

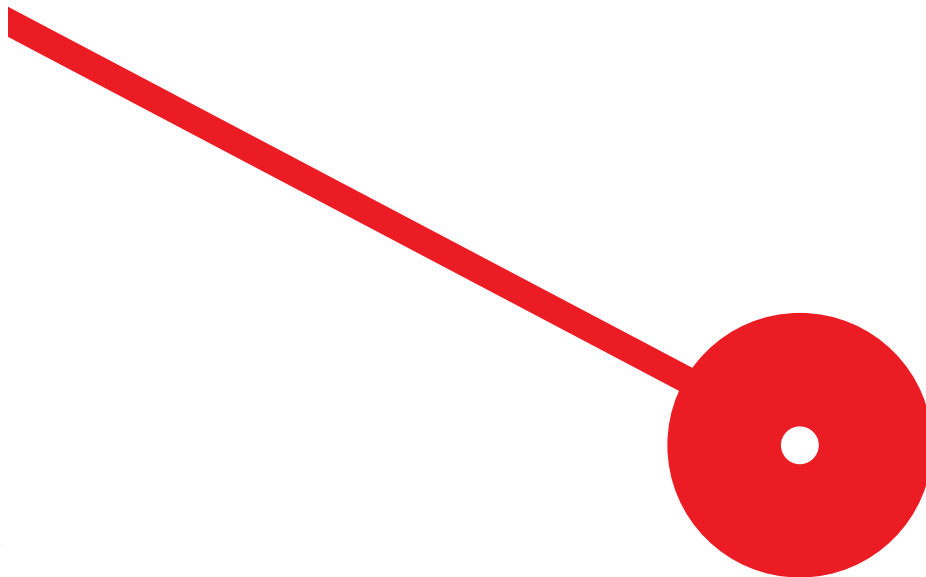


Working in the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro: Business Tourism and its Importance for the Success of a Hotel Unit

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**Relatório de Estágio apresentado ao Instituto Superior de
Contabilidade e Administração do Porto para a obtenção do grau
de Mestre em Estudos Interculturais para Negócios, sob
orientação de Doutor Marco Furtado**

Bárbara Raquel Fernandes Sousa. Working in
The Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro: Business
Tourism and its importance for the success of
a Hotel Unit
10/2022



Dedication

I dedicate this work to all those who believed in me
and gave me their daily support.

Acknowledgments

Now that another stage is over, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who, in some way, allowed this internship report to come to fruition.

First of all, I want to thank my family for having done everything in their power from the beginning to give me the opportunity to be in the course I always wanted and for accompanying me throughout the course.

I would also like to thank all my friends, both my undergraduate and master's friends, for having shared unforgettable moments with me both in Coimbra and in Porto. To all my teachers who crossed my path along my academic career and provided me with the best knowledge and experiences I can only thank them for all the support they gave me.

To Professor Marco Furtado I thank him for accepting to be my internship supervisor and for supporting me in this last stage of my academic path.

Last but not least, I want to thank the whole team at the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro for accepting my internship proposal and for welcoming me so well in the team, especially my internship supervisor, Dr. Adriana Azevedo.

Abstract:

This report refers to an internship that was carried out as part of the Master's Degree in Intercultural Studies for Business at the Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto. It had a total duration of four hundred hours and took place between February 2022 and May 2022 at the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro, a member of the national chain "Stay Hotels".

The main objective of this report is to explain not only how the internship took place, i.e., to describe as best as possible all the activities carried out in it, but also to develop with special attention the organization and functioning of the hotel itself, as well as the knowledge that was acquired during the internship. This internship covered the departments of Front-Office (reception) and F&B (Food and Beverage).

Key words: Report, internship, hotel, Front-Office

Resumo:

Este relatório refere-se a um estágio que foi realizado no âmbito do Mestrado em Estudos Interculturais para Negócios do Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto. Teve uma duração total de quatrocentas horas e decorreu entre Fevereiro de 2022 e Maio de 2022 no Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro, membro da cadeia nacional "Stay Hotels".

O principal objectivo deste relatório é explicar não só como se realizou o estágio, ou seja, descrever o melhor possível todas as actividades nele realizadas, mas também desenvolver com especial atenção a organização e funcionamento do próprio hotel, bem como os conhecimentos adquiridos durante o estágio. Este estágio abrangeu os departamentos de Front-Office (recepção) e F&B (Alimentação e Bebidas).

Palavras chave: Relatório, estágio, hotel, recepção

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter I – Business Tourism and its importance for the success of a Hotel Unit	4
1 Business Tourism and its importance for the success of a Hotel Unit	5
1.1 Business Tourism Concept	5
1.1.1 Fragments of Business Tourism	7
1.1.2 The Business Tourism market	9
1.2 Business Tourism in Portugal	12
1.2.1 Hotel Supply and Occupancy	12
1.3 Business Tourism at SHGC	15
1.3.1 Stay Corporate	17
Chapter II – Stay Hotels	22
2 Stay Hotels	23
2.1 Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro	23
2.2 Services offered	24
2.2.1 Rooms	25
2.2.2 Breakfast and Snack-bar	28
2.2.3 Entertainment and Leisure	28
2.2.4 Perfect for business	29
2.3 Vision, Mission and Values	29
2.4 Organizational Structure	30
2.4.1 General Management and the Commercial Department	30
2.4.2 Front-Office Department (Reception)	31
2.4.3 F&B (Food and Beverage) Department	32
2.4.4 Housekeeping and Maintenance Department	32
Capítulo III – Internship	33
3 Internship	34
3.1 Why Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro ?	34
3.2 First impressions and first contacts	35
3.3 The first week of the Internship	35
3.4 The Front Desk of Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro	36
3.4.1 Reception	37
3.4.1.1 Reservations	39
3.4.1.2 E-mail management	41

3.4.1.3	Partners	41
3.4.2	Weekends and Holidays	42
3.4.3	Closing cash and checking invoices.....	43
3.4.4	Space Maintenance	44
Conclusion		45
References		48
Web References		50
Attachments		52
Attachment I – The SHGC snack bar, games and reading area.....		53
Attachment II- SHGC Partners.....		55
Attachment III- Promotion of this Stay Corporate campaign in the hotels and online		56

List of Figures

Figure 1- Business Tourism Structure according to Davidson and Cope (2003).....	8
Figure 2- The structure of business tourism (Swarbrooke and Horner (2001).....	10
Figure 3 -Tourist Travel by Residents: total, by destination and main purpose.....	13
Figure 4- Trips by destination and main purpose	14
Figure 5- Trips by destination and main purpose	14
Figure 6 - Trips by destination and main purpose	15
Figure 7-SHGC Focus Room	16
Figure 8- SHGC Focus Room	16
Figure 9- Stay Corporate campaign promotion	19
Figure 10- Promotion of Stay Corporate's campaign on the three levels of benefits	20
Figure 11- Location of the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro	24
Figure 12- Double room at the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro	25
Figure 13-Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro Twin Room	26
Figure 14- Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro Suite Room.....	27
Figure 15- Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro Stay ONE Room.....	27

List of Tables

Table 1- three levels of Stay Corporate's unique advantages	17
Table 2- Conditions of access to Stay Corporate program of Stay Hotels.....	18
Table 3- Ways of promoting the Stay Corporate campaign on the different levels	19
Table 4-Campaign distribution in the three levels.....	20

List of abbreviations

ATM – Automated Teller Machine

CEMI – Conventions, Exhibitions, Meetings, Incentives

CP – Comboios de Portugal

ESP – Erasmus Student Network

F&B - Food & Beverage

ICCA – International Congress Convention Association

INE – Instituto Nacional de Estatística/ Statistics Portugal

MCE – Meetings, Conventions, Exhibitions

MC&IT – Meetings, Conventions & Incentive Travel

MECE – Meetings, Events, Conventions, Exhibitions

MEE – Ministério da Economia e Emprego

MEI – Ministério da Economia e da Inovação

MICE – Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, Exhibitions

MPI – Meeting Professionals Internationals

PDF - Portable Document Format

SHGC – Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro

SMS - Short-message service

SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNWTO – United Nations World of Tourism

WTO – World Tourism Organization

INTRODUCTION

This report is written within the scope of the curricular unit "Internship", a unit that is part of the Master in Intercultural Studies for Business and was supervised by Dr. Professor Marco Furtado, from Instituto Superior de Administração e Contabilidade do Porto.

This internship took place at Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro and lasted for four months, from February 2022 to May 2022. During this period, I was part of the Front-Office department (reception) and the F&B department (breakfasts and snack-bar), under the guidance of the hotel's quality manager, Dr. Adriana Azevedo. The opportunity to have the internship in a hotel like the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro, of national renown, became an overwhelming experience, both personally and professionally. In addition, I was able to put into practice all the skills and knowledge I have been acquiring during my Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Before starting my Master's, which is now in its final stage, I had the privilege, through my degree in Modern Languages at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Coimbra, not only to deepen my skills in the area of languages, more precisely English and German, but also to extend my linguistic, cultural and literary knowledge of these two languages. Some of this learning has been expanded during these two years of the Master, more specifically in the area of cultures and communication with the help of curricular units such as Entrepreneurship in Culture, Intercultural Communication Technologies, Culture and Development, and Intercultural Economic Relations, which helped me, for example, to know how to communicate correctly with others and to understand the different cultures existing in our society.

The choice of the entity that hosted the internship made sure that all the knowledge I acquired during my academic career was put into practice in the best possible way. The Stay Hotels chain, despite having only nine hotels, is able to represent leisure and business tourism all over the country, with the help of its partnerships. Furthermore, it is dedicated to "providing differentiated experiences, focused on proximity, well-being, and modernity".

