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## **CURATING AUTHENTIC HOSPITALITY IN A LOCAL BOUTIQUE HOTEL DURING AND POST COVID-19<sup>1</sup>**

AHAVA Hotel Singapore served the boutique hotel segment. Rather than focusing on market segments in Singapore's hotel chain scale system, the management had decided to offer guests an affordable luxury experience via excellent personalized service while capitalizing on the rich and authentic cultural heritage that the hotel offered in terms of history and design. Although AHAVA Hotel had won the Best Hotel Service award three years consecutively, it was getting harder to distinguish itself from other boutique hotels and to align itself with the parent company's (Signature Company) strategic long-term goals.

Mr. Lim had been the manager of AHAVA Hotel for five years. He worked up the ranks, learning the ropes and garnering accolades for best service, and management skills. He had earned the respect of his staff as he empowered his staff, empathized with them, and walked the talk.

Since December 2019, the world had been reeling from the impact of a global pandemic caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) which was primarily spread through physical contact and respiratory droplets. Most countries implemented very stringent measures to prevent the disease from spreading within their borders. The luxury boutique hotel category had been particularly negatively affected as the hospitality industry focused on people, personalized services and face to face interactions. One prominent change was in consumer behavior, influenced by risk perception (Gössling et al., 2020; Kirk & Rifkin, 2020). Guests became more concerned about safety and hygiene, preferring less human touch during registration and food delivery (Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2009).

Millennials had increasingly become an attractive market segment for the luxury hotel industry as they were not price conscious, preferring to "spend tomorrow's money" and "spend ahead of income" (Wang, Sun & Song, 2011). Furthermore, as they were digital natives, products and experiences that could satisfy their luxury consumption could be promoted easily via social media marketing.

In August 2020, the Singapore government rolled out a S\$45 million SingapoRediscover campaign where Singaporeans were given S\$320 million in tourism credits to drive local spending (Straits Times, August 2020). Staycations (staying in a hotel within Singapore or city) had grown in popularity with millennials forming the bulk of staycation guests at boutique hotels (Straits Times, Sept 2020). Mr. Lim was in a dilemma. Should he promote the hotel more aggressively as the preferred staycation destination to local Millennials, continue to cater only to the traditional clientele or disregard consumer groups and the hotel's brand image to bring in the much-needed revenue?

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## The Hotel Industry

Over the previous decades, the global tourism industry had grown rapidly with an estimated 1.5 billion international tourist arrivals in 2019 (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2020) and a forecast figure of 1.8 billion by 2030 (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2018). The tourism industry played a significant role in the global economy—bringing about economic, environmental and socio-cultural benefits through the creation of job opportunities, improving the infrastructural landscape and promoting cultural acceptance (Martínez & Del Bosque, 2013).

The hotel industry was closely associated with the tourism industry. In recent years, there had been a significant number of new hotel openings worldwide, from economical to luxurious categories, and from boutique to large hotels. In Singapore, an estimated 2,400 rooms are in the pipeline up to 2022, at an annual growth rate of 1.8% from 2020 to 2022 compared to a growth of 4.5% per year from 2014 to 2019 (CBRE Inc., 2020).

## The Boutique Hotel Market in Singapore

The Boutique and Lifestyle Lodging Association (BLLA, 2011) stated that a boutique hotel “combined living elements and activities into functional design, enabling guests to explore the experience they yearn for”. Jones et al. (2013) defined boutique hotels as small in size with a maximum of 300 rooms, providing genuine cultural or historical experiences along with intriguing personalized services. Lim and Endean (2009) emphasized that interior design features were critical in shaping the boutique hotel experience. In other words, a successful boutique hotel should be compact while delivering highly personalized services and rich cultural or historical architecture to curate an authentic unique experience.

