

Examination of Best Practices in Family-friendly Business Event Management in Hungarian Hotels

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Abstract

Purpose – This study examines key factors influencing the implementation of family-friendly business event management in Hungary. Business events facilitate professional and academic exchange, requiring organizers to address the needs of professionals with family responsibilities. A successful approach includes dedicated childcare, family activities, clear communication, and suitable infrastructure, enabling attendees to balance work and family. Hospitality providers adopting these practices can gain a competitive advantage by catering to business travelers seeking family-friendly accommodation.

Design/methodology/approach – This qualitative study analyses three Hungarian four-star hotels through in-depth interviews with hotel representatives and content analysis of hotel websites. NVivo software was used for in-vivo coding, and a comparative analysis identified similarities and differences in family-friendly practices.

Findings – Family-friendly business event management is implemented to varying degrees in the examined hotels. Key factors include childcare services, family-oriented activities, targeted communication, and infrastructure catering to both professional and family needs. Additionally, flexible scheduling, well-trained staff, and interactive spaces that accommodate both work and leisure activities were found to be essential. Children's hotel experiences influence long-term consumer preferences, making family-friendly services a strategic advantage. However, successful implementation requires investment in infrastructure, staff training, and marketing.

Originality – This study enhances understanding of family-friendly business event management by identifying essential components for success. The findings underscore that without a structured and well-communicated family-friendly approach, business events may fail to attract professionals with family commitments. Future research should explore broader hospitality sectors and assess the economic impact of family-friendly event management strategies in Hungary.

Keywords: business hotel, event management, family-friendly hotel, Hungary

Paper type: Research Article

1. Introduction

Family tourism is one of the most important sectors of the tourism industry worldwide, accounting for about 30% of the leisure travel market. Families with children represent almost 50% of the population in developed countries, making this demographic an important target market for tourism (Schänzel et al., 2012). Tourism plays an important role in building family relationships (Backer & Schänzel, 2013; Durko & Petrick, 2013), and the experience of traveling together has a positive impact on family functioning (Li et al., 2020). Family tourism is driven by promoting family togetherness, keeping family ties alive and creating shared memories (Schänzel & Yeoman, 2015). A key aspect of quality of life is the balance between work and family, which has been a focus of research since the 1990s and has become one of the most important career factors in recent decades (Hall, 1990). Since then, work-life balance has been increasingly prioritized in the workplace, leading to a more family-friendly approach in the world of work and in the related business events market.

Participation in business events provides opportunities to build and maintain professional relationships, while presentations and publication opportunities related to the business event provide participants greater visibility (Bos et al., 2017). This visibility is important both to ensure that the presenter is recognized by their peers in

their field and to enable researchers to develop future collaborations with other organizations (e.g. companies, associations, universities, research institutes) for joint transnational, multidisciplinary research and projects. For business event attendees, networking and presenting their achievements in presentations is key to achieving career goals and promotion (Bos et al., 2017). Travel to and attendance at business events is essential in some fields (e.g., some professions require people to earn credits in order to continue working in their jobs), but these events are often not organized in a family-friendly way, making attendance challenging for participants with family responsibilities, especially women. In order to ensure equal career opportunities, both employers and event organizers have recognized the potential of family-friendly business events, and more and more business events are being organized to balance work and family life. These are designed to help participants better balance their career goals with family commitments.

The label “family-friendly” can be applied to the type of event, to its theme and to its preparation and organization. Among the types of events, the most frequent examples of the implementation of the family-friendly concept are festivals and family days. In many cases, festivals are classified as family-friendly leisure activities, where participation is strongly influenced by the entertainment experience (Ásványi et al., 2019). In the case of business events, family-friendly approaches play an important role in the organization of family days as part of corporate events, as a company picnic combined with family-friendly activities (e.g., pony rides for children) helps to promote collegiality and acceptance at work. However, organizers need to ensure that these informal family events are attractive to both single employees without children and employees with families, as this is the only way to achieve community inclusion (Casper et al., 2007). This paper examines the implementation of family-friendly attitudes in the preparation and organization of business events through case studies. Specifically, it seeks to answer the research question: What are the key factors that hotel managers need to consider when applying family-friendly business event management practices? The aim of the research is to identify best practices and challenges in integrating family-friendly elements into business events through an analysis of case studies of Hungarian hotels. The paper first presents the theoretical background, followed by the research methodology, details the case study findings, and finally summarizes the key conclusions and recommendations.

