BOOSTING HOTEL ROOM RESERVATIONS BY LEVERAGING EMOTIONS.

A research project by Furtwangen University and GauVendi.

HOCHSCHULE FURTWANGEN UNIVERSITY | HFU

BUSINESS SCHOOL

GauVendi

DYNAMIC INVENTORY

FEATURE-BASED

POLYFUNCTIONAL

AI

+20% Revenue

HOTEL

GauVendi

EMOTIONAL PRIMING FOR HOTEL EXPERIENCES

Increased booking rates through emotional product presentation.

A joint research project by Furtwangen University and GauVendi offers insightful findings on how emotional priming directs the attention and interest of hotel visitors towards specific room information.

Through analyzing the gaze patterns and responses to emotional and neutral hotel room images, we have discovered that emotional depictions can successfully shift viewers' attention away from the prices to the unique features and charm of the rooms.`

Emotional product presentation eclipses price sensitivity:
The more emotional the product presentation, the less attention is given to the price.

Distracting from room features through emotionalization:
An enhanced emotional depiction also results in less attention being paid to the included room features.

Amplified effect for high-quality room products:
The influence of emotionalization is even more pronounced in more expensive room categories.

### Payment and cancellation conditions dominate price and features:
The conditions surrounding payment and cancellation are more critical than the price itself or the room amenities.

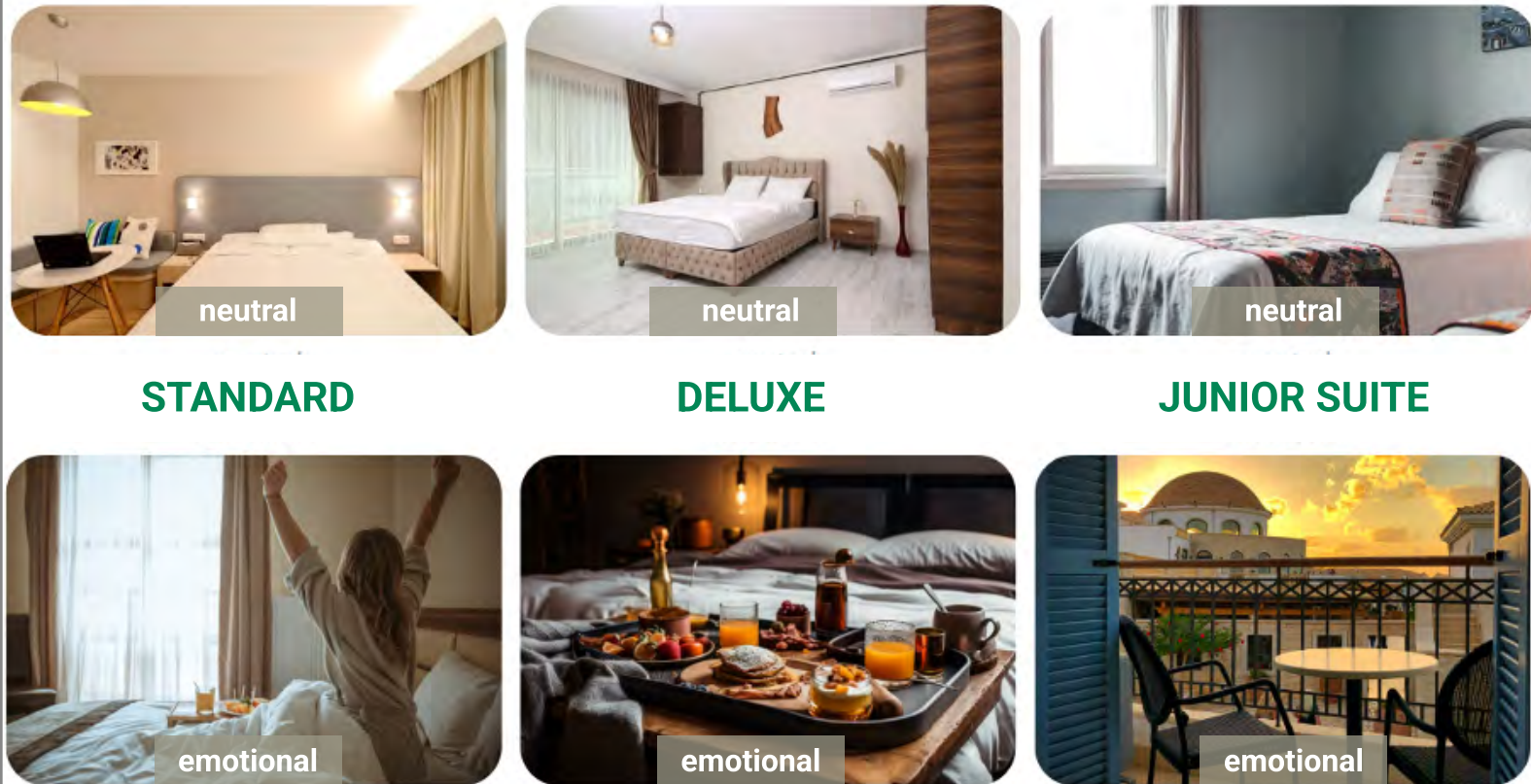### Longer memory effect of emotional images:
Emotional images, such as sunsets or impressive views, remain in the memory of bookers for a longer time. In contrast, hardly any specific features are remembered with neutral images – only the bed is often recalled.

