Cultural Inspiration on Service

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By Roberta K. Nedry

Greetings!

Aloha! Kia Ora! Hey y' all! Bienvenidos! Bienvenue! Saa wee da ka or Saa wee da krap! Welcome! What happens when these words of greeting from different cultures are uttered? What do we associate with those greetings and the people in those states or countries who say them? How do they impact us emotionally and do they change the way we perceive and receive our experience in that place?

Cultures around the world have many insightful and practical traditions and styles that can benefit a service mindset and in turn enhance service delivery. Let' s take a look at certain cultural traits and their potential impact in today' s hospitality world and guest experience management.

Consider how hospitality and business leaders and their teams may adapt some of these cultural traits and examples to benefit their own teams in guest and customer interactions. Note how these examples may serve as inspiration and motivation for a stronger service culture and more engaging guest experiences.

The Spirit of Aloha: The Hawaiian Style of Hospitality

I had the opportunity to live in Hawaii as a young girl. While there, I studied and performed Hawaiian dancing which required me to be completely immersed in and part of the Hawaiian culture and in turn the Aloha spirit. My teacher showed me how to tell stories through my hands, my eyes and body language in each dance that she taught. I learned first hand how Aloha is a way of life, an attitude and an authentic style of communicating from the heart. Thinking back to those moments and talking to those who experience Hawaii today, there are strong applications for that Aloha spirit in today's service environment. This Hawaiian way of thinking offers unique insight into a way of interacting with others that touches emotions and leaves lasting memories. Aloha is a word that means so many different things in the Hawaiian culture including hello, welcome, good bye and even love, compassion and friendship.

According to Aloha International in an article by Curby Rule, within the root words that make up Aloha the following meanings are:

'alo' -meaning sharing and in the present

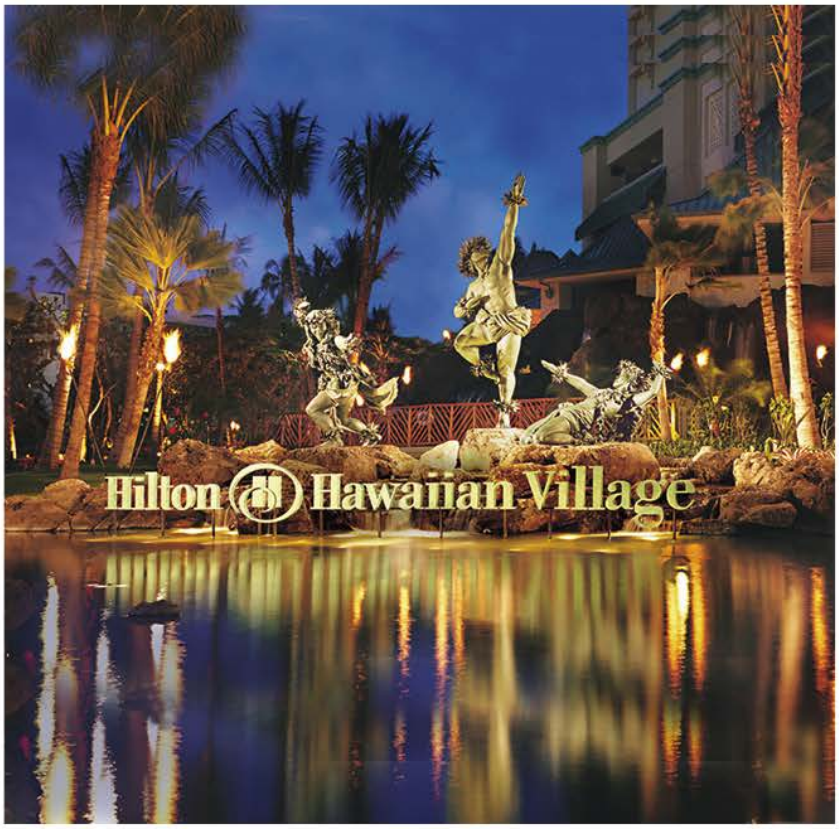
'oha' -meaning joyous affection, joy

'ha' meaning life energy, life, breath

Mr. Rule notes that using Hawaiian language grammatical rules this translates to 'the joyful sharing of life energy in the present' or simply 'Joyfully sharing life'. What a wonderful approach to training people in hospitality or any service delivery environment! When guests or customers come to a new destination, a new property, a new restaurant or a new attraction, they want to share life in a way different than the place they just left which is why they came. They want to make a connection. They want to feel the energy of the place they have chosen. They want to have joy or other positive emotions as their reward for choosing that location.

