

GAP ANALYSIS OF *traveloka.com*: HOTEL CONSUMERS' EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE WEB SITE

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ABSTRACT

traveloka.com is one of the famous online travel agents to make hotel reservation in Indonesia. Consumers making online hotel reservation can sometimes find that the performance of the Web site does not meet their needs. This study is to analyze the gap between hotel consumer expectations and perceptions on the Web site dimensions of *traveloka.com*. It is a quantitative method with 150 respondents who made hotel reservations through *traveloka.com*. The analysis techniques used are mean test and paired t-test. The results show that there are significant gaps between consumer expectations and perceptions on the Web site dimensions of *traveloka.com*. The biggest gap is on the images displayed which are in accordance with the real conditions.

Keywords:

expectations, perceptions, gap, website, traveloka.com

INTRODUCTION

Internet has become the most important media of communication nowadays, especially in making hotel reservations. In the past, consumers reserved hotels via travel agents, by phone or even they came directly to hotels. But now they can reserve hotels without spending too much time and efforts by visiting Online Travel Agents (OTA) via their Web sites. According to Huizingh (2000), a Web site consists of two dimensions: *content* (company background, specific products, non-commercial information, transaction, entertainment, advanced site and perceived content) and *design* (navigation structure, search function, protected content, quality of navigation structure, image, and presentation style). A good Web site should have all of these features^[1].

expedia.com, *traveloka.com*, *tiket.com*, *agoda.com*, *booking.com* are some of famous OTAs in Indonesia. Compared with *tiket.com*, *traveloka.com* is more famous as it has a lot more visitors (Cosseboom, 2015)^[2]. Hartono (2015) stated that consumers need to wait longer to access hotel lists and rates from *tiket.com* than from *traveloka.com*. Besides that, consumers usually find some errors while making payment in *tiket.com*. Thus, it makes *traveloka.com* more user friendly^[3]. On the other hand, according to (Erwinpetas, 2015) *tiket.com* is more superior in view of the supplied product ranges and the reward given. *traveloka.com* only provides airline tickets and hotels, while *tiket.com* provides other products, such as train tickets, car rentals, as well as other tickets for certain events. In terms of rewards given, *tiket.com* provides program points that can be accumulated and redeemed for hotel and ticket discounts. Such rewards are not available in *traveloka.com*^[4].

A study by Law and Hsu (2015) in China shows that most consumers find some discrepancies in the content of the Web site with consumer needs. In China, Web sites are widely used as a means to find information for travelling or business purposes. So Web sites should provide content that corresponds with the needs of consumers^[5].

According to Anandhita *et al.* (2014), the design of a Web site is very influential on increasing sales. However, some Web sites in Indonesia are considered less user friendly as they tend to be a little bit complicated and slow in response due to large paper size^[6]. Based on this phenomenon, the writers would like to analyze if there are significant gaps between hotel consumer expectations and perceptions on the Web site dimensions of *traveloka.com*. Expectations refer to what consumer needs

or wants before making online hotel reservation; whereas perceptions refer to consumer experiences after making online reservations. The purpose of this study is to analyze whether there are significant gaps between consumer expectations and perceptions on *traveloka.com*.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer Expectations versus Consumer Perceptions

Consumer expectations refers to consumer standards or needs before buying goods or services (Lovelock & Wright, 2007)^[7]. Successful companies are the ones which are able to provide goods or services according to customer needs and wants (Kotler & Keller, 2006)^[8].

Horovitz (2000) states that expectations can be formed by four factors as follows^[9]:

1. *Communications by service providers*

Service providers compete with each other to communicate their services to consumers. One of them is by giving promises through advertising and other media that will eventually inflict consumer hopes

2. *Price paid*

The greater amount of money is spent by consumers, the greater consumer expectations are to be satisfied with goods or services offered by the service providers.

3. *Past experience*

If a consumer has ever satisfied with goods or services offered by a service provider, he or she tends to expect the same experience he or she has ever had while consuming the same goods or services.

