Pacific. A lot of business travelers come to Bangkok for conventions or for their businesses and stay in the four or five star hotels. Therefore, the hotels need to

offer the best meeting facilities to them. In addition, This middle class or high class usually have a parties such as wedding parties or theme parties in the hotels that can accommodate many people.

- Other Services. Hotel Business Center. Business travelers are important segment of the hotel industry. Therefore, in the current highly competitive situation each hotel must provide the best services for their guests. Business facilities are important to the hotel guest in Bangkok. Secretarial service and immediate commercial information from around the world are available.

Currently, because of the devalued Thai Baht, Asia-Pacific hospitality executives face a disturbing dilemma (Muqbil, 1999). How can they maintain profitability during prolonged downturns, when some hotel owners' properties are facing significant depreciation in market value, cash flow shortages and an increase in US Dollars?

The majority of executives believe that demand for accommodation will continue to be either moderately or severely affected by the financial crisis. Almost 80 percent of major executives thought demand would decrease to some degree in four segments: business-individual travelers, leisure-individual travelers, corporate meetings and individual business travelers, whereas almost two-thirds said the decrease would be only "moderate".

When executives were asked to assess the impact of the regional crisis by comparing the products of four hotels: city business hotels and resorts, and luxury business hotels and mid-market properties—surprisingly, respondents believe city business hotels will not be affected more severely than resorts. This contradicts speculation by industry observers and commentators. These executives appear to think

that the destination, location and demand patterns of the hotel product--not the type of customers it attracts--will be the key determinants of how much a business is affected by economic problems.

The Number of Business Travelers

Historical reviews show that the number of business travelers in every country has been very sensitive to national, regional, and international economic conditions. For example, from the data in the Travel Market Report (1995), the number of business travelers declined when the U.S. economy experienced a recession and the number of business travelers rose as the economy recovered.

Thailand, like the rest of Southeast Asia, continues to experience a devaluation currency. The number of business travelers dropped by 2 percent in 1998 (Mazbil, 1999). In addition to the economic crisis faced by the Nation, there were several serious problems which affected directly on the industry. However, after the government supported the number of business travelers, this number was brought up by 5.22 percent in the following year (TAT, 1999). The number of business travelers has increased since the economy recovered.

Future Trends

Technological advances have affected all aspects of modern living. Hotels have been no exception. Historically, advances in technology and scientific discoveries have brought about the majority of the improvements of the facilities offered by hotels.

Ranging from electricity and telephones in the last century to air conditioning, television, computers and advances in telecommunication technology in this century (Foster, 1993).

For hotels of the 21st century, technology can help improve services with phone cords or safes big enough to store 14” screen laptops (Thalang, 1999). It must also be equipped with various standards of power adapters and it should provide the rental services of PC-card modems, printers, scanners, cellular phones and pagers. For people who want to do quick research, renting out a CD-ROM with reference material of the country they are visiting may also be a good idea.

Business travelers of the 21st century cannot do without an Internet connection (Thalang, 1999). Hotels should be able to provide a temporary Internet account, where the guest can access the Web, do e-mail and can get in touch with the home office. Connecting with all these new technologies may cause headaches for some. Then in-house consultants can come to the rescue. In one hotel in Malaysia an “IT butler” has been provided for guests who have trouble with computer problems in their guestroom.

Working while travelling may cause some stressed-out time for business travelers. Increasingly, hotel rooms are designed to include such rest-inducing comforts as aromatherapy candles, tabletop fountains and flowering plants. Now there are accompanying in-room services that appeal to business travelers who are trying to simplify their schedules without slowing down on the job.

Business travelers tend to schedule tightly. Morrison (2000) mentioned that scheduled workouts or treatments in the guestroom, gave no excuses for business traveler to not stay fit. In New York, guest at Loew’s Regency Hotel, for instance, no longer

have to leave their rooms to exercise: a customer-designed “Fit Kart” can be wheeled in to provide a complete workout.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Description of Subjects

The subjects of this study were international business travelers who stayed over at least one night in a hotel in Bangkok. They are all non-Thai citizens and reside outside of Thailand. All of their business trips concluded between January 11 to January 20, 2001 when the survey was taken. The variables were the information that the international business travelers gave about themselves. These variables are of two types: 1) characteristic facts about business travelers, and 2) the importance of hotel room amenities of the international business travelers. Each subject filled out the survey questionnaire completely and there were no missing values.

Sample Selection

The respondents of this study were randomly selected at Bangkok International Airport between January 11-20, 2001. The sample size was 170 respondents taken between 10:00am. and 5:00pm. everyday during the survey period.

Pilot Test

A pilot test of 15 business travelers was determined, which represented the same criteria stipulated for the main survey. The researcher distributed the pilot test on January 9, 2001. The locations of distribution were in a duty free area which was the area after check in. Comments were mainly on the length of the questionnaires, formats

and wording. Through the pilot test, the numbers of individual hotel in-room amenities were cut down to forty-two questions. In addition, some questions were rewritten to make for more appropriate questions.

Data Collection

Convenient sampling was used to collect the data from business travelers at Bangkok International Airport, Thailand. This researcher randomly selected subjects to fill out the survey questionnaire after first ascertaining that they were traveling for business. The researcher was situated in an area after check-in and passport control counters but before the departure lounge, where the researcher was not permitted by Bangkok Airport Authority. Subjects were approached and asked if they had been in Bangkok on business and had stayed over at least one night in a hotel. If they answered “Yes” they were asked to fill out the questionnaire. Most of those asked accepted and filled out the questionnaire. However, about thirty-five percent refused, did not understand, or were in a hurry. The same number of subjects was asked each day. All survey questionnaires were completely filled out so there were no missing values.

Instrumentation

The study was designed to collect information from the business travelers about the importance they attached to certain in-room amenities. The instrument was a four-page questionnaire with closed-ended questions. Page I and IV contained thirteen questions regarding the personal characteristics of the subject. These questions formed the bases for formulating dependent variable in the study. Pages II and III contained

forty-two questions about individual hotel in-room amenities. Here the subjects were asked to circle a number from “1” to “5” according to the importance they attached to each amenity “1” was “Very Unimportant”, “2” was “Unimportant”, “3” was “Neutral”, “4” was “Important” and “5” was “Very Important.” Components of the questionnaire were constructed from a review of the related literature about the needs and wants of today’s business travelers specifically surveys from the work of Sammons et al. (1999) and Seo (1997). A sample of the questionnaire is in Appendix A.

