

The 'Sauna Mafia' and the 'Pyjama Raiders'

Exploring the dynamics of guest to guest interaction on board cruise ships

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Table of Contents

- ▶ Cruise as a Social Experience:
 - Relevance of Guest2Guest Interaction on Board
- ▶ Research Methodology and Findings:
 - Approach Overview
 - Phase I: Relative importance of G2G interactions for the cruise experience
 - Phase II: Exploration of the dynamics of G2G interaction
- ▶ Implications & Discussion
- ▶ Appendix
 - Phase I: ANOVA Tables
 - Phase II: Code Book

The background of the slide is a grayscale photograph of ocean waves. The waves are breaking, creating white foam and spray. The sky is overcast with soft, diffused light. The overall tone is serene and natural.

CRUISE AS A SOCIAL EXPERIENCE

Are social aspects of a cruise important?

Social Interaction and the Cruise Holiday

The Food was Great and the Route was Interesting, but...

"Small annoying thoughts occur sometimes when elderly guests go earlier to bed than me. I like to spend time at the bar during the evening, but because of the early sleepers it causes that the bar closes also early and I am constraint to go in my cabin as well"

"There was a rather enthusiastic 'Sauna-group' on board, who was making sure that no sun beds were 'reserved'... When the person who reserved the sun bed would come back from the sauna they would become pretty agitated and an argument would begin. Then the rest of the 'sauna-group' would get involved to go against the 'sun-bed booker'"

"There was an older gentleman, mid-sixties, standing in his pyjamas... He was actually a glass sausage" (reception) at 12:30 asking for

"Privacy means to me that I don't have to get in touch with other guests if I don't want to. I don't want to be accosted by other people all the time and I don't want to feel forced to talk to anybody. I like to decide on my own who I want to chat with and when. But if I felt sympathy for someone I could possibly imagine continuing a talk"

The background of the slide is a grayscale photograph of ocean waves. The waves are breaking, creating white foam and spray. The sky is overcast with soft, diffused light. The overall tone is calm yet dynamic.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & FINDINGS

A Two-Phased Approach

Research Questions & Approach

What is the relative importance of a cruise's social elements (compared to catering, itinerary, facilities)?

- Quantitative approach
- Sample size: 173
- Analysis of cruise evaluation remarks (and associated incidents)
- Analysis of Variance between different age and consumption groups

Phase I: Relative importance of G2G

Phase II: Explore G2G Dynamics

- Qualitative approach
- Sample size: 76
- Semi-structured interviews
- Transcript coding and grouping -> Tentative hypotheses model

What are the determinants of positive social experiences on board?

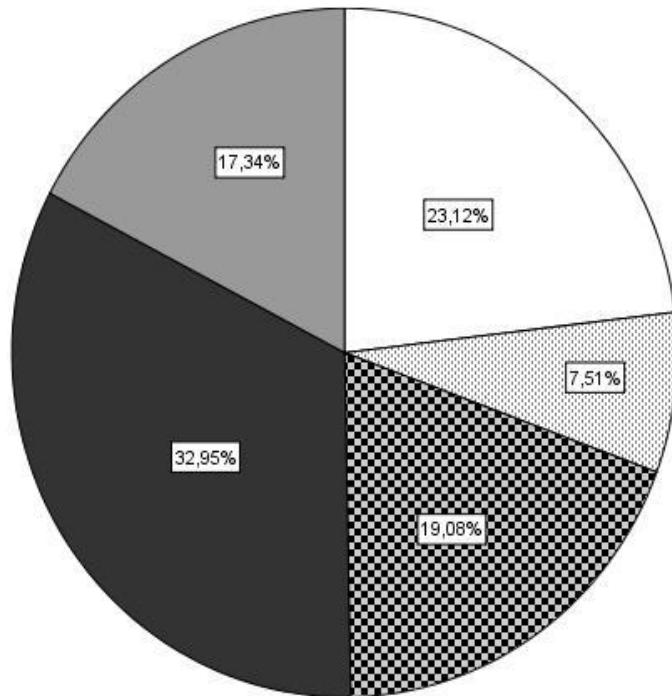
What does this mean for cruise professionals?