4. *Similar experience*

When a consumer feels satisfied with the given service, he or she will recommend his or her experience to his friends and others to consume the service and hope that others will have the same experience as his or hers.

Moreover, perceptions refer to a process in which a consumer choose, organize and interpret some information to be used to describe something. It does not depend on physical stimuli but also other stimuli related with the surroundings and individual circumstances. Perceptions can be one of some factors affecting consumer behavior (Kotler, 2009)^[10].

According to (Kotler, 2009)^[10], perceptions are formed in the following process:

1. *Selective attention*

Consumers filter messages based on their needs, interests and expectations.

2. *Selective distortion*

Consumers tend to transform information in their personal sense and interpret it in a way that supports their perception.

3. *Selective retention*

Consumers will forget things they learn easily but remember information that supports their views and beliefs.

A gap occurs when there are discrepancies between what is expected (expectations) with what is received (perceptions) when consuming a product or service. Zeithaml, *et al.* (2009) stated that consumers are dissatisfied when what is expected is less than what is received. When what is expected is the same as what is received, consumers are satisfied. Furthermore, when consumer perceptions are greater than their expectations, it can be said that consumers are delighted^[11].

Online Hotel Reservation

Reservation is derived from *reserve* meaning *message*. According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia Online (2015, para.1), it refers to a process, act of ordering or booking^[12]. While, according to English Oxford Dictionaries Living (2016), it refers to set or get something in the future^[13]. Online

reservation is done directly by consumers through the Web sites of service providers (Ratnasingam, 2012)^[14]. It is one way to give better service quality to their consumers (Bakar and Hashim, 2008)^[15].

Some benefits of having online reservations through Web sites (Janal, 2005)^[16] are as follows:

1. *Convenience/ Ease of bookings*
Consumers can buy or book a product or service any where and any time.
2. *Information*
A website usually provides product or service information, like price and product specification.
3. *Respond to market condition*
Service providers can add new products or services with their specific information easier and faster.
4. *Price reduction*
By using a website, promotion fee becomes cheaper as service providers do not need to rent or have a store, equipments and insurance. On the other hand, consumers can get better price as they can compare one service provider with the other.
5. *Fewer hassles*
Consumers do not need to have face to face interaction with service providers which may push them to buy the product or service.

However, the greater use of online reservations through Web sites may also have some limitations (Wearne and Baker, 2002)^[17], which are:

1. *Uneven spread of the internet*
Demographic segment influences internet users. Most of internet users are young people, older people do not use internet as much as young people.
2. *System crashing*
Online reservation is based on a system. When this system is disrupted, it can cause negative impacts for consumers, like double transaction, double booking and so forth. The ones affecting the system disruption are network or server dysfunctionality, bug, and inadequate devices.
3. *Security*
Consumer important information, like credit card names, credit card numbers, addresses and so on, must be kept confidentially. Otherwise, hackers might misuse this information that can harm not only consumers but also service providers themselves.

A Web site

A Web site consists of one or more pages having interconnecting information at random with one another (Nykiel, 2011)^[18]. It can be managed easily in the form of a hierarchy that can be developed from general information into more specific and complicated information.

Huizingh (2000)^[1] stated that a good web site should have dimensions with the following criteria:

1. *Content of a Web site* refers to the following Web site's features.
 - a. *Company background* contains information about a company's vision, mission, financial statements, a list of important customers and an overview of completed projects. It is important to present this information to potential consumers as well as to other stakeholders.
 - b. *Specific products* refer to products or services' information like price, specifications, terms of delivery, and animations of products or services.
 - c. *Non-commercial information* may relate to supporting information like company's sponsored events or new technologies, its geographical location, For a hotel, it may offer information of nearby tourist attractions and museums.
 - d. *A facility to request for proposals* contains list of products or services and prices to be purchased by consumers. This direct transaction may look simple but in a more complex situation, consumers and service providers will have to interact several times before all details in the order have been agreed upon.
 - e. *Direct ordering* refers to all details in the transaction (like total amount of products/ services and prices) made by consumers in online purchase