Data Analysis

The data collected was entered into a data file and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Each case represents a survey respondent – an international business traveler. Each variable represents a question answered on the questionnaire about personal characteristics or hotel in-room amenities.

The analysis in the study will construct to answer questions about the common assumptions about the wants and needs of traveling businesspeople regarding their hotel rooms. The major focus of the study will be business-oriented hotel room amenities.

Summary

The survey questionnaire was used to determine the importance of in-room amenities to the international business traveler. The findings from this research would be useful to the hotel industry and in particular to hotel management in cities around the world with significant international business guests. The study was designed to provide an understanding of the wants of this group of travelers.

Limitations

1. The number of respondents ($N = 170$) was a small number when comparing the total number of business travelers come to Bangkok each year. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized to the whole population.
2. The respondents of this study were business travelers from many counties. The questionnaire, which was used in this study, was written in English only. Error may occur because of misinterpretation of the questionnaire.

CHAPTER 4

REPORT OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to determine hotel service amenities that business travelers need from the hotel rooms. A survey questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. Business travelers were asked to complete the questionnaire at Bangkok International Airport during January 11 to January 20, 2001. The survey data was from 170 completed questionnaires. All questionnaires were filled out completely and there were no missing values. A complete sample of the questionnaire is in Appendix A.

Questionnaires were used to answer the objectives of this study, which were the followings:

1. To model the current use pattern of hotel room amenities by business travelers.
2. To assess the relative importance of the in-room amenities to business travelers.
3. To determine the future trend of service amenities that business travelers want in their hotel room.

All completed questionnaires were entered into a data file and analyzed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The frequencies of responses and percentages were used to present demographic data and behavioural data of respondents, while mean and mode were used to analyze all the service amenities listed with a five-point Likert scale. It was ranged by from 1= very unimportant to 5= very important.

This chapter begins with the respondents' demographic data and respondent behavioural data to show the general information of the respondents. The remainder of this chapter will focus on the objectives and the resulting responses from the survey instrument.

Respondent Demographics

The demographic questions were placed in the last section of the questionnaire. These questions included gender, age, annual household income, and original country.

Table 1: Summary of survey by gender, age and annual household income.

Attributes	Number	Percent
Gender:		
Male	140	82.4
Female	30	17.6
Total	170	100 %
Age:		
21-30	27	15.9
31-40	74	43.5
41-50	49	28.8
Over 50	20	11.8
Total	170	100 %
Annual Household Income:		
Less than \$25,000	10	5.9
\$25,001 - \$50,000	34	20.0
\$50,001 - \$75,000	39	22.9
\$75,001 - \$100,000	30	17.6
\$100,001 - \$150,000	29	17.1
\$Over 150,000	28	16.5
Total	170	100 %

Gender, age and income categories are shown in Table 1. There were 170 business travelers respondents to the survey. A review of the demographic data showed that there were a big difference number between male and female business travelers. Male was a large majority with 140 or 82.4% of respondents, while female were only 30 or 17.6% of respondents. Due to convenient sampling, even researcher tried to balanced group of respondents, but the researcher would not know the exact proportions of different between male and female business travelers traveling on each day.

An analysis of age group indicated that, the 31- 40 year old group was the largest age group representing 43.5% followed by 28.8% of respondent with the 41-50 year old group. Thus, 72.3% of respondents were between 31- 50 year old group. Respondents were 21-30 years old and over 50 years old representing 15.9% and 11.8%, respectively.

The study revealed that a third of respondents earned an annual household incomes between \$25,001 - \$75,000 as 42.9% of the respondents, 51.2% had household incomes of over \$75,000. The minority of respondents had an annual household income less than \$25,000 as 5.9% of respondents.

The countries of the international business travelers were shown in Table 2. The largest groups were from the Asia-Pacific region. 57.6% of the visitors were from Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, and Taiwan. Majority of the respondents was from Singapore, which were 14.7 %. Followed by Malaysia and Australia as 11.2% of responses. Visitors from the United States, and the United Kingdom represented 5.9% and 4.1%, respectively. However, there were only one respondent (0.6%) coming from the following countries: Cambodia, Vietnam, Austria, Bahrain, Egypt, and South Africa.

Table 2: Summary of survey by Country

Country	Number	Percent
Asia		
Cambodia	1	0.6
Hong Kong	14	8.2
India	2	1.2
Indonesia	5	2.9
Japan	14	8.2
Korea	3	1.8
Malaysia	19	11.2
Myanmar	2	1.2
Pakistan	6	3.5
Philippine	3	1.8
Singapore	25	14.7
Taiwan	7	4.1
Vietnam	1	0.6
Non-Asia		
Australia	19	11.2
Austria	1	0.6
Bahrain	1	0.6
Belgium	2	1.2
Canada	5	2.9
Egypt	1	0.6
Finland	5	2.9
France	7	4.2
Germany	2	1.2
Holland	3	1.8
South Africa	1	0.6
Sweden	2	1.2
U.A.E	7	4.1
United Kingdom	2	1.2
United States	10	5.9
Total	170	100 %

Respondents Behaviour

Questions about respondent's behaviour were placed in the first section of questionnaire. The questions included number of trips to Thailand during the last twelve months, average length of stay per trip, type of hotel, average cost of the room per night, working in the room during business trip, carrying a laptop on the trip and the purposes of business trip.

The respondents that visited Thailand more than four times in the past year were 36.1%, and 28.9% stayed longer than 4 days. Most of respondents visited Thailand on average 1-2 times per year, 39.4 % totalling, and 37 % of respondents stayed 3-4 days on each trip (Table 3).

Table 3: Summary of the survey sample by number of trips and length of stay

Attributes	Number	Percent
Number of Trips:		
1-2 times	67	39.4
3-4 times	42	24.7
5-6 times	32	18.9
Over 6 times	29	17.2
Total	170	100 %
Length of Stay:		
1-2 days	58	34.1
3-4 days	63	37.0
5-6 days	31	18.2
Over 6 days	18	10.7
Total	170	100 %

The review of table 4 indicated that 53.5% of respondents stayed in rooms costing up to \$100 while 46.5% of respondents stayed in rooms over \$100 per night. About 50% of respondents were in mid-price or standard hotels. Of the respondents, 44.7% were in luxury or up-scales hotels and only 5.3% of respondents were in economy hotels. However, most of the respondents not really confident about how to identify difference type of hotels. This information might not really accurate since most of the hotels around the world identify type of accommodation by using stars system.