Taking this line of thinking even further, in 1973, Serge Kahili King conceived 'The Aloha Project' as a way to join people together in a spirit of Aloha based on the wisdom found in Hawaiian philosophy and culture and focusing on physical, emotional, environmental, mental harmony. Again, great application for any hospitality environment as creating experiences that yield physical, emotional, environmental and mental rewards are the ultimate goal to engage and delight guests. The key is understanding how to trigger these applications and this spirit in employees. Employees need to 'feel it' too and have that same joyful energy in sharing life experiences in the places they work along with the people they serve.

Many islanders witness mainlanders coming to the islands with hectic and overworked demeanors. Hawaiian locals call it 'mainland attitude.' Once exposed to the Hawaiian lifestyle, slowing down and opening up to that spirit of Aloha, the transition happens and they don't want to leave. Even the simple gesture of a Hawaiian lei, a handmade ring of flowers, usually plumerias, makes locals and visitors alike feel so welcome and so happy. Imagine how hospitality leaders and their teams could apply the



Aloha spirit to inspire a similar transition in guests so they don't want to leave either, may stay longer, spend more and can't wait to come back. Say Aloha to a service culture that starts from the first point of arrival through every moment until departure. Welcome a powerful guest experience management strategy.

Kia Ora! New Zealand Style

When I landed in Queenstown, New Zealand last year, something felt different, even in the airport. Students from the Queenstown Resort College were there to greet me and other attendees and delegates for the 60th International Congress of Les Clefs d'Or Concierges. They welcomed us with 'Kia Ora' which I soon learned was a Māori language greeting meaning, 'be well and healthy' and serves as an informal 'hi'. It is also used as a farewell and a thank you, similar to Aloha. It was that feeling of 'informality', that 'hi', tinged with an authentic interest in my well being that introduced me to the New Zealand style of hospitality from the first moment. Even with an unfortunate mishap with lost luggage, that spirit of caring beyond the procedural issues of locating my baggage was evident with the Air New Zealand baggage team. They reflected genuine interest in my arrival, not just the logistics of my lost items. Jonathan McNay of Limousine Line Queenstown provided my transportation from the airport to the hotel and showed tremendous pride in being the first person to introduce me to the beauty of Queenstown. He shared little anecdotes that he thought might more strongly connect me to the New Zealand experience. Jonathan showed that informality combined with authentic interest for me to be well during my stay. Checking in to the Crowne Plaza Queenstown, the friendly greetings continued with the front desk team, the early and late bar staff and a personal greeting and welcome from General Manager Reinier Eulink and Chef Concierge Fiona Lawson. Each of these touchpoints continually reinforced that Kia Ora spirit and a feeling that each of the people in these different roles cared. It was so consistent.

Mayor of Queenstown, Vanessa Van Uden, told me that they had spent a lot of time uniting the Queenstown hospitality and retail community in that caring feeling.

When locals see visitors or guests taking photos, locals are encouraged to ask if they can take the photo so the entire guest party can be together. Little proactive gestures like that reinforce that the whole culture cares and that it's not just about tourist or hotel dollars, it's about a feeling of welcome and that each individual experience matters.

That spirit of caring about the experience and informal friendliness continued on a visit to the neighboring village of Arrowtown, a historic gold mining town. First a purchase of longhair cow boots at Woolpress Arrowtown on Buckingham Street, allowed me to meet owner Bruce Gibbs, who carefully explained the store's environmental commitment to the area along with where my boots were made. A visit to Betty's Liquorstore to purchase Zumwohl, a New Zealand made German-style Schnapps, resulted in meeting Brendan who promised to research ways for best enjoyment and followed up almost immediately with an email of recipes. That extra effort, the extra interest, that extra bit of caring about MY experience continued in each shop I visited.

