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Current State of Captive Hotels: USA Point of View

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CHAPTER 2: CURRENT STATE OF CAPTIVE HOTELS: USA POINT OF VIEW

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Abstract

The importance of on-campus hotels, also called captive hotels, is explored as a case study through three lenses: the academic institution and faculty, the student learner, and the hotel operator. The three populations are defined with specific benefits, opportunities, and barriers detailed for each community. A database of current hotels-on college campuses with Tourism & Hotel Management (T&HM) programs of study in the United States is presented as an Appendix to the chapter.

Introduction

The consensus regarding the best way to educate students to become tomorrow's leaders in the global tourism and hospitality discipline is at a crossroads. Some education outlets emphasize technical skills. Others believe the foundations must be in the functional areas of business. Still, another group suggests technological solutions such as AI/robotics is the ideal educational game plan. In a recent compilation of the "Best Tourism and Hospitality Schools in the World. University Rankings", three independent sources addressed this issue, including: *Top Universities QS Rankings by Subject*; *Shanghai Rankings by Subject*; and *the CEOWORLD Rankings*. Each listing was reported with a detailed scoring system and rubric for evaluation (Balan, 2020).

We observed one commonality between over 80 % of the three top ten lists, and this was an on-campus hotel as part of its educational mission. Successful tourism and hospitality (THM) programs offer applied business certificates, diplomas, and degrees where the practical application is valued (Tripodi & Baltazar, 2015: 72). LeBruto and Murray (1994) point out that they identify "insuring the application of classroom learning experiences to actual management situations" as a significant issue in hotel management education. This observation is still relevant today. An on-campus fully functional hotel provides students, faculty, academic programs, and the institution with many direct advantages.

This chapter examines on-campus hotels as a learning tool from three lenses: the academic program, the hotel operator, and the student learner. A discussion follows for each stakeholder, exploring the benefits,

opportunities, and barriers. The case study's final component is a useful list of over 40 on-campus hotels in the United States affiliated with hospitality and tourism programmes.

The Academic Program and Faculty Lens

Definition

Academic Programs are comprised of a series of required courses and electives leading to completing a certificate, diploma, or college or university degree. The faculty are those individuals who are part of the instructional team of the academic program.

Benefits

Competitive Advantage

A captive hotel enhances the THS program's strategic competitiveness among similar programs by arming the department/college/school with practical labs and a more realistic industry perspective. On-site learning helps students experience the challenges of customer service while creating their professional voice. This partnership is an exceptional recruiting tool for the program and academic institution.

A Hands-On Experience

Part-time employment openings will give students hands-on experience and explore major/career options in this hospitality industry segment. A hands on experience contributes to reducing students' unemployment rate, and due to the broad skills developed, it increases students' employability. Moreover, real-life hotel experiences will teach students the skills they will need to further their professional careers.

Campus Amenity & Image Enhancer

A captive hotel is a campus amenity that enhances and improves the amount and quality of life available to the university community and regional residents. It serves as a destination for expenditures that support the local economy.

Opportunities

Academic Synergies

A captive hotel presents a unique opportunity for any THM major to capitalize on access to both the physical facilities and professional hotel staff to support the major. Hotel employment and learning opportunities offered to students may also foster the exchange of academic interests, increasing their direct

connections and orientations to their professional interests. For example, a student majoring in engineering or business management could minor in THM if they develop a particular interest in hospitality, rooms, food, and events from the hotel working experiences. By working in a hotel, any student would see the importance of collaboration, communication, and creativity.

Experiential Learning

Many established THM programs have their culinary labs, and others operate their restaurant as a learning lab for their students. For those hospitality and tourism programs fortunate enough to have an on-campus hotel, the instructional team can design experience-based learning, hands-on opportunities and learning events (often referred to as “structured” activities) provided through the partnership. For those programs that fully integrate a hotel into the programs, the hotel can transform and contribute to more well-rounded students (Andresen, Boud & Cohen, 1999). THM programs often look externally for this training to complement the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Experiential learning at a campus-hotel is an opportunity to have these training experiences closer to the program, assuming mutual interest and relatively equal relationships between facilitator (faculty and/or hotel operator) and learner, giving the learner considerable control and autonomy and even career progression prospects.