Table 4: Summary of survey by dollar spent per night and type of hotel.

Attributes	Number	Percent
Dollars Spent per Night:		
Up to \$49	9	5.3
\$50 - \$75	40	23.5
\$76 - \$100	42	24.7
\$101 - \$125	28	16.5
\$126 - \$ 150	24	14.1
More than \$150	27	15.9
Total	170	100 %
Type of Hotel:		
Economy	9	5.3
Mid-priced or Standard	85	50.0
Luxury or Up-scale	76	44.7
Total	170	100 %

During business trips, about 65% of respondents carried laptop computers and worked in the hotel room. Of the respondents working in the rooms during business trips, there were 64% who spent 1-2 hours working in the hotel room (Table 5).

Table 5: Summary of survey by carrying laptops, working in hotel rooms and hours of working.

Attributes	Frequency	Percent
Carrying laptop computer on the trip:		
Yes	111	65.3
No	59	34.7
Total	170	100 %
Working in hotel room on the trip:		
Yes	111	65.3
No	59	34.7
Total	170	100 %
Hours of working per day:		
1 to 2	71	64.0
3 to 4	38	34.2
Over 5	2	1.8
Total	111	100 %

The questionnaire also asked for the purpose of the trip to Thailand (Table 6). About 15% of the respondents gave multiple responses. Client meetings and consulting projects were the top two reasons for the visit. A large number also checked “Others” which were 12.1% of respondents and that included purchasing equipment, business development, technical support, meeting with business partner, branch office supervision, etc. Then, responses followed national or regional sales meetings and training and development meetings as 10.3% and 9.9% of respondents, respectively.

Table 6: Summary of responses by purpose of visited.

Attributes	Frequency	Percent
Client meetings	47	21.1
Consulting projects	31	13.9
National or regional sales meetings	23	10.3
Training and development meetings	22	9.9
Sales calls	21	9.4
Presentations	18	8.1
Executive conferences	18	8.1
Conventions or trade show	10	4.5
Management development seminars	6	2.7
Others	27	12.1
Total	223	100 %

The finding results would help to achieve the objectives of this study. They were listed as follows:

Objective 1: To model current use patterns of hotel room amenities by business travelers.

In order to accomplish the objectives of the study, the respondents were asked to response on a scale of one to five (one = very unimportant to five = very important) as how important of each service amenity in the hotel room was when they travel on business. The variables were listed in descending value. The mean and mode of each

Table 7: Summary of mean and mode Scores

Rank	In-room Amenities	Mean	Mode
1	Comfortable mattress and pillows	4.54	5
2	Good lighting to read/work	4.26	5
3	Non smoking room	4.16	5
4	Dead bolt door lock	4.15	5
5	In-room sprinkler system	4.10	5
6	No surcharge on-long distance calls	4.10	5
7	In-room safe	4.08	5
8	Chain locks/latches	4.05	5
9	Easily accessible electrical outlets	4.05	4
10	In-room smoke detectors	4.02	5
11	Free newspaper	4.00	5
12	Free cable TV	3.95	5
13	High-speed internet access	3.94	5
14	Adapter	3.89	5
15	In-room refrigerator	3.86	4
16	Room service 24 hours	3.76	5
17	Data port	3.73	5
18	Peep holes	3.71	5
19	Free local calls	3.70	5
20	Oversize working desk	3.64	4
21	Checkout	3.42	3
22	Dryer	3.35	5
23	Two phone lines in the room	3.29	5
24	In-room ironing board and iron	3.28	3
25	Free delivered continental breakfast	3.24	3
26	Bathrobe	3.22	3
27	In-room computer	3.14	5
28	Additional phone in bathroom	3.11	3
29	Speaker phone	2.93	3
30	In-room fax machine	2.87	3
31	Printer	2.86	3
32	Packing and delivering bags to airport	2.84	3
33	IT butler	2.80	3
34	Brand name amenities in bathroom	2.78	3
35	TV access to web	2.67	3
36	Digital TV	2.65	3
37	Health snacks in the mini bar	2.58	2
38	In-room VCR/DVD	2.57	1
39	In-room exercise equipment	2.37	2
40	In-room microwave	2.12	2
41	In-room video games	1.88	1
42	Additional TV in bathroom	1.80	1

service amenities were listed in Table 7. The mean was an average summing the values of responses to each service amenities and dividing by number of scales and mode represents the most frequently selected value of the scale. Those scores were used to indicate which service amenities were important to the respondents.

To identify all amenities, any items that received an average value higher than 3.5 and a mode of 4 or 5 would be considered in the “important ” category. Also, any item receiving an average mean value less than 2.5 and a mode of 1 or 2 were included in the “unimportant” category, while all other items were considered in the neutral category.

The twenty service amenities considered important included:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Comfortable of mattress and pillows | 11. Free newspaper |
| 2. Good lighting to read/work | 12. Free cable TV |
| 3. Non-smoking room | 13. High-speed Internet access |
| 4. Dead bolt door lock | 14. Adapter/Transformer |
| 5. In-room sprinkler system | 15. In-room refrigerator |
| 6. No surcharge on-long distance calls | 16. Room service 24 hours |
| 7. In-room safe | 17. Data port |
| 8. Chain locks/latches | 18. Peep hole |
| 9. Easily accessible electrical outlets | 19. Free local calls |
| 10. In-room smoke detectors | 20. Oversize working desk |

Using the same method, any items receiving an average value between 2.5 to 3.5 and a mode of 3 were considered in the “neutral” category.

The sixteen service amenities considered neutral included:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. In-room checkout | 9. Speaker phone |
| 2. Dryer | 10. In-room fax machine |
| 3. Two phone lines in the room | 11. Printer |
| 4. In-room ironing board and iron | 12. Packing and delivering bags to airport |
| 5. Free delivered continental breakfast | 13. IT butler |
| 6. Bathrobe | 14. Brand name amenities in bathroom |
| 7. In-room computer | 15. TV access to web |
| 8. Additional phone in bathroom | 16. Digital TV |

The six service amenities considered unimportant included:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Health snacks in the mini bar | 4. In-room microwave |
| 2. In-room VCR/DVD | 5. In-room video games |
| 3. In-room exercise equipment | 6. Additional TV in bathroom |

Comfortable mattresses and pillows were in the highest rank. Perhaps the most interesting aspect was that the security related variables were clustered near to top, all with mean scores of over 4.00. In addition, good lighting to read/work, non-smoking rooms and 24-hours room service were considered importance to respondents. High-speed Internet access and data ports got higher scores than the computer itself. Business traveler respondents had less interested in items related to entertainment which were in-room VCR/DVD, in-room video games, and additional TV in the bathroom.

