The Determinants of Online Hotel Reservations among University Staffs

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Abstract

To compete in the current business environment, hoteliers need to cut down their distribution costs and adopt the electronic distribution channels such as the Internet. However, Malaysian hotels have been relatively slow in adapting this due to the current preference of using traditional method of room reservation by hotel patrons. Based from the literature review of the Internet users, a public university was chosen to represent one of the profiles of Internet users. A sample of 193 respondents was collected and the findings indicated that profiles conformed to previous studies. In adopting online reservation, online "bookers" would look for fast, reliable and convenient system. Price is a key motivator to purchase online. The findings are important in encouraging more hoteliers to adopt and implement online hotel reservations as part of their main sales mechanism.

1. Introduction

The travel sector is rated among the top three product or service categories purchased via the Internet (Eric et.al, 2006)[1]. According to research carried out by Jupiter Research, the number of people who have bought travel product over the Internet is likely to double from 18.6 million in 2001 to 38.6 million by 2007. One sector within the travel industry that has been transformed by the ICT developments is the hospitality section. It is said that to compete effectively in the current business environment, hoteliers need to adopt the electronic distribution channels. In addition, research results indicate that a growing trend in rooms booked via the Internet is not emerging from existing customer bases, thereby implying that the Internet is able to attract new market segments (Connolly et al.,1998). [2]

In response to this e-business opportunity, most hotels have already established their own websites to facilitate promotion and reservations on the web Starkov and Price (2007)[3] predicted that at least one-third of all hotel bookings will be completed online in 2010. With respect to Malaysia, in 2005 45% of online purchases in Malaysia were related to travel related items such as flight tickets and hotel bookings. With the Internet users currently at 14.9 million which is 60 per cent of the country's population; an increase of 302.8 per cent increase compared to the year 2000 (Internet World Stats,2008)[4], this represents an attractive market potential. Nevertheless, while the proportion of online reservations is increasing, only 64% of hospitality firms currently handle such transactions (Client and Warner,2001)[5]. According to Cobanoglu (2001)[6], travelers still use travel agents as their favorite reservation resource followed by toll-free reservation numbers, and then calling the hotel directly Peterson et. al (1997).[7] find that consumers are able to gather information about products and services on the Internet; however, the actual distribution of goods and services is likely to be affected by the Internet.

Although ICT experts predict that within several years the Internet will be one of the most important sources for hotel reservations and services (Cline and Warner, 2001)[5], it is intriguing that the current customers still prefer using traditional methods which are more costly and inefficient. In the Malaysian hotel sector for instance, the Malaysia Association of Hotel (MAH) is facing problems of insufficient fund to support the online reservation system due to lack of respond from many other hotels. This is despite the system is said to cuts costs, attracts affluent customers and lessens the dependency on more traditional and expensive channels.

The lukewarm response from hoteliers could be due to the current sluggish online bookings from travelers. Although travelers are increasingly sophisticated in their technological interactions, they may avoid the online reservation system if they feel uncomfortable, even when the benefits are obvious (Meuter et al., 2003)[8]. Hence, despite the growing online market, hotels are still searching for an efficient way to persuade travelers to reserve rooms directly through the hotel online reservations. To add salt to injury, progress in related research has been somewhat lagging (Pernsteiner and Rauseo, 2000)[9]. Earlier review of existing literature indicated that too little is known of the drivers of online consumer behavioural intentions (e.g. Grewal et al., 2004)[10]. While earlier researchers have focused on online service quality (e.g. Zeithaml et al., 2002)[11], a number of commentators have observed that online behavioural intentions while central, have somewhat been neglected (Goode and Harris, 2007)[12]. The gap in knowledge is further compounded by the dearth of research into factors that may moderate the linkage between such antecedents and behavioral intentions (e.g. Jones et al., 2000)[13].

Although there have been efforts to study hotel customers' online purchase intention, much of the research has focused on Western customers and cultures. Empirical studies pertaining to e-commerce across the Asia-Pacific Rim remain rare (Wu, Zhu and Xu, 2000)[14]. In response to these gaps, this paper identifies and analyses the important factors that affect hotel customers' online reservation intention in relation with their profiles and Internet behaviour usage patterns. The understanding of the online purchase intention will help to increase the share of online hotel sales total room revenues. Consequently, this would encourage more hoteliers to adopt and implement online hotel reservations as part of their main sales mechanism. Online reservations can reduce marketing costs and increase sales by efficiently identifying potential online customers. Additionally, online travel retailers can increase their revenues by improving marketing strategies and provide better service to attract and retain more online customers if they know which factors significantly increases the probability of online booking. Only through this understanding will marketers be able to develop strategies and tactics to attract and maintain these customers.

