

How Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Facilities Affect US Hotel Customers' Perceptions and Decisions

Abstract

There is limited research on how EV facilities make a difference in customer satisfaction and decision-making. This research addresses this gap through three studies utilizing TripAdvisor big data, Smith Travel Research secondary data, and survey data. Study 1 determines the impact of hotel EV charging facilities (N = 2,248 hotels) on customer satisfaction ratings. Study 2 (N = 454 customers) examines how EV ownership and EV charging station availability influence customer attitudes and their behavioral intentions. Study 3 (N = 495 customers) examines how EV charging pricing strategies sway customers' actual booking behavior depending on hotel length-of-stay. The findings demonstrate that EV infrastructure plays a critical part in strengthening customer satisfaction, green brand image, and booking behavior. Moreover, short-stay customers favor bundled pricing, while long-stay customers prefer unbundled pricing. This research provides insights into how emerging technological trends are influencing customer behaviors and business strategies within the hospitality industry.

Key Words *Electric vehicle (EV); Electric vehicle charging; Customer decision-making; Pricing strategy; Sustainability*

Track *Ethically Driven Innovations*

Focus of Paper *Theoretical/Academic*

1. Introduction

Around the world, governments and automakers are promoting electric vehicles (EV) as a key technology to curb emissions and fight climate change (Almansour, 2022; Uddin et al., 2024). As a result, more consumers have recognized the environmental benefits of EV (Casals et al., 2016; Kumar et al., 2025), and many are choosing eco-friendly transportation options (Day & Alavipour, 2023). According to Miller et al. (2022), over half of global car buyers expect their next car to be electric. The rise of EV is changing how people travel, and the tourism and hospitality industry is thus facing new opportunities and challenges (Fitt, 2022). Studies suggest that a lack of EV charging infrastructure is one of the main barriers to using EV for tourism purposes (Fitt, 2022; McKercher & Tkaczynski, 2024). Building charging infrastructure at tourist destinations could be a solution (Fitt, 2022). However, if these facilities do not bring benefits (financial and non-financial), their value may be questioned by tourism and hospitality operators (Qian & Zhang, 2023). Therefore, it's critical to examine how tourism and hospitality industry can make a unique contribution to the expansion of electric transportation while finding new revenue opportunities. However, such research is currently limited. This research explores how hotel EV charging facilities impact customer satisfaction, booking intention, and booking behavior, filling a gap in the literature on EV accommodation in tourism and hospitality industry.

2. Literature review and hypotheses development

2.1 Study 1

2.1.1 EV charging stations and customer satisfaction

In previous studies, scholars have extensively discussed the relationship between hotel service attributes and customer satisfaction. More efforts are needed to explore the relationships between the attributes of eco-friendly hotels and customer satisfaction (Merli et al., 2019). Guests are increasingly interested in

sustainable practices in hotel management (Berezan et al., 2013). Research shows that hotel environmental actions, including water conservation and waste management, positively affect tourist satisfaction (Han et al., 2018; Merli et al., 2019). The installation of EV charging stations in hotels contributes to promoting EV usage and sustainable development, which may lead to customer satisfaction. Therefore, this study proposes:

H1: The availability of EV charging stations positively affects customer satisfaction ratings.

2.2 Study 2

2.2.1 EV charging station, customer type, & customer booking intention

Recent studies indicate that consumers who prefer EV are particularly sensitive to issues related to vehicle pollution, driven by an increasing awareness of climate change and environmental sustainability (Jung et al., 2021). Choosing EV is a way to reduce the carbon footprint and foster sustainable lifestyles (Casals et al., 2016). Thus, it's reasonable to assume that customers with EV, with their heightened environmental awareness, perceive hotels with EV charging stations more favorably, enhancing their booking intentions due to the alignment with their environmental values.

H2: Customers with (vs. without) EV are more likely to indicate a higher booking intention of hotels with (vs. without) EV charging stations.