Objective 2: To assess the relative importance of the in-room amenities to business travelers.

Table 8: Show combining service amenities.

Security	Comfort	Complimentary
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dead bolt door lock 2. Chain locks/latches 3. In-room smoke detectors 4. In-room sprinkler system 5. In-room safe 6. Peep holes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comfortable mattress and pillows 2. Non smoking room 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Free delivered continental breakfast 2. Free local calls 3. No surcharge on-long distance calls 4. Free newspaper 5. Free cable TV
Concierge	Computer Facilities	Telephone Services
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.IT butler 2.Packing and delivering bags to airport 3.Room service 24 hours 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Printer 1. In-room computer 3. Data port 4. High-speed internet access 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-room fax machine 2. Two phone lines in the room 3. Speaker phone 4. Additional phone in bathroom
Working Facilities	In-room Utilities	In-room Entertainment
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Oversize working desk 2.Good lighting to read/work 3.Adapter 4.Easily accessible electric outlets 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-room exercise equipment 2. In-room refrigerator 3. In-room microwave 4. Health snacks in the mini bar 5. In-room ironing board and iron 6. Bathrobe 7. Dryer 8. Brand name amenities in bathroom 9. In-room checkout 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-room VCR/DVD 2. Digital TV 3. In-room video games 4. Additional TV in bathroom 5. TV access to web

The questionnaire asked the respondents about the importance of hotel room amenities. However, some of these have been in hotel rooms for a long time and some were relatively new offerings, especially those related to computer use in the hotel room. Many were related to the quality of the hotel and the price of the room. Base on necessarily, all amenities were combined in nine factors (Table 8) for ease of

interpretation. These factors included security, comfort, complimentary, concierge, computer facilities, telephone services, working facilities, in-room utilities, and in-room entertainment.

After combing the factors, each factor would be used to identify the significant differences by comparison of mean scores with respondent demographic and behavioral variables. Table 9 will demonstrate mean scores of respondent age with factor grouping.

Table 9: Variation of factor groupings by Gender.

Gender	Security	Comfort	Complimentary	Concierge	Computer Facilities	Telephone Services	Working Facilities	In-room Utilities	In-room Entertainment
Male	3.95	4.26	3.79	3.15	3.36	3.03	3.92	2.95	2.35
Female	4.33	4.73	3.83	3.02	3.70	3.16	4.13	3.20	2.17
Total	4.02	4.35	3.80	3.13	3.42	3.05	3.96	3.00	2.32

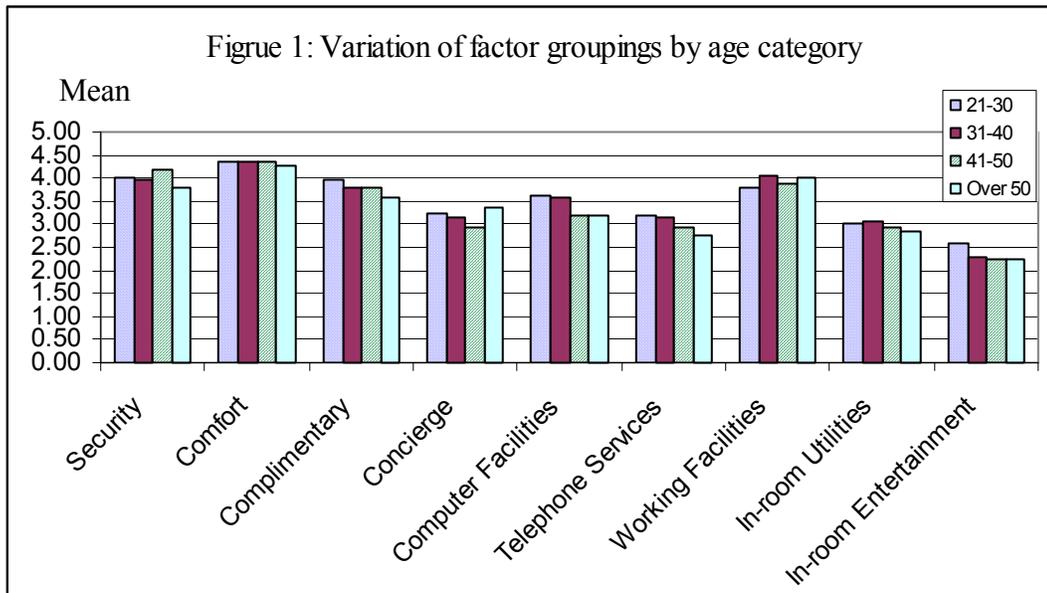
Note: Numbers represented in the table are mean values.

Results in Table 9 indicate significant differences across age groups for the security, comfort, computer facilities, and in-room utilities factors, with these factors listed being more important to female respondents than to male respondents. Even though, both female and male business travelers share many of the same use characteristics. Next, Table10 demonstrated mean scores of respondent age with factor grouping.

Table 10: Variation of factor groupings by age category.

Age category	Security	Comfort	Complimentary	Concierge	Computer Facilities	Telephone Services	Working Facilities	In-room Utilities	In-room Entertainment
21-30	4.01	4.33	3.99	3.23	3.60	3.19	3.81	3.04	2.57
31-40	3.98	4.37	3.80	3.15	3.56	3.17	4.06	3.07	2.30
41-50	4.18	4.35	3.78	2.95	3.20	2.93	3.87	2.93	2.22
over 50	3.79	4.28	3.56	3.37	3.18	2.74	4.00	2.84	2.26
Total	4.02	4.35	3.80	3.13	3.42	3.05	3.96	3.00	2.32

Note: Numbers represented in the table are mean values.