Even when I was leaving and worried about some extra baggage, Jochen Wauters, Event Manager from Sole Events, jumped in to help me and called airlines to ensure I would have an easy journey back to the United States. He even followed up by phone to make sure I was comfortable. I left Queenstown and New Zealand feeling so emotionally rewarded by a culture that seemed to care about me being 'well' every step of the way!

Each hospitality and business environment can apply a Kia Ora approach when orienting, training and inspiring employees in a service excellence philosophy and in turn, culture. Service does not have to be formal; it can be as simple as 'hi'. And, when everyone in the experience is oriented to that culture, whether it be 'Kia Ora' style or something else, the consistent reinforcement of that culture yields amazing positive results and reactions. Service cultures start with caring which then leads to making a commitment to certain types of behaviors. Those behaviors lead to making a connection and those connections lead to engagement. Engaging guests is what will lead to the emotional rewards that lead to the business and bottom line

rewards of guest loyalty, positive reviews and referrals. Committing to that mindset and then training employees and teams to deliver the behaviors to support that mindset are essential for that cultural impact.

In Malcolm Gladwell's 'Outliers', he introduces the cultural impact of the paesani culture of southern Italy, which was transplanted to the hills of eastern Pennsylvania in the town of Roseto. Gladwell introduces the study done by physician Stewart Wolf and sociologist John Bruhn, on the 'Rosetans', originally from Roseto Valfortore southeast of Rome, in Italy, and how they defied all odds in their health and social structure. The Rosetans had virtually no or minimal heart disease and attacks, lower death rates, no suicide, no alcoholism, no drug addiction and very little crime. Their fascinating findings stunned the medical establishment by causing them to think about health in terms of 'community' and the impact beyond the individual on others-the culture of which they were part- instead of genes, eating and exercise habits. Their concluding statement was that we now need to 'appreciate the idea that the values of the world we inhabit and the people we surround ourselves with have a profound effect on who we are.' WOW! Proof that identifying, establishing and inspiring a unifying culture, reinforced by a supportive environment, really works and can lead to amazing results.

On the other hand, without that reinforcement and unified culture, sporadic good moments lose their impact and leave both employee and guest without the positive experience both desire. At a ski resort in North America, celebrations were in place for a historic anniversary. On the day of the anniversary, many events were planned and skiers, dignitaries, guests and employees showed up for the festivities. Resort representatives were positioned all over the area to be resources and celebrants with guests. Guests continually asked various employees about the schedule of events throughout the day and were often met with the response, 'we don't know exactly, they didn't tell us the details of the whole day'. Amazing. So much work leading up to the celebration and all the events and yet the people on the line were not completely informed or inspired by what was taking place. They did not share the same values of the organizers or feel as connected as they could have been to this important event. These employees were frustrated and left out and then did the same for the guests asking the questions. The culture was not defined or in place which yielded a less than desirable result.

Whether Guests and Employees Hear

'Hey y' all' in the South of the United States (southern hospitality), 'Bien Venidos' in Mexico (festive, lighthearted and genuine), 'Bienvenue' in France or Canada (appreciation for the details, elegance and savored moments), 'Saa wee da ka or Saa wee da krap' in Thailand (gracious and

genuine hospitality), a feeling of welcome, a unique style and a passion from that culture will come across and reveals wonderful examples and applications of how an experience can be defined by a single word or phrase, explained in a way that is meaningful and that reflects an overall philosophy for how to make people feel. Words and feelings that come from a culture, not from a dictionary, developed over centuries, can cause entire populations to change the way they think and behave. This can be a shortcut to craft touch-points and guest experiences that you want in your hotel and organization and can provide creative opportunities to adapt elements of that culture to create unique hospitality cultures within an organization.

