RHM
2020
Research in
Hospitality
Management

Exploring the key components of a contemporary hospitality servicescape: Architecture, theology and community

Peter Singleton* & Erwin Losekoot

Stenden Hotel Management School, NHLStenden University of Applied Sciences, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands.
**Correspondence: peter.singleton@nhlstenden.com*

ABSTRACT: This article aims to contribute to the theoretical understanding of the hospitality servicescape. Through this analysis this article makes recommendations to managers on how they can set about creating a genuine sense of welcome and hospitality in a contemporary setting. It uses a case study of *Jabixhûs*, a "prayer house" in the northern Dutch city of Leeuwarden to investigate how religious convictions can blend with architectural expertise and a lifetime love of hosting "the other" to create a hospitable space where people can share experiences. The location of *Jabixhûs* on the actual historical pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela and socially within the community in Leeuwarden provides a combination of influences on the religious hospitality experiences offered. As well as extensive observations, a phenomenological interview was conducted with its owners, designers and operators, supplemented by feedback posted on the accommodation's Airbnb listing. The three theoretical servicescape-related themes identified are the provision of hospitality through architecture, theology and community. Management recommendations include the suggestion that the closer personal motivations and the hospitality offering are aligned, the easier it is to deliver a meaningful experience. A clear and authentic hospitality servicescape can help to ensure that this occurs.

KEYWORDS: architecture, community, hospitableness, hospitality, religion, servicescape, theology

Introduction

The idea for the study originated because one of the authors was staying at *Jabixhûs*, which provides accommodation and meeting and reflection spaces in Leeuwarden, a city in the north of the Netherlands. It was created by two people with a deep Christian faith and a lifetime of experimenting with buildings and spaces and reflecting on how they can create welcoming communities which facilitate shared experiences. In 2019, they had a bed capacity of 700 nights and filled 580, a very respectable occupancy rate of over 80%. It is home to them and their family, as well as a space for gatherings, prayer and reflection for those in the local community. It is located at the start of the centuries-old pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in Spain where the Apostle St. James' tomb is found, and is also a highly rated Airbnb-listed accommodation. When combined, these factors laid the foundations for a fascinating case study of a modern interpretation of the ancient responsibility to welcome strangers. After an overview of the nature of hospitality and the history of hospitality and religion and how this is represented in the servicescape of *Jabixhûs*, this study reports on an analysis of all the data collected which includes a phenomenological interview with the founders of *Jabixhûs*, and considers what modern (commercial) hospitality management can learn from a form of hospitality which many people seek but few can still find in the branded quality-assured offerings of multinational corporations.

The nature and history of hospitality

The nature of hospitality (domestic, civic and commercial) has become a subject of regular and constructive debate for almost half a century (Nailon, 1982; Brotherton, 1999; Hemmington, 2007; O'Gorman, 2007a; 2007b; 2009; 2010; Lashley, 2008; 2015; Lugosi, Lynch, & Morrison, 2009). Largely uncontested in this debate is the fact that hospitality has many historical connections with religious obligations to look after "the stranger" and travellers (Nouwen, 1975), although O'Gorman (2006a) points out that French philosopher Derrida questions whether hospitality can ever be truly unconditional, and that each party to a hospitality exchange will need to compromise, concluding that "the true gift of hospitality is an act of generosity experienced by the 'guest', which turns a stranger into a friend for a limited period of time" (O'Gorman, 2006a, p. 56).

The concept of hospitality has been extensively debated and redefined since the 1990s (see, for example, Patten, 1994; King, 1995; Lugosi et al., 2009; Blain & Lashley, 2014; Kelly, Losekoot, & Wright-St Clair, 2016; Golubovskaya, Robinson, & Solnet, 2017). While some textbooks claim that hospitality (management) was invented in the 20th century in the USA, other more academic sources generally agree that the word itself means "to provide care or shelter for travellers". Early definitions focused on commercial hospitality and the hospitality industry (Nailon, 1982; Brotherton, 1999) and were about the satisfaction of hotel guests at a fair price for all concerned. Others noted that in order to

be successful in providing such services these organisations must also show internal hospitality to their employees (King, 1995), and that the "managerialist" approach misses important elements in a memorable hospitality experience and that that the act of paying for services rendered changes in the relationship between host and guest (O'Connor, 2005; O'Gorman, 2010). Gunnarsson and Blohm (2011) also brought a new term to the debate — "hostmanship", which they explain in the sub-title of their book as "the art of making people feel welcome".