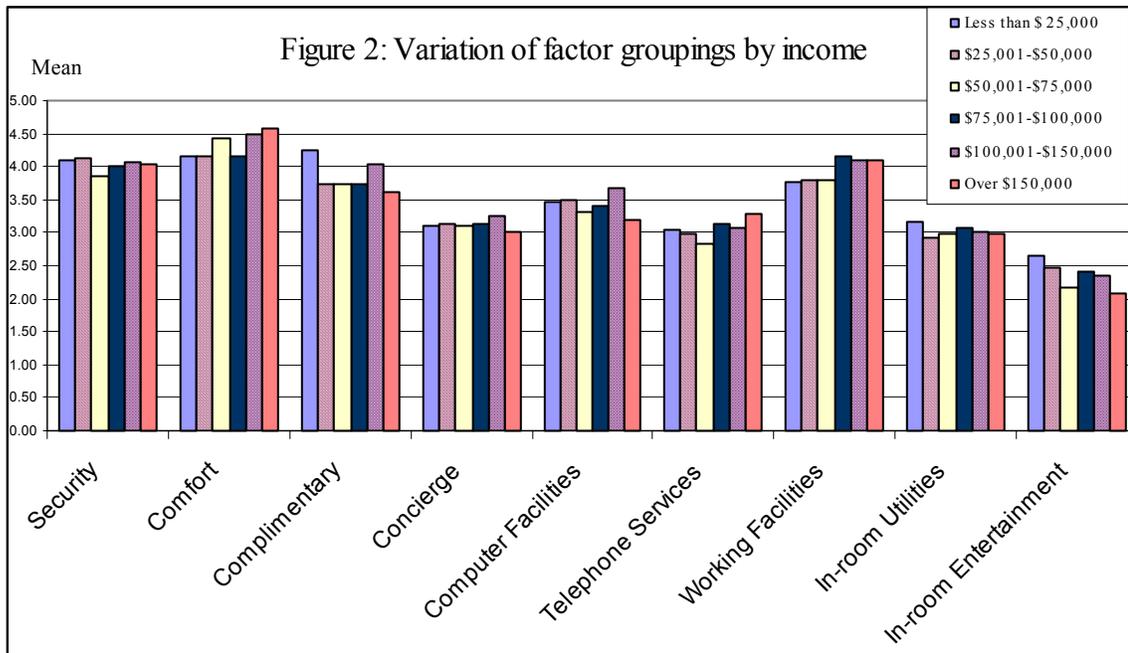


Respondents who were 41 to 50 years old shown significant difference in the security factor (Figure 1). They tended to be more concerned about security than other age groups. Respondents who were 21 to 40 were more concerned about computer facilities.

Table 11. Variation of factor groupings by an annual household income

Annual household gross income:	Security	Comfort	Complimentary	Concierge	Computer Facilities	Telephone Services	Working Facilities	In-room Utilities	In-room Entertainment
Less than \$25,000	4.08	4.15	4.26	3.10	3.48	3.05	3.75	3.16	2.64
\$25,001-\$50,000	4.14	4.16	3.74	3.15	3.49	2.99	3.80	2.92	2.46
\$50,001-\$75,000	3.85	4.44	3.74	3.10	3.31	2.85	3.80	2.98	2.16
\$75,001-\$100,000	4.01	4.15	3.73	3.14	3.42	3.13	4.14	3.06	2.42
\$100,001-\$150,000	4.06	4.48	4.04	3.26	3.68	3.09	4.10	3.01	2.34
\$Over150,000	4.05	4.59	3.61	3.01	3.19	3.29	4.10	2.98	2.09
Total	4.02	4.35	3.80	3.13	3.42	3.05	3.96	3.00	2.32

Note: Numbers represented in the table are mean values.



From the review of table 11 and figure 2, respondents with an annual household income over \$75,000 per year significantly differed in their response to in-room working facilities as a factor. In addition, respondents who reported annual household incomes over \$100,000 were inclined to agree that comfort factor was important to business travelers. Surprisingly, individuals with an annual household income less than \$25,000 placed a higher importance rating on complimentary as a factor.

Table 12. Variation of factor groupings by country

Country	Security	Comfort	Complimentary	Concierge	Computer Facilities	Telephone Services	Working Facilities	In-room Utilities	In-room Entertainment
Asia	4.03	4.19	3.81	3.15	3.43	3.20	3.89	3.05	2.44
Non-asia	4.00	4.59	3.79	3.10	3.40	2.82	4.07	2.93	2.13
Total	4.02	4.35	3.80	3.13	3.42	3.05	3.96	3.00	2.32

Note: Numbers represented in the table are mean values.

Review of table 12 found that there were significant difference between Asia and Non-Asia respondents in comfort, telephone services, and in-room entertainment factors. Non-Asia respondents concerned more about comfort factor while Asia respondents tend to pay higher attention on telephone services.

Table 13. Variation of factor groupings by average length of stay

Average length of stay:	Security	Comfort	Complimentary	Concierge	Computer Facilities	Telephone Services	Working Facilities	In-room Utilities	In-room Entertainment
1-2 days	4.07	4.28	3.72	3.01	3.37	2.92	3.95	2.86	2.06
3-4 days	3.97	4.44	3.81	3.12	3.33	3.08	3.90	3.05	2.37
5-6 days	4.11	4.31	3.82	3.38	3.85	3.37	4.25	3.26	2.63
over 7 days	3.87	4.33	3.96	3.15	3.14	2.81	3.71	2.81	2.43
Total	4.02	4.35	3.80	3.13	3.42	3.05	3.96	3.00	2.32

Note: Numbers represented in the table are mean values.

The differences on respondent behaviour variables as they related to the nine factors were shown on Table 13. Depending on the average length of stay, respondents who stayed on average 5 to 6 nights differed significantly in the level of importance they placed on the concierge, computer facilities, telephone services, working facilities, and in-room utilities (Figure 3).