This report begins with a brief introduction, whose main objective is to contextualize my academic path to date. Next, I will address and analyze how the Business Tourism that the hotel practices and cherishes so much has an impact on the hotel itself and makes it a successful hotel unit. Then, the Stay Hotels network is presented, more specifically, the Stay Hotels Guimarães Centro, explaining in detail not only the services offered by the hotel, its vision, mission and values, but also its internal

organization. Afterwards, there follows an explanation of the choice of the host entity for this Internship. After this, all the activities developed during the internship period, as well as the numerous adversities, will be presented in maximum detail.

In order to successfully complete the Internship, it was necessary to use a specific work methodology that is defined according to Dr. Shanti Brushan Mishra and Dr. Shashi Alok in the "Handbook of Research Methodology" (2017). According to these two authors, after the literature survey it is up to the researcher to make a working hypothesis. This, in turn, is nothing more than a guess made in order to test the logical outcome of the research itself. This hypothesis derives not only from the research problem, but also from the literature review and the conceptual framework. Hypothesis formulation, according to Dr. Shanti Brushan Mishra and Dr. Shashi Alok, can arise in different ways.

Mostly, for the understanding of each department of the hotel, problem solving and the correct execution of each imposed task was achieved through direct observation and through questions asked to the reception teammates. Initially I was also provided with a Hotel operation manual, where all the concepts, campaigns in effect, among others, were inserted. Besides that, the use of the website "Stay hotels" was also a very useful tool, not only to get to know other hotels, but also to learn the vision, mission and values of Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro.

Last but not least, the report ends with some final considerations, where I will expose in the most direct and true way, not only a reflection of the whole path that led to the completion of the internship, but also a general assessment of the weight that this opportunity will have for my future.

**CHAPTER I – BUSINESS TOURISM AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE
SUCCESS OF A HOTEL UNIT**

1 Business Tourism and its importance for the success of a Hotel Unit

1.1 Business Tourism Concept

The truth is that both statistically and conceptually, there is a wealth of information on Business Tourism, although it is somewhat fragmented and dispersed. The fact that there is a great heterogeneity of concepts and at the same time a lack of standard terminology, has meant that in recent times there have been multiple acronyms used to define a set of events or activities associated with Business Tourism. We refer to MECE (Meetings, Events, Conventions, Exhibitions), MCE (Meetings, Conventions, Exhibitions), CEMI (Conventions, Exhibitions, Meetings, Incentives), MC&IT (Meetings, Conventions & Incentive Travel), MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, Exhibitions) or even the Meetings Industry. This last concept was only in 2006 according to a decision that was carried out by the International Congress Convention Association (ICCA), Reeds Travel Exhibitions, Meeting Professionals International (MPI), and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), as an attempt to standardize the concepts into one or at least create a stronger image in the industry (Weber and Chon, 2002; Davidson and Cope, 2003; Swarbrooke and Horner, 2001; UNWTO, 2006; Rogers, 2008).

For many years, the inclusion of travel motivated only by business in the conceptual sphere of tourism was left aside. The definition of tourism, according to Krapf and Wunziker (1942), presents one of the first approaches to the type of activity developed in the travel and stay of a tourist, making clear reference to the aspect related to business travel or even for professional reasons. For these two authors, tourism excludes all travel and stays that are used only for profit (Krapf and Wunziker, 1942, cited by Cunha, 2003).

However, this definition ends up raising many doubts regarding the concept of profitable activity. For example, a lecturer makes a living traveling to various places and countries to speak at conferences, however, because it is a lucrative activity, it is no longer included in the so-called Business Tourism. On the other hand, if this lecturer were a teacher and if he/she traveled in order to participate in a conference where he/she might or might not get any kind of remuneration, then he/she would already be included in what we call Business Tourism.

The World Tourism Organization (WTO), in 1991, took the first steps and began to address all issues associated with profit and business travel by defining tourism as the set of activities undertaken by individuals who in the course of their travels stay outside their usual environment for a consecutive period not exceeding one year for profit, business or any activity that includes any type of remuneration in the place in question visited (WTO, 1991). From this statement, the concept of "usual environment" appears instead of the well-known "place of residence" and the category "business and professional reasons" is created, in order to classify tourism through the main motivation of the trip, excluding any paid activity associated with the place visited. (Marques & Santos, 2016).

However, not all authors agree with the definition given by the WTO, much less with the inclusion of business trips or trips made for professional reasons in the concept of tourism. Barretto (2008) was one of them. He argues that a tourist trip must necessarily be associated with an act of pleasure and leisure activities, so when there is some profitable purpose in making the trip in question, it cannot be considered tourism (Barretto, 2008). According to this perspective of Barretto, in addition to business tourism, other segments should be excluded from the concept of tourism, including health tourism (e.g. medical treatments). However, it is important to note that despite different perspectives from various authors, business travel is structured, in terms of services and facilities, in the same way as leisure travel, whether associated with profit or not. Some authors like Boniface and Cooper (2005), defend the idea that Business Tourism, even if it includes any kind of remuneration, uses the same services and facilities as Leisure Tourism, therefore, it should be included in the concept of tourism (Boniface and Cooper, 2005).

Another perspective, advocated by Beni (2001), refers to Business Tourism as the travel of businessmen, representatives of large companies, in order to carry out commercial and industrial transactions and activities. Cunha (2006), on the other hand, defines Business Tourism as "the set of trips made within the scope of professional activities of whatever nature: economic, scientific, political and social" (Cunha, 2006, p.231). However, the same author emphasizes the economic importance of this sector by stating that:

Business and professions lead to the displacement of large numbers of people giving rise to important tourist movements of great economic significance. For reasons related to business and professions people move to attend meetings, congresses, missions, exhibitions, fairs, to establish contacts with companies or conduct business (...). The preferred destinations are those with congress and exhibition centers and large urban or industrial centers. (Cunha, 2003, pp.51-52).

As previously mentioned, we can then understand Business Tourism as the set of activities developed by individuals who, in the course of their travels, stay outside their usual environment for a consecutive period not exceeding one year, with the purpose of participating in meetings, congresses, corporate events, exhibitions or other business events, and which are not remunerated at the place of destination.

1.1.1 Fragments of Business Tourism

As we had the opportunity to analyze earlier, Business Tourism is a concept that can cover, in addition to all the activities associated with tourism in general, a set of events or certain activities held only at the chosen destination. In order to standardize the concepts and create a stronger image of the sector, the concept of Meetings Industry emerged in 2006. According to the initial definition, the Meetings Industry includes all activities related to the sale, promotion, organization and delivery of meetings and events. In addition, it encompasses all services and products related to corporate meetings, congresses, conferences, conventions, fairs, exhibitions and seminars, whose objectives are related to doing business, motivating participants, learning, socializing, exchanging ideas and holding debates or even discussions (UNWTO, 2006).

Davidson and Cope (2003) divide business travel into just two groups: individual business travel and Business Tourism (figure 4). As the name implies, individual business travel includes all the necessary travel that an individual does in order to perform all the tasks or activities related to his or her profession, i.e. traveling to a certain place in order to resolve a certain issue related to his or her business. These trips are classified as "non-discretionary", because the destination is not chosen, but imposed by the demands of the job. Business Tourism considered "discretionary", on the other hand, is subdivided into

meetings, exhibitions, incentive travel and corporate hospitality. Here, the decision of location choice becomes flexible, since these trips are mostly associated with group travel.

Rogers (2008) also assumes a similar segmentation. However, he includes individual business trips as part of Business Tourism and replaces the concept of "meetings" by "conferences". In addition, he considers Business Tourism as a subsector of general tourism and divides it into: I) conferences, II) exhibitions and fairs, III) incentive travel, IV) events or corporate hospitality (discretionary) and V) individual business travel (non-discretionary).

Although there are different perspectives, we can still divide Business Tourism into two strands: an individual strand, consisting of individuals who frequently travel on behalf of their companies; and a collective strand, which includes events such as meetings, incentive trips, conventions, fairs or exhibitions (Davidson and Cope (2003); Cunha (2006); Rogers (2008), which is often associated with the Meetings Industry concept.

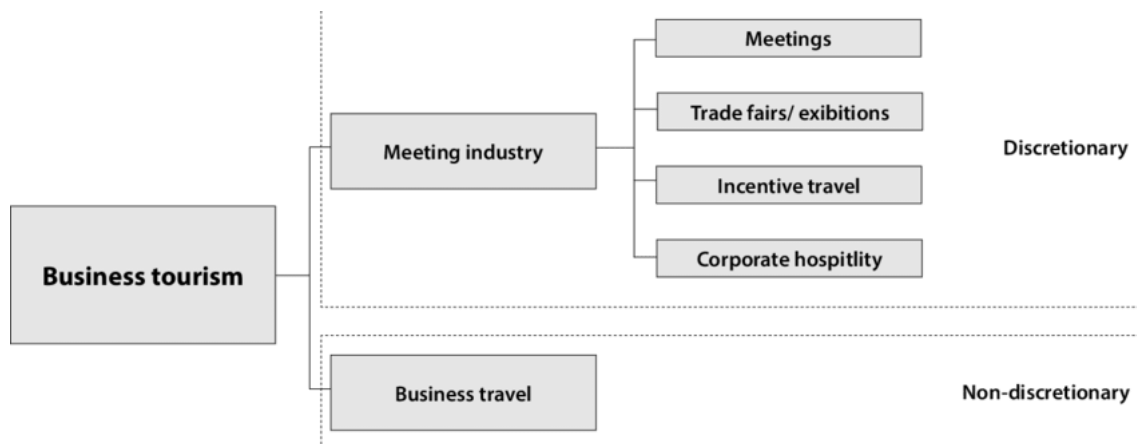


Figure 1- Business Tourism Structure according to Davidson and Cope (2003)

Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Business-tourism-structure_fig1_322100688

Although the individual aspect has its importance, the collective aspect is the main focus of all destination marketing and promotion strategies (Davidson and Cope (2003); Cunha (2006); Rogers (2008); UNWTO (2006).

