

# How the SSQ Awards helped promote the benefits of Mystery Shopping in Sweden

## Sector/Location

The hospitality sector in Sweden

### Why is it important to measure?

Every company benefits from measuring their service level, learning about opportunities for improvements and rewarding good examples. In the hospitality sector, lots of companies don't have access to benchmark data, so we wanted to create a concept that could offer this possibility.

### Why use an MSPA member company?

This concept required professional design, thorough planning and ethical Implementation. By selecting a MSPA member company, the businesses involved could be sure that the data provided would be accurate, consistent and quality-driven.

### Why use Mystery Shopping?

Mystery shopping was the best methodology to meet the objectives, on the basis that it is the only methodology that evaluates what really happens in "The moment of truth." The concept also includes measuring the establishments' reputation in social media.

## What are the project specifics?

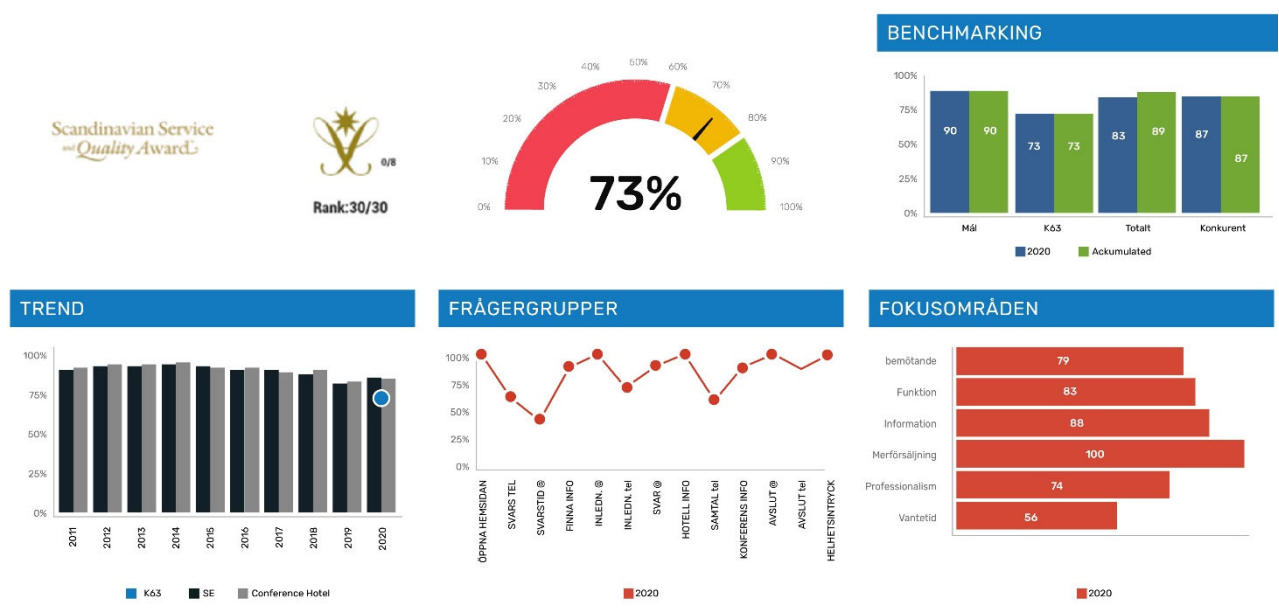
Nominated establishments in three categories are evaluated by mystery shopping via telephone, e-mail and their websites. The establishments were also evaluated based on customer reviews in 175+ online sites. The evaluations scores were aggregated after the first half year and the top 3 establishments were announced during an event organized by Better Business Worldwide. After the end of the year, the total scores were aggregated, and the top 3 establishments were awarded with diplomas at an industry event. Better Business/SSQ Award published banners and videos with interviews of the winners who could benefit from visibility in social media. Other participating establishments were published in alphabetic order. SSQ Award also offers a more complex professional program which includes standards for in-person mystery shopping, customer satisfaction surveys, employee surveys, and self-assessments of the establishments' environment and a quality planning



All participants since 2002 are presented at [www.ssq-award.com](http://www.ssq-award.com).

## What are the results?

The Scandinavian Service & Quality Award was launched in 2002 and accredited by HOTREC in 2010. The SSQ Award concept has grown to be the most prestigious award in the hospitality industry in Sweden. SSQ Award is one of only four quality programs that are accredited by HOTREC (the European umbrella organization for the national hospitality organizations) according to The European Hospitality Quality scheme. The top 3 in each category are really proud and some assign Better Business for additional mystery shopping and other services.



## What were the commercial benefits?

- By managing the SSQ Service Award concept, Better Business has grown to be considered as the authority in Sweden for measuring service in the hospitality industry.
- The participants receive reports from service evaluations free of charge.
- Better Business collects industry data at very low cost since the mystery shoppers don't need to travel for the surveys. No data is shared with anyone but the establishment themselves, other than at aggregated level.
- The winners of the SSQ Service Awards receive media attention, as well as Better Business as the organizer.
- Better Business receives detailed reports for each participant which is extremely valuable as a base for sales calls.



This article was submitted by Veronica Boxberg Karlsson and Lina Schölin. Veronica is the founder of Better Business World Wide in 1995 and MSPA Europe in 2002. Lina is CEO in Better Business World Wide. Better Business is a specialist in global mystery shopping programs, a MSPA Elite member since 1999 and also the founder of The Smiling Report.