Expansion of the Regular Teaching Spaces

A benefit of establishing a new on-campus hotel is expanding the instructional areas and setting a common classroom space within the hotel. This space, during non-academic times, can be cross-utilized as additional event space for the hotel. For faculty, the hotel can provide interior offices, expanding the current offices’ inventory. With its rooms, restaurant, conference, beverage services, and commercial kitchen facilities, the hotel can be utilized for experiential learning, such as practicums and internship courses or other courses, without any new capital, laboratory, or other equipment expenditures.

Development of a Robust Professional Development Culture

Hotel staff are industry professionals who can serve as mentors and provide expert hospitality guidance for our students. It will be aspirational for hotel employees to enroll as students at the institution THM programs, assisting academic programs’ recruitment, retention, and placement efforts.

Increase Fundraising Potential

The captive hotel can also frame research grants or future donations effectively. It repositions department/college/school to apply for grants, mainly related to federal programs, e.g., in the innovation field, grants targeting the study of new businesses strategic operational programs or to address complex sustainability challenges.

Research Focused Spaces

These new spaces have the potential of being used by students and faculty for research. The hotel may help the industry be better equipped with highly qualified professionals within its areas and data to advance and build its future by supporting the broad and multidisciplinary institution research agenda. The hotel services and spaces provide faculty and undergraduate or graduate students with the perfect environment for applied research, e.g., testing new rooms' technology or design, analyzing and interpreting guest satisfaction surveys, testing a new lodging robot or new cooking equipment.

Public-Private Partnership

In the case of a public-private partnership, a captive hotel brings the potential to serve and benefit the hospitality industry as a significant contribution to tourism & hospitality education of the next generation of professionals. A collaborative hotel-academic institution relationship can contribute significantly to the hotel industry's advancement at all three government levels, national, state, and local.

Although educational private-public partnerships are not new, the authors believe that considering the high number of public colleges' new "captive hotels" in the pipeline, in terms of pedagogic products life cycle, campus teaching hotels might be experiencing a period of renaissance.

Barriers

Effective Coordination

Hotel learning activities equip students with job-specific skills needed for survival and success in the workplace. However, as LeBruto & Murray (1994: 72) pointed out, "the scheduling challenge is considerable." There is a need to effectively coordinate, interact, and liaise with the on-campus hotel management and staff's efforts to provide a "hands-on" component to the curriculum, which aligns with the program outcomes, improving student quality learning

If there is no such coordination, what can be missed is:

- some control over the quality of the provided training,
- leadership development opportunities,
- integration of hotel operations.

The Learner Lens

Definition

Students are the primary consumers of education. The students we consider specialize (academically) and take course work in tourism and hospitality-related content programs. Students have changed dramatically

over the past decade as technology has progressed as defined by Moore's Law (1965). An article in *Digital Information World* states that over 25 % of our time is spent online with over 6½ hours daily (Salim, 2019), and this was before COVID 19. Generation Z is more dependent on technology than other generations (Yu, 2020). However, we also know that their learning styles still support active learning choices. "The 21st Century learning concept is about learning by doing, which allows students to have logical skills to solve problems, apply knowledge to new situations, analyze information, and comprehend new ideas." (Thinnukool & Kongchouy, 2017: 173)

Experiential learning is a form of active learning where students connect the classroom theory in a more real-world context and learn as they do (Kolb, 1984; Dewey, 1938). A captive hotel offers active learning benefits and opportunities for the students to be immersed in the world of work by seeing what occurs in a professional hotel operation.

Benefits

Practical Skills

Practical experience is valued in hiring for entry-level hospitality managers immediately upon graduation (Foucar-Szocki & Bolsing, 1999; Goodman, & Sprague, 1991). Tourism and Hospitality students can learn technical skills in many venues, but an on-campus hotel is an extremely convenient location to practice these skills. Although a student might not have to open wine bottles or make a bed as a future manager, credibility and earned confidence are associated with being proficient at these tasks and other related technical skills. Practical experience, which can be tied to formal experiential learning (internships, externships, and coops), also offers the students key exposure to the critical soft skills which separate great managers from all others- leadership, teamwork, time management, understanding company culture; critical thinking and decision-making.