The definition of emotionality in the image

Our research methodology initially involved an evaluation of images by various test subjects with regard to their emotional impact, in which each image was classified on a scale from -5 (very unpleasant) to +5 (very pleasant). The question related specifically to whether the images were perceived as pleasant or unpleasant. It is worth noting that the most effective images did not necessarily have to show the hotel rooms themselves, but often merely represented snapshots of specific moods. This finding underlines the importance of emotions in visual marketing and provides a strategic basis for increasing the attractiveness of hotel offers and ultimately improving booking rates, particularly in the premium segment.

Tested as neutral

Tested as emotional

EMOTIONAL PRIMING FOR HOTEL EXPERIENCES

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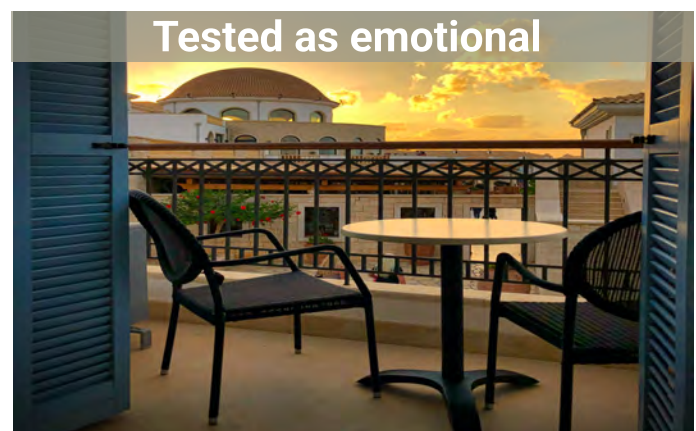
Comparison of neutral and emotional images for room products:

neutral

STANDARD

neutral

DELUXE

neutral

JUNIOR SUITE

emotional

emotional

emotional

Comparison of neutral and emotional names for room products:

neutral	emotional
Standard	Standard | Cozy relaxation
Deluxe	Deluxe | Oasis of peace
Junior Suite	Small Suite | Sunset Panorama

Practical application for more bookings:

The results of our study are a clear call to hoteliers to harness the power of emotionality in their marketing strategies. By using emotionally appealing images in the presentation of their rooms, hotels can draw the attention of potential guests to the inviting atmosphere and special features of their offers, which can ultimately lead to a higher booking rate, even for premium offers.

Dynamic inventory as an implementation solution:

With GauVendi's dynamic inventory logic, hotels can display and offer the same room on their own website in a wide variety of ways using the Internet Sales Engine. This ranges from emotionally appealing options such as "Standard | Sunset & Rhine View" to "Standard | No Preferences". By using emotional images and memorable names, the room inventory can be effectively diversified, reversing the traditional price structure: Now the majority of rooms can be offered at higher prices instead of being sold as lowest categories. Emotional priming can now be used in a targeted manner to positively influence purchasing behavior and contribute to an effective, value-enhanced sales strategy.