- Cruise Research
 - Role of culture (cruise culture vs. national culture)?
- Cruise Practice
 - Mega-liners?
 - Social engineering on board?
 - Cruise ship design?
 - Cruise marketing?
 - Role of staff?

Discussion & Implications

Phase I – Sample Characteristics

Age Groups



☐ Under 30
☐ 30-39
☐ 40-49
☐ 50-59
☐ Over 60

Consumption Groups

Cruise Experience	#	%	Cruise Segment	#	%	Cruise Type	#	%	Information Intensity	#	%
First Cruise	94	54.3	Budget	37	21.4	Classic	88	50.9	One Source	133	76.9
Over 2 Cruises	54	31.2	Standard	97	56.1	Club	72	41.6	Two Sources	33	19.1
Over 5 Cruises	12	6.9	Premium	27	15.6	Specialist	13	7.5	Three Sources	4	2.3
Over 10 Cruises	11	6.4	Deluxe	11	6.4				Four Sources	2	1.2
Over 15 Cruises	2	1.2									
Total	173	100,0	Total	172	99,4	Total	173	100	Total	172	99,4

Phase I: Key Findings

What is counted vs. what counts!

Remark Analysis:

- Measurement Aim:
 - Importance placed on social-related aspects of a cruise:
- Analysis of Variance:
 - No significant differences within cruise consumption groupings (Age, cruise experience, price segment, cruise type and information intensity)
- Implications:
 - Cruisers, regardless their segment-orientation, are primarily focus on typical features of the cruise product such as: facilities, catering, itinerary, and services
 - Social experiences appear to assume a secondary role in the recollections and post-hoc evaluations of cruisers

(What is counted) Aspects stated....

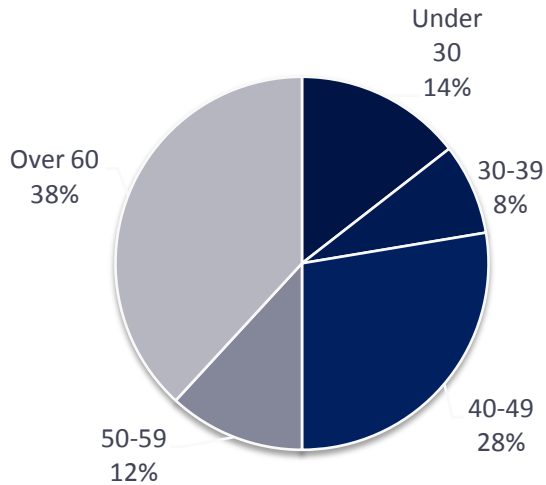
Incident Analysis:

- Measurement Aim
 - Recollection of memorable situations as an indication of the intensity of examined (Product and Social-related) aspects
- Content Analysis:
 - The vast majority incidents mentioned referred to a particular social situation (e.g. Captain's dinner, excursion experience with locals, individualised relationships with staff)
- Implications:
 - Social aspect seems to have a lasting, catalytic impact on cruisers' recollection and satisfaction

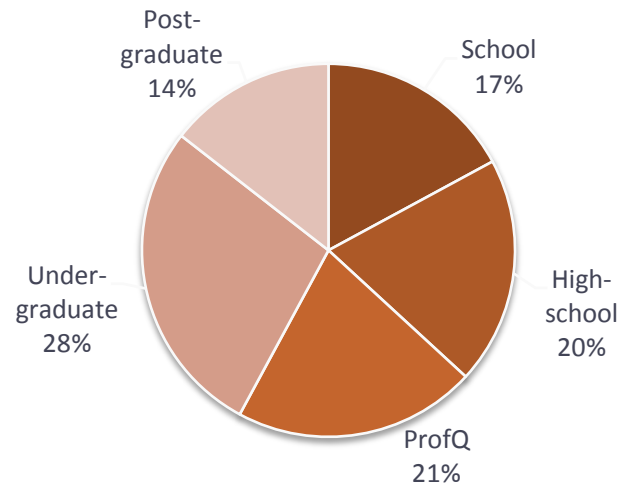
.... Aspects remembered (What counts)!