2. Literature Review
Demographic characteristics and Internet Usage Behaviour

Education level, age, income, and occupation have been found to be significantly different among Internet users. Bonn *et al.* (1998)[15] study showed that those who use the Internet as a travel information-gathering tool are likely to be more educated, younger, with higher household incomes, use commercial lodging accommodations while traveling, tend to travel by air and spend more money on travel-related expenses. Weber and Roehl's (1999)[16] study shows similar results. They found that online travel purchasers are more likely to be people who are aged 26-55, with higher incomes, with higher status occupations, and have more years of experience with the Internet than those who do not search or purchase online. The Asian demographic patterns of online purchasers tend to mirror their Western profiles. According to studies carried out by Technowledge Asia in 1999 and 2000, cybershoppers in the four Asian regions (Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Malaysia) were found to be mainly males, in the age group of 26 to 35 years and better educated.

Hence, it has been shown that an individual's educational level may affect their susceptibility to attitude change. Intelligent people understand complex messages better, and as a result, persuasion by complex messages is more likely. In addition, an individual's educational level is also

partially a measure of their socioeconomic status. Weber and Roehl (1999)[16] study found that Internet "bookers" were more likely to have used the Internet for 4 years. Other researchers confirmed that Internet bookers spend more time online per week than those booking offline (Weber and Roehl ,1999)[16].

Finally, the intention to shop online is also influenced by consumers' Internet shopping history (Shim et al., 2001)[17]. It is demonstrated by past research findings that prior online shopping experiences have a direct impact on Internet shopping intentions (Weber and Roehl, 1999)[16]. There have been other studies that have supported online experience or tenure as a key determinant of online buying behavior (Bellman, Lohse, and Johnson, 1999[18] and Beldona et al, 2004)[19]. Findings indicate that the greater the number of years the user spent online combined with higher frequency of Internet usage; the greater was the likelihood of buying (Bellman et al., 1999[18]; Weber and Roehl, 1999[16] and Beldona et al 2004)[19]. Alwitt and Hamer (2000)[20] posit that consumers increase their control with more time spent on the Internet, and in turn develop finer expectations of their interactions with businesses in general. Hammond, McWilliam, and Diaz (1998)[21] showed prior experience is an important moderator of users' attitudes towards the Web.

Based from the literature review of the Internet users, it is noticeable that Internet users are better educated, higher incomes, higher status occupations, have more online experience, use commercial lodging accommodations while travelling and tend to travel by air. In Malaysia, one of the profiles that had an early exposure to the culture of using the Internet for personal and professional reasons was university residents. These may consist of students, administrators and lecturers. However, university staffs are more likely to fit the profiles of the Internet users (in terms of purchasing) due to their financial capability and mobility. Consequently, this leads to:

H1: There is a relationship between the university staffs' demographic factors and the determinants of online hotel reservation

H2: There is a relationship between the university staffs' Internet usage behavior and the determinants of online hotel reservation

Determinants of online hotel reservation

There are various determinants identified in hotel reservations. The determinants of online hotel reservation intention used in this study are based from Salisbury et. al study (2001)[22]. It is based on the notion that perception is an important determinant of individual behavior and that it, in

turn, enhances the intention to book online. In this study, both perceived utility and risk of booking online is evaluated to examine the reasons why consumers do it.

Convenience, price comparison, and lower prices were identified as the three main reasons why Internet users buy travel products online (Starkov & Price, 2003)[23]. Because online consumers enjoy convenience and more control through making transactions online, online travel agencies should compete for customers through enhanced websites equipped with more convenient and ease of use features. Price is stated as the key motivator for consumers to purchase online (Santoma and O'Connor, 2006)[24]. Low prices has been found to be a major driver of online travel purchasing (Starkov & Price, 2003[23]; PhocusWright Report, 2000)[25]. According to the 2001 Annual PhoCusWright Travel Consumer Trends Survey (PhoCusWright, 2001)[26], almost 60% of online consumers cited price as the top reason to purchase travel-related products online and 53% of respondents believed that they get their best deals through online. Haussman (2002)[27] elaborated that online travelers are much more likely to make a reservation if they are offered the lowest price. Emmer *et al.* (1993)[28] stated that most of Internet users are searching over the web checking the price of tourism products before taking purchasing decision. Hence, online travelers would normally surf multiple web sites to research and compare prices before making their bookings.

