

Implementation of Service Quality at The Best Resort in Europe, Adare Manor

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Abstract — The tourism and hospitality industry is a vital and dynamic sector, fueling economic growth, creating jobs, and fostering cultural exchange. With rising globalization and competition, service quality has become the cornerstone of success, especially for luxury resorts, as travelers now seek personalized and memorable experiences. This study focuses on Adare Manor, a leading European resort known for its luxurious offerings and exceptional guest experiences. It examines how the resort achieves outstanding service quality by strategically being ahead than the other resorts in Ireland and a robust guest feedback system. The research also explores how Adare Manor skillfully balances its rich, traditional identity with modern demands to maintain its unique charm and relevance. The findings of this study offer practical insights for other resorts, providing recommendations on how to enhance service standards and ensure long-term competitiveness. Ultimately, this research highlights that superior service quality is not just a competitive advantage it's the fundamental basis for maintaining success in the global hospitality market.

Keywords — Resort, Service, Quality

I. INTRODUCTION

The global hospitality and tourism sector stands out as one of the world's most dynamic and rapidly evolving industries, serving as a primary example of globalization in action [1]. This sector plays a critical role in fostering economic growth, creating jobs, and promoting cultural exchange. Within this highly competitive landscape, excellence in service delivery is a foundational pillar of success, directly shaping guest satisfaction and fostering brand loyalty. For lodging establishments, particularly high-end resorts, a superior standard of service provides a distinct competitive advantage, fortifying their reputation among sophisticated travelers and enhancing financial performance [2]. The paradigm of service quality within this industry is predominantly guest-centric, conceptualized not merely as a technical benchmark but as a strategic philosophy that permeates every guest touchpoint [3].

In a market where customer expectations are continually rising, personalized service is no longer a luxury but an essential element for a hotel to truly stand out [4]. By moving beyond a standard service model and tailoring the experience to each guest, an organization forges a powerful emotional bond that builds a deep sense of loyalty. The effective implementation of a high-quality service framework is therefore a primary determinant of guest satisfaction, stimulating positive electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) and organic brand advocacy, which ultimately enhances the organization's competitive position and market standing [5].

Adare Manor, located in County Limerick, Ireland, represents a paragon of excellence within the European luxury resort sector. While the resort's opulent

accommodations, rich historical character, and scenic setting are significant assets, its primary competitive differentiator and the core of its acclaimed guest experience is a deeply ingrained culture of personalized and impeccable service. The foundation of exceptional guest satisfaction lies in providing the flexibility for each visitor to tailor their stay, ensuring their experience aligns perfectly with their individual expectations [6]. The current literature analyzes perception-expectation gaps in the broader luxury segment but does not adequately address the sustained success of multi-award-winning resorts specifically like Adare Manor. The hallmark of service excellence is a commitment to providing superior value by diligently addressing customer needs while consistently surpassing their expectations in both preparation and execution [7]. Consequently, a significant research gap exists concerning the unique strategic imperatives and internal ecosystems that foster world-leading service.

This study addresses the lack of scholarly investigation into the sophisticated, behind-the-scenes architecture of service excellence. It moves beyond guest-facing metrics to empirically investigate the core organizational drivers operational strategies, human capital development, and leadership that are foundational to consistently achieving and maintaining the highest possible standards in global hospitality. By analyzing the various elements that contribute to Adare Manor's success, this research aims to uncover the key drivers behind its exemplary performance. The objective is to synthesize these findings into a strategic framework that establishes a benchmark for service excellence, offering actionable recommendations that can inspire other resorts to elevate their standards. Ultimately, the findings are expected to shed light on the broader significance of service quality as a cornerstone for sustaining competitiveness and ensuring long-term success in the global hospitality market.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The marketing of tourism is a strategic management process that requires the continuous investigation of market conditions and future trends [8]. This strategic and multi-level process involves the harmonization of policies from individual enterprises and public governance bodies to meet the evolving demands of target markets and achieve economic objectives. The success of this framework is fundamentally tied to the subjective and holistic nature of the tourist experience, which is co-created through a traveler's dynamic interactions with a destination's environment. The quality of this experience is shaped by factors such as cultural engagement, opportunities for exploration, and, crucially, positive interpersonal connections with residents, which contribute to a sense of belonging and authenticity [9]. Ultimately, positive sensory

and service-related experiences are critical in shaping a tourist's satisfaction and overall well-being [10]

The theoretical foundation of service quality highlights four unique characteristics that distinguish services from tangible goods: intangibility, inseparability, variability, and perishability. These principles make consistency a significant challenge and underscore the importance of effective management. In the luxury resort sector, achieving service excellence means proactively anticipating and surpassing a guest's desires, going beyond simple efficiency to create personalized, transformative experiences [7]. This emotional engagement and the creation of experiential value represent the primary intangible product of a luxury resort and a key differentiator in a market where physical amenities are easily replicated. The ability to craft these bespoke experiences is further enhanced by leveraging detailed user profiles that incorporate emotional and personality characteristics to create richer personalized services [11]