EMOTIONAL PRIMING FOR HOTEL EXPERIENCES

Three reasons for higher sales:

1. Expanded sales opportunities: The ability to market previously unpriceable room features such as view, location or bed type has expanded the product offering and led to higher average prices.
2. AI-driven product marketing: Through the use of AI models, products marked with labels such as "Guest Favorite" or "Our Tip" were dynamically suggested and frequently booked, increasing differentiation from the standard offer on third-party channels.
3. Independent sales platform: Bookings were increasingly made directly via the hotel's own website, making the offer more attractive and setting it apart from traditional category sales on third-party channels.

Operational advantages:

The use of GauVendi's dynamic inventory and transparent display of room features also leads to a significant reduction in email and telephone inquiries in the reservation and front office areas, freeing up more time for on-site guest care.

Changes in booking behavior:

- 25% of guests chose AI-recommended products, where emotionalized products were also offered in particular.
- 15% used the room configurator to customize products according to their preferences.
- 22% booked room products that were offered directly via the sales platform.
- Only 38% opted for the lowest available price.

Conclusion:

Our research proves that the strategic use of emotional imagery is an effective way to influence the perception and interest of hotel guests. This provides a valuable opportunity for hoteliers to increase bookings by strengthening the emotional connection between their guests and the experience on offer. Use these insights to redesign your offering and appeal to your guests on a more emotional level.

Emotional priming

A process in which the emotional response to an initial stimulus influences the processing and response to a subsequent, related stimulus. It is based on the idea that certain emotions evoked by an initial stimulus can guide the perception and interpretation of subsequent stimuli, often without the person being aware of it.