Phase II – Respondents' Characteristics

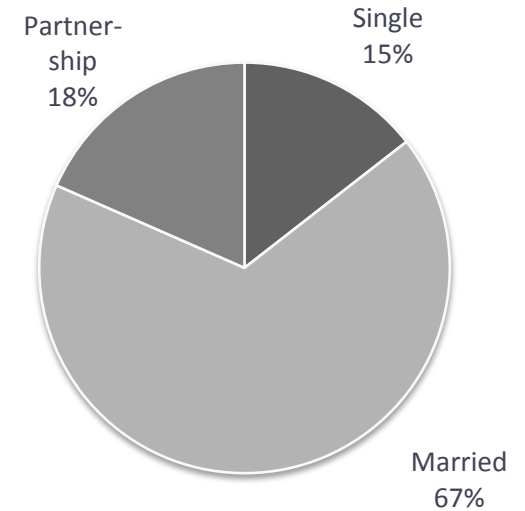
Respondents' Age



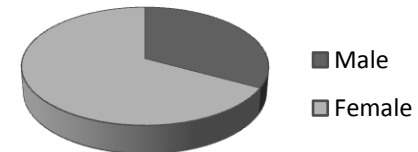
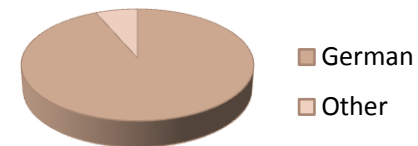
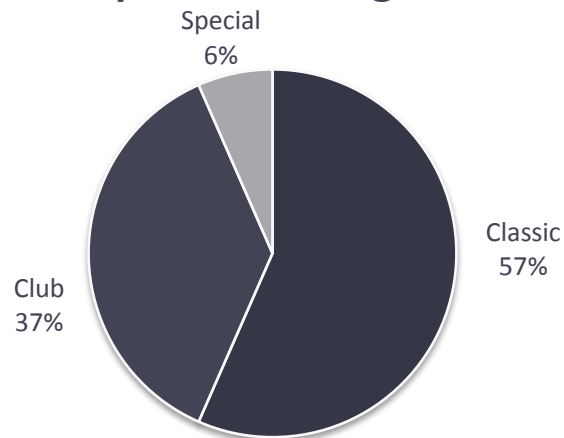
Respondents' Education



