How to Trust Hotel Website?

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Abstract: Industry 4.0 has changed the industrial strategy to improve performance. The Hotel Industry strives to continue to increase the number of rooms booked by maximizing the benefits of technology; one of them through the website. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of the hotel website (website quality) on guest trust (e-Trust). The research method involves a quantitative approach where the data analysis technique of simple linear regression was deployed. The results of this study showed that the image of website quality and e-trust in the Trans Luxury Hotel website is in a very strong category while the influence of website quality on e-trust is 87.6 percent. It can be concluded that the quality of the website (website quality) will affect guest trust (e-Trust).

Keywords: Website quality, E-trust, Hotel website

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Introduction

The tourism industry progresses along with the trends of modern people’s lives. The increasing education and economy of a person or community lead to a higher need for travel. In the long run, the tourism sector has become one of the economic sectors that always growing and developing along with the progress and dynamics of society so that it will be very possible if in the future, many countries, including Indonesia, will make the tourism industry as a source of economic driver for the country’s future. This is supported by the tourism sector, the country’s foreign exchange earning sectors which has the potential to be developed further. In increasing the country’s foreign exchange, the tourism industry must have a supporting system in it including supporting digital technology because, in the current industrial era 4.0, all industries are required to be able to utilize digital technology to improve their performance, including the tourism industry.

Chiu, Wang, Fang and Huang (2014) noted hotel website is an important distribution channel for many companies. Furthermore, e-commerce electronics in the fields of hospitality and tourism have evolved in recent years (Inversini, Masiero, & Inversini, 2014; Salavati & Hashim, 2015). The behaviour of guests in booking hotel

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rooms had changed along with the development of technology which is increasing along with the perceived ease of using technology (Li, Peng, Jiang, & Law, 2017).

The hotel industry is in an ideal position to exploit the potential of the Internet (Palmer, Mccole, Palmer, & Mccole, 2006). In this digital era, hotel guests have started to use technology to make reservations because they are considered easier and faster. The hotel management experience in using the internet as a medium to capture the market will be related to making content on the hotel website completely (Schmidt, Serra, & Pizzutti, 2008). The internet has changed the way lodging companies do business. More and more guests make reservations directly with the hotel through traditional distribution channels (Jeong, Oh, & Gregoire, 2005).

The website as an electronic media is the hotel’s choice to offer online booking services to guests. Existing features for website display must be made complete such as usability, functionality and security and user privacy so that the company has a quality website. A well-managed website can convince users to take action. The hotel must establish a trust relationship with guests (E-Trust) because it will affect guests’ willingness to book online (Wang et al., 2015).

E-trust is important because it is proven that consumer trust will mediate the relationship between satisfaction and intention to make a purchase (Hsu, Chen, & Kumar, 2016). Surprisingly, there were only a few large-scale empirical investigations in the service literature, particularly the hotel industry that systematically examined the relationship between the quality of hotel websites and e-Trust (Wang et al., 2015).

Website quality will influence customer behavior (Ali & Ali, 2016). Thus, the quality of the hotel website will affect the behavior of guests, especially guests who will use the hotel website. Hotel practitioners and academic researchers are required to make a lot of studies to examine the importance of hotel website quality (Law, 2018). The real reason why it is so because of the improved revenues as a consequence of hotel website quality.

Consumer trust in hotel websites can also influence online booking intentions; because trust is influenced by usability, complementary entertainment, and economical hotel websites. Therefore, hotels must effectively convey information and adopt interaction designs on good hotel websites to ensure that guests can easily navigate the website and find useful information (Li et al., 2017).

So, from that background, the question of this study is: How does the quality of the hotel website influence the guest’s e-Trust? Hence, the purpose of this study is to find the magnitude of the influence of the hotel website on e-Trust guests and the quality of the website that can be trusted by guests.

**Literature Review**

**Hotel Website Quality**

Website quality is the overall advantage or effectiveness of a website in conveying the intended message to users (Jeong, Oh, & Gregoire, 2003). While other definitions mention website quality as a user evaluation of the overall needs and advantages of a website (Chang, 2008), the definition shows that it deals with the importance of consumers in evaluating website performance (Bai, Law, & Wen, 2008). Although web visitors do not examine the context of website quality and related evaluations, it seems that the satisfaction of web visitors with the information provided by websites is an important consequence of the quality of websites (Jeong et al., 2005).