Supports In-Class Learning

The captive hotel enhances and promotes in-class learning in a controlled environment. Student learners experience a hotel company's culture and develop professionally following specific service standards and philosophies under the close supervision of educationally qualified internal staff and instructors/trainers.

Guest Experience

The mix of student-led and student-employed hotel staff increases the potential for service excellence, and provides real-world experiences for our students, better preparing them for the industry. An environment where highly experienced professionals supervise students will enhance the hotel image and school-affiliated programs. Service orientation is developed in several ways, the most powerful of which is observation. Exposure to a professional environment focused on the guest experience is a benefit that cannot be overstated. Service, like learning a new language, requires constant practice.

Synergy

A connection of any sort between the student and the captive hotel builds confidence. This confidence helps a student focus on a career path based on positive and negative experiences and interpersonal connections with the hotel operations team, particularly with leadership. These relationships foster mentoring and future career opportunities.

Opportunities

Guest Speakers, Demonstrations, and Tours

Class visits and guest lectures from the hotel leadership team can connect every part of the curriculum to every hotel operation department. These early relationships can foster confidence in the student applying for a position or a job at the captive hotel or another venue.

Part-Time Employment

For those students who earn a position at the captive hotel, it is certainly convenient to be able to practice hospitality so close to where they study. All operating departments in a captive hotel may provide employment possibilities for our students. International students can have challenges working while in the U.S., a captive hotel offers unique opportunities for international students to gain professional experience.

Barriers

Interns' Preparedness

The reality is that fewer first-year college students come to campus with work experience than in years past. This may mean that skills that are considered basic such as getting to work and communicating with supervisors and other behaviors, are underdeveloped. It is also an opportunity to establish workplace basics that will be with the student for the rest of their professional career. Hotel leaders must be careful with their words and tone. A hotel can be a busy, stressful environment, which does not always translate to the mentoring required from an on-campus partner. Hoteliers are used to working with seasoned professionals who may not be comfortable with training for the basics.

Communication Issues

Openness to hiring for all departments, even those not traditionally thought of as internship sites or part-time opportunities, should be expanded in the captive hotel. Students can be shy and reluctant to reach out, yet have the drive for success. Building relationships and student confidence is important for all parties.

Preconceived Ideas

Students can sometimes have a consumer mentality about education and the venues associated with the school. Although the captive hotel is on campus, students' expectations should be carefully managed by clear, transparent communication. It is NOT the captive hotel's responsibility to provide the student with a purely educational experience. Indeed, it would be a disservice to the student to craft the experience as unaligned with profit-focused business practice. Rotational internships that cannot be supported by the hotel payroll might be offered as unpaid if all parties agree, and the position does not distract the leadership team from the business of hospitality. At all times, the guest and the hotel's financial success should be the priority, as would be in any other venue.

Hotel Operator Lens

Definition

Considering the multitude of ownership and management structures possible for a captive hotel, this section of the chapter will focus instead on the hotel's operating managers. These are the general manager, division and department managers, and the supervisors for the captive hotel. As with any hotel, the priority is to manage a sound, profitable business. Brophy (2015) found that on-campus hotels were not academic exercises but sound business opportunities. On-campus hotels experience distinct business patterns as compared with hotels at large. There is a multitude of demand drivers connected to on-campus hotels (Brophy, 2015). These benefits are multiplied on a campus which houses academic programs related to tourism and hospitality management, as there are aligned student and curricular interests.

Benefits

Talent

The obvious benefit of a captive hotel is a talent pipeline of self-selected managerial candidates for the company. The hotelier can see the student in action and determine the capability of the future worker. These partnerships are an alternative way to staff the hotel on a just in time employment model. The THM student should be more motivated and engaged than another paid hourly employee.