The boutique hotel concept revolutionized perceptions towards luxury and was endeared as an “affordable luxury” (Budds, 2017). “Affordable luxury” focused on the salient things that mattered to a guest; consequently affecting the perceived quality of the guest experience. Mundel et al. (2017) mentioned that a product should comprise of luxurious elements, while being within the consumer’s spending capabilities, as an excessive charge would influence purchase decisions. Therefore, the boutique hotel delivered more than a room, and revolved around things that guests cared about (Khosravi et al., 2014).

## Curating an Affordable Luxury Guest Experience

In Singapore, most hotels adopted the Chain Scale segments by segregating hotels across six different segments: luxury, upper upscale, upscale, upper midscale, midscale and economy (STR, 2020). Some of the segment indicators included occupancy, price, location and product attributes (Singapore Tourism Board, 2017). Seo and Buchanan-Oliver (2017) attributed price as an indicator of contemporary luxury. However, due to the increasing diversification of luxury brands into international markets to accommodate the middle class and consumers’ comprehension of brand luxury becoming increasingly subjective, brand luxury had taken on a consumer-centric perspective focusing on social (experiential value) and the personalized meanings (symbolic value) of a brand.

The social meanings of a brand referred to shared criteria and rules commonly comprehended by consumers (Seo & Buchanan-Oliver, 2017). When consumers shared social meanings, formed meaningful groupings (market segments) and communicated throughout the system, the social meanings of a brand would be elevated (Barker, 2007). Factors that influenced the interpretation of social meanings included an individual’s aspirations, and self-actualization through greater knowledge, culture, or aesthetics (Michman & Mazze, 2006). Personalized meanings were also crucial in interpreting brand luxury as individuals might interpret them differently based on their experiences despite sharing similar social meanings (Seo & Buchanan-Oliver, 2017).

In curating affordable brand luxury, Walls, Okumus, Wang and Kwun (2011) felt that the three main determiners were brand equity, service quality and satisfaction.

### ***Brand Equity***

Brand equity was a qualitative measurement derived from consumers' perception of a product or service, rather than the product or service itself. Strong brand equity could negate potential negative consequences from service failures as consumers tended to be forgiving towards high equity brands (Brady et al., 2008). Furthermore, brand equity operationalized by quality and performance translated to a shift from singular transactions to building long term customer value (Liu et al., 2017; Walls et al., 2011) and created a competitive advantage which enhanced an organization's financial performance (Hillenbrand et al., 2013).

A common strategy to build brand equity was brand image. Brand image elicited consumers' memory relating to a distinct brand name mainly via images of sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness (Mabkhot et al, 2017; Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2013). A powerful brand image could generate positivity in consumers' brand attitude and purchase intentions for hotel services (Liu et al., 2017). As an organization could not control consumers' thought processes, it was important to exert influence on consumer perceptions via brand image by building a positive consumer network through repeated contacts.

Repeated contacts raised consumers' awareness of a brand. Brand awareness could be defined as consumers' ability to recall the brand (Šerić et al., 2016) or the extent to which it became part of consumers' decision-making process (Liu et al., 2017). This meant that consumers would be more inclined to make positive decisions regarding a product that was at the top of their mind as compared to one that they recalled upon mention of the product category or one that was elicited based on familiarity and past experience (Aaker, 1991). This was important as products with higher positive brand awareness produced greater consumer purchase intentions, loyalty and continual profit growth (Dawes et al., 2015; Han et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2017; Vitez, 2013).

### ***Service Quality and Employee Performance***

Service quality was pivotal in obtaining brand equity, which would then influence consumers' experience and satisfaction with a product (Walls et. al., 2011). However, service quality could be swayed by an individual's emotions and past experiences (Markovic & Raspor, 2010). Therefore, Parasuraman et al. (1988) recommended the adoption of the SERVQUAL model in ten dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, communication, credibility, security, competence, courtesy, understanding/knowing the customer, and access) to obtain a multidimensional aspect to measure the degree and discrepancy between consumers' perceptions and expectations, and to shape the service quality environment in a boutique hotel.