- f. *Entertainment* may relate to features used in a Web site that may attract consumers and can be used as a media of communication, such as jokes, cartoons, pictures, games, and video clips.
 - g. *Advanced site features* refers to the fact that the more available features in the Web site, the more advanced the Web site will be. The extent to which a Web site is advanced has been measured with the number of different features it contains. So if the Web site contains all six features (a up to f) mentioned earlier, it is considered as an advanced site.
2. *Design of a Web site* should provide ease use for consumers to get needed information. It includes the followings:
- a. *Navigation structure* is divided into a hierarchical and network structures. In a hierarchical or tree structure, a page is linked to one or more pages at the next level and to only one page at the previous level. Whilst in a full network structure, a page is linked to all other pages in the Web site. Thus, it enables consumers to navigate as they wish to get the needed information. However, the best structure is between a tree and a full network.
 - b. *Search function* can ease consumers to get the requested information directly by entering key words. It helps consumers to find specific information within the site (not the entire Web).
 - c. *Protected content* are pages only for consumers that are protected by means of an Internet Protocol (IP) address and password. So different consumers will have different IP addresses and passwords to request information.
 - d. *Quality of the navigation structure* is to ease and make consumers feel comfortable to access the Web site.
 - e. *The image of a Web site* refers to how interesting it is in the eyes of the consumers. This can include choices of words displayed in the Web, pictures or photos, videos as well as other cartoons or animations.
 - f. *The presentation style* should stimulate not only reading, listening and viewing but also facilitating the interpretation of the information which includes lay outs, colors, font style and size, and placement of links.

Previous Studies

An explorative study is done by Law and Hsu (2005) ^[19] to find some important dimensions and attributes of accessing a hotel Web site. The important dimensions include information about *reservation, contacts, hotel facilities, Web site management* and *tourist attractions near the hotel*. Whereas, the important attributes are *room rates, payment methods, safety of transaction, hotel descriptions, room facilities, contact numbers, address, search function* and the like. The results of the study show that the most important dimension is information about *reservation* and the most important attribute is *room rate*.

Another research by Phelan *et al.* (2009) ^[20] tried to analyze the impact of a Web site on purchase intention involving twenty eight respondents. The results show that purchase intention is influenced by several factors like *Web site's aesthetics (e.g. pictures on the Web site), ease of use (user friendly), colors, availability of the links, neat and unique look of the Web site*.

In addition, Febrianti *et al.* (2007) ^[21] did a study to find some gaps between consumer expectations and perceptions on the Web sites of five-star hotels in Surabaya using a descriptive analysis. The gaps include the information of *hotel facilities, contact person, reservation, tourist attractions near the hotels* and *Web site management*.

Using a factor analysis, Gozzali (2013) ^[22] also made a research to find factors affecting consumers to make online hotel reservation in Surabaya. The results show that there are seven new factors that encourage consumers in making online reservation: *popularity and technology, reliability, convenience, speed, information, price* and *reward*. Among others, *popularity and technology* become the factor that contributes the most.

Finally Sosiawan and Shandika (2015) ^[23] has also analyzed Web site dimensions influencing consumer purchase intention in making online hotel reservation in Surabaya. The writers use a

quantitative descriptive analysis with 349 respondents. The study reveals eight new factors affecting consumers in making online reservation, which are *access, safety and privacy, marketing, navigation, clarity of information, personalization, service, and accuracy*. The most contributing factor is *access*.

METHOD

This study is a quantitative descriptive with population of those consumers who have ever made online hotel reservation through *traveloka.com*. The population in this study is infinite population so non probability sampling is used with judgemental sampling. With 10% margin of error for infinite population, the respondents must be at least 97; but the total number of respondents in this study is 150.