Opportunities

In addition to the pipeline's talent, there are also opportunities to improve operations in the captive hotel and other hotels the management team operates.

Research and Development

With on-campus partners who study the industry, there are numerous opportunities for collaboration to fine-tune operations and incorporate innovations grounded in statistics and science. Beyond tourism and hospitality management, there are business researchers, engineers and a multitude of other experts on campus who can offer mutual benefits to the hotel leaders.

Barriers

Competing Priorities

As HVS Managing Director Anne R. Lloyd Jones pointed out (2008), the university and the developer/operator have distinct priorities and expectations. On one side, higher education institutions see campus hotels as a new education avenue or an added amenity in support of the broader university mission. On the investment side, the developer/operator typically views the project as a business opportunity, and its primary goal is attaining a significant return on investment. A misalignment of objectives between profit maximization and education needs can challenge the balance of the partnership.

Discrepancies have led to various campus hotels' closings, for example, George Mason university closed the Mason Inn Conference Center and Hotel in Fairfax in 2014 (van der Kleut, 2013), and Stockton University sold the Seaview Inn in 2018 (Stockton University, 2018).

Business First and Guests

Hotels are busy work environments. A complicated business structure with many interdependent departments and functions can be a challenge to manage. Working with the demands of the public can be very stressful, and this can impact the patience of the leadership team. Guests can be demanding and intolerant of errors.

Mistake Quotient

Students will inevitably make mistakes, but hoteliers are trained to avoid service flaws and create procedures that promote consistent, seamless service experiences. Service errors and recovery are great opportunities to learn. Not all managers can be successful in an environment where trial and error is more familiar than in a more usual hotel operation.

Not all Leaders are Equal

Not all hotel leaders are suited to work in a captive hotel. Leaders should be carefully screened for the qualities that will make a successful captive hotel leader. We believe these qualities include empathy, patience, and open-mindedness. Leaders who value the opportunity to develop talent and mentor others should be sought. Opportunities identified by the academic experts on campus should be duly considered.

Reflections and Recommendations

The best-case scenario is campus hotels, where hotel managers and supervisors are included within the instruction team and work cooperatively with academic administrators, faculty, staff, and students. Clear, open communication and cooperation are vital to the best experience for all parties involved.

The academic community is more stable, given tenure considerations for faculty and students who will come and go (generally every four years). These conditions make the recruitment and selection of hotel leaders all the more critical. Qualities that should be sought are empathy and patience, a strong inclination to develop young talent, setting a great example, and a real passion for delivering high-quality service. Intellectual curiosity and collaborative nature will also help the hoteliers to make the most of their experience managing a captive hotel.

Above all, preserving this integration and balancing practical and intellectual activities without becoming a purely vocational component is imperative. It is also relevant to point out that on-campus hotels represent change. Moreover, who – or which institution or faculty – is comfortable with change?

Conclusion

All the time spent at the on-campus partner hotel should emphasize real applications related to all the HS program components, from lodging to food & beverage, accounting, events, and human resource management. A mix of classroom discussions and work assignments throughout every department within the hotel will allow the learner to gain a rich and comprehensive, in-depth learning experience. As John Dewey (1938) mentioned, the road of the new experiential education is not an easier one to follow and will require many years of serious cooperative work on the part of its adherents. This work experience, adequately included in programs, should:

- enhance a sense of mutual commitment (hotel industry partners and faculty) towards a better hospitality management education experience,
- facilitate stimulating educational activities that expand students' understanding and roles within hospitality management and mutually benefit partners,
- foster students' ability to understand and develop their knowledge and confidence levels of performing in the hospitality industry.