This method is used in psychological research to study how emotions influence cognition and behavior, and is also used in marketing to guide consumer behavior (Psychology Today).
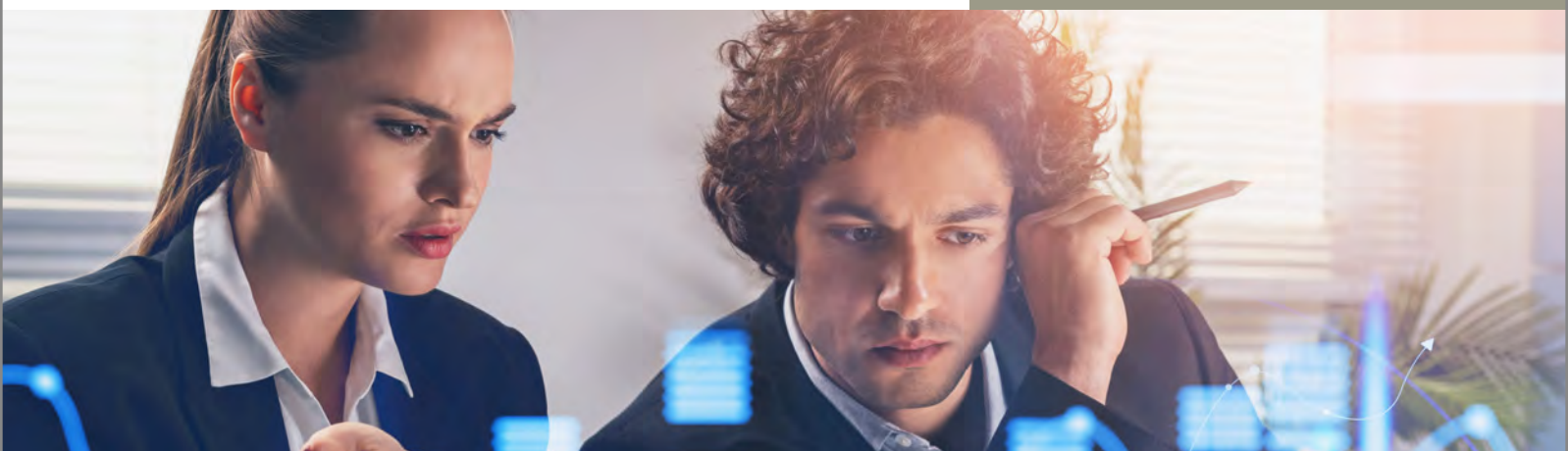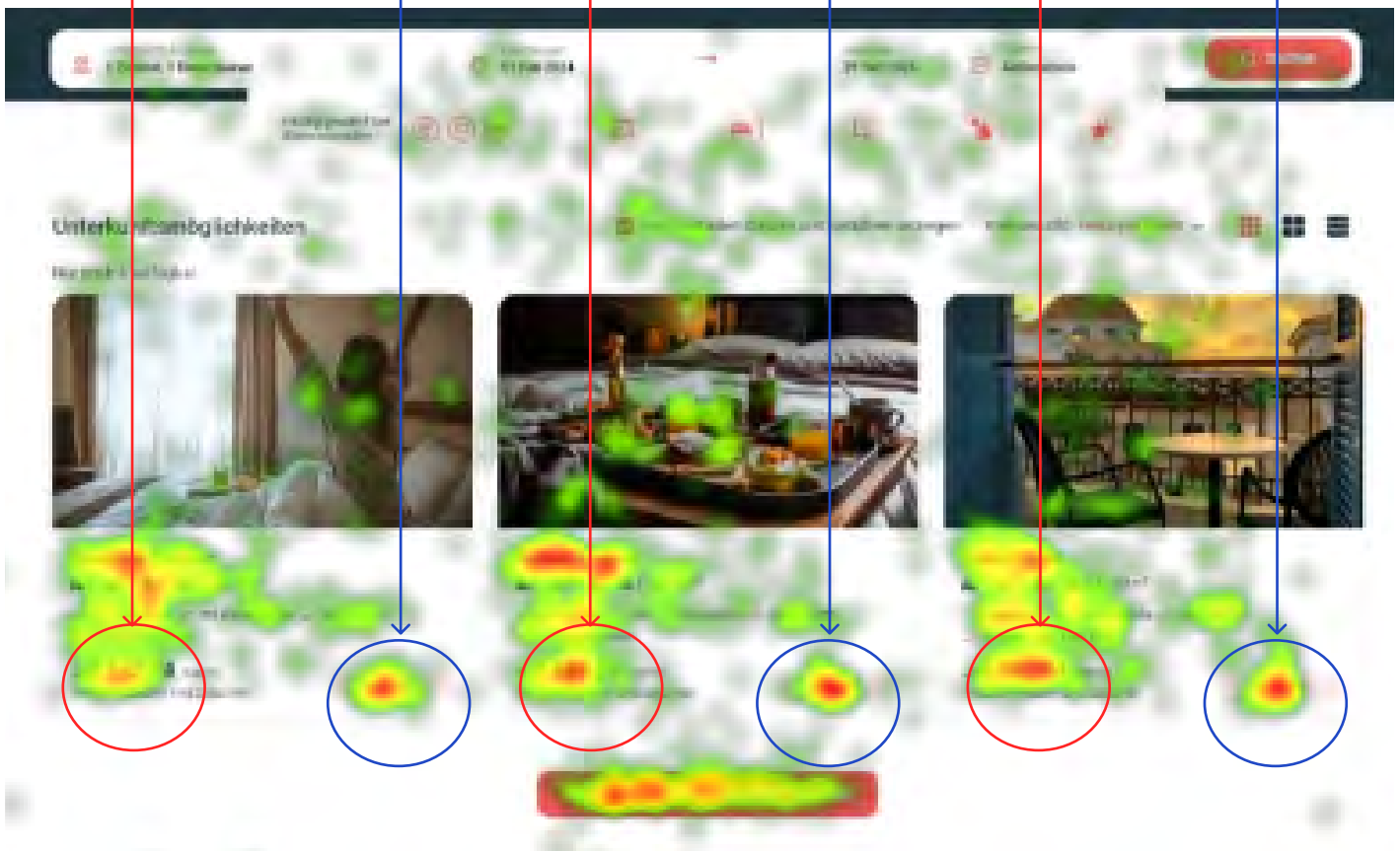

To the research:

In the research, participants were observed using eye tracking during a simulated booking process in order to investigate purchasing behavior under laboratory conditions. The study, conducted by Nina Burda, Pinar Özge Oguz, Anna-Lena Skudinski, Patrizia Zampella and Professor Dr. Kai-Markus Müller, aimed to gain in-depth insights into consumer decisions using eye tracking.