1.1.2 The Business Tourism market

Business Tourism requires, like any other type of tourism, a relationship between demand and supply, more specifically, a relationship between buyers and suppliers, which is usually aided by various tourism intermediaries. We are therefore talking about numerous agents that can intervene, on a small or large scale, in what we call the Business Tourism market.

As can be seen in figure 2, Swarbrooke and Horner (2001) were those who presented a possible structure of the Business Tourism market through the division between demand, intermediaries and supply.

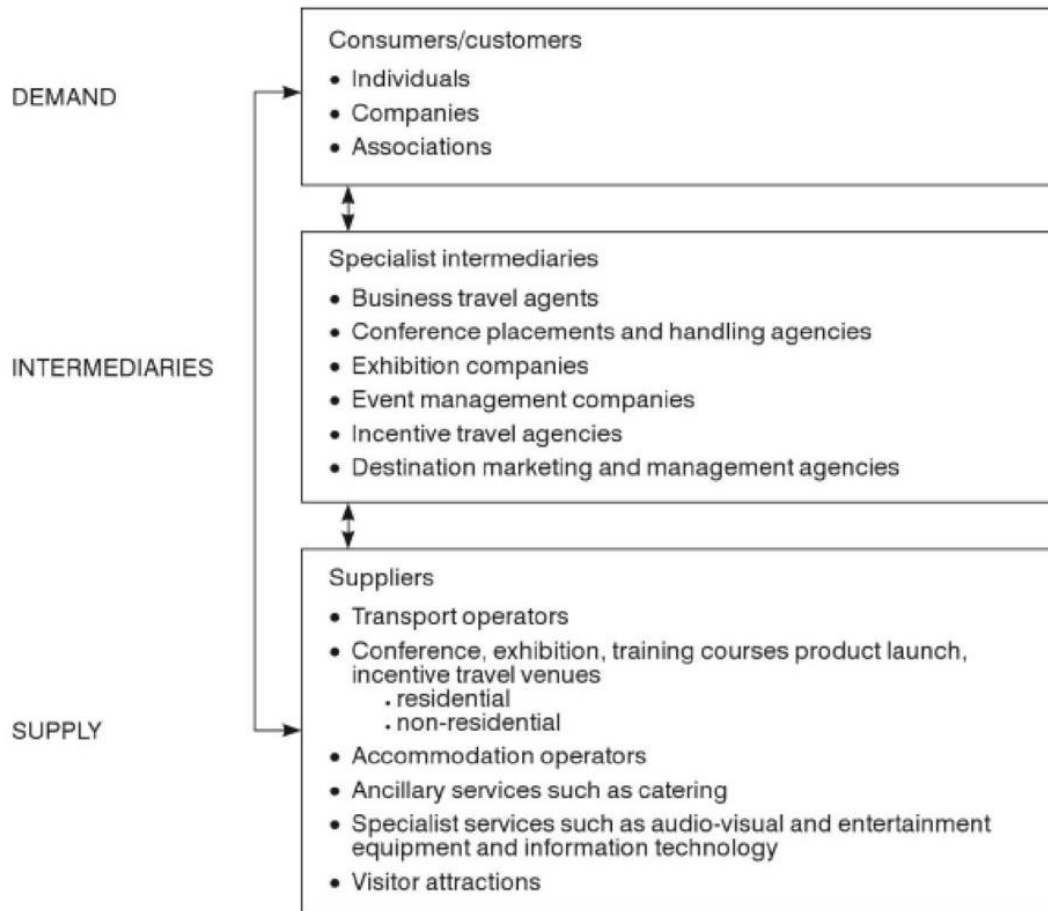


Figure 2- The structure of business tourism (Swarbrooke and Horner (2001)

Source: <https://docplayer.net/21641174-Russian-outbound-mice-tourism-demand-and-concept.html>

As can be seen in the scheme above, Swarbrooke and Horner (2001) emphasizes the interdependence between demand, intermediaries and supply, while there is a constant interchange between these three agents in order to build the product. In addition, the possibility that the demand has to contact and interact directly with the supply and vice-versa, leaving out the intermediaries, is still notorious. Another aspect to highlight is the fact that the demand includes customers and consumers. Here, the authors want to make clear the difference between these two terms, the customer is the one who creates the events and pays, while the consumer is the one who consumes. In some cases, they may be the same person (e.g. a businessman who pays all the expenses for his participation in

a certain business event) or else different entities (e.g. a company that pays all the expenses related to the participation of its employees in a certain business event).

Davidson and Cope (2003) also present a proposal for the structure of the Business Tourism market. Here, both authors refer to buyers, intermediaries and suppliers. The buyers are those who pay for the staging of a particular business event and/or the expenses of its employees. The authors consider that, with the exception of the self-employed, the person who travels on business is the same person who pays the respective expenses. In this model, there are some characteristics that stand out, such as the fact that the demand prevents mainly the corporate market, as is the case of incentive travel or corporate hospitality. Furthermore, intermediaries or even suppliers are common to all or almost all segments (e.g. catering companies) and there is also a strong interrelationship between intermediaries and suppliers, something that is also present in the model of Swarbrooke and Horner (2001).

Comparing these two models, we can then verify the existence of three very specific elements with regard to Business Tourism: I) the buyers, who are the entities that give rise to business events (for example, companies working with the aim of making a profit for their owners); II) the intermediary agents, who act as a kind of facilitator in the existing business relationship between buyers and suppliers and consequently end up being enhancers of an increase in demand. As for suppliers, where the support elements associated with travel, stay and other activities to be developed at the destination are inserted, namely the lodging establishments, which may serve as event venues (for example, the numerous hotel units that are equipped with several meeting rooms), as suppliers of specialized equipment (for example, audiovisual equipment, translation, telecommunications, among others) or even tourist leisure and entertainment resources, where we can include the places of interest to visit before, during or after the business event (for example, monuments, museums, etc.).

As far as Business Tourism destinations are concerned, it is important to mention that the main ones correspond to cities or urban centers associated with the location of the companies in question (e.g. factories, offices) and their suppliers, which include the main support elements, namely hotels, congress centers, meeting rooms, restaurants, etc.). While Leisure Tourism focuses on destinations with major tourist attractions and entertainment, Business Tourism concerns the affluence of certain places, which despite

not being explored in the leisure area, have strong commercial and industrial characteristics.

1.2 Business Tourism in Portugal

Identified as one of Portugal's ten strategic products, Business Tourism assumes "special importance for the volume of travel it represents and, mainly, for contributing to reducing the seasonality of destinations" (MEI,2007,P.66). More recently, the strategic focus of Business Tourism has taken another direction, that is, it is based on the "qualification of infrastructure and support structures, strengthening the proactive capture of events and creative development of offers that contribute to provide memorable experiences to participants" (MEE,2013,p.12).

1.2.1 Hotel Supply and Occupancy

As has been seen previously, hotels, travel, tourist entertainment, restaurants, venues and event organization, catering and transport companies are some of the many examples of suppliers that concern the structure of Business Tourism. These same areas greatly benefit Business Tourism and this, in turn, stimulates the economic development of the destination in question, creating countless jobs, thus contributing to the growth of many companies, while combating seasonality. Similarly to a common tourist, a business tourist needs to make a trip to the destination, places to stay, for the meetings he will attend and for food, and if it is also an option, the main tourist attractions of the destination. In the case of large international events, the agencies that are responsible for organizing the event have to hire a transport company so that all the participants can get to the airport, a catering company to guarantee the food of all the entities involved, rent the event space, book the hotel where everyone will stay, and, if necessary, hire other suppliers in order to ensure the smooth running and success of the event.

The hotel sector is perhaps the area that can profit most from Business Tourism, because, in addition to its accommodation offer, many hotels already have available in

their space meeting rooms properly equipped, whether in the area of catering or technology/audiovisual. In general, most hotel units today are not only for stays, but also as a work space.

According to data provided by INE, Pordata (Figure 3), the number of tourism trips by residents for business or professional reasons showed positive rates of change from 2002 to 2021, even though it was possible to verify marked changes over the years. Analyzing the results, we see that the number of trips had the highest growth in 2005, with about 1,100 thousand tourists. In the same year, there is a sharp growth in the number of tourists until the following year (approximately 1,100 thousand), but then this number begins to decline until 2011. From that same year until 2016 it is possible to clearly verify a continuous growth. Between 2019 and 2020 there is a sharp decrease in the number of tourists traveling on business, and the consequence of these results was the appearance of Covid-19. Here, the whole country went into confinement mode, which made any kind of travel, even business travel, impossible. Until 2021 the data remained relatively similar, but studies have been pointing to an increase in the number of trips through the year 2022.