O'Gorman (2007b, p. 17) refers to hospitality as having "an ancient origin and honourable tradition", and Zandberg (2019, p. 185) points out that "in the Middle Ages, inns and monasteries already offered lodging facilities to guests". There is an increasing amount of evidence that hospitality has a long history (since Greek and Roman times certainly, but arguably much longer) of turning strangers into friends, although it is noted that in the modern commercial hospitality industry front-line staff face the challenge of "the strains of making friendly welcoming relations with a succession of strangers" (Nailon, 1982, p. 140). Many religions regard the welcoming and protection of strangers as a sacred duty. Ancient Greeks such as Homer, Plato, Aristotle and Euripedes described and debated the duties and obligations of those offering and those receiving hospitality. O'Gorman (2005; 2007a) categorises these ancient hospitable moments into domestic, public and commercial forms of hospitality, and also provides a clear link to religious motives *for* (you might be entertaining angels sent by God) and instructions *about* hospitality. Protection of the vulnerable in society is a common link to hospitality in religious writing. A Catholic priest and scholar, Nouwen (1975, p. 46) writes from a Christian monastic perspective, and argues that travellers are often on "a painful search for a hospitable place", and that those who receive them in monasteries or other non-religious establishments have a responsibility "to offer an open and hospitable space where strangers can cast off their strangeness and become our fellow human beings".

Religious hospitality
Travellers in ancient times were in real danger, and one would not venture far unless it was for a serious mission or a pilgrimage (O'Gorman, 2007b). It is therefore not surprising to find many references in religious texts to the sacred duty to look after strangers and travellers. The early inhabitants of Eden could eat whatever and however much they wanted — with one exception, of course, the apple from the forbidden tree. There are further parables in the Old Testament about the importance of hospitality in Leviticus (19:33–34), Genesis (18:2–8), 2 Kings (6:22–23) and Job (31:32), all emphasising the importance of and rewards for welcoming strangers. The New Testament also contains a section in Matthew (25:32–37) which says: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome...". O'Gorman (2007b, p. 30) argues that "professionalism and greater expertise can surely come from a deeper understanding of the dimensions of hospitality, that have been evolving since antiquity, and on which the industry now relies". Monastic hospitality, and in particular the rule of St Benedict (ca A.D. 530), is regarded by hospitality scholars as the foundation of the hospitality industry we have today, particularly around the reception of guests. He wrote twenty-four "rules" about how guests should be greeted and looked after, but also how guests should not interrupt the

business of a monastery, prayer and reflection. These rules could be categorised into enduring hospitality principles around the guest, management, staffing, and the business of hospitality. Other religious orders such as the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem dedicated themselves to charity and to giving hospitality to travellers and the sick.

In England, the dissolution of the monasteries by Acts of Parliament as a result of Henry VIII's changes to the Church in England brought an end to most monastic hospitality, but other changes were also happening in Scotland and Germany (O'Gorman, 2006b; O'Gorman & MacPhee, 2006). As O'Gorman and MacPhee (2006, p. 18) note, hospitable activities "became separated from their Christian roots as the state increasingly took over responsibility" for hospitals, the poor and refugees, although Conti, O'Gorman and McAlpine (2008, p. 28; emphasis in original) use the phrase "hospitality *in necessitude*" to describe the provision of hospitality to those in need, rather than to those who have the ability to reciprocate. Nor was this requirement to provide hospitality to those in need restricted to Christianity — Muslims are required to engage in alms-giving (*waqf*), and caravanserai were safe staging posts for travellers in Persia, built by the wealthy in recognition of their good fortune in this life. Kirillova, Gilmetdinova and Lehto (2014) suggest that the interpretation of hospitality across religions shows many differences, but that there are also common threads about the treatment of friends, relatives, neighbours and strangers across Christianity, Islam and Buddhism and that "while representation of hospitality may not be exactly the same across religious contexts, the meanings ascribed to the acts of hospitality are all variations of care of one person for another" (Kirillova et al., 2014, p. 32).

In an interesting parallel for this article, the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in Spain starts in Friesland, just a short distance from the *Jabixhûs* accommodation which is the subject of this study. Conti et al. (2008) report that the hostel built at the end of the route in Santiago de Compostela as a hostel for pilgrims, is now *El Hostal de Los Reyes Católicos*, a five-star hotel.

