

Fewer tourists satisfied by F&B, tourism here

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A group of Japanese tourists at a local attraction on Feb 8, 2014. Customer satisfaction for the food and beverage (F&B) and tourism sectors here took a plunge this year, according to findings from the Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore. -- PHOTO: ST FILE

SINGAPORE - Customer satisfaction for the food and beverage (F&B) and tourism sectors here took a plunge this year, according to findings from the Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore.

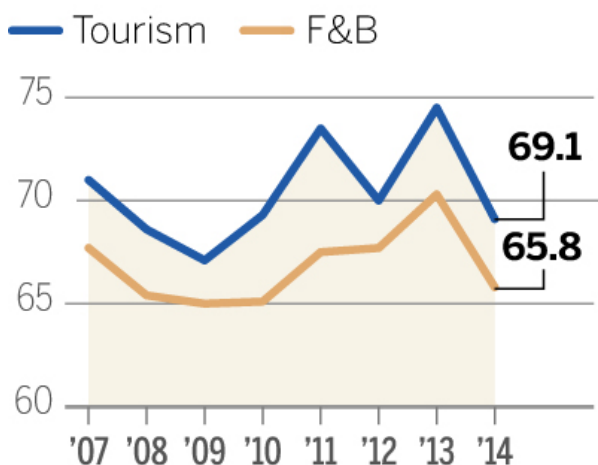
The Institute of Service Excellence (ISES), which compiled the results, attributed the dip to the manpower crunch here, coupled with higher expectations from tourists.

The tourism sector saw satisfaction points drop 7.3 per cent from last year to 69.1 points. Attractions and hotels met with significantly lower scores, hotels in particular declining 10.4 per cent to 69.4 points, the sub-sector's poorest performance since 2009.

Restaurants and cafes suffered most in the F&B sector, for which customer satisfaction fell 6.5 per cent from last year to 65.8 points. Restaurant satisfaction dropped a stark 10.5 per cent to 64.1 points.

Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore results

Consumer ratings for F&B and tourism sectors from 2007 to 2014



Source: INSTITUTE OF SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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Tourists surveyed gave lower ratings this year than last, expressing notable dissatisfaction in areas such as bill timeliness and accuracy, as well as cleanliness. The ratings for residents remained more or less stable.

ISES director Caroline Lim said the decline in results could be due to a shortage of well-trained staff here, due to tighter labour markets.

Residents here might have got used to this, whereas tourists would have less time to adjust to the different service standards, she said.

She advised businesses in both sectors to consider adapting their way of operating, by incorporating more self-service elements for instance.

However, she also warned that they brand themselves correctly if doing so, to better shape customer expectations and reduce potential dissatisfaction.

The results were drawn from 8,600 interviews done between June and September this year, 4,850 with locals and 3,750 with tourists.

The index reports customer satisfaction across nine economic sectors here, measuring up to three sectors each quarter. It is in its seventh year.