2. Organizational aspects of the family-friendly concept

Family travel is projected to grow faster than other forms of travel, as it strengthens family unity and provides opportunities for family members to spend quality time together (Schänzel et al., 2012). A survey of a sample of 6,000 families in 2019 found that 64% of parents spend the best quality time with their children during travel (Family Travel Consulting, 2020). The motivations for family holidays include leisure, but also education, fun, excitement, adventure and the acquisition of new experiences and skills (Poria et al., 2005). Family tourism service providers need to take into account the changing structure of families, the increase in multi-generational travel, and the changing goals and priorities of family holidays when planning (Schänzel et al., 2012).

According to Wu et al. (2019), family tourism research has so far focused on three main streams: family travel decision-making, the benefits of family travel and the experiences that can be gained from family travel. The specific needs of younger family members often influence families’ travel decisions (Koc, 2004). Early research on family holidays considered children as passive participants who were not able to actively influence the holiday experience of the family as a whole (Carr, 2006). According to Carpenter (2015), children were not previously considered a preferred target group by the tourism industry, as professionals assumed they had little influence on their parents' decisions (Ben Lahouel & Montargot, 2020). However, this traditional view has since been revised by academics and tourism professionals (Small, 2008), who consider children to be more active in influencing parental choices and to be an important target group with specific needs (Webster, 2012). Children

should therefore be considered as active decision-makers, as their satisfaction influences the satisfaction of their parents (Lugosi et al., 2016). In addition, Shaw and Ivens (2002) have shown that in Western cultures, families prioritize children's experiences when planning holidays, with parents giving less priority to their own desire for relaxation (Ben Lahouel & Montargot, 2020).

When organizing family-friendly business events, event organizers should pay special attention to children and family members accompanying the participants, in particular when choosing the venue, coordinating the event's professional and leisure program, and arranging the food and drink on offer. When choosing the venue, it is advisable to choose a hotel environment where both event organization and services for children are provided. Families with children are important players in the hotel industry, regardless of the event, and their expectations should be taken into account when choosing a venue (Dowse et al., 2018; Lugosi et al., 2016; Seraphin & Yallop, 2020).

Personal interviews with children in four and five-star hotels in Australia between 2009 and 2014 showed that children expect the same quality of services in hotels as they experience at home. While they recognize that some services are designed for adults and may be more suitable for them, they still expect equal access. For them, there are two separate worlds regarding hotel services: the world of children and the world of adults. As children grow older, they increasingly expect seamless hotel service as they navigate between the world of children and that of adults (Hay, 2017). Children also recognize that family holidays provide an opportunity to deepen their relationships with siblings and parents through shared experiences, and to connect with children outside the family (Hay, 2017).

It is important to take into account the specific needs of different age groups, as play and fun are different for a toddler and for a young child. However, safety is a key issue for organizers of any entertainment program or children's game. To guarantee safety, an activity coordinator, a sufficient number of supervisors, and a doctor should be available at the venue. And when organizing meals, the focus should be on healthy food that is suitable for the whole family and a short supply chain for sustainability. Our study will go into detail on the above-mentioned family-friendly practices in the business events market through case studies.

3. Methodology

As a research methodology, case studies bridge the gap between quantitative and qualitative methods (Johansson, 2007). In case studies, the number of units is significantly smaller, but the level of detail should be higher (Yin, 2014). This type of research is essential for the development of social sciences, for example to understand the extent to which certain phenomena are present in a given group or how they vary across cases. The advantage of large samples lies in their breadth, but they often lack depth. In contrast, case studies offer depth but limited breadth. Therefore, both approaches are essential for the balanced and consistent development of the social sciences (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

In tourism studies, the main key variables can be derived from case study approaches (Medina-Munoz & Garcia-Falcon, 2000). Case studies are typically prepared in close collaboration with practitioners and deal with real managerial situations. Case studies therefore represent a methodology capable of generating knowledge relevant to management (Leonard-Barton, 1990).

