

Hotels that have earned the ISO 14001 certification had higher guest satisfaction scores than those with no such certification, according to a study published by the Cornell Center for Hospitality Research (CHR). The study, which surveyed guests at 6,850 hotels in Spain, found that 4-star hotels particularly benefited from higher guest satisfaction scores when they held the ISO environmental management certification.

The study, “Environmental Management Certification (ISO 14001): Effects on Hotel Guest Reviews,” is available at no charge from the CHR. It was written by María-del-Val Segarra-Oña, Angel Peiró-Signes, Rohit Verma, José Mondéjar-Jiménez, and Manuel Vargas-Vargas. Segarra-Oña and Peiró-Signes are at Politechnic University of Valencia, Mondéjar-Jiménez is dean of Social Sciences School of Cuenca at the University of Castilla-La Mancha, where Vargas-Vargas is an associate professor. Verma is a professor at the Cornell School of Hotel Administration.

“This is one of several studies that indicate clear benefits from eco-certification, and one of these benefits seems to involve improved operations,” said Verma. “In this study, we see that guests do appreciate those operating improvements. This is especially true for upscale hotels, where certification boosted guest ratings significantly.” The ISO 14001 standard, which can apply to any business, specifies a path for continuous improvement and control of a firm’s environmental performance.

The Spanish study found that the guests gave significantly higher satisfaction ratings to 4-star hotels that met the ISO 14001 standard than to their non-certified competitors. On the other hand, guest rating differences relating to certification in 5- and 3-star hotels were muted. Thus, the results imply that acquiring ISO 14001 certification may give upscale hotels a distinctive asset that leads them to a competitive advantage over similar non-certified properties. On the other hand, in 5- and 3-star properties, it appears guests are focused on other factors when they make their satisfaction ratings.

Source: <http://www.hospitalitynet.org/news/4064709.html>