In Singapore, the model was integrated into the nation's service quality benchmarking tool, the Customer Satisfaction Index of Singapore (CSISG) (Deng et al., 2013). According to the CSISG model, customer satisfaction was determined by scores in three categories: customer expectations, perceived quality and perceived value. The overall satisfaction score for a company indicated its performance on these three customer satisfaction drivers (Institute of Service Excellence, 2018). It served as a barometer for expansion or improvement plans in the hospitality industry, while granting members who adopted the evaluation methodology the right to use CSISG branding in their communication materials to enhance their service quality assurance.

Employees were central in delivering these customer satisfaction drivers as customer perceptions could be formulated during the production, delivery and consumption stages (Kruja et al., 2016; Nguyen & Leblanc, 2002; Yoo & Park, 2007). Hence, the greater the congruence in staff's service performance, the greater the possibility in developing customer experiences that integrated the brand's equity (Hosseini et al., 2015).

Empowering staff had been found to produce better service quality as it reduced micromanagement, enhanced staff productivity, improved employee satisfaction, and ensured that employees remained responsible for their actions (Ro & Chen, 2011). Appraisal criteria that influenced customer perceived service quality such as the ability to provide empathetic responses by the service staff and going beyond the call of duty and employee's listening behavior also helped to improve customer satisfaction drivers (Dewasthale, 2017).

### ***Guest Experience and Satisfaction***

In a competitive landscape, hoteliers differentiated themselves by delivering a unique experience which elicited cultural and historical concepts for every guest (Furbay, 2016). For example, guests' experience could be enhanced if hoteliers took the effort to comprehend guests' travel motivations within the time, flow and constraints of the context presented, in order to maximize benefits to the guests (Williams & Bushwell, 2003), allowing guests to see a clear difference between post-purchase and pre-purchase product quality (Zaibaf et al., 2013).

Heskett et al. (2008) proposed the service profit chain model where internal service quality was improved via workplace and job design, employee selection and development, employee rewards and recognition, and tools for servicing customers. When internal service quality improved, employee satisfaction, retention and productivity improved, and these resulted in improved external service to guests. When guest satisfaction increased, guests were likely to become loyal to the brand and this induced revenue growth and profitability for the hotel.

## **Signature Company**

Signature Company was an established international hospitality owner and operator. Headquartered in Singapore, it had a combined portfolio of close to 14,000 rooms in Australia, Germany, Malaysia, New Zealand and Singapore.

Through its Singapore hospitality management arm, Signature operated a portfolio comprising over 20 hotels and serviced residences in the Southeast Asia region. It also owned more than 10 hospitality assets in Australia and Germany. In addition, it offered unique and complementary brands presenting excellent opportunities for cross-selling initiatives across the different brands and geographic markets and offered guests with a greater diversity of choices and locations.

Taking a customer-focused approach, Signature segmented its brands based on travelers' profile, instead of the traditional star-rating system or chain scale system. It offered a unique style of pragmatic hospitality that anticipated and addressed the needs of the new generation of discerning travelers by providing comfort in specific segments without the excesses that guests did not want to pay for.

### **AHAVA Hotel Singapore**

Each property in Signature's collection presented a different cultural personality but offered the same quality of personalized service and convenience in location with dining, shopping and entertainment options nearby.

One of the hotels in the collection was AHAVA Hotel. It was located within Singapore's central business district, making it a convenient location for business travelers. It was voted *Best Service Hotel* for three consecutive years in the TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Hotel awards.

AHAVA Hotel was the first and only hotel in Singapore to incorporate a museum that traced the footsteps of early immigrants from China. The interior of the hotel was designed to mirror the life of Singapore's early Chinese immigrants, but with a modern and contemporary twist. The rooms were created to include heritage accents with carefully selected furnishings such as traditional Chinese stools and porcelain basins. Each of its guest rooms was emblazoned with a Chinese family name on the door, an ode to the contribution of early migrants who lived around the area; no two rooms were alike in layout and furnishings. All these details provided guests with a rich and fully immersive experience of the history and culture of Singapore.