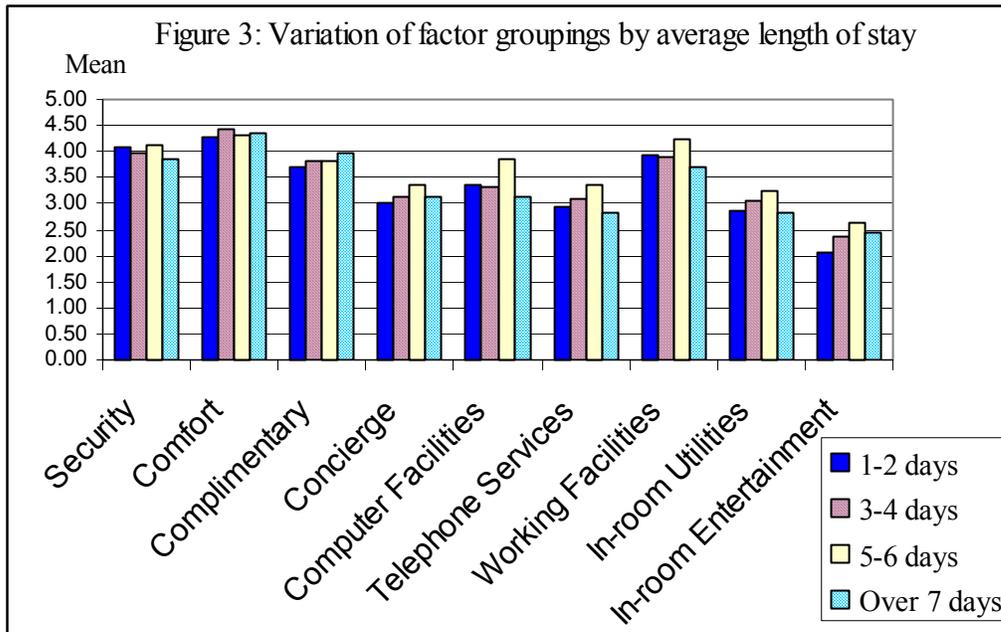


Table 14. Variation of factor groupings by average cost of hotel room per night.

Average cost of hotel room per night:	Security	Comfort	Complimentary	Concierge	Computer Facilities	Telephone Services	Working Facilities	In-room Utilities	In-room Entertainment
up to \$49	3.67	3.72	3.87	3.07	2.83	2.61	3.33	2.85	2.51
\$50 - \$75	3.93	4.45	3.93	3.11	3.33	2.68	3.81	3.05	2.28
\$76 - \$100	3.98	4.23	3.51	2.86	3.16	2.96	3.98	2.93	2.08
\$101 - \$125	4.24	4.36	3.85	3.32	3.87	3.43	4.21	3.00	2.44
\$126 - \$150	4.04	4.44	3.81	3.29	3.66	3.11	3.94	3.00	2.54
More than \$150	4.08	4.50	3.96	3.27	3.46	3.44	4.10	3.06	2.36
Total	4.02	4.35	3.80	3.13	3.42	3.05	3.96	3.00	2.32

Note: Numbers represented in the table are mean values.

Respondents who spent on average over \$100 per night on hotel room were more inclined to place importance on security, comfort, and telephone services factors than those who spent less than \$100. Obviously, respondents who spent on average between \$101 to \$125 had more interest in computer facilities and working facilities.

The variables about working in the room and carrying a laptop computer on the trip were important grouping variables in the study (Table 15). This was because almost all of the amenities provided by the hotels were for the purpose of aiding in doing work in the room for business travelers.

Table 15: Variation of factor groupings by working in hotel room and carrying laptop computer during the business trip.

Working in hotel room during the trip:	Security	Comfort	Complimentary	Concierge	Computer Facilities	Telephone Services	Working Facilities	In-room Utilities	In-room Entertainment
Yes	4.05	4.47	3.85	3.14	3.65	3.23	4.16	3.05	2.26
No	3.96	4.12	3.70	3.12	2.98	2.71	3.57	2.89	2.43
Carried laptop on the trip:									
Yes	4.04	4.46	3.76	3.11	3.54	3.19	4.08	3.01	2.26
No	3.98	4.14	3.86	3.17	3.19	2.78	3.72	2.98	2.42
Total	4.02	4.35	3.80	3.13	3.42	3.05	3.96	3.00	2.32

Note: Numbers represented in the table are mean values.

The results from the study showed that respondents who said “Yes” about working in hotel rooms and carrying laptops on business trips had higher mean scores than those who said “No”. However, with in these two groups of responses (Table.15), there was a significant difference in the ratings for comfort, computer facilities, telephone service, and working facilities factors. Furthermore, those factors had mean scores over 3.5. Thus, the respondent group that works in the room and the group that carries laptops on business trips valued those four factors as important to them. This was not surprisingly since those factors combined in-room amenities such as larger tables, good lighting to read/work, data ports, and Internet access which related to in room working and using laptop computers in hotel rooms.

Table 16: Summary of means by the Weaver and Oh's study and the current study.

Attributes	Weaver and Oh (1993)	Current Study (2001)
Comfortable mattress and pillows	4.40	4.54
Good lighting to read/work	N/A	4.26
Non smoking room	3.60	4.16
Dead bolt door lock	N/A	4.15
In-room sprinkler system	N/A	4.10
No surcharge on-long distance calls	4.20	4.10
Chain locks/latches	N/A	4.05
Easily accessible electrical outlets	N/A	4.05
In-room smoke detectors	N/A	4.02
Free newspaper	3.60	4.00
Free cable TV	3.70	3.95
High-speed internet access	N/A	3.94
Adapter	N/A	3.89
In-room refrigerator	N/A	3.86
Room service 24 hours	3.00	3.76
Data port	N/A	3.73
Peep holes	N/A	3.71
Free local calls	4.00	3.70
Oversize working desk	N/A	3.64
In-room checkout	3.30	3.42
Hair dryer	2.40	3.35
Two phone lines in the room	N/A	3.29
In-room ironing board and iron	2.30	3.28
Free delivered continental breakfast	3.30	3.24
In-room computer	2.40	3.14
Additional phone in bathroom	N/A	3.11
Speaker phone	N/A	2.93
In-room fax machine	N/A	2.87
Printer	N/A	2.86
Packing and delivering bags to airport	N/A	2.84
IT butler	N/A	2.80
Personal care/Brand name amenities	3.70	2.78
TV access to web	N/A	2.67
Digital TV	N/A	2.65
In-room VCR	2.50	2.57
In-room microwave	N/A	2.12
Game room/In-room video games	2.10	1.88
Additional TV in bathroom	N/A	1.80

Note: N/A = Not Available

Objective 3: To determine the future trend of service amenities that business travelers want in their room.

In order to answer this objective, comparison with previous studies had to be used to identify the future trend of in-room service amenities that business travelers want. The study of Weaver and Oh (1993) was used to compare with the current study. The previous study expressed ranking of the service items by the mean score.

In the study by Weaver and Oh (1993), the objective was to discover the most and least important hotel services as a comparison between frequent and infrequent business travelers. Business travelers were asked to respond to a scale of one to five (very unimportant to very important) as to what they consider important with regard to hotel services.