Meanwhile, Szymanski and Hise (2000)[29] elaborated that consumer's perceptions of convenience; product information, site design, and financial security were the dominant factors in consumer assessments of online satisfaction. Technowledge's, 1999[30] findings stated that the top reasons given for shopping online were convenience, unique merchandise and competitive prices. According to CATALOG AGE's Consumer Shopping Survey (Chiger, 2001)[31], about 67 percent of the online shoppers agreed that convenience was the main reason they had bought via the Internet and 41 percent mentioned price as another factor. Hence, no wonder Swaminthan et. al (1999)[32] stated that the most compelling motivation to shop online is convenience.

Another factor that influences consumers to do online reservation is the flexibility and user friendliness of the system. With traditional reservation method, customers can easily change their particulars while talking to the hotel staff. They can effortlessly make any changes. However, when customers utilize hotel online reservation, such alterations are entirely the customers' responsibility. In the case of airline online reservation, any changes to prior reservations will be charged and there will be adjustments to the flight tickets in addition to availability. Consumers concern in this matter might have a "halo effect" on hotel online reservation.

Meanwhile, Jeong and Lambert's (2001)[33] empirical results showed that consumers' perceived quality of information about products and services on the web was most crucial in predicting their decision-making. Kim and Kim (2004)[34] study showed that online customers considered ease of information search and transaction to be more important factors than price. Although their studies provided evidence that convenience, price, and safety were significant factors for both online and non-online customers, their findings demonstrate the importance of the quality of information on the travel websites. Kim and Kim (2004)[34] findings corroborated Chu (2001)[35] and Zickefoose (2001)[36] studies where both studies indicated the importance of information. Shim et al. (2001)[17] investigated the relationship between the consumer's intention to use the Internet to search for useful information and an intention to purchase. The results of their study revealed that the intention to search the Internet for useful product information is the key predictor of the consumers' intent to purchase. In other words, providing useful and relevant information directly on the web is an important feature that affects online consumers' intention to purchase.

Finally, trust or security is the main concern for many consumers, particularly when planning leisure travel (Lewis and Semejn, 1998)[37]. Lack of trust is one of the most frequently cited reasons for consumers not shopping on the Internet (Turban et. al, 2002)[38]. Security is one of the most challenging and critical issues facing online system today. According to the survey by Tyler Nelson Software Interactive (2002)[39], security-related problems are the major barriers that prevent customers from purchasing online. The results showed that 30% of respondents who have not purchased online indicated problems regarding credit cards and 28% of those indicated general security concerns as reasons for avoiding online purchase. Yang and Jun (2002)[40] argued that both Internet purchasers and Internet non-purchasers consider security as their most critical concern. For those who decline to purchase online, the most significant reason was their fear of security. Shim et al. (2001)[17] and Jeong and Lambert (2001)[33] also supported the idea that online retailers need to build secure websites since Internet users hesitate to purchase products or services online due to security concerns. Thus:

H3: There is a relationship between the determinants of online hotel reservation and the intention to reserve online.

Behaviour Intentions

Behavioural intentions has been defined by Eagly and Chaiken (1993)[41] as a person's conscious plan to exert effort to carry out a particular behavior with these intentions being formed from both a personal evaluative and normative construct. In the seminal work of Zeithaml et al. (1996)[42], the behavioural intentions of customers are conceived as either favourable or unfavourable. Consequently, Malholtra and McCort (2001)[43] argue that generating a greater understanding of consumers' behavioural intentions continues to be a primary concern for marketing researchers. This is reflected in the frequency and rigor with which researchers have explored and modeled the antecedents of the behavioural intentions of offline consumers (e.g. Parasuraman and Grewal, 2000)[44]. However, a number of commentators have argued that more research is required to elucidate the nature and dynamics of online behavioural intentions (Chang et al., 2004)[45].