Servicescape, space and community
This final section of the literature review cuts across the disciplinary boundaries of hospitality, geography and architecture (as advocated by Lugosi, 2020), just as the background of the *Jabixhûs* founders cuts across hospitality, architecture and religious beliefs. Hospitality usually takes place in a physical space — a hotel, restaurant, hostel, airport, hospital, museum, etc. It has long been recognised (Kotler, 1973; Bitner, 1990; 1992) that the physical space or "servicescape" influences how people feel and behave, either attracting them and encouraging the feeling of community, welcome and safety, or doing the opposite (Augé, 1995; Adey, 2006; 2007; Gordon, 2008; Venkatraman & Nelson, 2008). Breazeale and Ponder (2013) suggest that people shop in places they identify with or aspire to, something that Neill, Johnston and Losekoot (2016) also discuss with regard to food choices on holiday. The physical environment affects not just the customer but also the employee. The idea of the space influencing the development of a community is explored by Treadwell (2005) and Morris (1988). They argue that motels are seen as temporary shelters not connected to a community (not even a temporary community of other travellers) because of the lack of a communal area or gathering place. Writing of

Edward Hopper's painting *Western Motel*, Treadwell (2005, p. 218) argues that "a motel that is nothing more than an amalgam of road, car and bed". This article will attempt to show how the creators of *Jabixhûs*, using their life experiences, Christian faith, understanding of hospitableness and architectural and design backgrounds, make *Jabixhûs* into a meaningful experience which is much more than Treadwell's (2005) view of a resting place for travellers. As such it contributes to our understanding of the hospitality servicescape, and creates an opportunity for hospitality management practitioners to reflect on how their guests' experience is created (Harkison, 2017).

Methods

A case study approach (Stake, 1995; Andrade, 2009; Woodside, 2010) is appropriate for this study as it is a clearly bounded study using just one establishment. This fits the interpretivist approach that we felt to be most suitable for this study. The collected data includes over 130 hours of direct observation over a six-month period (including interaction with other guests and informal contact with the owners and managers), and a phenomenological interview, about 2.5 hours long, resulting in an edited transcript of over 3 500 words. 280 reviews on the airbnb.nl website for *Jabixhûs* were also downloaded and analysed. These reviews also include their previous property in Kollumerzwaag, and it is interesting to see that very similar comments were made in terms of welcome and hospitableness in their previous listing, although architecture plays a minor role in those previous postings compared to *Jabixhûs*. This study uses a variety of sources of information — documentation, photographs, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical evidence — to make sense of the experience of hospitality at *Jabixhûs*. We participated in the interview, agreed on the transcript and then individually coded the data before coming together to agree on the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman & Bell, 2011). The interpretations were shared with the interviewees to gain respondent validation and therefore improved accuracy and credibility. These themes were then linked to the literature, supported by quotes from the interviews and from other relevant postings on social media about guests' experiences at *Jabixhûs*, and evidence gathered during direct and participant observation by the researchers. This study has a number of limitations including the fact that it is only based on one establishment and no direct guest interviews were conducted. However, their voices are heard in the (unsolicited and therefore presumably unbiased) social media postings used to support the findings.

Findings and discussion

The learning derived from the literature review, combined with findings from the interview, social media postings and research notes collected through participant observation led to the identification of a number of themes, and this section reports on and discusses those.

Hospitality through architecture

Jabixhûs is an experiment in designing and building spaces that facilitate welcome, and a feeling of togetherness. The incorporation of those hospitable values in design, layout and facilities, including the use of colour, lighting, practicality, works

of art, and a sense of freedom, is a reflection of the Christian values of its creators. One of them had studied construction and architecture and had been a member of a Christian student association. As she reflected:

We had a group studying building, interior decoration and architecture. We used to meet and eat together and then we had lots of discussions about Christian ethics and how that could be represented in buildings. How do you create human-sized spaces? Which architecture makes people feel small and which makes people feel comfortable? What kind of architecture facilitates meeting and which is designed to impress? It is about hospitality in architecture.

Their emphasis was on creating communities where things were shared. As she noted: "If you eat together it becomes easier to understand each other and get on with each other". They explained that in one place where they lived they had built a space with accommodation for 35 people, with a communal hall leading off to individual apartments, so that there was a smooth flow of "public space, semi-public space and private space" in which it might be easier for people to have contact with others — spaces that reflected such values. She remembered that:

We philosophised about what buildings do to people and what values they represent. The norm is private space and then a front door leading on to public space. If there was some shared space in between that might facilitate community.

After having lived in several other places across the Netherlands, they finally decided the time was right to settle in Leeuwarden. A long search for the "right" building eventually led them to the current *Jabixhûs*, an old school (closed in 1994) in a formerly very deprived area of Leeuwarden with many social issues. The building is on the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela and so also provides a meaningful link to the past, as well as an opportunity to build a community into the future. As the current owners explained:

We were keen to be part of the Santiago de Compostela walkway. We wanted to be part of the pilgrimage route along with other guest houses. We are also a member of a cycling network — they are often older people. They often come with great stories — one gentleman was photographing every train station in the Netherlands.