The qualitative analysis included subjects with an average age of 22.3 years, consisting of 76% women and 24% men, and contributed to research into consumer behavior.
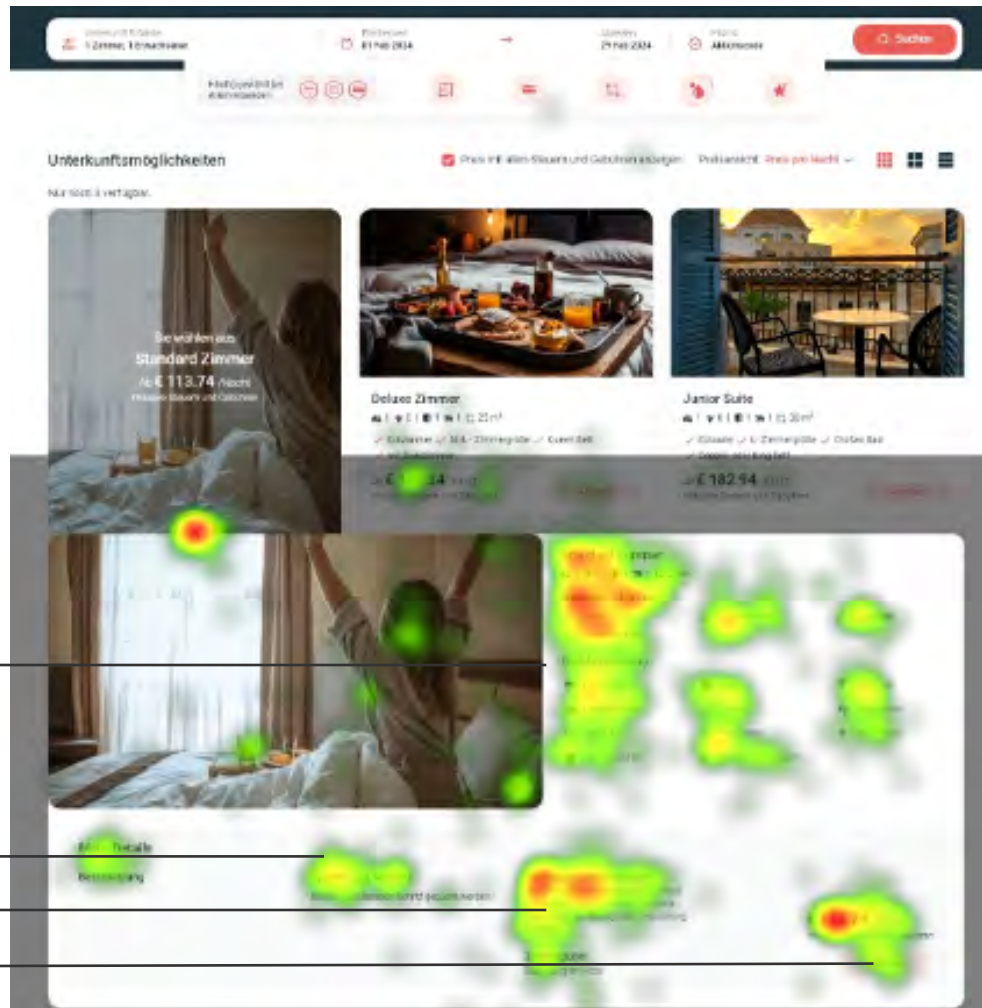
Eye tracking results for neutral images