The website is where customers first relate to the company and what is offered in terms of information about products and services, as well as the transaction process. If the first experience is negative, then the customer is highly likely to click on the competitor’s website and will not return back (Cox & Dale, 2007). According to the previous research, Jeong and Lambert (2001) proposed empirical evidence that clarified the qualities of a website are consisted of six potential dimensions: accuracy of information, completeness, relevance, clarity, ease of use, and quality navigation quality. Meanwhile, other comprehensive models of e-commerce measure the success of a website through four factors that include quality of information, a system used, pleasure, and quality of system design (Liu & Arnett, 2000).
Website quality is the main determinant in customer’s online bookings. Companies need to pay attention to the appearance of the website that must display content according to the customer needs (Akram, Umar, et al., 2017). In this study, researchers used the dimensions of usability, functionality, and security and privacy to assess the website quality (Wang et al., 2015). Based on previous research from Yeung & Law (2004) which revealed the effectiveness of hotel websites in reflecting appropriate and easy-to-use content that can be translated into functionality and usability. Literatures (Anderson, 2015; Wang & Beatty, n.d.) suggested the incorporation of hotel security and privacy attributes as extra dimensions to the website quality.

### E-Trust

Understanding internet customer trust (E-Trust) is essential because by having trust, it will form the attitude of online customers (Al-Debei et al., 2015). E-Trust is a concept that was developed through the combination of current and traditional characteristics of e-trust by analysing frequent online or offline interactions between customers and business (Wang & Emurian, 2005).

Trust is important because it can help consumers in overcoming perceptions of uncertainty and risk involvement with web-based companies, such as sharing information that is experienced personally or in making purchases (McKnight, Choudhury, & Kacmar, 2002). Therefore, increasing customer trust through a website will increase the success of online transactions (Wang, Law, Hung, & Guillet, 2014).

The emergence and development of information communication and technology (ICT) had led researchers to discuss the role of trust in an online-based environment (e-Trust). From the findings of the previous researchers, there was two risks of trust specifically perceived risk and e-Trust reference consumers (McKnight et al., 2002).

E-Trust has three dimensions, namely ability, willingness to correct problems, and the existence of privacy policies (Ang, Dubelaar, & Lee, 2001). However, Gefen (2001) suggested alternative dimensions namely: integrity, ability, and virtue. Trust, satisfaction and positive customer attitude were formed from the quality of the website (Bai et al., 2008; Paris & Pietschnig, 2015; Park, Gretzel, & Sirakaya-turk, 2008). Based on several e-Trust definitions as a positive expectation, this study measures e-Trust in the hotel industry with instruments gathered from previous research in particular Wang et al., (2014).

### Hypothesis

Website design is an important topic in online marketing strategies (Hoffman, Novak, & Peralta, 2002). The quality of the website is also the main driver of e-Trust. The instructions available on the website for instance will increase the control that consumers feel for the actions taken by online vendors which are directly affecting their privacy - perceived privacy (Hoffman et al., 2002). Other researchers found that appropriate and useful information on the websites can stimulate customer confidence (Shelat, Court, & Egger, 2002). The influence of website quality and e-Trust also received considerable attention from tourism and hospitality researchers (Kim & Mattila, 2011; Shyan, Foscht, & David, 2004; Sparks & Browning, 2011). The quality of the website is positively influencing the desire to make online purchases (Akram, Umar, et al., 2017). Website features evoke consumer confidence which in turn has a strong influence on consumer decision making (Wang et al., 2015).

Based on this premise, the hypothesis in this study is:

**H**₁ ‘Hotels’ website quality has a positive influence on Guests’ e-Trust

### Methodology

The population in this study were individual guests who stayed at the selected hotels and had accessed the websites totaling 19,846 guests. The existing population is taken as a sample to be the respondent in this study. Determination of sample size in this study is guided by the following formula by Fidell, Tabachnick and Fidell (2013):
\[ N \geq 104 + m \]
\[ N \geq 104 + 4 \]
\[ N \geq 108 \approx 115 \]

Note: \( m = \) number of variables, \( N = \) number of samples

Based on this formula, the sample size in this study is as follows:

Based on the above calculation, the minimum sample size of this study was 115 respondents. The sampling technique used is a non-probability specifically purposive sampling. Law and Hsu (2014) suggested a 12-month period was appropriate for respondents to recall their experiences.

This study was descriptive and quantitative in nature and planned to explain the respondent’s behaviour through survey. A simple linear regression technique was applied to the final data using statistical package software.