Table 16 demonstrates the mean score of Weaver and Oh (1993)'s study as compared to the current study. Since these two studies used the same rating (a five-point scale), there was no need to convert the mean value.

As shown in Table 16, there is no difference in mean value for the following attributes: comfortable mattress and pillows, no surcharge on-long distance calls, free local calls, free cable TV, in-room checkout, and in-room VCR. However, there is a significant difference in the mean values of following attributes: non-smoking room, newspaper, hair dryer, ironing board and iron, bath robe, and in-room computer.

Some difficulty was experienced in interpreting all of the results. Some of those attributes had been in hotel rooms for a long time and some were relatively new offerings, especially those related to computer use in hotel rooms and new technology.

Moreover, some attributes in Weaver and Oh's study were not related to in-room service. Therefore, the mean score was omitted.

For ease of interpretation, the researcher grouped attributes related to in-room service from the previous study into five factors, shown in Table 17. After comparing the result, it not be denied that the respondents wanted the basics services. Certainly, high-tech equipment and other services had their place in the industry, but, given an opportunity to rate the factors, business travelers want the essentials. A similar survey a century ago could have pulled similar results. Safety and security facilities and comfortable facilities were receiving high scores from respondents.

Table 17. Summary of means comparison between previous study and current study

Amenities	Weaver and Oh's Study	Current Study
Security	4.00	4.02
Comfort	4.00	4.35
Free Services service	3.76	3.80
Concierge	N/A	3.17
Computer Facilities	3.00	3.61
Telephone Service	N/A	3.05
Working Utilities	N/A	3.96
In-room Utilities	2.46	3.26
In-room Entertainment	N/A	3.71

Due to the increasing awareness of the cost of lost working time, business travelers tend to work in the hotel room while they are away from the office. Therefore, computer facilities and in-room utilities had been increasing from previous study. Beside these factors, working facilities in the current study were ranked at a higher importance level for business travelers.

Summary

The survey questionnaire was used to determine the importance of in-room amenities to the international business traveler. The findings from this chapter may be summarized as follows:

- Majority of respondents were male and the largest age group was 31- 40 years old. Respondents were from many different countries, the majority of them were from Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, Hong Kong, and Australia. More than half (about 65%) of respondents carried laptop computer on their trip and the same amount worked in hotel rooms during business trips.
- Comfortable mattress and pillows received the highest mean score from the respondents, followed by good lighting to read/work and non-smoking rooms. Amenities such as computer, high-speed Internet access, and in-room fax machines were also rated in an important category. While, in-room video games and additional TV in bathroom had received little consideration.
- After grouping amenities into nine factors, computer facilities and working facilities shown significant difference to respondent between the 31-40 year old group and respondents who stayed on average of 5-6 days per trip. Obviously, respondents who worked in the hotel room during a trip needed more in-room service amenities than those who did not work in hotel room.
- For future demand, security and comfort factors remain in the top rank, but in-room amenities that related to computer use have been increasing.

The next chapter covered a summary of the findings of this research, recommendations for the hotel industry and in particular to hotel management in cities

around the world with significant international business travelers. Lastly, the recommendations for future research were discussed.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the previous chapter, the statistical results of the study were presented. In this chapter, these findings were discussed. Finally, this chapter suggests possible directions for future research.

Restatement of the Problem

Hotel managers in international business cities need to know what their guests value as important regarding services amenities and facilities in the hotel rooms. Business travelers are not a homogenous group. Therefore, hotel managers need to know what is the best possible arrangement for the group as a whole or provide rooms with different sets of amenities.

This study was focused on the importance of hotel room amenities to traveling businesspeople. The goal was to determine which in-room amenities were wanted by business travelers. The three objectives of this study as mentioned in chapter 1, were the following:

1. To model the current use pattern of hotel room amenities by business travelers.
2. To assess the relative importance of the amenities to business travelers.
3. To determine the future trend of service amenities that business travelers want in their hotel room.

Methods and Procedures

The data to be tested was taken from a closed-ended survey questionnaire. The study was designed to collect information from business travelers about the importance they attached to certain in-room amenities. Business travelers were asked to complete the survey at Bangkok International Airport. All completed questionnaires (N=170) were analyzed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The frequencies of response and percentages were performed on the descriptive data of respondent demographics and behavioral characteristics. Moreover, the mean and mode scores were used to determine the order of importance. The higher the mean, the more importance of service amenities was to business travelers.

Major Finding

The survey questionnaire was used to determine the importance of in-room amenities to the international business traveler. The findings from this research will be useful to the hotel industry and in particular to hotel management in cities around the world with significant international business guests. The following conclusions were made about the data according to the order of objectives in the study.

Objective 1: To model the current use pattern of hotel room amenities by business travelers.

The result of this study indicated that comfortable mattresses and pillows were considered the most important to business travelers. Related to the study on business

travelers, comfortable of mattress has been in the top ranks of all the studies. Therefore, hotel management should realize how important the beds are to their guests.

Good lighting to read/work was the next important in-room amenity for business travelers. To support the previous mentioned, the study found that about 65% of respondents worked in the hotel room while they traveled on business trip. One interesting finding for in-room amenities was that in-room computer was considered in the neutral category or less important to business travelers. This can be due to many business travelers carrying laptops on the trip or about 65% of business travelers from this study.

However, business travelers were least concerned about the additional TV in the bathroom. Then hotel design should pay more attention to what the guests want to add. Some service might not serve the guests needs.

Objective 2: To assess the relative importance of the in-room amenities to business travelers.

Security and comfort factors shown significance to business travelers. Analysis revealed computer facilities, telephone facilities and working facilities as the most important in-room amenities to the business traveler who worked in their hotel room. This supports the statement mentioned in Chapter 2 that business travelers need an office away from office because they want to be productive when traveling. It was not a surprising result considering that over half (65%) of the respondents worked in their hotel room while traveling on business trips. The hoteliers should be ready for these working

guests. Then, it is necessary to identify the services that business travelers look for in their hotel room.

For the different age groups, the 31-40 year old group considers business-oriented amenities in the hotel room more important than other age groups. In addition, business travelers who stayed about 5-6 days had more intent to use in-room amenities. This finding, given a technologically equipped guestroom, would serve the needs of the guest who spent more time in the room.

Objective 3: To determine the future trend of service amenities that business travelers want in their room.