Price Info

Product Info

Price Info

Product Info

Price Info

Product Info

Eye tracking results for emotional images

Gau∨endi

Eye tracking standard room

Detailed view - neutral

Product features

Meals & Services

Booking conditions

Price

Eyetracking Standard Room

Detailed view - emotional

Product features

Meals & Services

Booking conditions

Price

Eyetracking Deluxe Room

Detailed view - neutral

Product features

Meals & Services
Booking conditions
Price

Eyetracking Deluxe room

Detailed view - emotional

Product features

Meals & Services
Booking conditions
Price

**Eyetracking
Junior Suite Room**

Detailed view - neutral

Product features

Meals & Services
Booking conditions
Price

**Eyetracking
Junior Suite room**
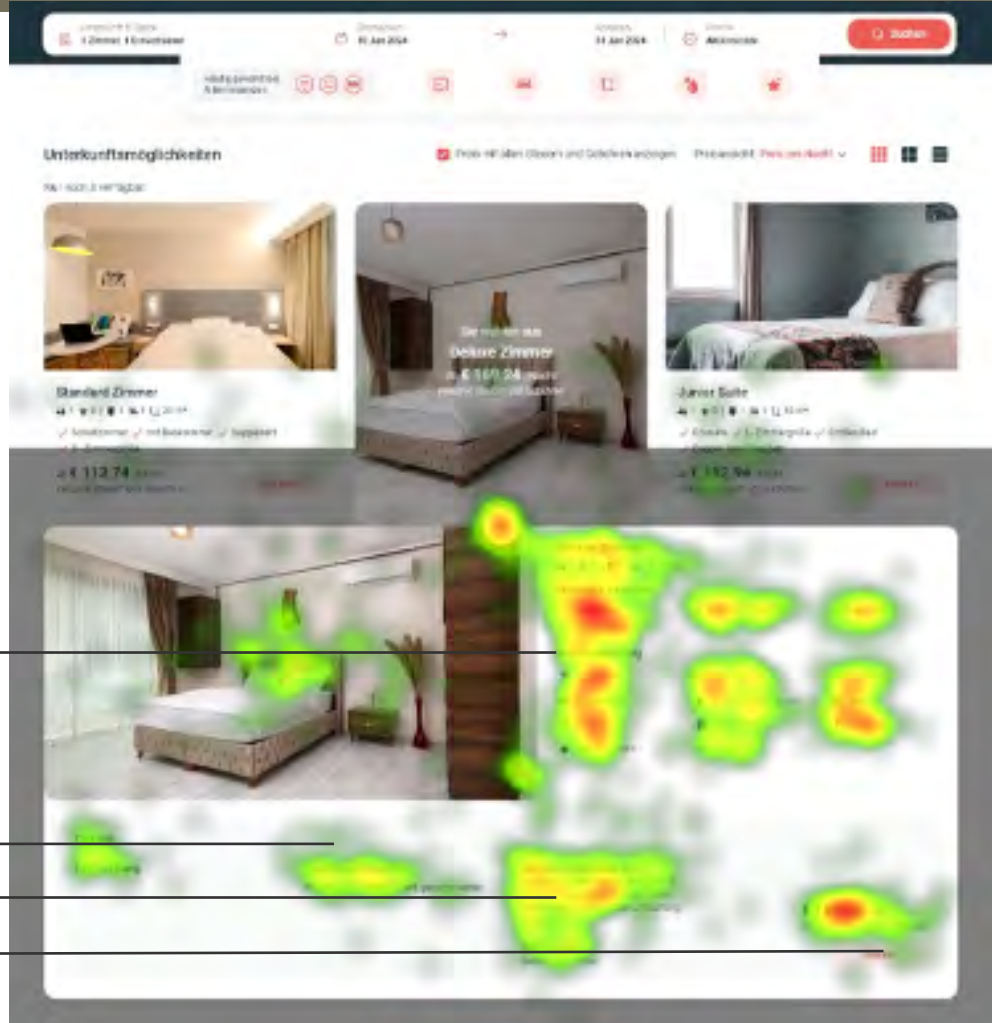
**Detailed view -
emotional**

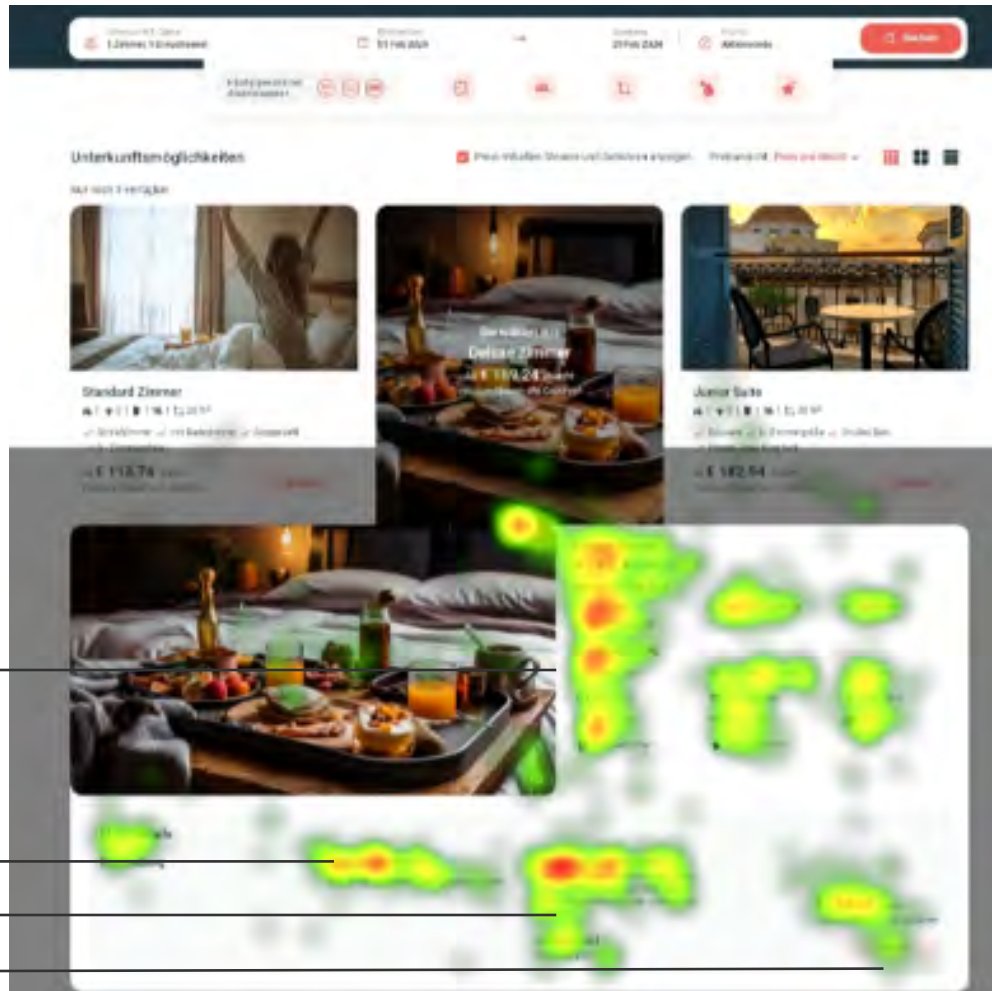Product features

Meals & Services
Booking conditions
Price
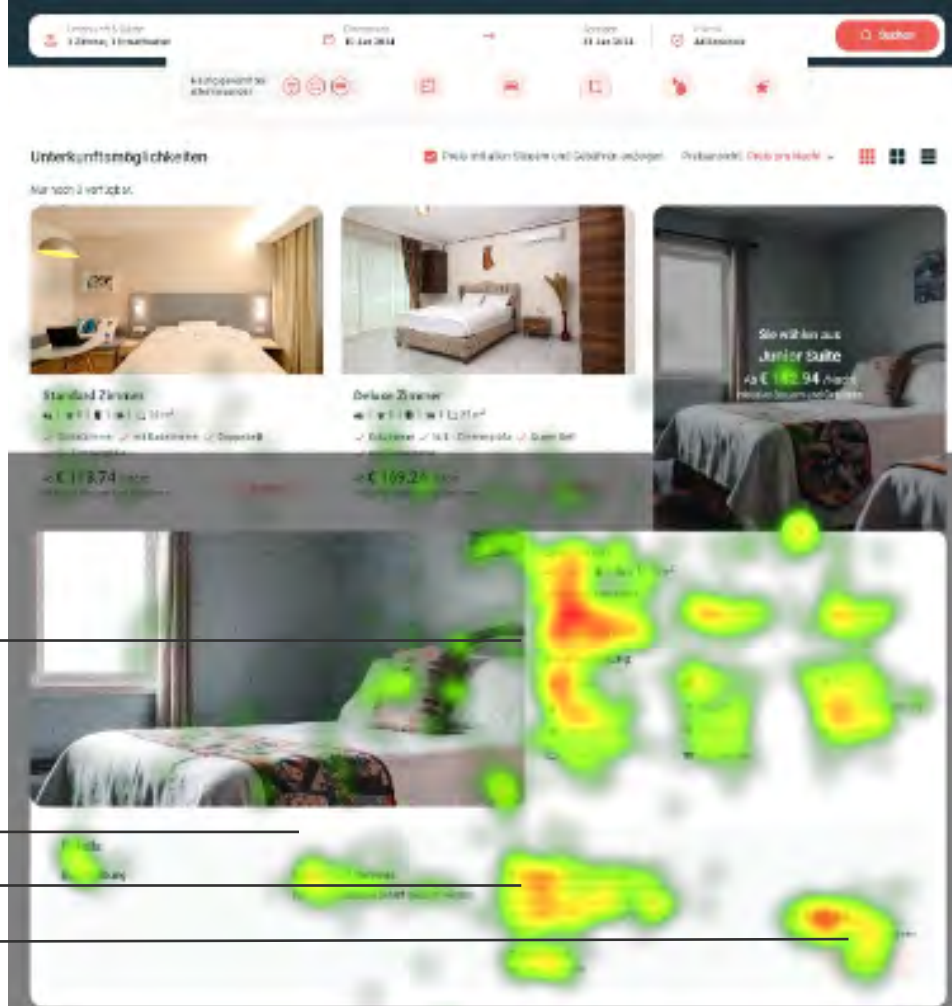
Eyetracking Deluxe Room