2.2.2 The role of green brand image and service convenience

Chen (2010) described green brand image as consumer perceptions tied to a brand's environmental commitments. Customers with EV often prioritize environmental sustainability in their consumer choices, reflecting their commitment to reducing their carbon footprint and embracing eco-friendly lifestyles (Casals et al., 2016). When hotels provide EV charging stations, they demonstrate a commitment to sustainability that resonates with these values (Day & Alavipour, 2023), thereby enhancing their green brand image (Chen, 2010). Customers with EV are more likely to notice and appreciate this alignment, viewing the presence of charging facilities as a sign of the hotel's dedication to environmental responsibility. Therefore, this study argues that:

H3: Customers with (vs. without) EV are more likely to perceive hotels with (vs. without) EV charging stations as having a more positive green brand image.

Convenience is defined as reducing the cognitive, emotional, and physical effort that customers undergo in obtaining and using services (Jiang et al., 2013). For customers with EV, service convenience is significantly enhanced by the availability of charging stations, which addresses a key practical need during their hotel stay (Freybote, 2023). The ability to charge their vehicles on-site without additional hassle increases the overall appeal of the hotel. This amenity is an important determinant in their accommodation choice, as it directly impacts the ease of their travel experience (Day & Alavipour, 2023). Therefore, this study proposes that:

H4: Customers with (vs. without) EV are more likely to perceive hotels with (vs. without) EV charging stations as offering higher service convenience.

Lee et al. (2010) argued that the overall image of green hotels can enhance customers' behavioral intentions. Recent studies also confirmed the positive effects of green brand image on customers' behavioral intentions (Chi et al., 2022; Hameed et al., 2022; Topcuoglu et al., 2022). Customers' behavioral intentions are most pronounced when they think their incumbent service provider offers greater convenience compared to its competitors (Kuo et al., 2012). In the context of the hospitality industry, Chang and Polonsky (2012) established that service convenience significantly impacts customer behavioral intentions. Therefore, this study proposes that:

H5: Perceived green brand image will positively influence customers' hotel booking intentions.

H6: Perceived service convenience will positively influence customers' hotel booking intentions.

2.3 Study 3

Length of hotel stay and EV charging pricing strategy

Price bundling combines expenses into a single package and reduces customers' cognitive load and discomfort associated with multiple payments (Prelec & Loewenstein, 1998). Additionally, customers often favor bundled pricing for its perceived comprehensive value, making bundled offerings appealing for longer stays (Drechsler et al., 2017; Soman & Gourville, 2001). Bundling EV charging with room rates can lead to higher booking intentions for customers with long and medium length of hotel stay by offering convenience and perceived savings. Therefore, this study proposes that:

H7a: For customers with long (7 nights) and medium (3 nights) length of stay, EV charging price bundling (vs. unbundling) is more likely to lead to booking behavior.

On the other hand, bundle pricing may not be as effective in short duration accommodation (one night) because consumers may feel that they do not have enough time to fully utilize all bundled services (Lambrecht & Skiera, 2006). Customers with a short-length hotel stay often seek to minimize costs and avoid paying for services they may not use. Unbundled pricing allows them to tailor expenditure to actual usage, maximizing perceived value and satisfaction, which in turn influences purchase decisions (Beerli-Palacio et al., 2020). Therefore, this study proposes that:

H7b: For customers with short length of stay (one night), EV charging price unbundling (vs. bundling) is more likely to lead to booking behavior.

3. Study 1 method & results

3.1. Data collection

A web crawler was developed to obtain information on Hilton Hotels Group's hotels in the United States (<https://www.hilton.com/en/>), including hotel room rates, TripAdvisor guest satisfaction ratings, and whether the hotel has an EV charging station. Hilton was selected for this study as it is a leading global hotel brand and one of the first to adopt EV charging stations, reflecting its commitment to sustainability (Noonan & Rankin, 2017).

This dataset included a total of 5,396 hotels, of which 1,127 had EV charging stations and 4,269 did not. Due to the unbalanced sample sizes between the two categories, secondary data from Smith Travel Research (STR), such as geographic region, hotel class, and hotel size, were drawn as the screening criteria to shortlist hotels without EV charging stations. A list of 1,121 hotels without EV charging stations was finally selected based on their comparable location, class, and size to their counterparts with EV charging stations.

3.2 Data analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used to examine the impact of EV charging station availability on customers' satisfaction ratings. Hotels without EV charging stations were coded as 0, and those with EV charging stations were coded as 1. Customer ratings from TripAdvisor were used as a proxy indicator for customer satisfaction, which has been widely adopted in previous research (Francesco & Roberta, 2019; Wang et al., 2020).

3.3 Results

With hotel size and class, the number of hotel reviews, and the number of public EV charging ports at each hotel's location controlled, the availability of EV charging stations had a significant positive influence on customer satisfaction ratings ($\beta=0.124$, $p < 0.001$) – See Table 1. It suggests that having an EV charging station helped improve customer satisfaction. H₁ was thus supported.

4. Study 2 method & results

4.1 Data collection & Measurement

Data was collected using Prolific online consumer panel. The 3-item green brand image scale was

adapted from Chen (2010) and Chi et al. (2022). the 3-item service convenience scale was adapted from Colwell et al. (2008) and Roy et al. (2020). Booking intention was measured by 4 items adopted from Agag and Eid (2019). All questions were measured on a seven-point Likert scale.

4.2 Data analysis

Two-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD tests were used to investigate the interaction effects of EV ownership and EV charging station availability on customers' booking intention (H_2), perceived green brand image (H_3) and perceived service convenience (H_4). Multiple regression analysis was used to examine the direct effects of green brand image (H_5) and service convenience (H_6) on booking intention.

4.3 Results

A total of 270 valid questionnaires were received. Two-way ANOVA results indicated significant interaction effects ($F=58.418$, $p<.001$). The Tukey HSD results showed that customers with EV indicated significantly higher booking intentions of hotels with EV charging stations ($M=5.641$) compared to those without ($M=4.215$). Therefore, H_2 was supported.

Furthermore, two-way ANOVA results indicated significant interaction effects on green brand image ($F=9.371$, $p=.002$) and service convenience ($F=12.028$, $p=.001$). Tukey HSD results revealed that customers with EV perceived hotels with EV charging stations as having a significantly higher green brand image ($M=5.455$) and providing significantly higher service convenience ($M=5.122$) compared to those without EV ($M=4.785$ & $M=4.333$, respectively). Therefore, H_3 and H_4 are supported. See Table 2.

Lastly, multiple regression analysis showed that both green brand image ($\beta=0.336$, $p<.001$) and service convenience ($\beta=0.234$, $p<.001$) had a significant positive impact on booking intention. These results supported H_5 and H_6 .

5. Study 3 method & results

5.1 Study design & measurement

In this study, a mixed factorial design experiment was conducted to examine the effects of hotel length of stay and EV charging pricing strategy on customers' actual booking behavior. In the between-subjects design, participants were randomly assigned to one of the three scenarios representing three lengths of hotel stay (7-night vs. 3-night vs. 1-night). In the within-subjects design, participants were exposed to all three conditions in the hotel booking website: (1) a control condition, hotel without EV charging station, and (2) two experimental conditions, hotel with EV charging station with either bundled or unbundled pricing.

To assess the booking behavior of customers with EV, we followed Chi et al. (2022) approach and created a simulated hotel booking website with three hotel booking pages displayed side by side. To manipulate hotel EV charging pricing strategy, with all other conditions being held constant (customer review ratings, location, amenities, etc.), Hotel Zeta is set without EV charging station at \$125 nightly rate; while Hotel Eta used unbundled EV charging pricing at \$125 nightly rate and pay-per-use EV charging; and Hotel Kappa used bundled pricing at \$129 nightly rate (EV charging included in the room rate). The \$4 EV charging rate was determined as follows: average miles US travelers travel (40 miles per day) \div average EV efficiency (3 miles per kWh) * average hotel EV charging rate (\$0.30 per kWh) = $40/3 * \$0.30 = \4 . Booking behavior was directly measured by tracking customer' clicks on the "Reserve" button for Hotel Zeta, Hotel Eta or Hotel Kappa. When a customer chose one of the three hotels, the selected hotel was coded as 1, while the unselected hotels were coded as 0.