Think about what you want your front desk to convey, how you want your food and beverage team to interact with guests, how each department works with each other and what effect the whole organization can have on each employee delivering the experience. Create great excuses to inspire and move employees to deliver unforgettable experiences and to connect to the emotional elements of their role and what it means to others. Make it meaningful to those employees as well.

Take your employees on an emotional journey and travel to new places in guest experience management through some of these cultural inspirations. Inspire your own culture and commitment from top to bottom and inside and out. Feel the passion from shared beliefs and values and pack your bags for success!

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【译文】

文化推动服务

文 | Roberta K. Nedry

Aloha! Kia Ora! Hey y' all! Bienvenidos! Bienvenue! Saa wee da ka or Saa wee da krap! Welcome! 当我们听到这些来自不同文化的问候语时会有怎样的感受？对于这些问候语和说这些问候语的人们，我们会联想到什么？他们是如何从情绪上影响我们，并且又是如何改变着我们认知和获得经验的方式的呢？

来自世界不同地域的文化蕴含着许多深刻又实用的传统和风格，有助于形成良好的服务理念，并相应地提高服务质量。下面我们就一起来看看一些文化特质以及他们在当今酒店业和客户体验管理方面的潜在影响。

仔细想想酒店、商业领袖以及他

们的团队们会如何采用其中一些文化特质和实例，来使他们自己的团队在来宾和顾客的互动过程中受益。注意这些实例是如何为更强大的服务文化和更多吸引人的客户体验充当灵感和动力的。

阿罗哈精神：夏威夷人的好客之道

当我还是个少女的时候，我曾有机会住在了夏威夷。在那里，我学习并表演了夏威夷舞蹈，那需要我全身心地融入夏威夷文化和阿罗哈精神中去，并成为其中的一部分。我的老师在她教我的每段舞蹈里都为我演示如何用我的双手、眼睛还有肢体语言来讲述故事。我第一次感受到，阿罗哈原来是一种生活方式，一种态度和一种发自肺腑的、真诚的沟通方式。回想那段时光，并与如今的夏威夷人谈话，我深深感受到当今的服务处处能感受到浓烈的阿罗哈精神。这种夏威夷精神让人与人之间通过一种独到的方式进行交流互动，这种富有深意的交流方式触碰到人与人的情感并为彼此留下永恒的记忆。阿罗哈在夏威夷文化中意义众多，可以表示“你好、欢迎、再见甚至爱意、热情和友情”。

Curby Rule 在其一文中提到了阿罗哈国际，其中讲到了 Aloha 一词的词根并对其进行了以下解释：

“alo”表示分享与当下

“oha”表示喜爱与快乐

“ha”表示能量、生命和呼吸

Curby Rule 写到用夏威夷的语法规则来解释就是“快乐地分享当下的能量”或简言之“快乐地分享生活”。这对于塑造人们好客的态度和服务传递的大环境是一个再绝妙不过的好方法了。当游客来到新的目的地、酒店、餐厅或名胜时，他们总想体验到与之前与众不同的感受并与他人共享，这也就是他们来到这里的原因。他们想要建立起沟通的桥梁，想感受到自己所选的目的地的活力，想感受到快乐或其他正能量并以此作为自己选对了地方的最大回报。

再纵观过去，1973 年，Serge Kahili King 提出了“阿罗哈项目”的构想以阿罗哈精神的名义将人们聚集起来，他们专注于夏威夷哲学和文化并将身体、情感、环境、心境等元素浑然一体，由此发现了夏威夷的智慧，也树立了夏威夷的阿罗哈精神。这种精神又一次地在这样一个好客圣地体现，创造了令人难忘的旅游体验，带来了身体上、情感上、环境和身心上的愉悦，其最终目的就是吸引游客、取悦游客。最重要的是要理解怎样发挥这种精神的作用并在员工身上找到这样的精神。员工自身也要有这种精神并乐意与自己服务的人去分享自己的人生体验。