Other aspects such as lighting and colours were also considered important, and could facilitate interaction with others in shared spaces. As one of them noted: "as a teacher we were taught to stand by the door and greet our students — that sets the tone". Bringing people closer to satisfy their need for togetherness while preserving their right to privacy was a common theme as they described the fact that while much of *Jabixhûs* is designed to facilitate interaction, there is also private space so people can withdraw if they want to — including for them as a family. They noted that they still had one child living at home and that therefore it was also important for them to have their own private family space, nevertheless visitors were often invited in to their living room for a chat or a drink. As they said: "it is interesting to see that the things we were busy with all those years ago in terms of colours and shapes are actually being used now in the design of *Jabixhûs*". The lighting outside *Jabixhûs* is created to draw people in and give a welcoming impression, as well as to highlight the foundation stone of the building, telling visitors a little of the history of the place. The tiles in the

bathroom were chosen "to reflect the dust of the road people have travelled". Inside the building, furniture has a role to play too. They pointed out the table we were sitting at was oval, and that was not a coincidence. As they explained:

> A round table means people sit far away from each other so you can only talk to the people beside you. A rectangular table leads to one person sitting at the "head" of the table. An oval table in contrast means everyone can talk to everyone, but no-one is in charge.

A noticeable feature of *Jabixhûs* is the artwork, and we were particularly struck by a woodcarving which is in the centre of the "prayer room". Carved by someone whose work they admired, they had asked them to make "something" which would fit their vision for *Jabixhûs*. More than a year later the artist called to say he had made them a piece and invited them to come and have a look. As shown in Figure 1, it is a wood carving of two bare feet. Some see it as Jesus walking across the Sea of Galilee, as a reference to the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela, as a metaphor of their journey which led them to this place of peace and reflection, or just as a very tactile piece of art — we instinctively reached out to touch it, and the owners smiled and said that is a very common reaction.

One final aspect which is to do with the spiritual rather than the physical architecture of *Jabixhûs* is the desire of the owners to see it as a place of temporary rest. The fact that there are more (semi)public spaces than private spaces is by design — unlike commercial hotels, they do not want people to create their "own" space which would by definition exclude others. They explicitly stated that they did not want people to book every Monday for three months "as that would stop others coming. We are set up for people who are moving through". What this study shows is that 21st century hospitality does not need to be delivered in a monastery or an alms-house to be authentic, purposeful and "from the heart". The servicescape they have created encourages visitors to find themselves, to share with others, and to find genuine hospitality.

Some of the coding is included to further illustrate the themes. For example, Table 1 shows selected quotes from social media showing unsolicited visitors' thoughts on the aspect of "hospitality through architecture". There are similar tables included in the next two sections.

Hospitality through theological commitment

Both founders of *Jabixhûs* had studied philosophy and theology in addition to their architecture and teacher training. One had spent time studying in London at an international community with 200 people of all ages from 50 countries and 60 different churches. As she reflected: "that is also a common theme — the internationalisation of cultures that we have found in each place". They described the incorporation of Christian belief

FIGURE 1: Carving of feet

in offering shelter, refuge, caring for the needs of others, seeing Christ in others, but stopping short of missionary work — perhaps out of a sense that that would be inhospitable? Recognising the benefit of community, of sharing social space for exchange of experiences and getting to know others have been very important to them. Describing the bible study community in London, she reflected:

> People are interesting but in very different ways. We had a group of Nigerians who thought everything we did was hysterical. And the Koreans thought the Dutch were incredibly lazy — when we went to bed they started studying again. The Brits were happy to go to the pub after a day's bible study, but the Americans were horrified at the thought of alcohol. It was a fascinating experience — to realise that what was normal for you was nothing of the sort for others.

TABLE 1: Visitor quotes related to the hospitality-through-architecture theme

Review comments	Theme	Code
Super amazing place, very well equipped		Furnishings
Everything you need and more, luxurious bathrooms		
Beautifully converted school: spacious, light and great facilities	Architecture	Light
The prayer space and music room make it unique.		Space
A beautiful and peaceful space		
This is a magical space. It's an old school that's been re-opened as a learning place... it's full of art and music and love.		
A great conversation with Jeannet about the different spaces and their plans for future projects.		