5.2 Data collection & data analysis

Data collection was through Prolific. A two-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the interaction effects, and then pairwise comparisons were performed to probe the intergroup differences (H_{7a} & H_{7b}).

5.3 Results

A total of 421 respondents were involved. Two-way ANOVA results showed that the interplay of length-of-stay and EV charging pricing strategy affected customers' booking behavior ($F = 76.402$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .196$), i.e., customers' booking behavior differed according to pricing strategies and length-of-stay.

Pairwise comparisons revealed that: for short length-of-stay, customers showed a strong booking preference for Hotel Eta with EV charging price bundling ($M = .701$) over price unbundling ($M = .226$), with a significant difference of 0.474 ($p < .001$). For long length-of-stay, customers exhibited a strong preference for Hotel Kappa with EV charging price unbundling ($M = .8$) compared to price bundling ($M = .166$), with a significant difference of 0.634 ($p < .001$). For medium length-of-stay, there was no significant difference ($p = .353$) in booking behavior between hotels with price bundling ($M = .518$) and price unbundling ($M = .446$). Across the three scenarios, Hotel Zeta without EV charging stations remained the least favored option for customers with EV ($M_{\text{short}} = .073$; $M_{\text{medium}} = .036$; $M_{\text{long}} = .034$). See Table 3.

These results indicated that regardless of the length-of-stay, customers with EV were least likely to book hotels without EV charging stations, confirming findings from Study 2 with actual booking behavior. Also, the effectiveness of different pricing strategies depends on the hotel length-of-stay. Interestingly, as opposed to what H_{7a} and H_{7b} proposed, the price bundling EV charging strategy was more effective for short stays (rather than long stays), whereas the price unbundling EV charging strategy worked better for long stays (rather than short stays). Customers with medium length-of-stay were indifferent towards bundled or unbundled pricing.

6. Implications

6.1 Theoretical Implications

This study closes several gaps in current literature regarding how emerging technology trends such as EV adoption are influencing customer behaviors and business strategies within the hospitality industry by employing a multi-study design. Firstly, Study 1 provides robust empirical evidence linking the availability of EV charging stations to enhanced customer satisfaction, using TripAdvisor user-generated data and STR secondary data. This study confirms the prediction of Day and Alavipour (2023) that hotels equipped with EV charging stations attract positive reviews while those without may face negative reviews. Study 1 underscores the critical importance of integrating sustainable infrastructure into hotel services to meet the demands of modern travelers, thereby improving customer satisfaction and a hotel's competitive edge.

Secondly, study 2 addresses a critical gap in the hospitality literature by exploring how identity associated with owning an EV influences hotel booking intentions and perceptions. This study shows that customers with EV, who are more likely to be concerned about the environment, strongly favor hotels with EV charging stations. This is among the first study to explicitly incorporate EV ownership as a symbolic identity factor into the hotel selection model, deepening insights into the psychological mechanisms linking identity and consumer decision-making.

Lastly, study 3 is among the first to explore how hotels with EV charging stations develop effective pricing strategies. The high investment characteristics of EV charging facilities and the for-profit nature of hospitality businesses mean that hotels can not always take a complimentary route when providing such services. As such, how to develop a reasonable EV charging strategy has become the key. Study 3 not only examines the impact of different pricing strategies (e.g., bundling vs. unbundling) on customer booking behavior, but also considers key situational factors such as length-of-stay, which expands the research perspective of simply focusing on "whether to charge" (Han et al., 2025) to the more insightful "how to charge".

6.2 Practical implications

This study provides substantial practical implications for hotel operators and marketers. The positive association between EV charging stations and customer satisfaction ratings underscores the importance of investing in green amenities to meet the evolving preferences of environmentally conscious customers. Additionally, accommodating customers with EV can enhance a hotel's green brand image and perceived service convenience, thereby increasing their booking intention. This means EV charging facilities have become an important factor for EV owners in hotel selection. With more and more customers embracing EV (Uddin et al., 2024), hotels providing charging facilities gain a competitive advantage by attracting and retaining customers in the sustainable tourism market.

