

**Successful Networking strategies for Small businesses: Case Study for Georgian
hospitality companies.**

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Abstract

Small businesses played a significant role in the economy of the nations. However, recent studies have used qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine small businesses' successes, and failures have found that half of the small firms failed to exist within five years. The studies done in other countries have also recognized that small businesses lack to apply practical strategies. However, the research in Georgia remained limited. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore and find new insights into strategies and networking strategies in particular, used by small hotel businesses for long term success in Tbilisi that would lead to future studies. The qualitative multi-case study method was used with semi-structured questionnaires to source the data. It engaged in manual thematic analysis to interpret the meaning through the coding process. The study found that the owner's leadership style and shortage of resources were the prime factors for small firms to engage in business networking. From the findings, five strategies emerged as significant to establish strong network ties: formal and informal networks, constant communication, Relationship building, shared learning and reciprocity. The findings indicated that small hotels survived for long-term when they use practical strategies, like networking strategies, relevant to their needs. The study's findings provided useful information for business owners to understand the importance of applying appropriate strategies for survival and enhanced socio-economic development. There is a need for a future comprehensive study in a small hotel or small business sectors in Georgia. Further research includes using a quantitative approach to assess internal strategies by measuring the reliability of small business success in terms of subjective or objective performance and examining a large number of small hotels to draw more findings in networking strategies.

Key words: strategic management, strategy, network strategy, small hotel, small business, small business success