The commercial pressure to pay bills incurred in running *Jabixhûs* is certainly something they feel, but as they noted:

> *You also need faith — faith that it will be okay. We also relied on many friends — we asked all those people who enjoyed the idea of sharing and doing things together. Many of them we had met at a Christian folk festival Flevofestival where we used to help out.*

At the festival people from all walks of life joined in, irrespective of their background or occupation, and this was what they wanted to re-create at *Jabixhûs*. When they invited some of these people they found:

> *they came here and were really at ease. They left everything behind. That atmosphere is an important part of hospitableness — it is about shared values.*

When asked about their attitude to hospitality and the connection to their faith, they explained "from a theological perspective Jesus welcomed people, and wants to be present — we try to find Jesus in people". They then went on to also say "from a sociological perspective you want to find out what someone needs and then to provide that". However, they recognised that every guest was different:

> *Our accommodation is not so expensive, so young people who want to get away can afford this but not a hotel. They do not really want to get to know you, but just want something that is clean and where they can come and go as they want. You can do what you like here so long as you do not disturb others. Other people arrive and are clearly burdened by something. It is surprising how open the discussions are — people will never see each other again so they are more open with others. We have people talking about relationship breakdowns and all sorts of personal issues. You give them the space because they need to unburden themselves.*

Table 2 shows that visitors often do not see an explicit link to the personal religious beliefs of the owners, but the sense of welcome, peace and tranquillity which accompanies these beliefs is clear in many small ways, and makes a difference to those who come to stay.

Hospitality through community

By offering space and facilities for prayer, contemplation, reflection, music, group discussion, courses and community events a sense of community is created. An example of this are the specially designed rooms set up for these purposes in *Jabixhûs*. Events include a regular 24-hour prayer marathon dealing with creative ideas on how to pray together. It was attended by 34 people from the Leeuwarden area. As the owners explained:

> *A few years ago suddenly prayer houses started to spring up. There is now a global network of these prayer houses where people plan prayer marathons. The idea was to have a permanent prayer being said somewhere around the world. Some people call these "boiler rooms". Every year around 1 500 people get together to pray — we met a 2m tall Irishman with red hair who was running a prayer house in China. Someone else set one up in Ibiza where they go out at night to look after youngsters under the influence. We were suddenly regarded as "religious leaders" in Leeuwarden.*

International guests are also drawn together, sharing their different cultural values. This again came out of the owners' experiences when they previously lived in Delft in a relatively poor area where "a lot of stuff happened in the street because all the houses were too small to host anyone". In another area they lived there were large numbers of refugees and immigrants with young children "where families looked after each other" in a very international community. Internationalisation is not, however, something they leave to chance. *Jabixhûs* has its own website (https://www.jabixhus.nl/), and a listing on Airbnb (Leeuwarden Pilgrimsguesthouse Jabixhûs). For this listing they consciously decided to only post it in English, thereby attracting people who at least speak English as a foreign language.

> *We only placed English adverts because we wanted to attract English speakers who were looking to meet people. It is about creating that atmosphere of openness, hospitality, acceptance and an interest in "the other".*

They believe this leads to a much more international group of visitors, a fact reflected in their furniture, fittings and equipment like the home-made globe lightshades shown in Figure 2.

This commitment to activities also extends to the local community. They were keen not to become a "social housing" project or a long-term refuge as that would perhaps alienate the local community. They explained that as they developed their project "people started to notice these lived values". Neighbours Days were a great opportunity to open their doors and show local people around. They ran marriage preparation courses, and when a neighbour wanted to have a birthday party for her mother, they made one of the spaces available for that.

We were keen to explore payment, as O'Connor (2005) speaks of the dread of that moment — the point when one realises that people are only being hospitable because you are paying them to do that. They acknowledged that "there is a bit of tension between our commercial and charitable activities". The cyclists who are part of a national association pay a fixed amount, the

TABLE 2: Visitor quotes related to the hospitality-and-theology theme

Review comments	Theme	Code
Amazed by the hospitality, beautiful space and wonderful comfort		Transcendental
A wonderful atmospheric space where you are welcomed with hospitality and where you have the space to make music or meditate		Transcendental
Jeannet and her family have given a new meaning to hospitality through their personal attention.		Personal disposition
A very home-from-home feel	Theology	Spiritual
Jeannet is a very warm and friendly host.		Friendship
Jeannet is a lovely host. Super helpful and always up for a chat		Personal disposition
This is a lovely place to rest, relax and meet others.		Spiritual
It is a meeting place for other travellers.		Journeying
Meaningful spaces. Perfect for people who want to have more than just a bed for the night		Spiritual

FIGURE 2: Home-made lightshades made of globes

Airbnb people pay online so no money changes hands on the day and "for the rest, we have envelopes and people can put some money in". They are very keen that a lack of funds should not deter people from being able to stay, and note that because they are so reasonably priced guests take extra effort to look after their environment, leave things clean, and tidy up after themselves. This also saves time and cleaning costs.