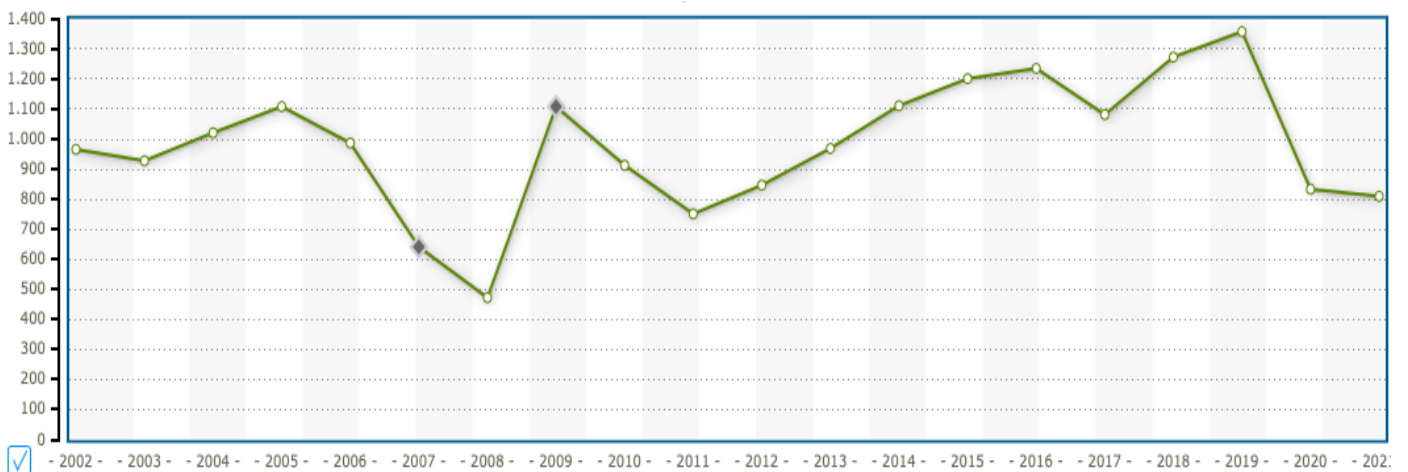


Figure 3 -Tourist Travel by Residents: total, by destination and main purpose

Portugal/ Business or professional

Source/Entities: INE, PORDATA

In order to present the numbers of tourists (in thousands) who traveled for business or professional reasons between 2002 and 2021 in a more detailed way, the following figures (4, 5 and 6) appear:

Viagem - Milhares

Viagens por destino e por motivo principal					
Anos	Total	Portugal			
		Total	Lazer, recreio e férias	Visita a Familiares e Amigos	Negócios ou Profissional
2002	11.914,0	10.738,4	5.568,4	4.204,2	965,8
2003	9.938,2	8.908,3	5.113,0	2.867,5	927,9
2004	12.140,9	10.654,3	6.145,9	3.487,2	1.021,1
2005	12.970,8	11.370,1	5.884,5	4.377,3	1.108,3
2006	11.439,2	9.971,9	5.544,4	3.440,5	987,0
2007	↓ 10.399,3	↓ 8.760,3	↓ 5.625,7	↓ 2.493,1	↓ 641,5
2008	10.512,1	8.935,2	5.695,6	2.767,4	472,2
2009	↓ 18.048,0	↓ 16.157,9	↓ 8.142,6	↓ 6.492,4	↓ 1.108,3
2010	15.372,9	13.764,4	6.444,5	5.747,2	913,1

Figure 4- Trips by destination and main purpose

Portugal/Business or professional

Source/Entities: INE, PORDATA

Viagem - Milhares

Viagens por destino e por motivo principal					
Anos	Total	Portugal			
		Total	Lazer, recreio e férias	Visita a Familiares e Amigos	Negócios ou Profissional
2011	15.190,7	13.726,9	6.077,7	6.163,8	751,2
2012	17.097,7	15.567,1	6.461,2	7.511,5	846,8
2013	17.861,1	16.370,9	6.742,0	7.925,1	969,2
2014	17.891,5	16.263,1	6.478,4	7.867,1	1.111,1
2015	19.147,2	17.253,8	7.143,9	8.144,4	1.201,3
2016	20.181,9	18.241,3	7.773,1	8.484,4	1.235,4
2017	21.187,9	18.993,3	8.318,1	8.855,2	1.081,5
2018	22.079,0	19.593,3	8.809,2	8.702,8	1.273,1
2019	24.462,8	21.362,6	10.244,8	8.723,5	1.357,7

Figure 5- Trips by destination and main purpose

Portugal/Business or professional

Source/Entities: INE, PORDATA

Viagem - Milhares

Viagens por destino e por motivo principal					
Anos	Total	Portugal			
		Total	Lazer, recreio e férias	Visita a Familiares e Amigos	Negócios ou Profissional
2014	17.891,5	16.263,1	6.478,4	7.867,1	1.111,1
2015	19.147,2	17.253,8	7.143,9	8.144,4	1.201,3
2016	20.181,9	18.241,3	7.773,1	8.484,4	1.235,4
2017	21.187,9	18.993,3	8.318,1	8.855,2	1.081,5
2018	22.079,0	19.593,3	8.809,2	8.702,8	1.273,1
2019	24.462,8	21.362,6	10.244,8	8.723,5	1.357,7
2020	14.409,8	13.729,8	7.494,8	4.700,3	833,4
2021	17.518,4	16.506,2	8.699,6	6.156,4	809,9

Figure 6 - Trips by destination and main purpose

Portugal/Business or professional

Source/Entities: INE, PORDATA

1.3 Business Tourism at SHGC

The hospitality industry is perhaps the area that can profit most from Business Tourism, because, in addition to its accommodation offer, many hotels already have available in their space meeting rooms properly equipped, either in the area of catering as in technology/audiovisual. In general, most of the hotel units nowadays are not only for stays, but also as a work space. The Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro is an example of this (figure 7 and 8).



Figure 7-SHGC Focus Room

Photo credits: Author



Figure 8- SHGC Focus Room

Photo credits: Author

1.3.1 Stay Corporate

The Stay Corporate program was originated in November 2020. It is a programme whose objectives are based on increasing the number of Corporate bookings in all Stay Hotels units, making business customer bookings simpler, faster and without holes and increasing traffic and promoting Stay Hotels' direct and official channel: stayhotels.pt.

The Stay Corporate concept is therefore a program that is one hundred percent dedicated to all business bookings and is fully in line with the STAY culture, i.e. simple, uncomplicated, practical and unbureaucratic. This program is exclusively applied, as mentioned above, on the Stay Hotels website and is only five clicks away. Furthermore, it is available for all hotels and contains three levels of exclusive advantages:

Nível 1. Great Corporate	Nível 2. Just Corporate	Nível 3. Prime Corporate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Code "GREATCORP"; 2- 10% discount; 3- No contract; 4- No minimum nights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Code "JUSTCORP"; 2- 5% discount; 3- With contract; 4- 30 days credit granting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Codes "PRIMECORP 1" AND "PRIMECORP2", associated to different tariff levels; 2- Fixed rate according to the number of nights per year; 3- Personalized contract; 4- Safeguard clause (number of nights vs price level); 5- Concession of credit at 30 days; 6- No allotments; 7- Subject to availability.

Table 1- three levels of Stay Corporate's unique advantages

Source: Own preparation based on the dossier provided by Stay Hotels

The conditions of access to this program can be seen in the table below:

Level 1. GREAT CORPORATE	Level 2. JUST CORPORATE	Level 3. PRIME CORPORATE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request the promotional code from STAY HOTELS by emailing staycorporate@stayhotels.pt or directly at the hotel; 2. Hotel Team sends the code; 3. Enter the code on the website at the time of booking; 4. Request the invoice on behalf of the company (mandatory factor). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request the promotional code from STAY HOTELS by emailing staycorporate@stayhotels.pt or directly at the hotel; 2. Fill out the CUSTOMER opening form for financial solvency analysis and contract signature; 3. Insert the code on the website at the time of booking; Request the invoice on behalf of the company (mandatory factor). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Company identified by STAY HOTELS 2. Complete CLIENT opening form for financial solvency analysis and contract signing; 3. Send the promotional code, according to the no. of nights per year estimated ("PRIMECORP1", if >1500, "PRIMECORP2", if >3000); 4. Enter the code on the website at the time of booking; 5. Request the invoice on behalf of the company (mandatory factor).

Table 2- Conditions of access to Stay Corporate program of Stay Hotels

Source: Own preparation based on the dossier provided by Stay Hotel

This Stay Corporate campaign can be promoted in two ways: in hotels or online/offline. In order to present in more detail how the promotion of the levels of benefits for those who join Stay Corporate is done, please see the table below:

Level 1. GREAT CORPORATE & Level 2. JUST CORPORATE	Level 3. PRIME CORPORATE
<p>In hotels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video TV; • Information shared by all employees, including Hotel Quality Managers. <p>Online/Offline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email Marketing (Email Approach / Newsletter); • Social Media (organic publications + sponsored publications); • Press Advisory; • Website; • Animated banner in the team's e-mail signatures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information shared by the Assistant manager of the Hotel; • Direct contact by email or phone.

Table 3- Ways of promoting the Stay Corporate campaign on the different levels

Source: Own preparation based on the dossier provided by Stay Hotel

It is also important to mention that the promotion of this Stay Corporate campaign on all three levels (Level 1. GREAT CORPORATE, Level 2. JUST CORPORATE & Level 3. PRIME CORPORATE) is done, both in the hotels and online/offline, through the following images:



STAY CORPORATE

Figure 9- Stay Corporate campaign promotion

Source: Dossier provided by Stay Hotels



GREAT CORPORATE



JUST CORPORATE



PRIME CORPORATE

Figure 10- Promotion of Stay Corporate's campaign on the three levels of benefits

Source: Dossier provided by Stay Hotels

Last but not least is the distribution of this campaign. The details of this process can be analyzed through table 4:

Level 1. GREAT CORPORATE	Level 2.JUST CORPORATE	Level 3. Prime Corporate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotel staff will send you the promotional code, via e-mail, for a direct discount when you book at www.stayhotels.pt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact assumes the support of the Hotel Quality Manager; • Sending the hotel factsheet; • Sending a credit opening form; • Financial solvency analysis; • Signature of contract; • Sending promotional code. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending a credit opening form; • Financial solvency analysis; • Signature of contract personalized; • Sending promotional code.

