

IMPROVEMENT IN RESULTS DESPITE TIGHT LABOUR MARKET

Customer satisfaction with tourism, F&B sectors hits record high

But local residents less satisfied than tourists with service in both industries

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SINGAPORE – Customer satisfaction with the tourism and food-and-beverage (F&B) sectors rose to record highs this year, according to Singapore Management University's Institute of Service Excellence (ISES).

Releasing the results from its third-quarter survey on customer satisfaction, the university said both sectors have made significant progress this quarter.

The F&B sector scored 70.3 out

of 100 points on the Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore, up from 67.7 points last year. The tourism sector, which consists of attractions, hotels and tour-and-travel services, also hit an all-time high, scoring 74.5 points, up from 69.99 points last year.

Director of ISES Caroline Lim said the results have been "a pleasant surprise" against the backdrop of a tight labour market. "It shows that you don't necessarily need to have manpower resource to satisfy customers," she said.

In its seventh year, the survey was conducted between August and September, and received a total of 8,503 responses throughout the tourism and F&B sectors.

Despite the record-breaking re-

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sults, the survey found that local residents were less satisfied than tourists with customer service in both sectors.

Tourists had given high scores for both sectors, with 80.1 points for tourism and 81.1 points for F&B, while local residents had given scores of only 67.6 and 71.5 points respectively when polled.

Assistant Professor of Marketing (Practice) and Academic Director of ISES Marcus Lee said: "While tourist satisfaction has improved year-on-year, businesses should strive to

keep up with the ever-evolving expectations of their target customers, regardless of whether they are residents or overseas visitors."

Asked if Shangri-La Hotel Singapore, one of the hotels measured in the survey, planned to work on its customer-satisfaction levels among local residents, its General Manager Manfred Weber said all its guests, whether local or foreign, are "valued with equal importance".

The same sentiment was echoed by the Fairmont Hotel and Swissotel The Stamford, when contacted by TODAY.

Mr Weber added that Shangri-La conducts focus-group discussions to develop new service initiatives so the hotel can improve its customer service.

"With the help of monthly survey results, we were able to review our guests' feedback, understand the areas for improvement and develop solutions to create engaging guest experiences," he said.

Some of the hotel's initiatives have included personalised tours of Shangri-La's garden, led by its own Garden Ambassador, and complimentary glasses of teh tarik, a local tea beverage, served daily at the lobby.

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