Respondent's Marital Status

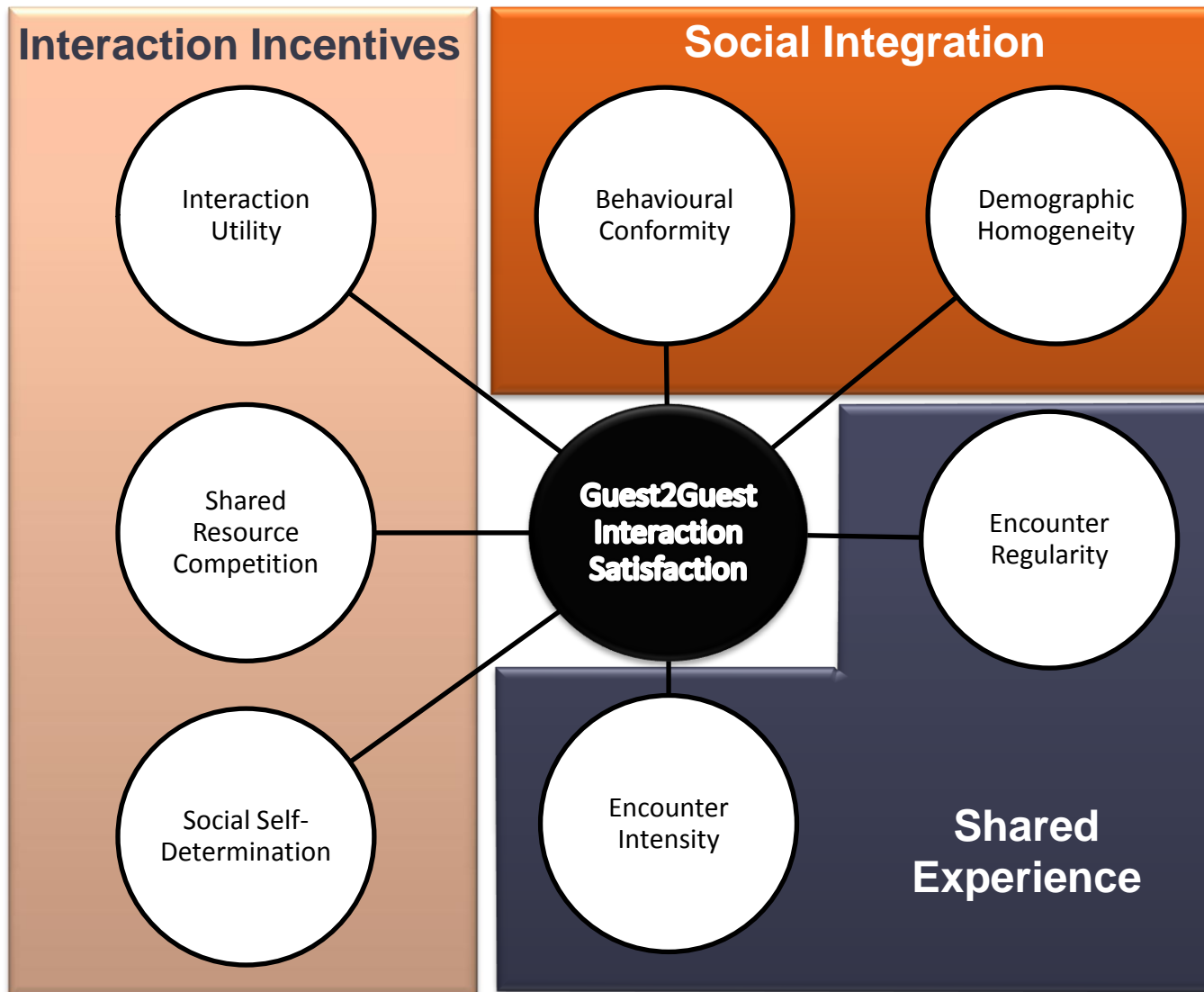


Respondents' Segment



Phase II: Key Findings

No Social Adventures!