Table 4-Campaign distribution in the three levels

Source: Own preparation based on the dossier provided by Stay Hotel

Thus, it is possible to verify that by creating an exclusive program for those who travel on business, the hotel becomes even more prone to success, that is, it has the ability to cover all those who travel for leisure, but at the same time does not rule out those who travel on business, quite the contrary. The national hotel chain Stay Hotels is keen to benefit all business travelers looking for an economical stay.

2 Stay Hotels

"A national hotel chain that has a vision to be a reference brand of city hotels where customers prefer to STAY"
(Stay Hotels)

Just Stay Hotels is a company that was created in 2013 by Inter-Risco in order to develop and build innovative strategies in the Portuguese hotel market, more specifically in the limited service segment. Thus, this investment has as its main objective to position Just Stay Hotels as a reference in this segment under the Stay Hotels brand.

Stay Hotels is a Portuguese hotel chain directed to all business and leisure travelers. One of its main goals is to provide its clients with unique and memorable experiences, focused on "proximity, well-being and modernity". Their main mission is to win over all their clients, serving them in the best possible way, that is, with great quality, interest and above all, admiration. They want to offer those who visit them an innovative and excellent stay and provide a personalized and exceptional service, thus making the experience unforgettable. Currently, this network has ten hotels, located north and south of the country, namely in Guimarães, Porto (Stay Hotel Porto Aeroporto, Stay Hotel Porto Centro Trindade and Grande Hotel de Paris (currently under renovation works)), Coimbra, Torres Vedras, Lisboa (Stay Hotel Lisboa Aeroporto and Stay Hotel Lisboa Centro Saldanha), Évora and Faro.

2.1 Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro

The Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro is a hotel that belongs to the Stay Hotels chain. Opened in 2015, this four star hotel unit is known for being located in the most dynamic axes and for its direct connection to the Historic Centre of the city of Guimarães, a World Heritage Site, classified by UNESCO. This hotel is characterized by its modern facilities,

which offer maximum comfort and simplicity to its guests. Due to its excellent location and for being able to satisfy all the needs of those who visit it, the Stay Hotel Guimarães, receives daily tourists from all over the world, thus gathering all the necessary conditions for a leisure tourism, as well as business tourism.

Considered one of the most attractive hotels in the city of Guimarães, the Stay Hotel Guimarães, besides providing its guests with unforgettable experiences, also has, as previously mentioned, a privileged location. Located in Avenida D. João IV, as it is possible to see in figure 1, Stay Hotel Guimarães is 10 minutes away from the Historical Center and 18 minutes away from the Guimarães Castle. Given this incredible location, it is no wonder that many tourists who yearn to visit the city choose to stay at SHGC.



Figure 11- Location of the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro

Source: Google Maps

2.2 Services offered

Due to its location, the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro invites all its guests to enjoy a visit, preferably guided, through the city, while enjoying a comfortable and relaxing stay. Being a hotel nationally known for its leisure and business tourism, it has quickly become a destination of choice.

2.2.1 Rooms

Currently, the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro has 47 spacious standard rooms, represented in figures 12 and 13 , called double, i.e., double bed, or two separate beds, twin. All rooms have an unmatched level of comfort, decorated in neutral tones, using white, beige and gray, in order to create a harmonious and cozy atmosphere. Most of the rooms have a view of the center of the avenue, while the others face the back.



Figure 12- Double room at the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro

Source: Stay Hotels Website



Figure 13-Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro Twin Room

Source: Stay Hotels Website

The hotel also has 3 suites (figure 14), all of which also have privileged views of the city, and there is also a room specially adapted for people with reduced mobility, rooms that are equipped to promote maximum comfort for its guests. In addition, it is also important to mention that the hotel has 4 Stay ONE rooms (it only has one single bed) (figure 15). These rooms are only assigned as a last resort, that is, if there are no other rooms available and the guest in question only stays for a maximum of two nights, because the room is small.



Figure 14- Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro Suite Room

Source: Stay Hotels Website

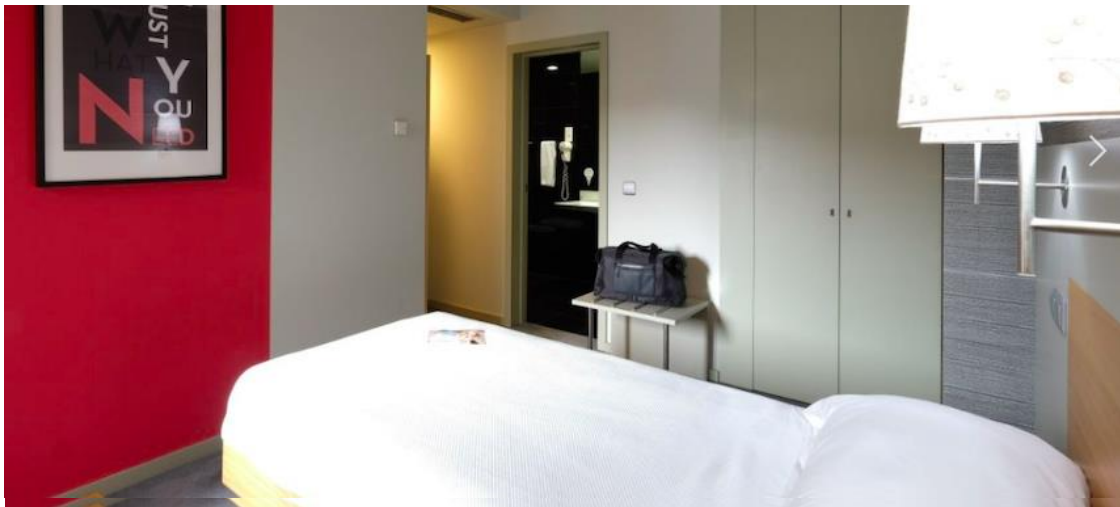


Figure 15- Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro Stay ONE Room

Source: Stay Hotels Website

Being considered a Four Star hotel, the SHGC, provides its guests the opportunity to enjoy and relax in their rooms, where they will have access to: air conditioning, telephone, cable TV, minibar, safe and room service 24 hours a day. In addition to all these amenities,

the hotel also offers daily laundry service. Regarding parking, the hotel has a private garage, without direct connection to the hotel, with a daily cost of 8 euros.

2.2.2 Breakfast and Snack-bar

The SHGC's buffet breakfast, which is served from 6:30 am to 12:00 noon on the second floor of the hotel, features a wide variety of fresh, delicious produce. In addition to the possibility of enjoying the fantastic menu in the snack bar, there is also the opportunity for guests to relax outside the room, for those who like a busier yet cozier environment. In this way, the Hotel provides two ideal places: the snack-bar and the games and reading area (attachment I). For those who love sports and the environment, the hotel offers its visitors an electric bicycle (available 24h), where they can use it to discover the city in the most practical and environmentally friendly way.

2.2.3 Entertainment and Leisure

Considering the SHGC's privileged location, there are many options for leisure and entertainment that the hotel can provide its guests. Just a 10-minute walk from the hotel, everyone can enjoy what is the busiest place in the city, the Historic Center. Here, everyone can enjoy immense and magnificent restaurants, bars, and music shows. For lovers of arts and culture, and due to the proximity of the Hotel to the city center, the International Center of Arts José de Guimarães, the Vila Flor Cultural Center, the Martins Sarmiento Archeological Museum and the Alberto Sampaio Museum are obligatory stops. Besides this, guests also have the opportunity to do several tourist activities, such as visiting the Guimarães Castle, São Tiago Square, Largo da Oliveira, Paço dos Duques de Bragança, Guimarães Cable Car, the Consolação Church, Praça da República do Brasil Square, São Francisco Church, the Penha Sanctuary, among many other historical monuments.

All these activities prove, in fact, the advantages that each guest has in staying at the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro, because not only it provides the greatest comfort and

modernity of the hotel accompanied by a magnificent view to the city center, but also allows all those who pass by the SHGC, to leave it knowing and admiring a little more the history and charm of the North of Portugal.

2.2.4 Perfect for business

Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro, besides being considered an attractive destination when it comes to leisure and fun, is also an ideal place to practice the so called "Business Tourism". The SHGC offers the best conditions to carry out all kinds of business, from meetings, conferences and congresses. For this type of activities, the hotel offers one large meeting room, called "Stay Focus" (figure 8 and 9), all with natural light and with a view of the main avenue. These conditions that the hotel provides make it possible to satisfy all the needs and demands of those who wish to conduct any kind of business there. It is also necessary to emphasize that the Focus Rooms are duly equipped with all the didactic and technical materials necessary for each meeting to run as expected.

2.3 Vision, Mission and Values

Being Stay Hotels a national hotel chain, its vision is based on the desire to "be a reference brand of city hotels where customers prefer to STAY" (Stay Hotels).

The mission of Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro is to want to win the trust of each client, serving them with great interest, admiration, but above all quality. SHGC wants to provide those who visit them an "excellent and innovative stay" accompanied by an "exceptional and personalized" service, so that every moment becomes an experience for the guest. The mission of this company should always be related to its general objectives, while serving as a motivating challenge for all employees.