Another unique selling point of AHAVA Hotel was the personalized service the hotel took pride in providing for its guests. For example, there was a guest who visited Singapore after many years. She shared in a conversation with the front office manager that she used to live around the Seletar Airbase area in Singapore just after World War II and even showed the staff some black and white photos of places she used to visit frequently. To help this guest reminisce her fond memories, the manager took the guest to Yakun Kaya Toast at China Street, which still retained the benches and tables in an old coffee shop setting and bought her the local breakfast set of grilled toast with soft boiled eggs and coffee brewed from a sock. Additionally, the manager took the initiative to create a mini guidebook of some old sites to visit and helped to plan the route so the guest could get around easily on her own by walking or public transport. To ensure that this would be a memorable trip for the guest, the manager also presented her a souvenir of Singapore.

Other examples of high-quality personalized service included accompanying guests to the bank to exchange money, escorting guests to the train station and helping them to purchase train tickets, accompanying an unwell guest to the hospital and ensuring that he was taken care of during his recuperation, and going out to purchase cupcakes from a guest's favorite store upon learning that it was her birthday.

The focus on providing high quality personalized service to guests was strongly backed by Signature's philosophy in empowering staff and increasing their job satisfaction. In 2020, Millennials accounted for a huge percentage of the workforce across all industries. It was undeniable that these individuals had different motivations as compared to previous generations. As an employer, Signature had evolved its HR practices to address their need for acceptance and affirmation, their definition of recognition and reward, and their impatience for growth and development.

At Signature, staff took on the approach to "minister rather than administer". Leaders were encouraged to build trust and promote a harmonious working environment where staff were empowered to make a difference.

Annually, Signature sent teams to the national stage for various competitions. Most recently, the AHAVA Hotel team won the *Best Front Office Department* in the Superior/Boutique category at the Singapore Hotel Association's Best Department Awards 2017. Signature also had a myriad of programs to nurture its staff and help them find fulfilment in what they did. A key example was the implementation of a mandatory 100 hours training curriculum, arguably the highest in the industry. This was an on-the-job training program which gave leaders the chance to explain why certain things were done in a certain way.

At the same time, it allowed staff members to challenge processes to deliver a more consistent and superior outcome. When teams had that sense of fulfilment in their roles, they naturally looked after guests well.

Signature was looking for opportunities to extend Singapore-inspired hospitality to its guests. Most recently, it announced that new properties would be added to its portfolio to fill the gap in the midscale hotel segment in Singapore, while catering to the growing category of discerning travelers and Singapore's robust staycation market.

Beyond expansion, Signature was also focusing on industry transformation of the overall hospitality scene in Singapore. This would be carried out through its partnership with the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) on the Hotel Industry Transformation Map. As Signature had a diverse portfolio of brands in the upper and midscale categories, it had been impacted by the challenges of the hospitality industry more than others. Signature recognized the need and the complexities of transforming its business model. Hence, its collaboration with STB covered both micro innovations involving shared services, centralization, process improvements and automation; and macro innovations involving collaboration with government agencies, industry partners and vendors to create a seamless destination experience for visitors, attracting local talents to the industry and building a Singaporean core to support future growth. Some key examples of initiatives that Signature worked on included a central laundry service, interactive smart kiosk, and luggage tracking while focusing on providing travelers with a local interpretation of Singapore-inspired hospitality.

### **Onset of COVID-19**

When COVID-19 first hit Singapore on Jan 23, 2020, a multi-ministry government taskforce was set up to tackle the virus (Goh, 2020). On February 7, the government raised the Disease Outbreak Response System Condition (DORSCON), from yellow to orange (Exhibit 1) and introduced three phases for the safe opening of businesses (Singapore Tourism Board, 2020). By March 23, no short-term visitors were allowed into Singapore and by April 7, the circuit breaker (a stay at home order to break the transmission of COVID-19) kicked in. Employees were to work from home and businesses closed (except for those in essential services). On June 1, the circuit breaker was lifted, and Singapore moved into Phase 1 (Safe Opening). Subsequently, on June 19, Singapore moved into Phase 2 (Safe Transition) where dine-in was allowed and most businesses reopened with safe management measures in place.