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Appendix 1

U.S. Hospitality Programs with Hotel and Hotel Conference Centers on Campus

University/ College	Department / College / School Food, Hospitality & Tourism	Hotel Name	Rooms Capacity	Banquet/ Meeting space	City / State	URL
Auburn University	Auburn University College of Human Sciences	The Hotel at Auburn University & Dixon Conference Center	236	22,000	Auburn, AL	https://www.auhcc.com/
(*) Auburn University	Auburn University College of Human Sciences	The Laurel Hotel	32	N/A	Auburn, AL	http://ranecenter.auburn.edu/the-laurel/
Ball State University	Department of Management	Ball State Student Center Hotel-L.A. Pittenger Student Center	25	4,000	Muncie, IN	https://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/ studentcenter/hotel
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona	The Collins College of Hospitality Management	Kellogg West Conference Center & Hotel	85	12,800	Pomona, CA	http://www.kelloggwest.org/
California State University, Fullerton	The Center for Entertainment and Hospitality Management	Marriott Fullerton	224	5,730	Fullerton, CA	https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/ laxfl-fullerton-marriott-at-california-state-university/
(*) California State University, Northridge	Department of Recreation, Hospitality, & Parks Management	Hyatt Place	150	N/A	Northridge, CA	https://www.csun.edu/node/187971
College of the Ozarks	College of the Ozarks Hotel & Restaurant Management	The Keeter Center	15	17,000	Point Lookout, MO	https://www.keetercenter.edu/
Cornell University	School of Hotel Administration	Statler Hotel	153	16,000	Ithaca, NY	https://statlerhotel.cornell.edu/
Drexel University	Center for Food & Hospitality Management	The Study Hotel	212	7,000	Philadelphia, PA	https://www.thestudyatuniversitycity.com

University/ College	Department / College / School Food, Hospitality & Tourism	Hotel Name	Rooms Capacity	Banquet/ Meeting space	City / State	URL
Endicott College	School of Hospitality Management	Wylie Inn and Conference Center	91	18,000	Beverly, MA	http://wyliecenter.com/
Fairleigh Dickinson University	The International School of Hospitality and Tourism Management	Hamilton Park Hotel and Conference Center	219	30,000	Florham Park, NJ	https://www.hamiltonparkhotel.com/
George Washington University	School of Business	One Washington Circle Hotel	151	3,500	Washington, DC	https://www.thecirclehotel.com/
Grand Canyon University	Colangelo College of Business	Grand Canyon University Hotel & Conference Center	300	N/A	Phoenix, AZ	http://gcuhotel.com/
Indiana University Bloomington	School of Public Health	Biddle Hotel and Conference Center	189	50,000	Bloomington IN	https://imu.indiana.edu/about/index.html
Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Department of Hospitality Management	Hilton Garden Inn	128	3,000	Indiana, PA	http://hiltongardeninn3.hilton.com/en/hotels/pennsylvania/hilton-garden-inn-indiana-at-iup-IDIGIG/
James Madison University	Hart School of Hospitality, Sport & Recreation Management	Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Valley Conference Center	231	21,000	Harrisonburg VA	https://www.hotelmadison.com/
Kent State University	School of Foundations, Leadership and Administration	Kent State University Hotel & Conference Center	94	5,000	Kent, OH	https://www.kentstatehotel.com/
Metropolitan State University of Denver	Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Events	SpringHill Suites Denver Downtown by Marriott International	150	2,000	Denver, CO	https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/densd-springhill-suites-denver-downtown/

University/ College	Department / College / School Food, Hospitality & Tourism	Hotel Name	Rooms Capacity	Banquet/ Meeting space	City / State	URL
Michigan State University	Eli Broad College of Business	Candlewood Suites East Lansing Hotel	128	1,000	Lansing, MI	https://www.ihg.com/candlewood/hotels/us/en/lansing/lanmu/hotel/detail
Michigan State University	Eli Broad College of Business	Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center	160	35,000	East Lansing, MI	https://kelloggcenter.com/
New Mexico University	College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES)	New Mexico State University Courtyard by Marriott	126	N/A	Las Cruces, NM	https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/lrucy-courtyard-las-cruces-at-nmsu/
Northern Illinois University	School of Hospitality Management	Holmes Student Center Hotel	78	60,000	DeKalb, IL	https://niu.edu/hsc/hotel/
Ohio State University	Department of Human Sciences	The Blackwell Inn & Conference Center	151	20,000	Columbus, OH	https://www.theblackwell.com
Ohio University	Human and Consumer Sciences	Ohio University Inn & Conference Center	139	6,003	Athens, OH	http://www.ouinn.com/
Oklahoma State University	School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration	Atherton Hotel	69	5,000	Stillwater, OK	https://www.athertonhotelatosu.com/
Pennsylvania State University	School of Hospitality Management	The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel	300	58,000	Syracuse, NY	https://thepennstaterhotel.psu.edu/
Purdue University	School of Hospitality Management	Union Club Hotel	192	20,000	West Lafayette, IN	https://union.purdue.edu/hotel/
(*) San Diego State University	L. Robert Payne School of Hospitality & Tourism Management	TBD - SDSU Mission Valley master plan	400	N/A	San Diego, CA	https://missionvalley.sdsu.edu/plan-overview (**)

