

## THE ROLE OF ONLINE EVALUATIONS IN HOTEL SERVICES PURCHASE DECISION PROCESS

Lia Chagas de Lima  
Danielle Miranda de Oliveira Arruda  
Universidade Estadual do Ceará  
Fortaleza, Brasil

*The Role of Online Evaluations in Hotel Services Purchase Decision Process. The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of online evaluations in hotel services purchase decision process. In order to achieve that purpose, a qualitative research was carried out. The data emerged from narrative interviews conducted in person with Brazilian travelers who recognize online evaluations as a source of information in the decision process of purchasing a hotel service. In order to finish the data collection, the saturation criterion was observed through the data repetition. The data's treatment and interpretation occurred through content analysis, specifically the analysis of thematic content (Minayo, 2004). The survey's result highlighted the online evaluations of hotel services as an online media that performs more than the function of sending information, because it counts on internauts collaboration to inform about details of the hotel, to ask questions, to recommend the best lodging and to alert other consumers about possible problems that the hotel may have. The study also outlined a framework of the purchasing decision process with information in online evaluations, helping to identify at what moment of decision making the consumer searches the online evaluations as source of information and what steps and criteria used to make it reference.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Online evaluations, purchase decision process, hotel services.*