The final section explores thoughtful "little touches" that *Jabixhûs* does in order to facilitate the creation of a temporary community. Riley (1984, p. 107) writes a little disparagingly about what he saw as the "wholesale substitution of personal services by 'things' and 'touches'", but Table 3 shows that visitors appreciate the many little touches that the owners have reflected on and provided as part of the experience. The owners were at pains to stress the lengths they had gone to in order to anticipate people's needs and desires — in a way that would challenge many corporate hotel operations. One example that is very much appreciated by visitors is that they will fly the national flag of the visitors who come to stay. As they noted: "We hang out the national flag for visitors who come here to stay — they love that. The Korean was bowled over by it". Other things were the large bathrooms with baths for

people who had been walking or cycling all day — but they had also been designed to be easy to clean. Bathmats are provided to avoid people standing on their towels and unnecessarily soiling them. Likewise all the beds had bedspreads as they had learned that people put (dirty) suitcases on the bed thus marking the sheets — bedspreads protect the sheets. Linen has been carefully sourced (much of it ex-hotel) and all the bathrobes (provided for all guests so they can comfortably move around the shared spaces) are ex-Sheraton. The owners also provide maps, brochures and other information about the local area, much as one might expect from a hotel concierge. These are all things that could easily (and sometime are) done in commercial hotels, but at *Jabixhûs* they are clearly done from the heart, not because the brand manual requires it.

Conclusion

This article presents *Jabixhûs* as a contemporary hospitality servicescape where architecture, theology and community come together to create a sense of hospitality and hostmanship. By creating an environment where strangers can feel at home and at peace, meaningful hospitable moments are created. Careful reflection on the architecture creates an environment where people want to share, experience and learn from others. Bitner's (1990; 1992) servicescape model speaks of the environment creating a desire to remain, join and feel a part of something, or to avoid and leave as quickly as possible. The architecture (both physical and social) of *Jabixhûs* contributes to this sense of hospitableness and belonging. While theology is not a common theme in the 21st century commercial hospitality industry, a desire to give an authentic and welcoming experience is. Community is coming to the fore again as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic that is spreading as this article is being written, and with it an increased awareness that our neighbours and community need support and can in turn support us. Wanting to be part of something and being able to interact safely has never seemed more important at a time of enforced social and physical distancing as a result of Covid-19. These are all things that hospitality managers can use to ask themselves: "Where does my business do these things?".

The link between what O'Gorman (2005; 2007a; 2007b; 2009; 2010) reported and *Jabixhûs* is the idea of hospitality based on and driven by values, not economics. Surely commercial hospitality is about people leading to profit, and not simply profit from people? What *Jabixhûs* offers is different as it avoids an active, proselytising role in terms of Christian focus on beliefs, in favour of offering facilities to socialise, interact, reflect and learn (Butler, Curran, & O'Gorman, 2013). The guest is invited into a mix of social and private space geared to recognise their needs. This recognises an intrinsic human need to overcome a sense of

TABLE 3: Visitor quotes related to the hospitality-through-community theme

Review comments	Theme	Code
Very atmospheric with all modern conveniences: from bathrobes to cooking utensils		Food
A bit unexpected, they offered everything I needed in terms of breakfast.		
Jeannet and her husband are outstanding hosts. They glow with a genuine interest in the people they meet flowing through their centre. They engage with the lives and destinies of their guests without in any way encroaching on their privacy or plans.	Community	Engagement
For the first time in my 72 years of life, I saw the flags of Tanzania and of Norway flying side by side, thanks to my hosts honouring both my countries of birth and of citizenship.		

isolation, as identified by Nouwen (1975). The nominal charge is a pre-indication of priorities (it is not all about the money), a message to the guest that they are valued as a guest above and beyond their economic or financial worth to the business. The created environment recognises an intrinsic human need to overcome a sense of isolation. The traveller does not have their local social network close by, so is physically, spiritually and socially in need (Nouwen, 1975). *Jabixhûs* offers a shared space for social interaction where the need for shelter is satisfied on a generous scale at minimal cost. Lashley (2015, p. 1) speaks of the desirability of blurring the commercialism of the modern hospitality industry and that

> at one end, hospitality is offered in the hope of personal gain in response to the hospitality provided, while at the other extreme hospitality is offered merely for the pleasure of giving other people pleasure.

