

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines the hotel property development process in general, putting a special focus on the role of consulting companies within the hotel operator bidding process. The use case of this thesis is the consulting company MRP (the abbreviation was derived from the founding partners Mascha, Regner & Partner) hotels that not only engages in but also facilitates such bidding processes.

By applying a mixed methods approach, an online survey as well as expert interviews were conducted among hotel operators within the current portfolio of MRP hotels. In total, 26 hotel operators responded to the online survey and to support these results, seven expert interviews were completed. The findings show that among the sample, there is no clear preference for receiving a fact sheet or a teaser in order to decide on a certain project. Nevertheless, experts highlight that often less data should be disclosed to avoid misunderstandings which, however, can be solved by establishing a direct communication. To sum up, the key factors influencing this process are successful communication as well as the delivery of the right amount and type of information. This is considered being crucial by experts since it enables them to easily recognise if a project fits their requirements or not. This thesis shows that, according to the sample, the current information provided by MRP hotels is quite encompassing although there are always areas for improvement.

In addition, the information provided by MRP hotels has been ranked and one can see that the location of the project is described as the most important element for analysis. Moreover, the distinction of resort properties and city properties and projects located in A destinations and B-C destinations seems to play an important role. Future outlook shows that competition is expected to increase. This is supported by the expert interviews which further revealed that, in general, competition within the hospitality industry leads to the need of strengthening the USPs of a company as well as focusing on current trends. The major trends involve the rise of technology and digitisation as well as the tendency towards lifestyle oriented products and services. The dynamics within the network of the real estate business also seem to be an influencing factor.

Overall, this thesis demonstrates that in today's competitive environment, it is crucial to deliver the right information by using the most adequate communication channels as to best serve the need of all parties involved within the complex process of hotel property development. Given the scarce existence of relevant literature, MRP hotels and other similar companies aiming to facilitate the bidding process are recommended to expand the scope of this research by also closely monitoring and analysing their communication processes with clients in order to establish profound theories.