许多岛民发现大陆人在抵达夏威夷岛虽然十分兴奋，但却是满脸劳累

过度的姿态。当地人会称之为“大陆态度”，当这种态度与夏威夷的生活方式发生碰撞时，整个节奏便慢了半拍，人们乐意敞开心扉拥抱阿罗哈精神，这样的变化是必然的，他们也再也不愿意离开。即使是一个再简单不过的夏威夷花环（用鸡蛋花手工做成的）都能让当地人和游客感到备受欢迎。想象一下酒店业领袖和他们的团队怎样才能通过阿罗哈精神去感染他们的客人，让他们的客人流连忘返。让我们一起对自始至终的优秀服务文化说“Aloha”，迎接一个更为强效的客户体验管理战略。

你好！新西兰风格！

当我去年抵达新西兰皇后镇的时候，我有种很不一般的感觉，在机场就已经能感觉到了。皇后镇旅游学院的学生、其他参加国际金钥匙组织第60届年会的人员及大会代表都来机场接机。他们对我说了“Kia Ora”以示欢迎，我后来才知道这句话是毛利语表示“祝愿健康安好”的意思，通常用于亲朋好友间表示“你好”。和Aloha相似的是，它也可以用来表示再见或谢谢的意思。第一次我感受到了这种“不受拘束”的“你好”，还伴随着一种对我健康的祝福，我感受到了新西兰的好客之道。尽管不幸的是我弄丢了我的行李，新西兰航空公司行李管理小组除了帮助我寻找行李，还对我给予了莫大的关心。不仅仅是我丢的东西，他们对于我的到来也表示真切的关心。皇后镇豪华车队的Jonathan McNay为我提供了从机场到酒店的交通服务，并以自己是第一个为我展示新西兰之美的人而感到自豪。他给我讲了几个有趣的故事，并认为能以此丰富我在新西兰的体验之旅。Jonathan用不拘礼却很真切的方式表达了希望我能在新西兰玩的开心的愿望。我登记入住了皇后镇的皇冠假日酒店，前台的人也很热情地欢迎了我的入住，其中还包括早晚吧台的员工，我也受到了酒店总经理Reinier Eulink和礼宾司Fiona Lawson的亲自欢迎。这些细节无不突出体现了Kia Ora精神，我也真切地感受到这儿的每个人都很贴心，而他们带给我的这种感觉是那么的一致。

皇后镇的市长Vanessa Van Uden告诉我他们就情感关怀方面花费了大量的时间去联合皇后镇的酒店业和零售社区。当地人只要看到游客在拍照时，就会主动问需不需要帮忙，这样就可以拍集体照了。小小的一个主动的举动就是一种关爱文化的升华，这与游客或酒店小费无关，感受到被欢迎以及每个个体的体验才是最重要的。

在整个体验中感受到的关怀和不拘礼的友情一直延续到我的下一站——邻近的箭镇，这是一个历史悠久的采金小镇。我第一次在白金汉街的Woolpress Arrowtown买了一双长毛牛皮靴时遇见了店主Bruce Gibbs，他认真地向我阐释了他们对环保的承诺以及靴子生产地的情况。此外，我还闲逛了Betty’s Liquorstore买了当地的荷兰烈酒，这是一种在新西兰酿造的德式烈酒，我在那儿见到了Brendan，他说要想办法让人们享受到一种极致体验，当即就给我发了一封有关具体方法的邮件。在我接下去游览的商铺中我都感受到了那份额外的热情、额外的关心和关怀。

甚至是当我准备离开却因为我多余的行李而担忧时，Sole Events的项目经理Jochen Wauters主动帮我电联新西兰航空公司确保我能顺利返回美国。后来他甚至又打电话给我确保我一切安好。我抱着内心的愉悦与满足，感受着一个文化每时每刻给予我的关怀和体贴，离开了皇后镇，离开了新西兰。

在每个酒店和企业环境中都可以通过Kia Ora的方式来进行员工导向和培训并鼓励员工建立一个卓越的服务理念和文化。服务并不一定要很拘谨，可以是一句简单的“你好”。当每个体验的个体都能去适应那种文化时，无论是“Kia Ora”或其他的方式，人们对文化的升华都总是能带来意想不到的积极的结果和反应。服务文化从关怀开始，接着是致力于某种行为举止。这些行为可以连结人与人之间的纽带，这些纽带又相应地能吸引游客。最后就能赢得游客的情感互动，继而就能收获客户忠诚度、积极的评论和客户推荐。致力于这样的理念并

对员工和团队进行培训，再通过他们的行为举止来支持这种理念，这对于文化影响力来说是至关重要的。

在 Malcolm Gladwell 的《 异类》一书中，他提出了意大利南部 Paesani 文化的概念，这种文化流传到罗塞托小镇宾夕法尼亚东部的山上。Gladwell 引用了 Stewart Wolf 医师和社会学家 John Bruhn 对罗塞托人的研究，这些罗塞托人原本来自意大利罗马东南部的 Roseto Valfortore，同时作者还写到他们是如何不顾一切地为健康和社会而战。事实上，在罗塞托，心脏病发生几率为零或者很小，死亡率也很低，没有自杀、没有酗酒、没有吸毒也几乎没有犯罪。他们的惊人发现震惊了一些医疗机构，这些机构开始思考“群体”意义上的健康概念、这种健康对超越了个体的其他人的影响，还有他们的文化，而并不是去思考他们的基因、饮食和健身习惯。总之他们认为我们应该重视我们赖以生存的社会以及我们周围的人们，因为他们对于我们自我修行都有着深远的影响。哇，在这样一种有利的环境中，这些种种具有标志性意义的证据对于建立一个统一的文化起到了积极作用。

另一方面，如果没有一个统一的文化，那些零星的美好瞬间也终将失去其影响力，这会给雇员和顾客带来极其糟糕的体验和期望。在北美的一个滑雪胜地上，人们筹备了一系列的活动以庆祝具有历史性意义的周年纪念日。纪念日当天，人们筹划了许多项目，滑雪者，名人，宾客和员工们齐聚一堂。滑雪场的代表们分布于场地各处为宾客主持活动。宾客们想从员工处了解一天中活动的安排，可员工总会回答“我们也不知道具体的活动，他们没有告诉我们一天里具体的行程”。很神奇吧，整个纪念日有这么多的工作和活动项目需要处理，然而相关负责人竟然一点也不知情。他们与组织人的价值观不同，他们并不觉得自己和这个活动有什么关系，也意识不到活动的重要性。这些员工被孤零零的安置在滑雪场上，对于宾客所问的问题也都是无从下手。在这样一个连理想的结果都成为渴求的环境下，文化都只是空谈。

无论客人和员工听到与否

在美国南部，人们用“Hey y’all（你好）（美国南部表达友好的方式）”；在墨西哥，人们用“Bien Venidos（欢迎）（表示喜庆，开心和真诚）”；在法国或加拿大的一些地方，人们用“Bienvenue（欢迎）（表示对细节、高雅和美好时刻的欣赏）”，在泰国，人们用“Saa wee da ka 或 Saa wee da krap（表示友好和热情）”，宾客们可以感受到当地人民很独特的欢迎之意，一种来自于那种特有文化的热情。简单的几句只言片语，饶有意味，向人们展示了打动人类情感的哲学理念，也很好地诠释了一次完美的体验之旅。几个世纪以来，言语与情感伴随着文化不断发展，这与字典中的诠释毫无关系，而这些言语与情感则会带动整个人类思维方式和表现方式的改变。这也是管理客户接触点，提升客户体验的捷径，同时也为运用这些文化特色以建立一个独特的待客文化创造了机会。

好好考虑下你希望前台为宾客传达什么，你负责饮食的团队怎样与宾客沟通，内部各部门之间如何相互协作以及公司能为每个员工产生什么影响。要想办法激励员工去打造难忘的体验，并让他们发挥自己内心情感的作用，让他们意识到这对于其他人有什么意义。要让员工理解这一切的意义。

带上你的员工去体验一次情感之旅，让他们通过这些文化启示去了解宾客体验管理。全方位地去提升公司文化和宗旨，在共同的信仰与价值中去感受似火热情，收获成功！