Regarding the hotel's values, we consider values to be all the principles that each employee must have in order to perform his or her duties in the best way possible. These values are the ethical basis of the company. In this way, the SHGC is based on essential values, such as welcoming and service. These two values are what promote the hotel's

growth, hence its extreme importance. In Stay Hotel Guimarães all employees treat the clients in the most polite way, always speaking in an appropriate manner and, at the same time, listening to the clients' position and opinion with the utmost attention, so that they feel unique and special. All these values are practiced by SHGC with one and only one goal: customer satisfaction.

2.4 Organizational Structure

Regarding the organizational structure of the SHGC, and as is the norm in any reputable hotel unit, there are several departments responsible for certain functions in the hotel, each of which is represented by a director. In total, there are 6 departments at the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro: the General Management, the Commercial Department, the Front-Office Department (reception), the F&B Department (breakfasts, snack-bar, kitchen, office and pantry), the Housekeeping Department (room cleaning) and the Maintenance Department. Within each of these departments there are several sectors, for example, in the F&B Department, there are 5 sectors: the breakfast buffet, snack bar, kitchen, office and pantry. Each department, as well as each sector, must necessarily work in relation with the others, this is the only way to ensure the smooth running of the hotel, for example, in the Housekeeping Department there is the cleaning sector, however, no cleaning is done to the rooms by employees without first confirming with the Reception Department if the rooms are available or unoccupied for such service. Thus, it is essential that all departments and consequently all sectors help each other and work together for the success of the hotel.

2.4.1 General Management and the Commercial Department

The General Management department is the department that has the highest hierarchical rank in the whole hotel. This department consists of only two sections: the Management section and the Secretary section. In the Management department there is only one person with the most important position in the whole hotel, the General

Manager. He is responsible not only for the general supervision of all the departments in the hotel, but also for the administrative part. Still in the general management department, there is the Secretariat sector, here and in general, it deals with all issues related to accounting, namely the payment of employees, among others. This department, therefore, represents the most respected and valued department in the whole Hotel, since any issue that wants to be addressed will have to go through there.

The Commercial Department of the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro is the department responsible for the commercial part of the hotel, as well as for group reservations, namely the elaboration of budgets. This department is the one that usually has more need for teamwork, since to provide any kind of more specific information about any issue of another sector of the hotel, it is necessary to resort to the support of someone who is inserted in that same sector, so as not to provide wrong information to potential customers. The Commercial Department is like the face of the SHGC, because its goals are not only to make known the main objectives of the hotel and its degree of excellence, but also to differentiate itself, through the services it provides, from all other hotel units.

2.4.2 Front-Office Department (Reception)

The Reception department is essential for the proper functioning of the Stay Hotel Guimarães. At first sight, this department has no doubts about its role, but the truth is that it is much more complex than that. The Reception is not only about receiving clients or providing information, on the contrary, this department is not only responsible for receiving clients (check-in and check-out), but it is also in charge of all reservations and invoicing, including cash closing. The reception is composed of 5 elements, being the head of reception, mainly responsible for financial functions and four receptionists, the latter divided into four shifts, the morning shift (8:30 am to 4:30 pm), the intermediate shift (13:30 pm to 22:30 pm), the afternoon shift (4:30 pm to midnight) and finally, the night shift (from midnight to 8:30 am). This way, we can say that the Front-Office Department manages to be one of the most important in the SHGC, because it is there that the client gets the first impression of the Hotel, due to the service he received from the employees.

2.4.3 F&B (Food and Beverage) Department

The F&B department is essentially composed of five sections, the breakfast buffet, snack bar, kitchen, office and pantry. In the breakfast buffet, only one employee is in charge of receiving the guests, checking if their names and room numbers match the report that was left by the night shift receptionist and replenishing the food stock. The snack-bar service is the responsibility of three employees, who are responsible not only for preparing the dishes and drinks desired by guests, but also for managing the organization of the kitchen, the bar, the beverage and food stores, the orders and the pantry, i.e., take care of cleaning and tidying the dishes used in the restaurant service.

2.4.4 Housekeeping and Maintenance Department

The Housekeeping Department is composed by six employees, all of them belonging to the company AveiClean. Their function is not only to prepare the rooms to receive the guests, but also to send to an external laundry (company with which the hotel has a contract) the bed linen, such as sheets, duvet covers and pillow cases. In addition, all employees are responsible for cleaning both the guest rooms and the common areas of the hotel.

The Maintenance Department has only one employee, whose job is to check all the equipment as well as the heating and water systems in the SHGC. When there is a failure in any system and that consequently the good functioning of the Stay Hotel Guimarães is compromised, this employee is called and must repair the failure. If this employee, after analyzing the situation, is not able to solve the problem, then the Reception Department must immediately contact an outside company capable of taking responsibility.

3 Internship

3.1 Why Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro ?

The choice of doing the curricular internship in a hotel unit like the Stay Hotels Guimarães Centro was very much based on the fact that there was the thought that it would be a unique experience and of added value, both personally and professionally. Since the entire academic course was characterized by the presence and learning of Foreign Languages, doing an internship in a prestigious hotel, where a vast cultural diversity is found daily, became, in this last phase of completion of the Master's course, an opportunity we couldn't refuse. The internship in a hotel like the SHGC became the perfect reality to put into practice all the languages learned so far and the constant development and improvement of the others already mastered. All these factors were crucial for my decision regarding the place where I would do my internship, because I wanted a company where I could put all the knowledge and skills I had acquired with the different languages into practice. The internship at Stay Hotels Guimarães Centro made this goal come true.

The search for the place to carry out the Curricular Internship was made through the knowledge I already had about the hotels in the city of Guimarães. Since the city has a lot of hotels, it is already expected that one knows the ones that stand out, and the SHGC is one of them.

At this point, I believe that my choice for my Curricular Internship in this hotel was, without a doubt, the right one. Not only was it possible for me to put into practice all the knowledge I acquired during my academic career, but I also gained and deepened new skills in a new field, the hotel business. In addition, my personal growth was also noticeable. This internship was a period of constant learning, and at the same time, the perfect opportunity to put into practice all the knowledge and skills I acquired throughout my academic career and prepare me for the next phase, the job market.

3.2 First impressions and first contacts

The first contact with Stay Hotels Guimarães Centro was made early in the first semester of the first year of my Master's degree, via email. There was immediately a great interest for the internship to take place, which facilitated the whole process of research and search. The next step was a previously scheduled interview with the hotel's Quality Manager, Adriana Azevedo. During the interview I was asked about my academic background and the reasons that led me to choose this specific hotel for my internship. Also during the interview I was approached about the hotel's minimum language requirements. Since the hotel is frequented daily by many people from other countries, all reception employees have to have a good level of English and at least one other language, preferably French, German, and Spanish. In addition to language skills, both trainees and employees throughout the hotel have to have a strong team spirit, because no sector can work alone, everyone needs to work together and towards the same goal, i.e. customer satisfaction.

Two weeks after the interview, on February 7, 2022 and lasting 4 months, i.e. ending on May 7 of the same year. However, in the last week of my internship I was offered a full-time contract for one year, which I did not accept, not because of my experience at the hotel, which was excellent, but because I already had other plans in mind.

3.3 The first week of the Internship

On my first day at work I was given a tour of the entire hotel, so that I could get to know not only the space and structure of the hotel, but also to feel what the guests feel when they enter the hotel for the first time. After that, I was introduced to my workplace, the reception. However, they informed me that as they were short of employees at the time, it would also be necessary to take care of the snack bar that is open 24 hours, that is, to receive the customers, serve them at the table and prepare their orders. Although this was not part of my main job, it turned out to be a valid option, as I would gain

experience in both places and consequently establish and strengthen a greater contact with the guests.

The first week, as expected, became a week of introduction and insertion into the work environment. It was therefore a busy week, but mostly intensive, as there was a lot of information to retain. As expected, in the first two weeks it was rare that I was alone at the reception to serve customers, as it is a sector of great responsibility and above all of first impressions and connections between staff and guests, a colleague was always present to help and support me in the tasks and challenges that arose on a daily basis. However, not all tasks had the opportunity to have been explored or explained in the greatest detail. As the tasks arose, the colleague who was present at the reception explained and demonstrated the best way to solve them. Thus, I can say that the support provided by all colleagues was indeed essential for the good performance of all activities. They always paid attention to the needs and doubts of all the trainees, never leaving aside our autonomy, crucial to our personal and consequently professional development.

3.4 The Front Desk of Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro

The job of a hotel receptionist, although at first glance it may not seem like it, is a job that requires a great sense of responsibility and autonomy. Every day can be different, since the tasks are not always predictable and we deal with all kinds of people of various nationalities and cultures.

All interns and employees at the Hotel have many functions in common; however, there are tasks that are assigned to a specific person and here we value above all the autonomy and initiative of each employee. However, it should be noted that despite the tasks being distributed among all, there is always a great deal of mutual help and teamwork in the performance of each one, always having as its main objective the success of the Hotel.

Working hours vary depending on the week, the month, and the amount of guests the Hotel has in that particular period of time. There are four shifts in the reception area: the morning shift (from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm), the intermediate shift (from 1:30 pm to 10:30 pm), the afternoon shift (from 4:30 pm to 12:30 am) and finally, the night shift (from

12:30 am to 8:30 am). The whole team, from the interns to the employees, works holidays and weekends, and everyone is entitled to two days off a week, these on weekdays, since at weekends it is always necessary to have a larger number of employees, due to the affluence of guests.

Throughout the internship, I performed a wide list of tasks and functions at both the hotel reception and the snack bar. Each of these functions were able to provide me with new skills, but most of all allowed me to gain new insight into tourism and how it influences multiculturalism.

3.4.1 Reception

Contrary to what most people think, the work of a receptionist at the Stay Hotels Guimarães Centro is not just about being behind a counter and serving customers, although this is their main function. When guests first enter the hotel, the first thing they come across is the reception desk. Their first impressions of the hotel and consequently the staff will be based on the quality of the service they had when they got there. The people who are in charge of the reception will therefore have to be aware that they will be the first people that customers will encounter as soon as they enter the Hotel. That said, it is understandable that management, when it comes to hiring staff, is rigorous with regard to serving the public.

Whoever is at the reception desk has to be responsible, attentive, and perceptive. Much of a receptionist's work involves answering phone calls with specific requests for information and having the ability to answer those requests without any difficulty, that is, being able to clarify the customer in the clearest and most enlightening way possible. As mentioned before, being a receptionist brings with it other duties and responsibilities, which may no longer be necessary in other functions, namely the contact with the cashier. Since all reception employees deal with large amounts of money on a daily basis, it is strictly crucial that everyone has an increased sense of responsibility. In addition, working at the reception requires all employees to have a great sense of cooperation and teamwork. Although each section requires different types of duties and responsibilities, the best results cannot be achieved alone. All Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro employees must be

able to work as a team and help each other. The reception service cannot be done without the collaboration of the Housekeeping team, since they are the ones who declare if a certain room is free, clean and ready to sell, just as the snack-bar section cannot sell any product without resorting to the reception to provide all the necessary data about the guest. Added to these functions, there is also the requirement that everyone must be able to communicate without any kind of difficulty, that is, at a minimally advanced oral and written level, in other languages, with special preference given to English, French, and Spanish.

Besides the work of a receptionist having an immense administrative character, as will be proven later in this report, it also requires that each employee has the ability to know how to deal with all kinds of questions that customers may have. It is necessary to be able to deal with a large movement of people at all times, to have the agility to attend well, without haste, and in a competent manner each one of them, always keeping in mind that the next customers may ask the same questions, whether they are about the reservations, the type of room or even the opening hours of each sector. It is also at the reception that most of the time customers seek information and suggestions about the best places to visit in the city, as well as the best restaurants that offer in their menus traditional food of that region. In these situations, it's up to each employee to be able to advise the customer in the best way, if they can't do it with precision or detail, then they just have to direct the guest to the department that can best answer all the questions in a more detailed and complete way.

The fact that I spent most of my time at the reception allowed me to get a much broader view of what it is really like to work at a reception. Having the opportunity to interact with all kinds of people of all kinds of nationalities made me realize the importance of languages, but above all the diverse cultures that exist and that many of us are not aware of. The problem often lies in knowing how to deal with these differences. We don't all have the capacity to understand others, but we should all rightfully try to understand, accept and learn. This is what I have tried to do during these four months. All the concepts related to intercultural relations and multiculturalism, which until then I only knew and appeared during my academic career, have now been put into practice. Being able to deal with different people and having the opportunity to get to know their cultures made me realize that multiculturalism is indeed everywhere, and the relationships that we

create with people of different nationalities and cultures only allows us to further enrich the knowledge we think we have about others.

3.4.1.1 Reservations

Part of a receptionist's job is to perform an analysis of the hotel's availability in relation to the service that the customer wants. It should be noted that the SHGC reception receives requests for reservations not only for rooms, but also for focus rooms where conferences, meetings or even congresses can be held. Anyone who is at the reception has immediate access to the Protel program, used exclusively for all types of reservations at the Hotel, which contains all existing reservations, as well as availability for that same day or in the long term.

At the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro, there can be 6 types of reservations: Walk-ins, Direct Contact, Travel Agency, Online Booking Sites (Booking, Skyscanner, Trivago...), SHGC official site and companies. Walk-ins are designated those customers who enter the Hotel for the first time and request a reservation on the spot. It is therefore up to the receptionist to check at Protel the availability of rooms or meeting rooms, if that is the case, and inform the customer of the possible options. The direct contact is made with the receptionist over the telephone, that is, the clients call the hotel number and make their reservation on the spot, whether for the same day or a long-term reservation. This type of reservation requires not only a greater availability of time, since the employee needs all the data to make the reservation, but also requires that the employee is able to have the dexterity to make the reservation and be aware of what is happening at the reception. The travel agency type reservation, as the name implies, is not made by the hotel receptionists, but by the travel agency itself. The travel agency makes the reservation, sends an e-mail to the hotel with the reservation data, as well as the proof of payment, and then it is only up to the desk clerk to insert the reservation in the Protel program. When the client makes a reservation on sites such as Booking, Trivago, Skyscanner, among others, the reservation process is the same as for travel agencies. The desk clerks receive by e-mail all the reservations made on the various sites and just have to enter them into the hotel's program. The only thing that differs this type of reservation from the travel agency is the payment, that is, when the reservation is made at a travel agency, the payment is already

made and in turn the hotel does not have to charge anything, but if the reservations were made on sites like Booking, then there is the possibility that the customer can make the reservation and pay the amount only when arriving at the hotel. Therefore, it is up to the desk clerk to carefully check if the reservation is already paid for or if the guest has chosen to pay at check-in. In these situations, there is a small option in Protel to write observations. Here, the receptionist who is entering the reservation leaves little notes for the other receptionists to be aware of the situation of a specific client. Making a reservation on the SHGC Official Site is also an option and perhaps the most advantageous, because there are always campaigns in effect, namely Stay Young. This informs that clients who are up to 30 years old can enjoy a 30% discount on their reservation if they make it on the hotel's official site. Regarding the reservation process, the receptionist has to enter each guest's data in Protel and check if the reservation is already paid or if the payment will be made at check-in. Last but not least, reservations can be made through companies, thus changing the official method. When a reservation is made by a company, and as we will see in more detail in the next chapter of this Report, the protocol changes. First, the company has to contact the hotel, more specifically the reception desk, explain the whole situation in detail and only after verifying all the data and availability, the receptionist sends by e-mail a discount code to the company. In turn, when the company receives this discount code, it makes its reservation on the hotel's official website.

Generally speaking, customers choose to pay at check-in. However, they can pay in advance if they wish. This happens, for example, in the case of offers, i.e. if someone wants to offer a stay of certain days to someone, it is the receptionist's role to issue a voucher with the details in question and, in these situations, the customer makes the payment when the voucher is issued. Still on this voucher issue, if someone wants to make a reservation and informs that they have a Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro voucher, then it is necessary to enter the Hotel's database to check the voucher number and the type of stay they are entitled to and, afterwards, indicate in that same database when the voucher was used.

This whole issue of reservations seems at first glance a simple and fast function, however, it must be one of the most demanding and complex functions, because it not only depends on the type of reservation, but also on the customer. This whole process

requires a lot of attention and dedication, because this is the only way to satisfy the customer and promote the smooth running of the hotel.

3.4.1.2 E-mail management

One of the functions of a receptionist that has been mentioned before, is to constantly keep an eye on email. The importance of checking emails is often not appreciated, but the truth is that every day we receive lots of messages from potential customers asking for information about the hotel, parking, room types, prices, among others. The function of answering e-mails is not assigned exclusively to an employee, quite the contrary, it's a task that any reception employee and even a trainee must be able to perform with great skill and ease. Whenever there is a specific request for information, the person responsible for answering the customer must always pay attention to the answer he will give, that is, the answer must be assertive, but above all, trustworthy. When the receptionist feels that he/she is having doubts about the information he/she is providing, then he/she should ask for help to a colleague who is also at the reception or, as a last resort, ask the hotel quality manager to review the e-mail. As you might expect, all e-mails containing information that the receptionists themselves cannot answer must be sent immediately to Dr. Adriana Azevedo, Quality Manager at SHGC. She will review the e-mail herself, and only then will she contact the customer in question, or inform a receptionist of the procedure to be performed.

3.4.1.3 Partners

The SHGC has established partnerships with numerous brands and platforms (Attachement II) known nationally, including the Portuguese Association of Hospital Administrators, the ESN (Erasmus Student Network), Regional Section of the Center of the Order of Physicians, Fnac, Order of Psychologists, Mutual Association Montepio, CP (Comboios de Portugal), among others. There are specific protocols for all the above mentioned partnerships, but the truth is that none of them is a loser, i.e. the partnerships

sell their products and generate more customers, the Hotel earns commissions for each reservation made through the partnerships and the customers themselves, in turn, are winners because they can enjoy high quality facilities and comfort at a more affordable price. For example, if a frequent user of the Portuguese Railways decides to book a stay at the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro, the only thing he needs to do to get the discount is to show proof of purchase of the CP ticket.

When you receive a call requesting reservations through partnerships, the Hotel receptionist has to immediately ask for detailed information about the reservation, i.e., will have to ask in which partnerships will be made the reservation of the stay and a proof of purchase in that same entity. After obtaining the information and the necessary documents, we then proceed to check availability for the day on which the customer wants to book the room, and then make the reservation. After making the reservation, it is crucial that the customer provides some of his personal data, such as name, telephone contact (mandatory in case of delays, cancellations, among others) and e-mail. These are the steps that a receptionist has to follow in order to make the reservation request. On the day of the reservation, the customer only has to bring with him/her the proof of purchase in a certain partnership, so that the receptionist will be able to proceed with the registration of the stay and be able to invoice the reservation.

All partnerships require the receptionist to be attentive and above all informed about the protocol of each one. As soon as he receives the information he needs to make the reservation, he has to insert it immediately in the platform, because if he doesn't do it in time he runs the risk of other people making reservations for the same day and consequently it can lead to overbooking, i.e. an excess of reservations over the limit of available rooms. All these tasks are part of the job of a receptionist and there is no specific employee who is in charge of performing these functions, these reservations are made by the person who is at the reception at the time of booking.

3.4.2 Weekends and Holidays

Weekends and long holidays are an extremely important period for the SHGC, as they mark the largest influx of guests all week and all year round, both in the summer and

winter months. Thus, it is to be expected that staff schedules are made to count on everyone being present at the weekend, hence the two leaves they are entitled to are only on weekdays.

During this period, it is essential that there is extra reinforcement with regard to the staff on duty. In the case of reception, the number of employees always varies between two and three. The distribution of tasks on busy days consists of: one employee takes care of check-ins, others move bags to the luggage room, and another takes care of answering all calls and answering all e-mails.

That's why on these days the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro registers a higher number of active employees, which ends up proving the motivation and good performance that all employees have in fulfilling their duties.

3.4.3 Closing cash and checking invoices

At the end of each day, more specifically in the afternoon shift (16h-00h), the reception staff has to close the cash of the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro. The closing, of course, requires a lot of responsibility and attention, because all accounts must be correct. However, the process itself is quite easy. Since the SHGC reception has only one box, half of the work is made easier. All invoices, in whatever payment (ATM, cash, or bank transfer), must have the guest's room identified, otherwise they will be invalid at the end of the day. That's why at the end of each payment, the receptionist who has been invoicing the rooms has to pay attention to only three things: the method and proof of payment and the room number of the client in question.

When it is time to close the cash register, it is up to the hotel receptionist to check that all receipts are correct, that is, if there was no mistake at the time of payment, and to make the final calculations. To make the counting process easier, the Hotel Quality Manager provides an excel sheet every day, where there is a breakdown of the different types of payment methods. Here, the clerk only has to register the amounts that each payment method had. When this same excel sheet is completely filled out and the cash value matches the calculations made on the sheet, then the receptionist has to save the document and title it with the date and time of the registration. This procedure is the same as the one

for the cashier at the Snack-Bar. Normally, in the first days, this process of closing the cash register and checking the invoices is not taught to the trainees, since it is a process of great responsibility, but after they become familiar with the space and with Protel, then explanations are given in order for them to be able to assure the service successfully.

3.4.4 Space Maintenance

Every day it is necessary to prepare the reception of the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro, whether in the morning, afternoon or evening shift. This function, of course, is not only up to the trainees, but to all the employees of the Hotel. They have the obligation to keep the space not only clean and organized, but also to prepare it for the colleague who will take over the position.

Since the hotel is open 24 hours a day, there is always someone present at the reception desk, and so at the end of each shift, the receptionist has only to organize his or her work space and pass on important information to the next colleague. Although the reception is always working, the receptionists on the night shift have an extra job with regard to the preservation and consequently, maintenance of the workspace. This process consists, specifically, in checking if all service areas are free of guests, turning off all lights in the areas that are not being used, preparing the sheet of guests who requested breakfast, as well as their specifications and dietary restrictions, and delivering it to the breakfast attendant so that he/she knows how many breakfasts to prepare.

The important thing to note is that regardless of the shift, it is necessary that the reception is always clean and tidy in order to preserve the Hotel's image of excellence. The entire team, without exception, has the responsibility to constantly pay attention to detail, so that nothing fails.

The completion of this Internship Report represents the end of a very important stage in my life. The reduction of this document not only marks the end of my Curricular Internship at the Stay Hotel Guimarães Centro, but also the conclusion of my academic path, which lasted five years and included a Degree in Modern Languages at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Coimbra and the Master's degree course in Intercultural Studies for Business at the Institute of Administration and Accounting of Porto. At this final stage, I consider that both the Degree and the Master allowed me to grow as a person and prepared me, in a way, for the future and consequently for the job market.

On a personal level, the Internship was fundamental in acquiring new knowledge and developing skills, such as responsibility and above all, autonomy. In addition, the fact that I had the opportunity to be inserted for the first time in a work team and to be in daily contact with numerous guests of different cultures and nationalities, made me improve my communicative and linguistic skills, while deepening the knowledge I had about the various cultures that exist. In this way, and always taking into consideration that each client is unique, being of a different nationality, has different habits from ours, so it was necessary to adapt the situation to the cultural standards of the guest in question, which became somewhat challenging and rewarding. That said, I consider the Master's degree course in Intercultural Studies for Business to be an essential course nowadays and one that prepares all students for the biggest challenge of all: the job market.

On a professional level, this Curricular Internship represents an added value for my future, because I put into practice not only my language and cultural skills, but also the contact with people and how to deal with them in different situations. It is also worth mentioning the opportunity I was given by being assigned numerous tasks, from administrative ones such as reservations, to financial ones such as cash closing and checking all future ones. All this diversity of tasks strongly contributed to the acquisition of dynamic and, above all, innovative skills. Besides all these positive aspects, the internship also allowed me to understand, first hand, how a company works, in this case a hotel, its organizational structure, the relationship between the different departments, all this contributed to the preparation of future experiences that I will face at the beginning of my professional career.

In addition to these positive aspects, the Internship also allowed me to put into practice the knowledge that was acquired in the numerous curricular units of the Master's course in Intercultural Studies for Business, especially Entrepreneurship in Culture, Intercultural Communication Technologies, Culture and Development, where I learned how to deal with different people from different cultures, and Intercultural Economic Relations, that prepared me for direct contact with customers from diverse cultures in a business environment. These courses therefore play a fundamental role in preparing students for the challenges they will face in their professional lives. Thus, in conclusion, I consider that the internship was a very rewarding opportunity, both in the acquisition of skills such as autonomy and responsibility, and teamwork.

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Attachment I – The SHGC snack bar, games and reading area



Photo credits: Author



Photo credits: Author

Attachment II- SHGC Partners



Photo credits: Author

Attachment III- Promotion of this Stay Corporate campaign in the hotels and online

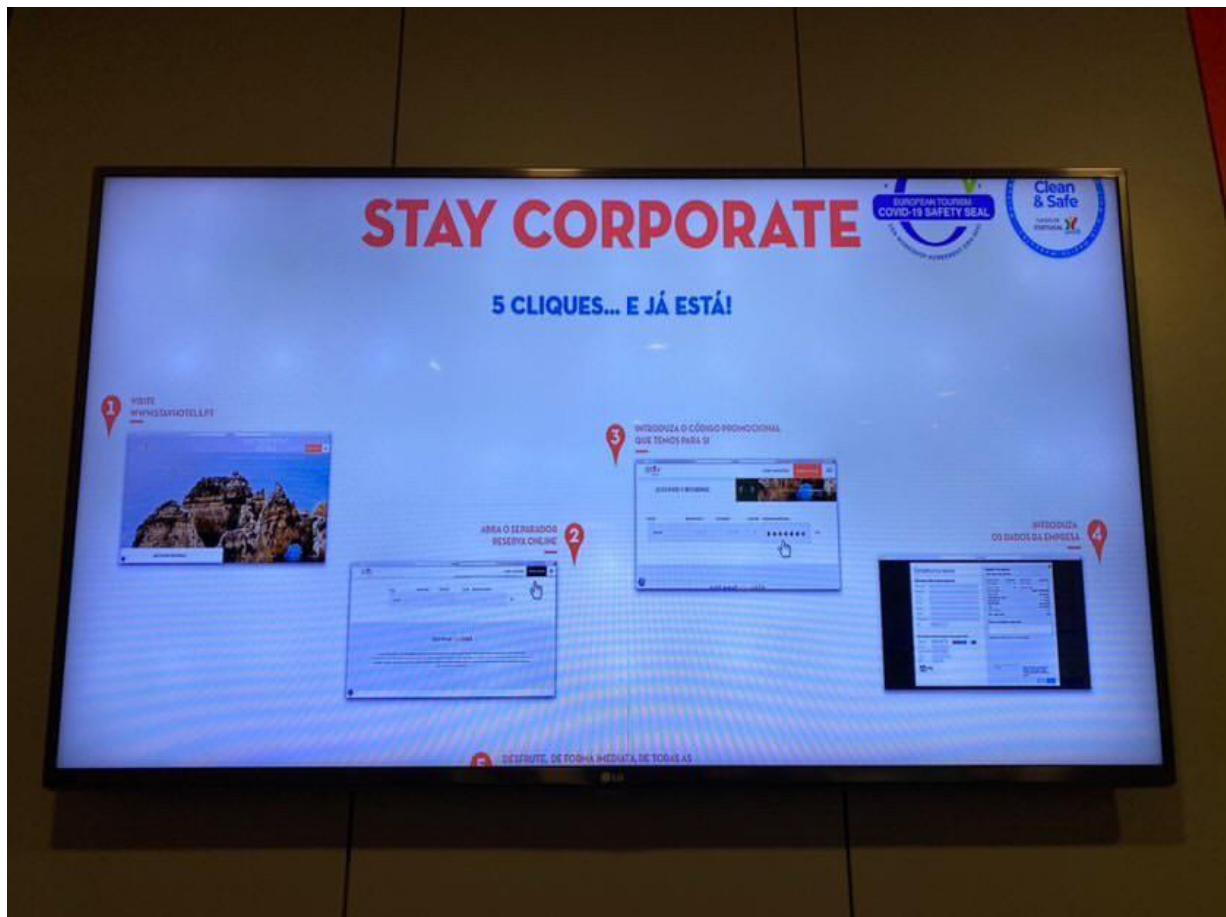


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