Based from the discussions and elaborations of the demographic characteristics, Internet usage behavior and the factors that influence the intention of online hotel reservation, a theoretical framework is developed and illustrated in Figure 1.
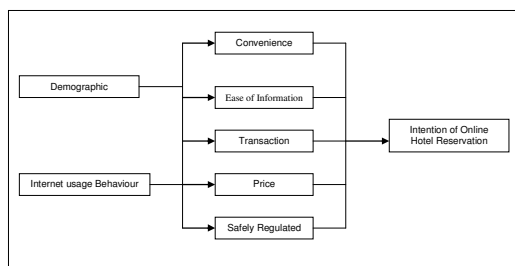

Fig 1. Research Theoretical Framework

3. Methodology

The respondents in the study are Universiti Utara Malaysia faculty members. A significant market segment of the Malaysian hotel industry comprises of government sectors. These consist of all employees working under the government linked institutions, ministries and state administrations. Government employees are entitled for special hotel rates which are about twenty per cent lower than the listed price. Universiti Utara Malaysia being a public university located at the very north of the country entails its staff to frequently travel outside the state for various official purposes such as meetings, research activities and etc. In addition, the university has thirteen centres through the country where lecturers would frequently travel and board a hotel room throughout the duration. Therefore, the selection of the university's faculty

members could provide an insight towards the online behaviour intention of hotel reservation.

There are 1345 staffs comprising of administrative and academic staffs from three main colleges which basically encompass thirteen faculties. The sampling frame was based from the university's e-mail list server directory. A bilingual questionnaire of English and Bahasa Malaysia (the country's national language) was constructed based on previous research. Data were collected combining the web and email. The Universal Resource Locater (URL) of the questionnaire web site was given to respondents through each faculty list server. In this process, fifteen (15) e-mails bounced due to e-mail space quota excess. The respondent's were given one week to answer the questionnaire after which the URL to the questionnaire was block (expired). Respondents submitted their answers online and a data file was automatically generated. No incentives were used in this study.

The interactive method had numerous advantages compared to mail survey. First, it is less expensive because no paper or postage was involved. Data collection time was shorter and time was saved in data entry because the data file was automatically generated. This method also enables the researcher to communicate with respondents by e-mail if they had concerns. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first and second sections were designed to obtain the respondents demographic and Internet usage behaviour such as gender, age, income, education level, browser use per week, and number of years of Internet use and past online purchase experiences (1=yes, 2=no). The third section seeks customers' reasons of using the Internet for (hotel) purchase decisions. Fifteen (15) attributes were designed to measure the online hotel customers' perceived importance of each determinant. The determinants were developed from previous studies by Jarvenpaa and Todd (1997)[46], Weber and Roehl (1999)[16] and Jeong and Lambert (2001)[33]. The respondents were asked to rate each determinant using a 5-point likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree; 5=strongly disagree). The final section measured respondents' online hotel reservation intention using a similar Likert style scale, purpose of reservation and the choice of the hotel standards.

194 responses were received where one case has to be deleted due to large sections of missing data. This gives a clean response rate of 14.51 per cent. The collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 14.0. Statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and multiple regression analysis were used to achieve the objectives of this study. First, simple frequencies were generated to display the

distribution of respondents' demographic profiles and their Internet usage behaviour. Second, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation was employed to determine the determinants of using the Internet for (hotel) purchase decisions. The EFA analysis verified the five factors as predetermined in the questionnaire development. However, some of the items were deleted or were move to represent other determinant. Finally, correlation and regression analyses were conducted to investigate the impact of the extracted factors and the likelihood of the respondent to do online hotel reservation.

Table 1: Factor Analyses, Mean and Cronbach's α

Item	Factors	Mean	SD	Percentage of Variance	Loading	α value
Factor 1	**Convenience**	4.32	0.68	18.52		0.86
	Easy to use	4.34	0.80		0.615	
	Convenient	4.39	0.74		0.591	
	24 hour accessibility	4.49	0.74		0.762	
	Variety of choice	4.07	0.95		0.813	
Factor 2	**Price**	3.53	0.88	17.70		0.83
	Better pricing compared to manual reservation	3.38	1.05		0.862	
	Reduced purchase related costs	3.79	1.00		0.695	
	Discounted price	3.40	0.99		0.866	
Factor 3	**Transaction**	3.55	0.81	13.73		0.72
	Trust in online transaction	3.28	0.97		0.681	
	Fast and efficient transaction	3.82	0.86		0.737	
Factor 4	**Easy and User Friendly**	4.08	0.76	13.00		0.81
	Ease of comparing hotels/services	4.07	0.96		0.772	
	Ease of placing order	3.96	0.90		0.763	
Factor 5	**Safely regulated**	2.94	0.81	12.57		0.76
	Security of sensitive information	3.01	0.98		0.836	
	Protected by law	2.88	0.84		0.835	

