

Hotel guest satisfaction drops to 7-year low

By Gary Stoller, USA Today

Overall satisfaction with check-in and check-out, food and other hotel services and facilities, such as pools and business centers, has dropped to its lowest level in seven years of surveys, J.D. Power and Associates' annual survey of North American hotel guests says.

The survey – based on online responses from more than 61,700 guests who stayed in a North American hotel June 2011 through May 2012 – finds that overall guest satisfaction has declined from a year ago. It dropped seven points on the survey's 1,000-point scale, to 757.

J.D. Power says guest satisfaction with “the underlying experience” at hotels has deteriorated much more than the seven-point decline indicates. Indicative is how satisfaction with rooms has dropped within a point of its lowest level in the past six years.

A drop in satisfaction with check-in and check-out services, and with food and beverage services, could be a result of the continuing impact of cuts in staffing made during the economic downturn, says Jessica McGregor, a J.D. Power senior manager.

Charging for Internet access also is a sore point. Guests who were charged for access had an average satisfaction score of 688 for costs and fees – 76 points lower than those who weren't charged extra.

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