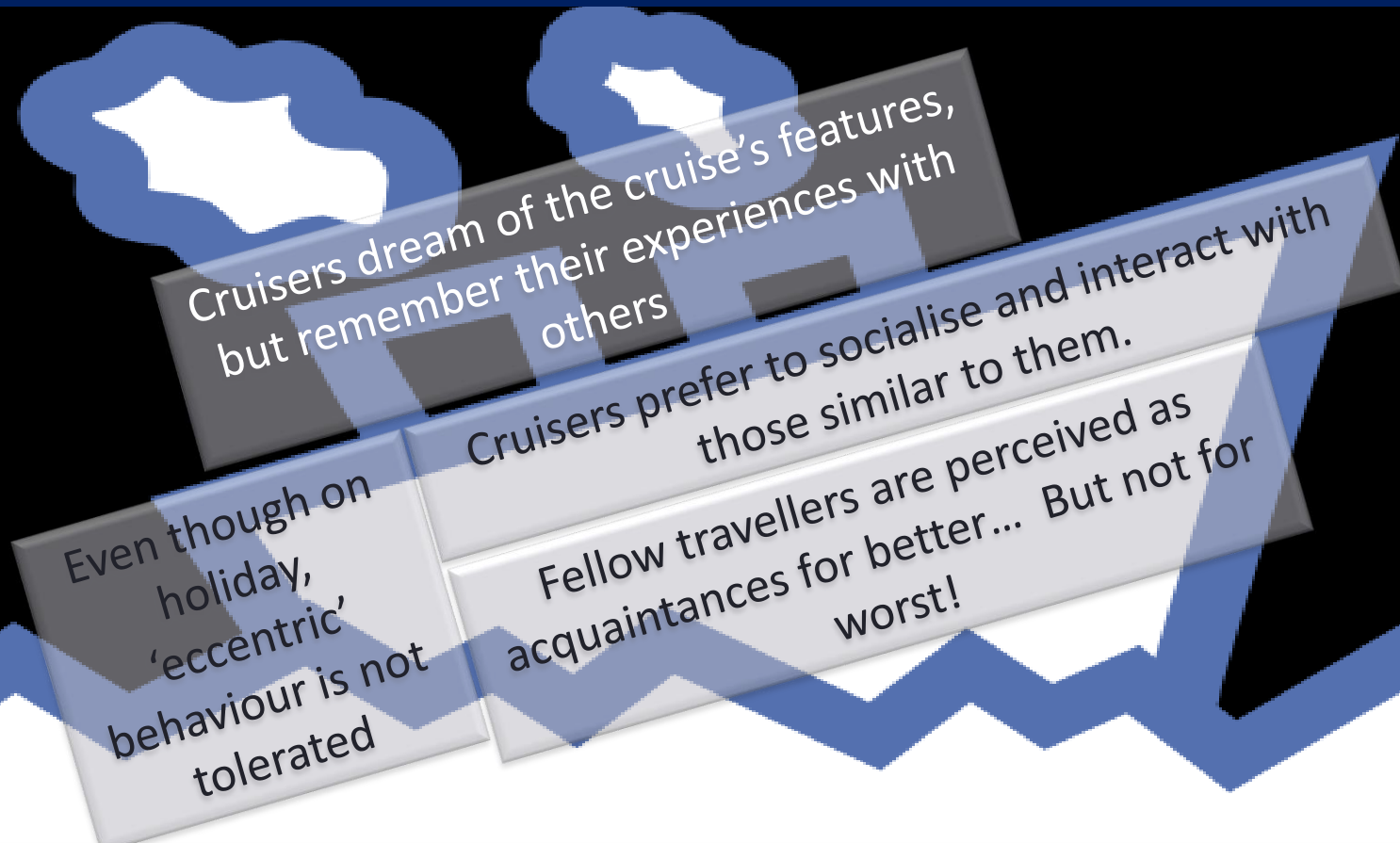
- ▶ **No 'Aliens'**: G2G interaction on board is positively affected from:
 - Behavioural conformity (i.e. informal rules of behaviour)
 - Demographic homogeneity (nationality and age)
- ▶ **'Quality instead of Quantity'**: Satisfying G2G interaction is encouraged by:
 - Regularity
 - Intensity of encounters (i.e. common interests, shared experiences)
 - Informational benefits (e.g. insider info, tips)
- ▶ **'Freedom & Peace'**: Satisfying G2G interaction required to be:
 - Voluntary
 - Non-competitive (sun beds, Buffet)



IMPLICATIONS & DISCUSSION

The 'Social Cruise Ship'

Cruise as a Self-Centered, Socially-Secure, Visual Adventure...



Like a 'Butler', other guests are expected to be uniformed, available when needed, un-intrusive, pleasant, helpful and self-less

Discussion Points – Food for Thought

► Mega-liners:

- Investment in cabin size vs. investment in public areas?
- Many different social groups on board – ‘Holiday Ghetto-ing’?

► Practices on Board:

- ‘Yield Management’ for Buffet / Sun-beds?
- Role of cruise staff as social actors?
- ‘Free-Style Cruising’ vs. ‘Free Choice Cruising’?