A prime example of an institution that embodies these principles is Adare Manor, which has been recognized as the best resort in Europe (Conde Nast Traveller Award, 2024). Situated on an 842-acre estate with a storied past, Adare Manor operates as a five-star resort with 104 uniquely designed rooms, embracing a philosophy of quality over quantity (Adare Manor, 2025). The resort's neo-Gothic architecture and symbolic "Calendar House" design reflect a commitment to intricate craftsmanship and a sense of place. Beyond its physical assets, the resort's commitment to showcasing local Irish ingredients at its Michelin-starred restaurant, The Oak Room, further contributes to a unique and authentic guest experience. This blend of historical grandeur, modern luxury, and a deep-seated culture of service excellence makes Adare Manor a compelling case study for understanding the key drivers of success in the global hospitality market.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design to investigate the implementation of service quality at Adare Manor. A qualitative approach is selected as the primary framework for its suitability in exploring complex, subjective, and context-dependent issues that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative metrics alone [12]. The design is specifically descriptive in nature, which involves the systematic documentation and analysis of facts, characteristics, and the intricate relationships that define the phenomena being studied [13]. This methodology is fundamentally exploratory, allowing the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the nuanced meanings individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem [14]. This aligns perfectly with the study's aim to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations within their natural setting. By focusing on the "why" and "how" behind actions, this research seeks to produce a thick description of the subject, providing a comprehensive and holistic portrayal grounded in the lived realities of the participants.

B. RESEARCH SETTING & PARTICIPANTS

The research was conducted at Adare Manor, a globally recognized luxury resort in County Limerick, Ireland. This

location was selected due to its exemplary reputation for delivering high-quality service and its consistent recognition as one of Europe's premier resorts. Its operational complexity, stringent service standards, and diverse guest profile make it an ideal setting for investigating the implementation of service quality. The participants were chosen using a purposive sampling strategy, which is non-probabilistic and aims to select individuals who can best help the researcher understand the problem and central phenomenon under investigation [14]. This involves setting clear criteria for participant selection based on their specific knowledge, experiences, or roles. The sample includes key staff at Adare Manor, such as a Talent Manager and Human Resources Coordinator, as well as front-line employees like concierges, chosen for their direct involvement with and profound understanding of the resort's operations and guest experiences. The sample size will be determined by data saturation, where data collection continues until no new themes or insights emerge [15].

TABLE 1

Participant Category	Name	Description of Role
Front of House Manager	Gavin Moloney	Ensuring that guests receive an exceptional experience from the moment they arrive until they depart.
Talent Manager	Fiona Byrne	Strategically attracting, developing, engaging, and retaining a passionate and skilled workforce that consistently delivers exceptional guest experiences and upholds the resort's brand excellence.
Human Resources Coordinator	Sarah Reilly O'Neill	Provides essential administrative and operational support to the HR department, managing records, assisting with recruitment and onboarding, and serving as a primary point of contact for employee inquiries to ensure smooth HR functions.

C. DATA COLLECTION

To ensure a comprehensive analysis and promote triangulation, this study utilizes a multi-methodological approach to data collection, drawing upon both primary and secondary sources. Primary data will be gathered directly from key stakeholders through semi-structured interviews and direct observation. The interviews will be conducted with a purposive sample of management and front-line employees to gain firsthand insights into strategic policies and practical service delivery. Direct observation of daily operations in guest-facing areas will complement the interview data, providing real-world context and verifying the consistency between stated policies and actual practice. The researcher will serve as the primary instrument for data collection, using a comprehensive interview guide, a voice recorder for accurate transcription, and meticulous field notes to capture non-verbal cues and contextual information.

Secondary data will be gathered to provide context, historical information, and external validation of the primary findings. This includes an analysis of official corporate documents, such as Adare Manor's website and marketing materials, to understand the resort's official mission and brand promises. Additionally, online reviews and ratings from reputable luxury travel guides will be systematically collected to offer an external perspective on service quality. This data will be used to compare with the

internal perspectives gathered from interviews and observations. A comprehensive review of existing academic literature on service quality, covering established models, will also be undertaken to provide a theoretical foundation for data analysis and the interpretation of findings in a broader context. The collected data will be analyzed using a thematic analysis approach to identify key themes and patterns.