For ease interpretation, service amenities were grouped and compared with previous Waver and Oh's study. After comparing, basic service remains the same in the hotel. However, in-room business service amenities in the hotel were very important for business travelers as the concept of office away from the office is rapidly spreading through the hotel industry. It is important that hotels offer in-room working utilities such as good lighting to read/work and oversize working desk.

Recommendations for Thai Hotel Industry

The results of this study have important marketing implications. This study suggests that security and comfort factors remain in the important categories for business travelers. Even the concept of new technology is spreading through the hotel industry. The hotel should not save money by reducing standard features.

With the concept of office away from the office, in-room working utilities has considered in important to business travelers. The information in this study would benefit to Thai hotel industry that they can offer and design business services that fit the needs and wants of business travelers.

The finding of the unpopularity of the in-room entertainment such as in-room VCR/DVD, in-room exercise equipment or additional TV in bathroom is important to the hotel industry. Instead of spending thousands dollars to add those equipment, oversize desk with good lighting is much more benefit to business travelers. In additional to oversize working desk, easily accessible electrical outlets and adapter around the desk plus a data port can provide more convenience to business travelers who carries laptops and work in the hotel room.

Recommendation for Future Study

The general purpose of this study was to add to the Bangkok hotel industry knowledge about the needs and wants of a special market of customer—international business travelers. Based on the findings of this study, the following research possibilities were suggested.

1. Further research might replicate this study, but comparing and contrasting the differences between women and men business travelers in greater detail may change the result.
2. Further study should analyze the impact of cultural differences. It will be useful to study what international business travelers' need and want. Since different nations have their own cultures, there may be difference among their service needs and

wants. This information would help hotel managers of international business oriented destinations.

3. The replicated study should be continually conducted and more varieties of business service amenities should be tested. Since technology develops so fast, there will always new technologies available, which can help business travelers to be more productive. It is important to hotel managers to keep their facilities updated and in line with technological advances, not in behind of their guest's technological needs.

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APPEXDIX A

SURVEY OF BUSINESS TRAVELERS NEED

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-STOUT



The purpose of this survey is to determine hotel service amenities that business travelers need from the hotels. Information gathered from this study will assist hotel management in designing in-room service amenities, which will serve the need of business travelers.

The researcher would appreciate you taking a few minutes of your valuable time to complete the questionnaire. It is extremely important that you complete this questionnaire, as you are one of few people that have been selected to take part in this study. Moreover, your responses will remain

ANONYMOUS.

Thank you for your cooperation.

SECTION I

1 During the last 12 months how often did you come to Thailand for business purposes and stay in paid accommodations?

___ Times

2 Average number of days per visit

___ Days

3 What type of hotel did you usually stay in?

___ Economy

___ Mid-priced or standard

___ Luxury or up-scale

4 Average cost of room per night

___ Up to \$49

___ \$50 - \$75

___ \$76 - \$100

___ \$101 - 125

___ \$126 - 150

___ More than \$150

5 Did you usually work in your hotel room during your business trip?

___ Yes, ___ average hours per day

___ No

6 Did you usually carry a laptop on your trip?

___ Yes

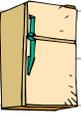
___ No



SECTION II

How important is the following features in your hotel room when traveling for business purposes?
(Please circle the appropriate number).

	Very Unimportant			Very Important	
<u>Room Security</u>					
Dead bolt door locks	1	2	3	4	5
Chain locks/latches	1	2	3	4	5
Individual room smoke detectors	1	2	3	4	5
Individual room sprinkler system	1	2	3	4	5
In-room safe	1	2	3	4	5
Peep holes	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Free Service</u>					
Free room-delivered continental breakfast	1	2	3	4	5
Free local telephone calls	1	2	3	4	5
No surcharge on-long distance calls	1	2	3	4	5
Free newspaper 	1	2	3	4	5
Free cable TV	1	2	3	4	5
<u>In-room Entertainment</u>					
In-room VCR/DVD 	1	2	3	4	5
Digital TV	1	2	3	4	5
In-room video games accessible to TV	1	2	3	4	5
Additional TV in bathroom	1	2	3	4	5
<u>In-room Business Service</u>					
In-room fax machine	1	2	3	4	5
In-room printer	1	2	3	4	5
In-room computer	1	2	3	4	5
Data port	1	2	3	4	5
High-speed Internet access	1	2	3	4	5
Oversize working desk	1	2	3	4	5
Good lighting to read/work	1	2	3	4	5
Two phone line in the room	1	2	3	4	5
Additional phone in bathroom	1	2	3	4	5

				Very Unimportant			Very Important		
<u>Concierge/ Personal Service</u>									
	IT butler service			1	2	3	4	5	
	Packing and delivering bags to airport			1	2	3	4	5	
	Room service 24 hours			1	2	3	4	5	
<u>Miscellaneous Service</u>									
	Speaker phone			1	2	3	4	5	
	TV access to web			1	2	3	4	5	
	In-room exercise equipment			1	2	3	4	5	
	In-room refrigerator			1	2	3	4	5	
	In-room Microwave			1	2	3	4	5	
	Health snacks in the mini bar			1	2	3	4	5	
	Comfortable mattress and pillows			1	2	3	4	5	
	In-room ironing board and iron			1	2	3	4	5	
	Bathrobe			1	2	3	4	5	
	Dryer			1	2	3	4	5	
	Brand name amenities			1	2	3	4	5	
	Easily accessible electrical outlets			1	2	3	4	5	
	Transformer/Adapter			1	2	3	4	5	
	In-room check out			1	2	3	4	5	
	Non smoking room			1	2	3	4	5	

In the box, please identify important service amenities in hotel room that are not listed in previous section.

SECTION III

Please provide the following information to help the researcher interpret the results of the survey. Without this information, your survey cannot be used. The answer to all questions will be **Strictly Confidential**.

1 Gender:

Male

Female



2 Age Category:

21 - 30

31 - 40

41 - 50

over 50

3 What country are you from? (Nationality)

4 Annual household gross income:

Less than \$25,000

\$25,001 - 50,000

\$50,001 - 75,000

\$75,001 - 100,000

\$100,001 - 150,000

\$Over 150,000

5 What was your business purpose?

National or regional sales meetings

Conventions or trade shows

Training and development meetings

Executive conferences

Consulting projects

Sales calls

Presentations

Management development seminars

Client meetings

Others: _____



THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION