

Abstract

The tourism and hospitality industry has continuously grown and became crucial in recent years. However, as Covid-19 was detected in China in December 2019, the industry was facing a significant threat. Within three months, the virus spread globally, nothing remained as it used to be, and public life seemed frozen. All around the world, tourism came to a complete standstill. Despite the fact that there is literature about the impacts of various crises on tourism and hospitality, as it is a very recent topic, there is no academic research about the actual impact of Covid-19 on the luxury hotel industry of Vienna. This thesis aims to determine how the Covid-19 pandemic impacted Viennese luxury hotels. Recovery strategies in the short- and long- term to overcome the crisis are uncovered. Lastly, what has been learned from the situation, which might be beneficial for the future, is presented. The solutions of the research are mainly intended to support general managers of luxury hotels to manage business during a crisis.

The results of this research are derived from primary and secondary sources of information. For primary research, a qualitative approach was selected, and five interviews with general managers of Viennese luxury hotels were conducted to receive detailed information about the impact of the pandemic on the industry. In order to get an overview of the topic and to acquire some background information, literature was used for secondary research.

The results of the thesis highlight that hotels were strongly impacted by the pandemic. Due to travel restrictions and closed borders, the industry was suffering. In order to overcome the crisis, costs were reevaluated and put to an absolute minimum. However, every crisis is also an opportunity, and hotels had to adapt their target markets based on countries, where people are allowed to travel. As tourism is really sensitive to issues concerning health and safety, numerous measures to prevent from any infections with the virus were implemented. Although experiences in crisis management can be valuable in handling future shocks, every crisis is different, and therefore, crisis preparation is just possible to a certain extent.