IV. RESULT

The findings reveal a profound and direct relationship between the service quality implemented at Adare Manor and the resulting high levels of guest satisfaction. This influence is not merely transactional but is rooted in a highly personalized, anticipatory, and emotionally resonant approach to service delivery. Data from the semi-structured interviews consistently highlighted that guest satisfaction is a direct outcome of staff members' proactive and empathetic engagement. As articulated by Gavin Moloney, the Front of House Manager, "We don't just react to requests; we're constantly looking for ways to anticipate a guest's needs before they even have to ask. That's the difference between good service and exceptional service." This sentiment was echoed by front-line staff who spoke of a culture where they are empowered to observe and learn guest preferences. This internal perspective is strongly corroborated by the analysis of online reviews and ratings from sources like Condé Nast Traveler. Thematic analysis of these documents revealed that guest praise frequently centers on the "personal touch," "impeccable attention to detail," and "genuine warmth" of the staff. Many reviews explicitly state that the service made them feel "like family" or "like royalty," indicating that the service quality transcends mere efficiency and directly fosters a deep sense of personal value and care, which is the ultimate driver of satisfaction and loyalty.

A core factor in Adare Manor's success is its commitment to innovation, which allows it to consistently stay ahead of competitors like Ashford Castle. The resort achieves this by constantly developing new and exciting features, such as a unique party lighting system and significant marketing efforts to promote positive reviews from prestigious publications like Forbes. The resort's dedication to culinary excellence is also a significant contributor to its success, as evidenced by its prestigious awards, including the highest honour of Three Michelin Keys and a consistent One Michelin Star for its restaurant, The Oak Room. Head Chef Michael Tweedie and his team focus on creating elegant tasting menus inspired by exceptional Irish ingredients, with a strong emphasis on locally sourced produce. This commitment to world-class dining elevates the guest experience and reinforces Adare Manor's reputation as a leader in luxury hospitality.

Another significant factor is the meticulous integration of the physical environment (tangibles) with the human service. The direct observations and document analysis demonstrated that the historic grandeur of Adare Manor is not just a backdrop but an active participant in the service experience. The immaculate upkeep of the 840-acre estate, the pristine cleanliness of the public areas, and the state-of-the-art facilities all signal a high standard of quality before any human interaction even occurs. This meticulous attention to the physical surroundings creates an atmosphere

of luxury and reliability that reinforces the high-end service provided by the staff, creating a consistent and cohesive brand experience. Finally, a key element of the Adare Manor experience is the seamless and proactive personalized service that anticipates guest needs. This commitment is evident in the world-class amenities and daily conveniences provided, such as a meticulously restocked minibar and in-room fridge. This attention to detail, while seemingly small, significantly enhances the guest experience, creating an environment where guests feel genuinely cared for and allowing Adare Manor to offer a luxury experience that is both sophisticated and deeply personal.

V. CONCLUSION

This descriptive qualitative case study, using a triangulated approach, revealed a direct and profound link between the quality of service at Adare Manor and high guest satisfaction. This connection is driven not by transactional efficiency, but by a highly personalized, anticipatory, and emotionally resonant approach to service that makes guests feel individually valued and cared for. The study also identified a multi-faceted system underpinning the resort's service excellence, which includes a core philosophy focused on hiring individuals with an inherent "service heart," a genuine passion for caring for others. This is complemented by a culture where front-line employees are empowered to make autonomous decisions to create spontaneous moments of delight, a seamless integration of the magnificent physical environment with human service, and a strong leadership structure that fosters a culture of continuous improvement. The findings of this study offer important insights for both academic theory and industry practice. Theoretically, the research provides a "thick description" of service quality in a luxury context, highlighting that beyond traditional dimensions, the anticipatory and emotional nature of service is a critical differentiator. It offers a rich case study that can serve as a benchmark for understanding service excellence at the highest level of hospitality. For management, the key implications include prioritizing a people-centric model by hiring for empathy, empowering front-line staff to make real-time decisions, and intentionally aligning service with the physical environment to create a cohesive brand experience.

Despite these insights, this study has several limitations. First, as a qualitative case study, the findings are not statistically generalizable to a broader population of luxury resorts. Additionally, the researcher, as the primary instrument for data collection, may have introduced a degree of subjective interpretation despite efforts to triangulate findings. Lastly, the data was gathered from a purposive sample of willing participants, which may not represent the full spectrum of all employee perspectives at the resort.

Based on the findings and limitations, several avenues for future research are suggested. To address the issue of generalizability, a comparative analysis of Adare Manor with a different luxury resort could be conducted to test the transferability of the identified success factors. Another approach could be a quantitative study to test the statistical correlation between service quality factors and guest satisfaction across a larger sample of luxury resorts. Furthermore, this study primarily focused on the internal

perspective of staff and management. A valuable next step would be a dedicated research project from the guest's point of view, perhaps through in-depth interviews with recent Adare Manor guests or a long-term ethnographic study. Such research could reveal potential gaps between the intended service and the experienced service, further enriching the understanding of guest satisfaction drivers.

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