Tables 1 demonstrate the results of factor analysis, reliability scores of the construct, the mean and standard deviation data of the determinants of online hotel reservation. As can be observed in table 1, the most critical attribute was found to be convenience (mean=4.32) followed by easy and user friendly (mean=4.08), transaction (mean=3.55), price (mean=3.53) and safely regulated being the least importance (mean=2.94). Additionally, to examine the reliability of the determinants of online hotel reservation, a reliability test (Cronbach's α) was undertaken. The result revealed that the scales had scores ranging from 0.72 to 0.86 and were found to be reliable (Hair et al., 1998)[47].

4. Findings

Table 2 shows the demographic and the Internet usage behavior of the respondents. As shown in Table 2, over half of the respondents are in the age of 30 to 40 years old with a majority of them are married. Based on the education level and salary, over 80% of the respondents seem to represent the profiles of an academemician. A majority of the respondents access Internet at work and have been

using it for more than 5 years. In terms of weekly usage, it varies almost evenly while 80 per cent of the respondents have made previous purchase from the Internet.

Correlation analyses were first employed to examine the relationship between demographic characteristics and Internet usage behavior on the factors that influence online hotel reservation. The results in Table 3 indicated that there's a significant positive (t= 0.606, p<0.01) relationship of education and salary which illustrates the higher the education, the higher the salary. The two demographic characteristics are also significant with the number of years using the Internet (t=0.272, p<0.001). Meanwhile, the respondent weekly Internet usage has a positive (t=0.171) correlation with transaction and previous experience of purchasing from the Internet has a negative correlation with transaction (-0.199, p<0.001).

Table 2: The Respondents Profile

	Items	Details	Frequency	Percent
1	Age	20-30	46	23.8
		30-40	109	56.48
		40-50	31	16.06
		More than 50	7	3.66
2	Gender	Male	79	41.36
		Female	112	58.64
3	Marital status	Single	29	15.10
		Married	159	82.81
		Divorced	4	2.09
4	Highest Education	SPM and below	6	3.6
		STPM or Diploma	7	3.6
		Degree or Professional	16	8.3
		Postgraduate	164	84.50
5	Gross salary per month	Less than RM1500	6	10.89
		RM1501 - RM 2500	15	7.77
		RM2501 - RM3500	50	25.90
		RM3501 - RM4500	69	35.75
		More than RM4500	53	27.46
6	Internet Access	At work	165	85.5
		At home	27	14.00
		Mobile access	1	0.50
7	No of years using the Internet	1 - 2 years	4	2.09
		3 -4 years	8	4.16
		More than 5 years	180	93.75
8	Usage of Internet on weekly basis	Less than 7 hours	26	13.54
		7 - 14 hours	48	25.00
		14 - 21 hours	46	24.00
		More than 21 hours	72	37.46
9	Previous purchase from the Internet	Yes	153	80.10
		No	38	19.9

Finally, a regression analyses were employed to examine the effects of the determining factors on the likelihood of using online hotel reservations. The results in Table 4 demonstrate that transaction has the greatest effect followed by price. The next factor was ease of information and convenience being the last factor. Meanwhile, the findings for safely regulated did not show any significant relationship.

Table 3: Correlation Scores

Factor	Age	Education	Salary	Years using Internet	Weekly Internet usage	Purchase from the Internet	Convenience	Information	Transaction	Price	Safety
Age	1										
Education	.103	1									
Salary	.481**	.606**	1								
Years using Internet	-.002	.272**	.166*	1							
Weekly Internet usage	-.213**	.133	.078	.150*	1						
Purchase from the Internet	-.166*	-.361**	-.389**	-.306**	-.051	1					
Convenience	-.054	.148*	.043	.020	.095	-.114	1				
Information	-.029	.070	.026	.051	.106	-.106	.652**	1			
Transaction	-.034	.051	.112	.051	.171*	-.199**	.612**	.559**	1		
Price	-.021	.076	.084	-.036	.117	-.067	.414**	.441**	.381**	1	
Safety	-.032	-.085	-.046	-.106	.070	.012	.271**	.389**	.505**	.398**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level while * at 0.05 (2-tailed).