A five point of Likert scales is used in the study from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to see consumer expectations and perceptions. Then, data are analyzed using validity test, reliability and normality tests. Validity test is used to see the precision of the measuring instruments in the research. An instrument is valid when its correlation coefficient is greater than 0.30. Reliability test is to measure the consistency and accuracy of measurement tools. It is said to be reliable when the value of Cronbach Alpha is greater than 0.70. Normality test is also used to see whether data distribution is normal or not. It is said to be normal when *Asymp. Sig* is greater than 0,05.

Statistic descriptive analyses like mean, four scales of interval from very bad (less than 2.00) to very good (greater than 4.00), and paired sample t test are also used to see the significant gaps with the help of SPSS 23.0. To determine the significant gaps, statistical critical value of t is taken into consideration. When the value of t obtained is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

FINDINGS

Thirty samples are taken to find whether the items in the questionnaires are valid and reliable. From data analysis, all items in the questionnaires have correlation coefficients which are greater than 0.30. Thus, all items are valid. In addition, the values of Cronbach Alpha of consumer expectations (0.97) and perceptions (0.89) are greater than 0.70. So, they are also reliable. From normality test, the value of *Asymp. Sig* is 2.00 which is greater than 0,05. So it is said that data has normal distribution.

In addition, the gaps between consumer expectations and perceptions can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Gaps Between Consumer Expectations and Perceptions

<i>Content</i>	<i>Mean of Expectations</i>	<i>Mean of Perceptions</i>	<i>Gap</i>
<i>traveloka.com</i> offers better price compared to other online travel agents.	4.39	3.93	-0.46
Hotel description and addresses can be found in <i>Google Maps</i> or <i>Waze</i> .	4.51	4.01	-0.50
Information about hotel facilities are very complete.	4.53	4.05	-0.48
Information about points of interests near the hotels is very complete.	4.43	3.87	-0.56
Information about distances from hotels to points of interest is accordance with the actual distances	4.43	3.94	-0.49
<i>traveloka.com</i> provides many kinds of payment (credit card, transfer, etc.)	4.54	4.22	-0.32
Steps and payment process are very easy	4.55	4.15	-0.40
Total Mean of <i>Content</i>	4.48	4.02	-0.46
<i>Design</i>			

<i>Search box</i> eases consumers to get the needed information.	4.42	4.09	-0.33
Fast online reservation system makes consumers comfortable.	4.51	4.17	-0.34
<i>traveloka.com</i> eases consumers to get the necessary information.	4.51	4.21	-0.30
Images in the Web site are interesting.	4.21	3.90	-0.31
Images in the Web site are in accordance with the real condition	4.42	3.73	-0.69
Total Mean of <i>Design</i>	4.41	4.02	-0.39

Table 1 shows that mean indicators in consumer expectations are all greater than 4.00 which are very good. While mean indicators in consumer perceptions are only seven which are greater than 4.00, the other five indicators (better price, information about point of interests, distances from the hotel, interesting images, and images in accordance with the real condition) are ranged from 3.00 to 4.00. Thus, they are considered as good enough. At the average, the means of consumer expectations and perceptions are greater than 4.00 so they are still considered as very good.

Furthermore, Table 2 below shows the result of Paired Samples t test in which the significance is 0.000 (less than 0.050). So it can be said that there are significant differences/ gaps between consumer expectations and perceptions and the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 2. Paired Samples t Test

Pair	Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Consumer Expectations and Perceptions	0.432	12.447	11	0.000

DISCUSSION

Most of the respondents in this study are between 18 to 27 years old (60%) as older people do not use internet as much as young people. This is in line with Wearne and Baker (2002) who state that internet users are influenced by demography segments. Older people rarely use or do not use internet as much as young people^[17]. Mostly also work as private employees (51%). Their monthly income is between Rp 2,000,001.00 to Rp 4,000,000.00 (38%) with average expenditure about Rp 400,001.00 – Rp 800,000.00 per transaction. As room rates of two to three star hotel in Indonesia is between Rp 400,000.00 to Rp 800,000.00, it can be said that most respondents make online reservations in these hotels.