University/ College	Department / College / School Food, Hospitality & Tourism	Hotel Name	Rooms Capacity	Banquet/ Meeting space	City / State	URL
Stockton University	School of Business	Seaview Resort	313	34,500	Galloway Township, NJ	https://www.stocktonseaview.com
Syracuse University	Department of Public Health, Food Studies and Nutrition	Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel & Conference Center	235	10,000	Syracuse, NY	http://www.sheratonsyracuse.com
Syracuse University	Department of Public Health, Food Studies and Nutrition	Hotel Skyler Syracuse	58	N/A	Syracuse, NY	https://tapestrycollection3.hilton.com/tc/hotel-skyler/
Temple University	School of Sport, Tourism, and Hospitality Management	Conwell Inn	22	N/A	Philadelphia, PA	http://www.conwellinn.com/
University of Alabama	Department of Human Nutrition and Hospitality Management	Hotel Capstone	150	12,000	Tuscaloosa, AL	https://www.hotelcapstone.com/
University of Arkansas	School of Human Environmental Sciences	The Inn at Carnall Hall	50	8,000	Fayetteville, AR	https://www.innatcarnallhall.com
University of Delaware	Department of Hospitality Business Management	Courtyard Newark-University of Delaware	126	2,225	Newark, DE	http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/ilgud-courtyard-
(*) University of Delaware	Department of Hospitality Business Management	TBD	N/A	N/A	Newark, DE	https://www.delawarebusinesstimes.com/star-campus-blends-academics-and-research/
University of Georgia	Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics	University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education & Hotel	200	25,000	Athens, GA	https://www.hotel.uga.edu/

University/ College	Department / College / School Food, Hospitality & Tourism	Hotel Name	Rooms Capacity	Banquet/ Meeting space	City / State	URL
University of Houston	Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management	Hilton University of Houston	86	25,000	Houston, TX	http://www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/texas/hilton-university-of-houston-HOUUHHF/index.html
University of Iowa	College of Human Sciences	Iowa House Hotel	97	N/A	Iowa City, IA	https://iowahousehotel.com/
University of Massachusetts	Isenberg School of Management	Hotel UMass	116	76,053	Amherst, MA	http://www.hotelumass.com/
University of Memphis	Kemmons Wilson School of Hospitality & Resort Management	Fogelman Executive Center	51	17,000	Memphis, TN	https://bf.memphis.edu/fecc/index.php/main/aboutus
University of Memphis	Kemmons Wilson School of Hospitality & Resort Management	Holiday Inn	82	26,986	Memphis, TN	https://www.ihg.com/holidayinn/hotels/us/en/memphis/memkw/hoteldetail?cm_mmc=GoogleMaps_-HI_-US_-MEMKW
University of South Carolina	School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management	Inn At USC Wyndham Garden Columbia	116	3,000	Columbia, SC	http://www.innatusc.com/
University of Wisconsin	School of Hospitality Leadership	The Wisconsin Union Hotel and Club Suites	60	N/A	Madison, WI	https://union.wisc.edu/visit/stay-at-the-union/
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	Pamplin College of Business	The Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center	147	23,705	Blacksburg, VA	https://www.innatvirginiatech.com
West Virginia University	College of Business and Economics	Jackson's Mill	26	N/A	Weston, WV	https://jacksonsmill.wvu.edu/