The present study is based on case studies, which are useful for investigating "how" and "why" questions in a series of events over which the researcher has little or no control (Yin, 2014). Descriptive qualitative research aims to identify patterns of behavior and habits through case studies and narrative analysis (Gyulavári et al., 2017), "as a research strategy to understand current phenomena in their context" (Horváth & Mitev, 2015, p. 132).

The objective of this academic work is to identify and analyze practices that shape the direction of family-friendly business event organization. In order to achieve the study's objective, a qualitative research method based on case studies was chosen, as it allows for a detailed and in-depth contextual analysis of a limited number of event contexts and their interrelationships. The data collected were analyzed in order to identify commonalities and differences between the case studies and to identify strategies that worked well in each case. In this study, we present three case studies, each of which describes the good practices of a four-star hotel in the field of family-friendly event management. The Hungarian domestic hotels were selected through a Google search for the term "family-friendly accommodation". We looked for hotels that target both business guests and families and communicate this clearly. The selection criteria required that hotels display on their websites that they are family-friendly. However, inclusion in the sample was not based solely on family-oriented offers. Additionally, the selected hotels had to be suitable for hosting business events.

The case study interviews were conducted with senior hotel staff in the spring of 2019, a record year for tourism before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. The characteristics of the hotels included in the study are illustrated in Table 1. The interviewees were selected based on their position in the case studies.

Table 1 Characteristics of the hotels included in the survey

Case study number	Interviewer position	Description of the hotel represented by the interviewee	Reasons for choosing the hotel
1	marketing manager	Large holiday complex located in the Transdanubian region, near the county seat	Online communication: wellness, family-friendly, children's categories, business events
2	sales director	Large hotel in the Transdanubian region, close to the capital Hotel with several types of family-friendly certification	Online communication: child-friendly, wellness, business events
3	hotel director	Large hotel in the county seat, in the Transdanubian region	Online communication: family-friendly, wellness, conference

Source: own editing

The interviews lasted approximately half an hour on average, in line with the requirements for expert interviews. The interviews were audio recorded with the interviewees' consent and transcribed for analysis. NVivo software was used to code the interview transcripts and website texts, applying in-vivo coding to extract key themes. During the analysis, 22 unique codes were identified and grouped into five main categories. The key themes that emerged included "childcare services", "family-friendly infrastructure", "work-family balance", "communication strategies", and "event flexibility". Additionally, subcodes such as "play areas", "special children's menus", and "family-tailored event packages" further refined the insights into family-friendly practices. A comparative analysis was conducted based on these in-vivo codes to identify commonalities and differences in family-friendly practices across the selected hotels. This methodological approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of how family-friendly business event management is integrated within the Hungarian hospitality sector, highlighting best practices and areas for improvement.

3.1 Case study 1: Work and play in a hotel environment

Research on family and event tourism agrees that hotels are important players in both tourism products. Analyses on hotel operations related to family tourism focus on services such as kids' clubs (Seraphin & Yallop, 2019), leisure offers and animation programs (Gaines et al., 2004; Khoo-Lattimore & Yang, 2018) and childcare (Liu & Filimonau, 2020). Research on child-friendly hotels (Hamed, 2017; Özel, 2013; Song et al., 2020) mostly

focuses on resort hotels, as they offer the most appealing packages for families with children (Zaman et al., 2020). Hotels in cities are often not an appropriate destination for family travel, but their growing educational and cognitive role means that city visits can in some cases be attractive for families with children (Dunne et al., 2011). Venues, hotels and service providers can benefit directly from organizing family-friendly business events if they pay attention to the specific needs of participants traveling with their families.

In Hungary, the Kolping Hotel**** Spa & Family Resort in Alsópáhok is a leading example of a family-friendly conference venue, which won the Family Cup Award in the “Leisure Programs” category in 2016 and is also TÜV – which means Technical Inspection Association – “OK for Kids” certified. The hotel excels in combining professional business events with family leisure activities, which is actively reflected in their marketing communications. Their programs offerings include a huge play empire and a family adventure pool with a wide range of special activities for all-day fun for the family members while the business event participants are at work (Kolping Hotel, 2022). As summarized by the hotel's marketing manager during an in-depth interview for a primary research project in May 2019: *“Companies are increasingly discovering that it is possible to organize training and conferences without having to leave the family at home, as the hotel can offer great accompanying activities during the event. The hotel is very good at organizing a family-friendly conference because it has everything: a separate and modern conference hall and 10 hectares of land for children and family entertainment.”*

Childcare is a very important hotel service in the field of event management, although in some cases it is available at very high prices or at inappropriate times or locations for family participants. Organizers do not always disclose details of services early enough to allow potential participants to fully plan their own – and their families’ – travel to the event. The most optimal childcare conditions are offered by family hotels, which are recommended by the event organizers. One such family hotel is the hotel in Alsópáhok, which not only has a nursery and crèche to provide childcare but can also arrange for a few hours of childcare with a qualified babysitter (not as a basic service) by prior arrangement. The use of a crèche is a basic service and is included in the room rate (Kutai, 2002). A hotel designed to operate as a family-friendly establishment must be prepared to manage a large workforce, *“as it will need nursery nurses, animators and many others not needed in a general hotel setting.”* (marketing manager)

In addition to childcare, family-friendly event organizers should also be at the forefront of arranging activities for all members of the family, so that they can create a multigenerational experience. The concept of family-friendliness in hotels is perceived indirectly by guests as part of the experience creation process, “which is manifested through the manifestation of child-friendliness, the perception of children and its effects on parents” (Csordás et al., 2018, p. 26). The importance of children’s perception is also recognized by the hotel in Alsópáhok, where staff receive basic training on how to *“talk to children in order to understand what they want and be aware that the child’s request comes first.”* (marketing manager) When organizing an event, the complexity is further heightened by the necessity for the planners to coordinate participants’ schedules with the needs of their children. This entails balancing professional obligations with leisure time, ensuring that family responsibilities are accommodated during the event. When these additional services provided by the venue are effectively combined by the organizer, it is not only the parents who benefit, but also the institutions and businesses associated with the business events as well.

The hotel in Alsópáhok is an ideal choice for both conference participants and families, as there is no conflict between these two distinct target groups. In fact, this dual appeal provides the hotel with a competitive advantage, as noted by the marketing manager: *“It has everything for success: a separate conference level that meets modern technical requirements and a wellness area designed for adults, with a swimming pool, spa pool, and sauna park where children are not allowed. Children are entertained in a child-friendly facility covering 10 hectares.”*

3.2 Case study 2: Communication is the key to successful event management

Social media can be an effective tool for communication between event organizers and families. According to a survey, 75% of parents use some form of social media platform to gather information, with mothers being particularly engaged in supporting one another as parents (Duggan et al., 2015). X, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn are all free and popular social media platforms where event organizers can create public or private groups to support parents' participation in the event and provide information about family-friendly services available at the venue. Parent social groups are virtual platforms where parents can easily find and share relevant information before, during and after the conference. Communication within the community groups can facilitate the planning of leisure activities and childcare, which parents may offer to one another in their free time between different professional commitments. Communication and community building not only has practical utility for event organizers, but also benefits the entire parenting community by reducing feelings of social isolation and anxiety that many parents experience at work and business events (Duggan et al., 2015).

Effective communication is important not only between organizers and families, but also between the hotels and/or accommodation providers and families. In their marketing practices, child-friendly hotels focus on child-friendly hotel rooms, food and beverage options, entertainment options, price offers, and the health and safety of children (Özel, 2013). The importance of direct communication is also recognized by the hotel Velence Resort & Spa****, which clearly communicates its family-friendly concept on its website (Velence Resort & Spa, 2022). The hotel has been awarded a Gold level family-friendly rating based on full compliance with the criteria developed by the Hotelstars Union and has also been awarded the highest rating by KidsOasis¹ (KidsOasis, 2018). This means that the accommodation is *“able to provide a consistently high standard of service to families, both in terms of facilities and staffing, as well as its programs. The exact day and time of the program is indicated. The hotel also offers fun and sports activities for adults, such as Zumba or water-related activities, for example water aerobics.”* (sales director)

In our experience-driven society, seeking new experiences is a fundamental expectation across all generations, but holds particular importance for young people, whose experiential engagement can be greatly enhanced through the use of information and communication technologies (Boros & Keller, 2022). The most effective method to reach children is the use of experiential marketing, as successfully applied to consumer products for children (Schor, 2014). Children have specific consumer needs; they want sensory, affective and memorable experiences, surprises and activities that are creative, unique and fun (Hemmington, 2007). Applying the principles of experiential marketing, which considers children as emotional beings, can be an effective marketing tool to capture tourists by offering pleasant experiences (Boo & Busser, 2018). The hotel in Velence also builds on the power of experiential marketing, organizing various playful competitions in the hotel, *“where there are different prizes that children can win. There is a mini disco at weekends, although this is common in all hotels with children. There are also guest performers, different puppet groups, a magician, a fire-eater, and even a graphologist, who is very popular. The guest performers are specifically children's themed and they put on shows that are very interactive.”* (sales director) These experiences also need to be communicated appropriately, as families are a more complex target group in terms of marketing communication, and therefore require completely different communication tools than other segments (Csordás et al., 2019).

These factors should be considered when organizing a family-friendly business event, so it is advisable to provide a child-friendly hotel, if not as a venue, then as accommodation for family participants. In the

¹ KidsOasis is a certification scheme for family-friendly accommodation in Hungary, which provides a real guarantee of the existence and quality of family-friendly services in the hotels that have been awarded the label. Candidates can qualify to use the KidsOasis wind-twisting trademark after a multi-stage certification process. The services are regularly checked by trained professionals and the trademark can be withdrawn if the services are not satisfactory.

experience of the sales director, the hotel rarely receives event bookings from individuals, *“but rather from business people.”* According to the interviewee, the hotel’s strengths are its location, flexible and fast service and conference facilities. *“Many companies from Budapest and the surrounding area choose the hotel as a venue for their events because it is close to everything. Another advantage is that hotel sales are very flexible, but if you work in this industry, you can’t do without it. Last-minute changes in programs and numbers affect the whole hotel. Another strength is the speed of the service and the conference rooms with beautiful views and natural lighting.”* Conversely, the capacity of the catering area on a full house day can be a challenge for hotel staff, according to the sales director’s experience. *“A disadvantage is the size of the restaurant, as when it is full, the large conference room has to be used as an additional catering area.”*

3.3 Case study 3: Creating value through children's experiences

Hotel Azur**** is one of the largest capacity event centers in the area of Lake Balaton, with families as an important segment in addition to business guests (Hotel Azur, 2023). According to the hotel’s director, *“the two target groups account for approximately 50-50% of annual turnover. So basically, business guests are neck and neck with individual leisure guests, so business events are a pretty massive revenue stream. [...] These two segments complement each other very nicely.”* Children value the unique experiences that they create through interaction with hotel staff and family members (Carù & Cova, 2015), and package offers for families therefore focus strongly on the latter (Ho et al., 2013). An important element in becoming a family-friendly hotel can be to include activities aimed not only at children but also at the whole family (Buzlu & Balik, 2022). *“It is clear that there is a growing demand for the family-friendly trend and that it is attracting a growing audience.”* (hotel director) The hotel under study pays attention to offering services according to age groups. *“The hotel wants to be fully family-friendly, which means offering services for different age groups.”* However, children’s activities organized by hotels are considered inappropriate by many parents due to their lack of thoughtfulness and strict schedules that families find difficult to adhere to (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2015). Given that more than half of families prefer to travel without scheduled activities (Backer & Schänzel, 2012), hotels may inadvertently increase holiday-related stress for families with young children by offering ‘fun’ family-friendly activities (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2015). Another reason for the resistance to hotel programs is that most child-centered activities exclude parents from participation, which negates the basic need for family experiences, strengthening family bonds and sharing common experiences (Schänzel et al., 2012). The experience of a family holiday is twofold, as parents want personal space (Gram, 2005), but also quality time with their children. Family holidays should therefore be seen as a consumption unit and not as a separate entity for children and adults (Lehto et al., 2009). Activities and programs should be designed to provide opportunities for both parents and children to participate and interact (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2015). The hotel in Siófok offers different experience elements for each age group, with a baby-friendly room for the youngest and their parents, play activities for 2-4 year olds, a playhouse for slightly older children, adult activities and some family activities (Hotel Azur, 2023). The *“experience is that there is a growing demand for this.”* (hotel director) Families with children of different ages are the most difficult to cater for, due to different expectations and requirements (Liu & Filimonau, 2020). This perspective is also acknowledged by the hotel in Siófok, which aims to operate as a multifunctional family holiday complex. *“For example, if there are three children of different ages in a family, they can have a lot of fun completely independently of each other, so that the family can have fun together, but also separately for each age group, all in the same comfortable way as if they were at home.”* (hotel director)