► Marketing Practices

- Theme-Based Segmentation (vs. Nationality) – Measure for achieving higher homogeneity on board?
- Balanced age mix – Age quotas?
- ‘Compatible’ Nationalities – Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions as a Guideline

Thank You for your Attention



► Research Functions:

- Founder & Chairman of the **Cruise Research Society**
(<http://www.cruiseresearchsociety.com>)
- Co-Director of the **Institute for Maritime Tourism (IMT)**
(<http://www.imt.hs-bremerhaven.de/>)
- Editorial Board Member of the Journal of the European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation (EJTHR) –
(<http://www.ejthr.com/>)
- Reviewer of the Tourism Management Journal
(<http://journals.elsevier.com/02615177/tourism-management/>)

► Administrative Functions:

- Dean of Studies – Faculty of Business & Economics
- Chairman of the CIM Examinations Committee
- Member of the CIM Study Affairs Committee

APPENDIX

- *ANOVA Tables*
- *Coding Table*

Sig. value > 0.05 => No significant difference between the groups tested

ANOVA Analysis

Sig. value > 0.05 => homogeneity of variance assumption has been met.

One Way ANOVA – Cruise Experience (Num. of cruises taken)							Homogeneity of Variances Test			
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Social-related Remarks	Between Groups	22,471	4	5,618	1,552	,190	,163	4	168	,957
	Within Groups	608,200	168	3,620						
	Total	630,671	172							
Product Related Remarks	Between Groups	28,413	4	7,103	,750	,560	1,463	4	168	,216
	Within Groups	1592,107	168	9,477						
	Total	1620,520	172							
One Way ANOVA – Cruise Segments (Budget, Standard, Premium, Deluxe)										
Social-related Remarks	Between Groups	17,316	3	5,772	1,607	,190	,264	3	168	,852
	Within Groups	603,446	168	3,592						
	Total	620,762	171							
Product Related Remarks	Between Groups	6,555	3	2,185	,228	,877	,475	3	168	,700
	Within Groups	1613,137	168	9,602						
	Total	1619,692	171							
One Way ANOVA – Cruise Type (Classic, Club, Specialist)										
Social-related Remarks	Between Groups	7,628	2	3,814	1,041	,355	,695	2	170	,500
	Within Groups	623,042	170	3,665						
	Total	630,671	172							
Product Related Remarks	Between Groups	28,447	2	14,223	1,519	,222	,835	2	170	,436
	Within Groups	1592,074	170	9,365						
	Total	1620,520	172							
One Way ANOVA – Information Intensity (Num. of information sources utilised – pre-booking)										
Social-related Remarks	Between Groups	24,079	4	6,020	1,667	,160	1,051	3	168	,372
	Within Groups	606,591	168	3,611						
	Total	630,671	172							
Product Related Remarks	Between Groups	18,005	4	4,501	,472	,756	,333	3	168	,801
	Within Groups	1602,515	168	9,539						
	Total	1620,520	172							

16

Phase II: Coding Summary

Categories	Code labels	# Sources	# Codes	Total # Codes
Behavioural Conformity	Adherence to Dressing Code	11	12	70
	Adherence to Regulations	3	4	
	Communication Manners	9	14	
	Complaining	11	12	
	Crime – Violence	4	4	
	Eating Manners	4	4	
	Intoxication	4	4	
	Others Hygiene	2	2	
	Promiscuity - Jealousy - Harassment	5	5	
	Public Embarrassment	9	9	
Demographic Homogeneity	Age Similarity	19	25	70
	Cultural Proximity	20	25	
	Economical-Educational Similarity	1	1	
	Stereotyping - Discrimination	13	19	
Encounter Intensity	Excursion Together	13	14	14
Encounter Regularity	Eating Together	17	18	21
	Emerging Rituals	3	3	
Interaction Utility	Advise – Support	3	3	49
	Common Cruise Experience	18	20	
	Interest Sharing	11	11	
	Motives – Expectations	9	12	
	Perceived Social Entertainment	1	1	
	Recognition	2	2	
Resource Competition	Buffet Queuing	7	7	36
	Bus Crowding	1	1	
	Embarkation Queuing	2	2	
	Facility Reservation Conflicts	10	13	
	Public Facility Crowding	12	13	
Social self-determination	Degree of Interaction Control	17	22	22