Detailed view - neutral

Product features

Food & Services

Booking conditions

Price

Eyetracking Deluxe room

Detailed view - emotional

Product features

Food & Services

Booking conditions

Price

Gauvendi

Eyetracking Junior Suite Room
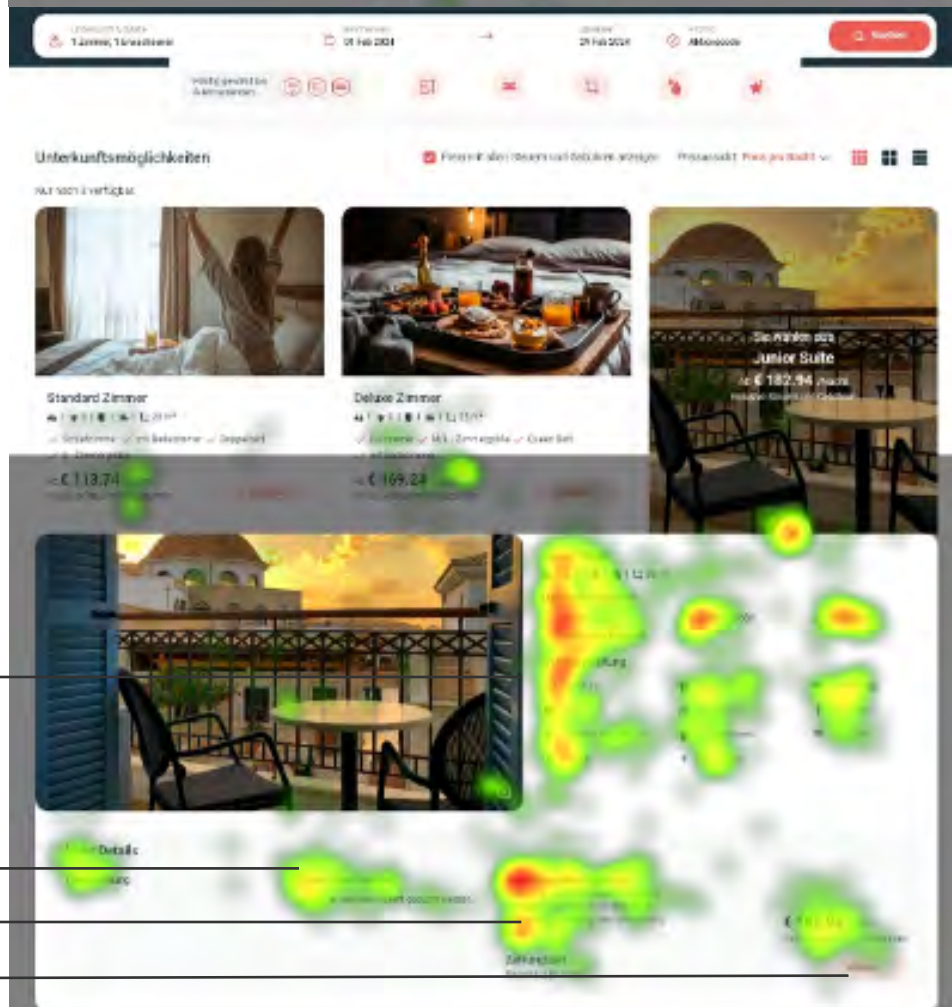
Detailed view - neutral

Product features

Food & Services

Booking conditions

Price

Eyetracking Junior Suite room

Detailed view - emotional

Product features

Food & Services

Booking conditions

Price