The concept underlying *Jabixhûs* is essentially Christian, drawing on the tradition of the Good Samaritan, and on the instruction to love your neighbour as yourself. However, this creation comes from an ecumenical perspective deeply held by its designers and owners, as it is devoid of any intention to impose opinion or to convert in terms of religious belief. It is simply a provision of the spiritual space to socialise and be liberated from social isolation.

The question hospitality academics and practitioners should be asking themselves is: does this have an application to other forms of hospitality? Or is it simply the purest form of hospitality and can be used as a way to understand the essence of hospitality? Perhaps the findings from *Jabixhûs* give insight into what enables hospitality to work. To be at its best, hospitality goes beyond facilities and allows social interaction (at a comfortable distance for those involved), building a sense of belonging and togetherness. In *Jabixhûs*, the facilities, ambiance, hostmanship (Gunnarsson & Blohm, 2011), decor, lighting, layout, attitude and activities are all imbued with hospitable Christian values. There is no suggestion that large-scale commercial hospitality operations should (could?) emulate the sense of hospitableness that the owners have succeeded in creating, but it could perhaps hold up a mirror which any reflective practitioner in our industry would benefit from looking in. This is perhaps what Lugosi et al. (2009, p. 1474) meant when they urged researchers to have "some awareness of relevance to a broader set of stakeholders".

Further research could be conducted with owners and in particular with guests of other *stadskloosters* or *gebedshuizen* (city monasteries or prayer houses), or utilising a quantitative approach using surveys to improve the validity, reliability and generalisability of this type of research. Another research opportunity would be to capture the "stories" of travellers. The owners of *Jabixhûs* were amazed by the variety of backgrounds and motivations of the people who chose to stay with them — for example, someone who had been bought out of their business and was spending a year travelling on a boat they purchased; a lady researching a story about two young girls who had rescued horses from the Waddenzee and who wanted to make a film of it; a group of climbing specialists who were in town for a while to build a commercial climbing wall; lots of artists who stayed during Leeuwarden's year as European Capital of Culture 2018. Just as this article has focused on the "story" of the "proud parents" of *Jabixhûs*, hospitality businesses could collect the stories of their guests to better understand and connect with them.

References

Adey, P. (2006). Airports and air-mindedness: Spacing, timing and using the Liverpool airport, 1929–1939. *Social and Cultural Geography, 7*(3), 343–363. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649360600714998

Adey, P. (2007). 'May I have your attention': Airport geographies of spectatorship, position, and (im)mobility. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 25*, 515–536. https://doi.org/10.1068/d69j

Andrade, A. D. (2009). Interpretive research aiming at theory building: Adopting and adapting the case study design. *The Qualitative Report, 14*(1), 42–60.

Augé, M. (1995). *Non-places: An introduction to supermodernity* (trans. J. Howe). London: Verso.

Bitner, M. J. (1990). Evaluating service encounters: The effects of physical surroundings and employee responses. *Journal of Marketing, 54*(2), 69–82. https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299005400206

Bitner, M. J. (1992). Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of Marketing, 56*(2), 57–71. https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299205600205

Blain, M. & Lashley, C. (2014). Hospitableness: the new service metaphor? Developing an instrument for measuring hosting. *Research in Hospitality Management, 4*(1–2), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1080/22243534.2014.11828307

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*, 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Breazeale, M., & Ponder, N. (2013). Get the picture? Visual servicescapes and self- image congruity. *Journal of Business Research, 66*, 839–846. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.06.009

Brotherton, B. (1999). Towards a definitive view of the nature of hospitality and hospitality management. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 11*(4), 165–173. https://doi.org/10.1108/09596119910263568

Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2011). *Business Research Methods.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Butler, R., Curran, R., & O'Gorman, K. D. (2013). Pro-poor tourism in a first world urban setting: Case study of Glasgow Govan. *International Journal of Tourism Research, 15*, 443–457. https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.1888

Conti, M., O'Gorman, K., & McAlpine, D. (2008). Hospitality in necessitudine: Hospices, hostels and hospitals. *The Hospitality Review, 10*(2), 28–35.

Golubovskaya, M., Robinson, R. N. S., & Solnet, D. (2017). The meaning of hospitality: do employees understand? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 29*(5), 1282–1304. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-11–2015–0667

Gordon, A. (2008). *Naked airport: A cultural history of the world's most revolutionary structure*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gunnarsson, J. & Blohm, O. (2011). *Hostmanship: The art of making people feel welcome*. Stockholm: Dialogos.