Table 1 reveals that seven indicators of content are very good. Consumers have a very high expectation in finding complete information about payment steps and process when making transaction with *traveloka.com* (mean 4.54). This is due to the fact that most consumers want to have easy payment access accordingly. Moreover, consumers have least expectation in the indicators of design, especially interesting images on *traveloka.com* (mean 4.21). They think that attracting images won't be able to guarantee the real condition of the hotel rooms or facilities. They are more concerned with the suitability of the images and the real condition of the hotel than the attractiveness of the images themselves. But as a whole, consumers have very high expectations in accessing *traveloka.com* as the average mean is greater than 4.00.

In terms of perceptions, consumers have good perceptions of the Web site *traveloka.com* as the means of five out of twelve indicators (offering better price, complete information about points of interests, suitable information about distances, interesting images and suitability between images and real conditions) ranged 3.01 to 4.00. Though the performance of *traveloka.com* is good enough, it can still be maximized to be better. The rest seven indicators have very good performances as their means are greater than 4.00. Thus *traveloka.com* has very good perceptions in the consumer minds.

The highest performance of *traveloka.com* is in the methods of payment with mean of 4.22. Consumers have several choices to pay their online reservations since different consumers may have different needs and wants. Not all consumers have credit cards so they can make transactions using

mobile or internet banking and the like. This easy payment makes them feel comfortable when making online transactions. In addition, the lowest performance of *traveloka.com* is the images displayed in the Web site which are sometimes not in accordance with the real conditions (mean 3.73). This is due to the fact that some hotels do not update the newest images in the Web site accordingly that can make consumers dissatisfied when they compare the images with the reality. Some consumers state that the room images look so spacious and clean; but in reality, the rooms are so narrow and not as clean as in the displayed images in the Web.

Moreover, there are discrepancies between consumer expectations and perceptions in all indicators (Table 1); and these gaps are significant with t value of 12.447 which is greater than t table (2.201) and significance of 0.000 which is less than 0.050 (Table 2). The biggest gap is in the suitability of images in the Web site with the real conditions (-0.69), while the least gap is in the easy way for consumers to get the necessary information (-0.30).

This study is also in accordance with by Febrianti, *et al.* (2007)^[21]. Both studies show significant gaps between consumer expectations and perceptions when making hotel reservations. The object of this study is Online Travel Agent *traveloka.com*, whereas the object of the later study is a hotel Web site. The biggest gap in this study is in the displayed images in the Web site with the real conditions and the smallest gap is the easy use to get the necessary information. Whilst, the biggest gap of the later study is in the information of website management and the smallest gap is in information about consumer contact.

CONCLUSION

Consumer expectations are greater than consumer perceptions. There are some significant gaps between consumer expectations and perceptions in the twelve indicators of *traveloka.com*. The biggest gap is in the suitability of images displayed in the Web site with the real conditions as some consumers do not find the real conditions of the hotels as expected. Whereas, the least one is in the easy of consumers to get the necessary information in the Web site. This is due to the fact that sometimes it takes longer time to access the information. But as a whole, *traveloka.com* is still good enough in the minds of consumers.

Due to the gaps in this study, it is suggested that *traveloka.com* needs do the followings: 1) updating the latest hotel images as not to disappoint the consumers when they compare them with the reality, 2) providing more complete information about points of interests and attractions near the hotels so that consumers are able to plan their visit/ trip, 3) providing more complete hotel description and addresses (e.g. telephone numbers, street numbers, post codes, etc.) that can be accessed in *Google Maps* or *Waze* easily, 4) maintaining more accurate or exact distance information about points of interests near the hotels, and 5) updating the latest hotel facilities if any.

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