By July 2020, 80 hotels in Singapore had reopened in Phase 2, including AHAVA Hotel, offering staycations to locals (Straits Times, July 2020). These hotels had to adhere to stringent safe management measures as defined by the Singapore Tourism Board (Exhibit 2) to minimize the spread of COVID-19. While the reopening of these hotels might not make up for the loss in receipts pre-COVID, it helped to meet pent-up demand from locals for travel (Singaporeans spent \$34.2 billion in overseas travel in 2018).

In August 2020, the Singapore government rolled out a S\$45 million SingapoRediscover campaign to drive local spending in the tourism sector (Straits Times, August 2020). Singaporeans were given S\$320 million in tourism credits to spend domestically. It was a very competitive market however, as the size of the population in Singapore was much smaller than countries like China.

Market segmentation helped marketers develop their marketing strategies to cater to the needs of target groups. Many marketers from luxury companies targeted Millennials as a specific distinctive luxury consumer category (Ngai & Cho, 2012). This was because they embraced credos such as “spend tomorrow’s money” and “spend ahead of income” (Wang, Sun and Song, 2011), and had diverse reasons and patterns for luxury consumptions (Ngai & Cho, 2012). Besides not being price conscious, they were digital natives who embraced the use of technologies to satisfy their luxury consumptions.

## The Decision

The hotel industry was highly service oriented where satisfying consumers is the top priority (Högnäs, 2015). During the COVID-19 period, hotel bookings plunged. In order to attract guests back, AHAVA Hotel needed to reexamine its business strategies, taking into consideration guests' concern about safety and hygiene, and yet maintain its brand equity, service quality and guest satisfaction. Mr. Lim is in a dilemma. Should he target initiatives that bring value to local Millennials during staycations or focus on the hotel's traditional clientele and brand image as a heritage hotel catering to foreigners? Alternatively, should he disregard consumer groups and the hotel's brand image to raise the hotels' revenue?

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## Exhibit 1: DORSCON levels

<b>DORSCON ALERT LEVELS</b> (Disease Outbreak Response System Condition)				
	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>YELLOW</b>	<b>ORANGE</b>	<b>RED</b>
<b>Nature of Disease</b>	Disease is mild <b>OR</b> Disease is severe but does not spread easily from person to person (e.g. MERS, H7N9)	Disease is severe and spreads easily from person to person but is occurring outside Singapore. <b>OR</b> Disease is spreading in Singapore but is (a) Typically mild i.e only slightly more severe than seasonal influenza. Could be severe in vulnerable groups. (e.g. H1N1 pandemic) <b>OR</b> (b) being contained	Disease is severe <b>AND</b> spreads easily from person to person, but disease has not spread widely in Singapore and is being contained (e.g. SARS experience in Singapore)	Disease is severe <b>AND</b> is spreading widely
<b>Impact on Daily Life</b>	Minimal disruption e.g. border screening, travel advice	Minimal disruption e.g. additional measures at border and/or healthcare settings expected, higher work and school absenteeism likely	Moderate disruption e.g. quarantine, temperature screening, visitor restrictions at hospitals	Major disruption e.g. school closures, work from home orders, significant number of deaths.
<b>Advice to Public</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be socially responsible: If you are sick, stay at home</li> <li>• Maintain good personal hygiene</li> <li>• Look out for health advisories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be socially responsible: if you are sick, stay at home</li> <li>• Maintain good personal hygiene</li> <li>• Look out for health advisories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be socially responsible: if you are sick, stay at home</li> <li>• Maintain good personal hygiene</li> <li>• Look out for health advisories</li> <li>• Comply with control measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be socially responsible: if you are sick, stay at home</li> <li>• Maintain good personal hygiene</li> <li>• Look out for health advisories</li> <li>• Comply with control measures</li> <li>• <b>Practise social distancing: avoid crowded areas</b></li> </ul>