Harkison, T. (2017). The importance of the human touch in the luxury accommodation sector. *Research in Hospitality Management, 7*(1), 59–64. https://doi.org/10.1080/22243534.2017.1355488

Hemmington, N. (2007). From service to experience: Understanding and defining the hospitality business. *The Service Industries Journal, 27*(6), 747–755, https://doi.org/10.1080/02642060701453221

Kelly, R., Losekoot, E., & Wright-St Clair, V. A. (2016). Hospitality in hospitals: The importance of caring about the patient. *Hospitality & Society, 6*(2), 113–129. https://doi.org/10.1386/hosp.6.2.113_1

King, C. A. (1995). What is hospitality? *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 14*(3/4), 219–234. https://doi.org/10.1016/0278–4319(95)00045–3

Kirillova, K., Gilmetdinova, A., & Lehto, X. (2014). Interpretation of hospitality across religions. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 43*, 23–34. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2014.07.008

Kotler, P. (1973). Atmospherics as a marketing tool. *Journal of Retailing, 49*(4), 48–64.

Lashley, C. (2008). Studying hospitality: Insights from social sciences. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 8*(1), 69–84. https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250701880745

Lashley, C. (2015). Hospitality and hospitableness. *Research in Hospitality Management, 5*(1), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1080/22243534.2015.11828322

Lugosi, P. (2020). Developing and publishing interdisciplinary research: Creating dialogue, taking risks. *Hospitality & Society, 10*(2), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1386/hosp_00015_7

Lugosi, P., Lynch, P., & Morrison, A. (2009). Critical hospitality management research. *Service Industries Journal, 29*(10), 1465–1478. https://doi.org/10.1080/02642060903038879

Morris, M. (1988). At Henry Parkes motel. *Cultural Studies, 2*(1), 1–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502388800490011

Nailon, P. (1982). Theory in hospitality management. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 1*(3), 135–143. https://doi.org/10.1016/0278-4319(82)90002-0

Neill, L., Johnston, C., & Losekoot, E. (2016). New ways of gazing: The refractive gaze. *International Journal of Tourism Anthropology, 5*(1/2), 138–151.

Nouwen, H. J. M. (1975). *Reaching out: The three movements of the spiritual life*. Garden City: Doubleday.

O'Connor, D. (2005). Towards a new interpretation of "hospitality". *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 17*(3), 267–271. https://doi.org/10.1108/09596110510591954

O'Gorman, K. D. (2005). Modern hospitality: Lessons from the past. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 12*(2), 141–151.

O'Gorman, K. (2006a). Jacques Derrida's philosophy of hospitality. *The Hospitality Review, 8*(4), 50–57.

O'Gorman, K. (2006b). The legacy of monastic hospitality: 1. The rule of Benedict and rise of Western monastic hospitality. *The Hospitality Review, 8*(3), 35–44.

O'Gorman, K. D. (2007a). The hospitality phenomenon: Philosophical enlightenment. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research, 1*(3), 189– 202. https://doi.org/10.1108/17506180710817729

O'Gorman, K. D. (2007b). Dimensions of hospitality: Exploring ancient and classical origins. In C. Lashley, P. Lynch & A. Morrison (Eds), *Hospitality: A social lens*, (pp. 17–32), Abingdon: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-045093-3.50005-9

O'Gorman, K. D. (2009). Origins of the commercial hospitality industry: From the fanciful to factual. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 21*(7), 777–790. https://doi.org/10.1108/09596110910985287

O'Gorman, K. D. (2010). *The origins of hospitality and tourism*. Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers. https://doi.org/10.23912/978-1-906884-08-6-990

O'Gorman, K. & MacPhee, E. (2006). The legacy of monastic hospitality: 2. The lasting influence. *The Hospitality Review, 8*(4), 16–25.

Patten, C. S. (1994). Understanding hospitality. *Nursing Management, 25*(3), 80I–80M. https://doi.org/10.1097/00006247-199403000-00017

Riley, M. (1984). Hotels and group identity. *Tourism Management, 5*(2), 102–109. https://doi.org/10.1016/0261-5177(84)90057-8

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Treadwell, S. (2005). The motel: An image of elsewhere. *Space and Culture, 8*(2), 214–224. https://doi.org/10.1177/1206331205275006

Venkatraman, M. R., & Nelson, T. (2008). From servicescape to consumptionscape: A photo-elicitation study of Starbucks in the New China. *Journal of International Business Studies, 39*, 1010–1026. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8400353

Woodside, A. G. (2010). *Case study research: Theory, methods, practice*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.

Zandberg, T. (2019). The diminishing role of the general manager from a middle managers' perspective: Some generic drivers. In B. Rowson & C. Lashley (Eds), *Experiencing Hospitality*, (pp. 183–202), Hauppage: Nova Science Publishers.