

Millennial Imaginators®

Ideation and Concept Refinement In the Hotel Industry

Case History

Category: Hospitality, Tourism, Innovation, Millennials

Methods: Concept Refinement, Millennials, Imaginators®, Innovation

Summary

A leading, global hotel chain wanted to engage creative, forward-thinking Millennials to cocreate some distinct urban-hotel concepts with them.

Strategic Issues

Over the past 20 years, many facets of the hotel industry have shifted to adapt to new technology and changing consumer tastes, needs, and behaviors, which has in turn changed how hoteliers and the service and entertainment industries conduct business. It is estimated that Millennial travelers will account for more than 50% of all global hotel guests in 2020. The great majority of these travelers will plan their trips on their phones, identify accommodations through social media, and spend more money on experiences and locations that cater to their unique preferences. They want to enjoy the area they travel to and be outside of their hotel room. Our client wanted to take advantage of these trends.

Research Objectives

The objective of the research was to co-create enhanced brand concepts with Millennials, specifically in relation to distinct urban concepts that centered around key issues such as:

- Sleep experience
- Community socializing
- Personalized/Customized stay
- Giving back/Charity



Research Design and Methods

We recruited and engaged our Millennial Imaginators® to help our client enhance their initial concepts by cocreating with the hotel's design team. Imaginators® are unlike any other creative community in the world. To find these highly creative individuals, more than 250,000 people have been tested using Decision

Analyst's proprietary testing system. We utilize various methods to further develop this special group's creative abilities, and only the best contributors remain a part of the community over time.

The Imaginators® were exposed to descriptions that explained the benefits one could expect from each of the concept designs. Through time-extended creative sessions, the Imaginators® helped our client identify the concept features, language, visuals, and marketing materials that should be used to build excitement and interest in their brand.

Results

We provided five key takeaways for the client that were critical to apply to the new hotel concepts in order to:

- Make them more appealing to Millennials.
- To fine-tune concept positioning to reach the Millennial audience.

The enhanced concepts as cocreated by the Imaginators® guided our client to understand both the emotional and the rational attitudes and behaviors driving their guests' hotel-booking decisions. The Imaginators® guidance was specific in terms of both strengths and weaknesses of this hotel brand and its competitors. Recommendations incorporated newly imagined services and features designed to fulfill Millennial travelers' emotional journeys as well as their more functional needs while away from home. Based on the success of this work, the company continues to incorporate the Imaginators® as a key part of their innovation process.