**Findings**

**Respondent’s Profile**

Based on Table 4.1, guests who used the hotel website to make online reservations consist of 72.2 percent women and 28 percent men. Majority of them age between 25 - 35 years (53.0%) and work in private sector (33.9%). Apart from that, most of the respondents originated from Jakarta with a total of 50 respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>&lt;25 YO</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>The Origin of Residence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil servant</td>
<td>Bandung</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private employees</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Testing Results of the Correlation Coefficient and Determination Coefficient**

Correlation is an analytical technique that measures the strength of the relationship between two variables. The correlation coefficient and determination coefficient are used to determine the equality of relationships and the contribution of variable X. To find out the effect of website quality (X) which consists of usability, functionality, and security and e-Trust privacy (Y), the correlation coefficient values and determination are displayed in Table 4.2:
Table 2. Output analysis of the effect of the quality website on e-trust

Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. The error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.876a</td>
<td>.767</td>
<td>.765</td>
<td>4.949</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a. Predictors: (Constant), website quality*

Based on the above Table, it can be evidenced that the website quality to e-Trust correlation coefficient value is 0.876 which is considered as a strong predictor. Furthermore, it can be seen that the coefficient of determination is 0.767. This shows that 76.7 percent of e-Trust variables are explained by website quality variables while the remaining 23.3 percent is explained by other variables not examined in this study probably advertising, public relations, direct marketing, sales promotion, and personal selling.

**Simultaneous Hypothesis Testing and Significance Test (F Test)**

To find out the significance level of the contribution of independent variables in explaining the dependent variable, the F test was measured. The details about ANOVA output can be seen in Table 4.3:

Table 3. Output Anova

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>9092.614</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>909.614</td>
<td>371.260</td>
<td>.000b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>2767.507</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>24.491</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11860.122</td>
<td>114</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a. Dependent Variable: e-trust*

*b. Predictors: (Constant), website quality*

Based on Table 4.2, the value of F-count = 371.260. By referring to the degree of freedom (0.1) which is 2.79; it is suggested that F-count (37.260) ≥ F-table (2.79). Significant value of less than 0.01 indicate that H0 is rejected; thus, accepting H1. The results of hypothesis testing indicated that website quality can influence e-Trust guests to make reservations online through the hotel website consistent with Law and Leung (2000).

**Partial Testing of Hypotheses and Significance Tests (t-Test)**

Further test (Partial Testing of Hypotheses and Significant Test) was conducted to measure the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The result was explained in the form of regression coefficient as illustrated in Table 4. Based on the results, all independent variables (website quality) examined in the study have a significant influence on the dependent variable (e-Trust). This can be seen from the value of T-count and the significance value (0.000 < 0.1), where the T-count is greater than T-table (t-count = 19.268 ≥ 2.65 = T-table); meaning that there is a significant effect between website quality (X) on the decision to use e-Trust (Y) with a regression coefficient of 0.979.
### Table 4. Quality website regression coefficient against e-trust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficients</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>4.588</td>
<td>2.942</td>
<td>1.559</td>
<td>.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website quality</td>
<td>.979</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.876</td>
<td>19.268</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: e-trust

### Conclusion

It is concluded that the website quality has a significant influence on guest e-Trust with a strong predictor quality. Thus, the impacts of hotel websites must include the elements of usability, functionality, security and privacy in order to be trusted by guests. In short, this research supports previous research that proved the websites are very important for businesses to market and sell their products or services. Improving website quality is a key factor for business success. It was revealed that the hotel website’s content positively influenced customer buying behaviour. Information is very important for customers to decide the destinations, vacation packages, and accommodations (Abou-shouk & Khalifa, 2016). The findings from this study explained several significant issues related to website quality and its effect on guest trust (E-Trust). The empirical findings of this study are in line with the validation results that the quality of a hotel website is a complex two-level building process with three main dimensions including the use of the hotel website, the functionality of the hotel website and the security and privacy of the hotel website (Ali & Ali, 2016).

According to the results of this study, the two main factors that are found to influence trust are the quality of the web and e-WOM (Authors, 2015). The website will increase the control of how consumers feel about the actions taken by online vendors which directly affected their privacy - perceived privacy (Hoffman et al., 2002). Website features evoke consumer confidence which in turn has a strong influence on consumer decisions (Wang et al., 2015). Thus, from the results of this study and as previously suggested, hotel managers must make a major effort in achieving accurate communication and information using the website so that it will get an effective CRM not only to disseminate information (Law, 2018).

The findings of this research are useful to the hotel industry because it can provide valuable input for the hotel industry to increase the trust of guests on the hotel website. From the trust, it will give the likelihood that the guests will make reservations online.

### References


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