

## Article Title

Online Hotel Reviews: Rating Symbols or Text... Text or Rating Symbols? That Is the Question!

## Citation

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## Abstract

This paper deals with the question of how hotel reviews impact the decision-making process of choosing hotel accommodation and the role which rating symbols play on hotel review and electronic booking intermediary websites. A potential customer's decision in favour of or against a particular hotel may be influenced by the ratio of positive and negative reviews on hotel review platforms. Another crucial aspect is the importance placed on rating symbols in comparison to textual material. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to identify whether the first look at a hotel review is directed towards rating symbols or text. This research was conducted by means of a true experiment that made use of eye-tracking technology (BeGaze 3.4). The findings show that high priority is given to rating symbols rather than textual material and that the ratio of positive and negative reviews only partially influences an individual's decision for or against a certain accommodation. Furthermore, it offers tourism managers a deeper understanding of the importance of online hotel reviews.

## Conclusion

This study results strongly support the standpoint that rating or symbols on the hotel booking platform are more effective than the review content itself. Also for hospitality managers, it is recommended to take a look at the reviews on the platforms to get an insight into their services by analyzing them. Moreover, if they could give a prompt response to customer reviews, they would get more chances to receive more positive reviews. Also, when they manage their marketing strategy they need to keep in mind that positive reviews affect more than a negative reviews on consumer behaviors.

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