It's critically important that hotels advertise their EV charging facilities to raise public awareness, via strong online presence, on-site promotion and target marketing. Hotels should optimize their hotel websites with a dedicated page detailing the EV charging service and ensure that all the OTAs listings have included 'EV charging' as an amenity so that customers can easily filter their search results. For on-site promotion of hotels' EV charging services, hotels should use clear signage within the hotel premise to direct guests to charging stations and provide EV charging information in the lobby, guest rooms, and on the digital displays within the hotel. Lastly, hotels could segment their guests to target those who drive EVs and who have shown interest in sustainable travel, using email marketing, social media and targeted advertising.

The hotel industry is lacking data on customer pricing preference of EV charging since it's an emerging hotel amenity. Insights from this study fill the gap and have direct implications for pricing strategies and service optimization in the hotel industry. Contrary to previous research findings that bundled offerings are more appealing for longer stays (Drechsler et al., 2017; Soman & Gourville, 2001), in the case of EV charging, for short stays, bundling services might offer perceived value and convenience, while for long stays, allowing customers to choose individual services could be more effective. Therefore, hotels can advertise and prioritize room rates with EV charging included for customers who indicate a short length-of-stay during the reservation process. Whereas for long-stay customers, hotels can offer usage-based billing for EV charging to satisfy these customers. As for medium length-of-stay customers, since they don't have a strong preference in EV pricing strategy, they provide the most opportunities for hotels to advise them on which way to go during the booking process depending on their individual situations.

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Table 1 Multiple regression analysis (Study 1)

DV: Customer satisfaction rating (H1)	B	Std.	β	t	P
(constant)	4.250	0.029		144.991	0.000
Charging station availability (H1)	0.093	0.016	0.124	5.968	0.000
Control Variables:					
Number of reviews	0.000	0.000	0.093	3.596	0.000
Hotel size	-0.001	0.000	-0.221	-7.824	0.000
Hotel class	0.010	0.010	0.023	0.923	0.356
Number of public EV ports	-0.004	0.003	-0.03	-1.452	0.147

Table 2 Tukey HSD tests (Study 2)

DV: Booking intention (H2)		N	Mean	Booking intention mean difference			
				1	2	3	4
1		71	5.641		1.253	1.426	0.682
2		67	4.388	1.253		0.173	0.571
3		65	4.215	1.426	0.173		0.744
4		67	4.959	0.682	0.571	0.744	
DV: Green brand image (H3)		N	Mean	Green brand image mean difference			
				1	2	3	4
1		71	5.455		0.893	0.671	0.699
2		67	4.562	0.893		0.222	0.202
3		65	4.785	0.671	0.222		0.028
4		67	4.756	0.699	0.194	0.028	
DV: Service convenience (H4)		N	Mean	Service convenience mean difference			
				1	2	3	4
1		71	5.122		0.858	0.789	0.659
2		67	4.264	0.858		0.070	0.204
3		65	4.333	0.789	0.070		0.129
4		67	4.463	0.659	0.199	0.129	

Note: Bold numbers are significant at.05 level.

Note: 1: Customer with EV & Hotel with EV charging station

2: Customer with EV & Hotel without EV charging station

3: Customer without EV & Hotel with EV charging station

4: Customer without EV & Hotel without EV charging station

Table 3 post-Hoc tests (Study 3)

Length of stay	Pricing strategy	Booking behavior	Difference in booking behavior (H7a-b)		
			Zeta (Without)	Eta (Unbundling)	Kappa (Bundling)
1 night	Zeta (No EV)	0.073		-0.153	-0.628
	Eta (Unbundling)	0.226	0.153		-0.474
	Kappa (Bundling)	0.701	0.628	0.474	
3 nights	Zeta (No EV)	0.036		-0.41	0.482
	Eta (Unbundling)	0.446	0.41		-0.072
	Kappa (Bundling)	0.518	0.482	0.072	
7 nights	Zeta (No EV)	0.034		-0.766	-0.131
	Eta (Unbundling)	0.800	0.766		0.634
	Kappa (Bundling)	0.166	0.131	-0.634	

Multiple comparisons: Bonferroni method
 Note: Bold numbers are significant at 0.05 level.