**Source:** Government of Singapore (Feb 6, 2020). What do the different DORSCON levels mean. Retrieved <https://www.gov.sg/article/what-do-the-different-dorscon-levels-mean>

## Exhibit 2: Advisory for Hotels in Phase 2 by the Singapore Tourism Board

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1. The Multi-Ministry Taskforce (MTF) announced on 19 May 2020 that Singapore would exit the [Circuit Breaker from 2 June](#) and resume activities in three phases. On 15 June, the MTF announced that Phase 2 will commence on 19 June 2020. More businesses will be allowed to resume activities in a phased and controlled manner and subject to Safe Management Measures (“SMMs”) being implemented to provide a safe environment for both customers and workers, so as to minimize the risk of a COVID-19 resurgence.
2. In Phase 2, a more cautious approach will be taken for higher risk activities, which typically involve large numbers of people interacting with one another, often in enclosed spaces, and over prolonged periods. Some activities of the hotels sector fall under this category.
3. The Singapore Tourism Board (“STB”), Ministry of Trade and Industry (“MTI”), Enterprise Singapore (“ESG”), and Ministry of Health (“MOH”) have drawn up SMMs specifically for hotels. Hotels, including Migrant Worker Decant Hotels (“MWD”), Stay-Home-Notice Dedicated Facilities (“SDFs”), Government Quarantine Facilities (“GQFs”), and Swab Isolation Facilities (“SIFs”)[1] must comply with the latest requirements for Safe Management Measures (“SMMs”) found in the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Control Order) Regulations 2020 found at <https://sso.agc.gov.sg/SL/COVID19TMA2020-S254-2020> (“Control Order”). The information in this advisory supersedes that in previous advisories or statements.
4. The following activities listed in para 4.1 to 4.6 have been allowed to resume from 19 June 2020, subject to sector specific SMMs and appropriate conditions being in place:
  - 4.1. Dine-in services for F&B establishments, F&B establishments must adhere to ESG’s latest advisory on SMMs for F&B establishments.
  - 4.2. Gyms and pools, subject to adherence to the Sport Singapore’s (“Sports SG”) latest measures on SMMs for sports facilities.
  - 4.3. Spas, subject to adherence to ESG’s latest advisory on SMMs for retail establishments.
  - 4.4. Gatherings of 5 or fewer persons [2], subject to adherence to mandatory SMMs in this advisory.
  - 4.5. Marriage solemnizations and wedding receptions of ≤ 50 pax [1] for each solemnization/reception, subject to adherence to mandatory SMMs in this advisory.
  - 4.6. Classes organized by a permitted enterprise providing an education service e.g., Training and professional development of ≤ 50 pax including the trainer [4], subject to adherence to mandatory SMMs in this advisory.
5. In Phase 2, hotels may apply to the Singapore Tourism Board (“STB”) to resume the following activities:
  - 5.1. Re-opening Recreation areas for children (e.g., Kids’ Club), and
  - 5.2. Providing accommodation to guests for the purposes of leisure (e.g., staycations).
6. Any hotels that wish to apply to resume these activities must comply with the SMMs found within [Annex A](#).

### SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION TO RESUME FULL OPERATIONS (INCLUDING STAYCATIONS)

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7. Prior to resuming the activities in paras. 5.1 and/or 5.2, hotels must submit their application to STB for assessment. STB will process these applications from the date of this advisory, and hotels may resume these business activities and related marketing efforts only after receiving approval from MTI.
8. The detailed guidelines in this advisory are to help hotels develop their plans and implement the necessary SMMs for the activities in paras. 5.1 and/or 5.2. These plans will have to be tailored to the specific nature of operations in each hotel, and potential risk factors arising from localized factors such as the hotel's physical premises and layout, environment, scale of hotel, and typical guest behavior.
9. Hotels must also address key outcomes in their application to reduce potential transmission risks and support contact tracing efforts. Risk factors for hotels to consider include proximity between guests, propensity for crowds to form, level of activity and number of high-touch surfaces.
10. Each hotel's application must show how the hotel will achieve all the following key outcomes:
  - 10.1. Ability to meet density requirements
    - 10.1.1. Limit occupancy to no more than 1 person per 10sqm guest-accessible public space per person (excluding hotel staff) at any point in time
    - 10.1.2. Implement more stringent safe management measures at areas where guests and staff spend more time, as opposed to areas which see more transient traffic
  - 10.2. Reduce face-to-face mingling among guests, between employees and between staff and guests
    - 10.2.1. Stagger timings for guests to be at hotel lobby and guest facilities, and employees at back of housework environment
  - 10.3. Ability to disperse crowds and prevent bunching
  - 10.4. Mandatory implementation of SafeEntry and encourage use of Trace Together
  - 10.5. Implement rigorous cleaning and disinfecting regimes, particularly for high touch elements
11. Please refer to **Annex A**, which contains the procedure, checklist, photographic requirements, and documentation needed for application submission. While the majority of the SMMs in Annex A are drawn from the Control Order and are summarized for the convenience of hotels, the Control Order will prevail in case of any inconsistency. Hotels' applications must adhere to the Control Order in order to be considered for re-opening in Phase 2, as well as additional requirements also incorporated in Annex A.
12. Hotels must submit to an inspection scheduled and conducted by STB as part of the assessment process.
13. Hotels must submit the applications to STB via [go.gov.sg/localbookingapplication](https://go.gov.sg/localbookingapplication). STB and MTI will take up to 14 working days to assess each application.
14. Hotels whose applications are approved must,
  - 14.1. Submit a set of required data every Monday before 10am. Submissions are to be made at [go.gov.sg/covid19-hotelupdates](https://go.gov.sg/covid19-hotelupdates). Information collected will be used only as internal reference for public policy purposes, and will not be shared with other hotels; and
  - 14.2. Inform STB whenever there is a positive COVID-19 case at the Hotel[5]. Submissions are to be made at [go.gov.sg/covid19-positivcasehotelupdate](https://go.gov.sg/covid19-positivcasehotelupdate).
15. Hotels are required to submit via <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg> the number of workers who are working on-site within 2 weeks of the date of resumption of on-site operations for staycation following approval from MTI.

#### **OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS ACTIVITIES ALLOWED TO RESUME FOR MWDs, SDFs, GQFs, and SIFs SUBJECT TO RELEVANT APPROVALS**

16. Please refer to the table below on business activities that may be allowed to resume in hotels that are currently serving as MWDs, SDFs, GQFs, and SIFs. Hotels' requests to resume these business activities will be subject to assessment and approval by the relevant authorities.

<b>Business activities</b>	<b>Assessments and approval required</b>
F&B Dine-in, takeaway, delivery	Subject to assessment and approval by the relevant authorities. Hotels to submit requests and the following plans to the respective officer from <b>SLA</b> that your hotel has been liaising with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical premise segregation and security plans</li> <li>• Other safe management measures to provide a safe environment for customers and workers</li> </ul>
Ballrooms/ Function rooms/ other amenities (Spa/ Gym/ Swimming pool etc.)	
Kids' Club	Subject to <b>STB's</b> assessment and <b>MTI's</b> approval of application. See paragraphs 7 to 15 on application details.
Providing accommodation to guests for the purposes of leisure (e.g., staycations)	

**ENFORCEMENT OF MEASURES**

17. Government agencies will also be stepping up enforcement to ensure that businesses comply with the required SMMs. Under the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act passed in Parliament on 7 April 2020, first-time offenders will face a fine of up to S\$10,000, imprisonment of up to six months, or both. Repeat offenders may face a fine of up to S\$20,000, imprisonment of up to twelve months, or both. Further, other levers under the Act, such as closure of the premises, may be used against hotels that are found to be non-compliant.
18. Businesses that do not comply with the government's safe distancing advisories may also be ineligible for government grants, loans, tax rebates and other assistance.

**SINGAPORE TOURISM BOARD**

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