Table 4: Regression Analyses of the Determinants with Online Hotel Reservations

Factor	Std β	t	F	Adjusted R^2
Convenience	0.261	3.735***	13.95	0.063
Ease of Information	0.280	3.110**	12.13	0.104
Transaction	0.369	4.308***	15.02	0.180
Price	0.293	4.091***	16.38	0.243
Safely Regulated	0.099	1.291	13.49	0.245

**$p<0.05$ and ***$p<0.01$

**$p<0.05$ and ***$p<0.01$

5. Discussions and Conclusion

The findings of the study reveal some interesting facts. Based from the demographics and Internet usage behaviour, heavy Internet users requires fast and efficient transaction. These findings are supported by the scores where the respondents with highest education, salary and number of years using the Internet have a significant relationship with previous experience of purchasing through the Internet. It can be implied from these scores that the respondent with the highest education are exposed to a longer tenure of Internet experience. These characteristics resembled academicians which comprised the majority of staffs in the faculty.

With regards to the relationship of the "antecedents' with the determinants of online hotel reservation, the correlation scores depicted that "academicians" look for convenience. The results corroborate the means results of the determinants where convenience is considered as the most important attributes in the intention to use online hotel reservation. Their educational background and tenure of using the Internet seems to alleviate their concerns of security. Apart from that, their position as a government staffs enables them to get a special discount (government rate) which is usually cheaper than the conventional promotional rates. Hence, pricing may not be an issue to them since they are usually entitled to a certain price bracket. The means scores also indicated that the motivating factor for using an online hotel reservation is to reduce the purchase related costs. In addition, the academicians used the system to compare hotels and service within their "eligible" rates that are allocated for them.

This study empirically investigated the relationship of the demographic characteristics and Internet usage behaviour on the determinants of online hotel reservations. The results showed that respondents with higher level of education exerts more importance on the convenience factor while the usage level of Internet and prior Internet shopping experience influence the transaction factor. The findings are consistent with previous research (e.g. Weber and Roehl, 1999)[16] that demonstrate busy travellers (as proxy by education level) look for convenience. However, the correlation scores depicted an interesting finding. Previous experience purchasing through the Internet has a negative correlation score with transaction. This illustrates that the respondents are unsatisfied with their initial experience purchasing through the Internet. Therefore, hotels need to improve their online reservation system as the online bookers look for reliable, efficient and fast online transactions.

In terms of the determinants on the likelihood of online reservations, the results suggested that online bookers place great importance on transaction factors which are the ability to make fast and efficient online transactions. Underlying the determinant factors is price. Online bookers used online hotel reservation to reduce their purchase related costs and simultaneously get good rates as well. Price is again the key motivator for consumers to purchase online as showed in previous studies (Santoma and O'Connor, 2006)[24]. Following this, online consumers expect the system to be user-friendly where one could compare hotels and is accessible 24 hour. The non significant safely regulated factor illustrated that online bookers are not aware of the regulations that govern or provide protections in the online commercial activities. The low scores demonstrate that online transactions are still view as not being well protected as traditional business transactions.

In a nutshell, this study has identified the target market profiles of "government sectors" online bookers. Based on the study findings, if Malaysian hotels were to set up their online booking system, they need to tailor their segmentation and positioning strategies to this group in addition to the various

promotional activities such as introducing packaged products, sending electronic newsletters, and sending catalogs and direct mail to appropriate market segments. In ensuring the success of the online booking system, special emphasis needs to be focus on the transactional abilities, convenience and ease of information. Attractive pricing strategies need to be carefully crafted to lure online bookers to make reservations.

Finally, the findings of this study should be useful to online travel planners and marketing professionals in the travel and tourism industry in formulating their marketing strategies to fully exploit the potential of this new channel. Travel industry, travel planners and marketers are advised to take this market segment and determinants into consideration as they develop their online travel products.

6. Limitations of Study

Although the study conforms to previous findings of online hotel reservations, the study's findings are limited by the sample (of a local public university). Great care is needed in applying the findings of the research to other populations. The response rate of 14.51 per cent was acceptable for this study because the sample was homogenous. For other general population samples, a higher response rate would be desirable.

7. Recommendations for Future Research

A replication of this study is recommended using the general population. This will provide a test of reliability of this study's findings. Further research is also needed to differentiate the determinants of repeat online hotel bookers as compared to first time bookers. These will help hoteliers to differentiate the concerns of first time bookers as compared to season travelers that might request for special needs. The findings would definitely help hoteliers to more effectively retain these online hotel bookers.

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