Hotel animation programs can also play an educational role, integrating the idea of sustainable development into the activities for the youngest children in the mini-club during the holiday (Mikulić & Prebežac, 2011; Seraphin & Thanh, 2020). Moreover, young people see animation not only as a fun activity but also as an opportunity to learn more about their peers from different countries (Seraphin et al., 2022). Families from different cultural backgrounds may have different expectations regarding the purpose and extent of the activities

organized for their children in the accommodation (Liu & Filimonau, 2020). Parents from Asian countries expect more educational activities during the trip (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2015), while parents from Western countries would put more emphasis on uniqueness and originality (which implies novelty and deviation from the usual) (Schänzel & Yeoman, 2015). The diversity of expectations challenges accommodation providers to create original yet universal offers.

Parents want activities in family-friendly hotels that offer opportunities not only to play, but also to explore and discover. These could include swimming lessons; pony rides; cooking, baking and cake decorating; painting, arts and crafts; drama, storytelling and puppetry; drawing and coloring; field trips to nearby attractions; rock climbing and indoor gymnastics; simple science activities such as collecting leaves and bugs and anything outdoors; and feeding rabbits and other animals in conjunction with lessons on living creatures (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2015). At the same time, the intangible aspects of service delivery are crucial, particularly the quality of interactions between staff and children, which is highly important to parents (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2015). These elements are also a key focus of the hotel in Siófok: *“we have developed a program to keep us at the forefront and this is a very important thing. Family travel is booming, and families represent a financially strong market. So it’s all about providing meaningful experiences and creating value, whether for business events or leisure family trips.”* (hotel director)

4. Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight that hotel managers must consider several key factors when implementing family-friendly business event management practices. These include providing high-quality childcare services, developing family-oriented activities, ensuring clear and targeted communication with families, and designing infrastructure that accommodates both professional and family needs. Additionally, flexible scheduling, well-trained staff, and interactive spaces that balance work and leisure are essential for a successful family-friendly approach. Figure 1 illustrates strengths and areas for improvement for each examined hotel.

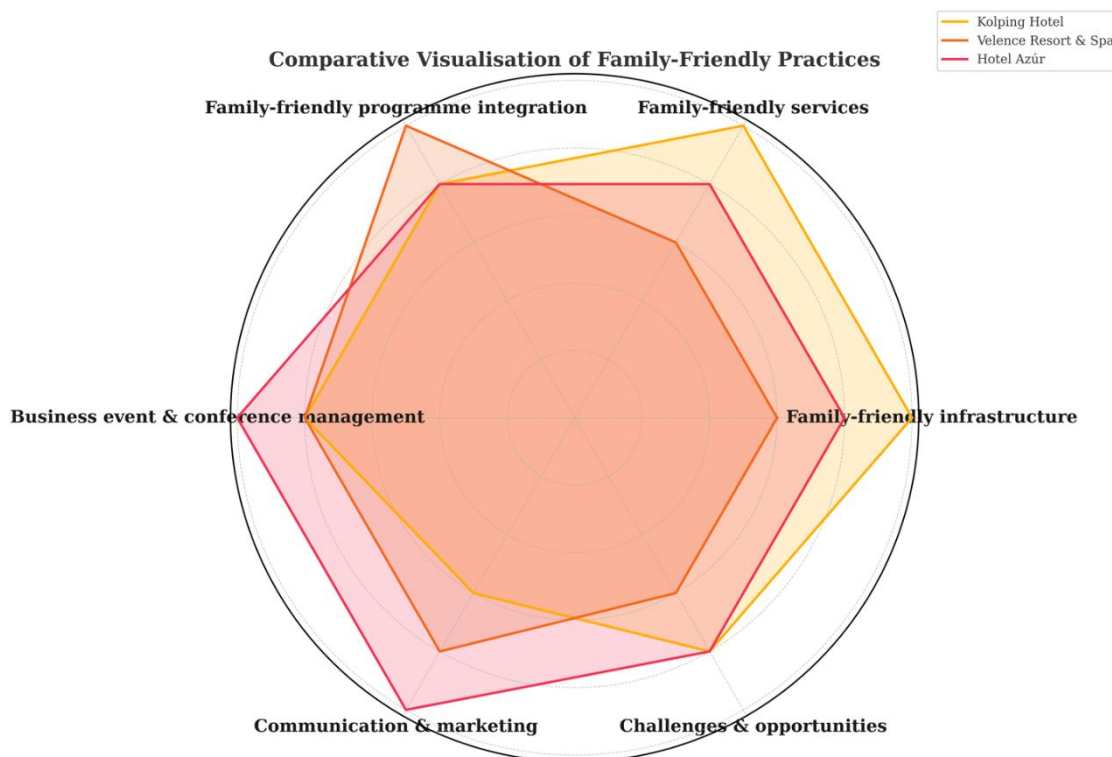


Figure 1 Strengths and areas for improvements for the selected hotels

Based on the examination it can be stated that the Kolping Hotel excels in family-friendly infrastructure and services, but its business event organization and marketing strategies are less developed. It is worth noting that the price of using the nursery is included in the room rate, and that the programs organized are multi-generational. The Velence Resort & Spa has strong program integration and flexible event management, but limited childcare and infrastructure. This hotel is excellent at communicating its child-friendly programs through a variety of channels and has also recognized the importance of experience marketing. The Hotel Azúr offers a balanced approach, particularly strong in business event organization and marketing, but lacks differentiation in family-focused program customization. The hotel in Siófok is at the forefront in offering programs that can be enjoyed, not only by the whole family, but also by different generations.

Balancing work and private life is a major challenge for families, and an increasing number of tourism operators are recognizing its importance. As a result, it has become an essential factor in business event organization. Hotels play a key role in supporting this balance by offering children's programs, either as part of the event itself or through their accommodation services. These programs not only enhance guest experience but also contribute to the sustainable success of operators (Makens, 1992). The hotels examined in this study recognize that today's children are tomorrow's adult customers and that preferences developed in childhood often persist into adulthood (Chaplin et al., 2020).

The case studies suggest that hotels which effectively integrate family-friendly elements can gain a competitive advantage by attracting business travelers with family commitments. To provide a high-quality experience for family travelers, event organizers and hospitality providers must take into account cultural differences, family values, and the diverse objectives of travel, alongside socio-economic considerations (Yen et al., 2023). Furthermore, the varying needs of children from infants to young adults must be considered when designing services and infrastructure (Hamed, 2017). Since children have different needs and requirements (Shuxia, 2018), their specific expectations should be addressed in the planning and execution of family-friendly business events. Ultimately, the elements presented in the case studies – such as a wide range of family-friendly services, direct communication with families, and program packages that create an engaging experience for all family members – are critical to the successful implementation of a family-friendly concept in event management. By fostering an inclusive environment, hotels not only meet the evolving needs of guests but also contribute to a broader cultural shift towards work-life balance in the business event sector.

Hotels can enhance their positioning and effectively reach target consumer groups by incorporating language and expressions in their advertisements that highlight the family-friendly nature of their accommodations (cf. Kovács, 2024). A future research direction could involve examining the similarities and differences in marketing strategies employed by family-friendly business hotels, with particular attention to how they address and communicate the distinct needs of their target groups. Additionally, the experiences of women attending business events in family-friendly hotels warrant further exploration through demand-side qualitative research, including generational comparisons.

The research also identified certain limitations. The group of hotels included in the study did not encompass all family-friendly business hotels in Hungary; therefore, while the findings offer valuable insights, the data cannot be considered fully representative. Another limitation was that only hotels with more than 100 rooms were surveyed, suggesting that smaller hotels may face different circumstances.

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