

Interview mit Anna, Airbnb-Host, persönlich, 13.04.2017

Interviewer: TF, Transkription: GS, Korrektur der Transkription: LS

Thomas: I just need your approval or agreement that I recorded you 'cause// #00:00:04-9#

Anna: I agree and approve for you to record it. #00:00:07-4#

Thomas: Okay, great, thanks. #00:00:08-3#

Anna: Sure. #00:00:10-0#

Thomas: So to start with, maybe you could just like introduce yourself a little bit and also related to your Airbnb activity. #00:00:19-6#

Anna: Sure. So my name is (*Anna*), I am 28 years old, born and raised in New York, I lived in (place of the interviewee) for the past six or seven years now. I originally moved to an apartment in this building seven years ago and my roommate became my boyfriend, so we ended up sharing a bedroom and we had an extra bedroom and we didn't know what to do with the room, 'cause we didn't want to get a roommate, so someone suggested we airbnb it, so we started airbnbing it together and then we realized how much money we were making off of it. So. #00:01:01-1#

Thomas: When was it? #00:01:03-0#

Anna: That was like five years ago. #00:01:04-2#

Thomas: Ok. Mhm. #00:01:05-3#

Anna: So we started making a lot of like money of Airbnb really easily, so we got another apartment in the building and then just airbnbed that apartment together. I didn't really work and just airbnbed it and like met people and went out with them and it was really fun, we were like really young like in our twenties. And then we broke up and he moved out and so I continued to airbnb my extra bedroom and I've been doing it ever since. So. #00:01:31-7#

Thomas: And the other apartment? #00:01:33-4#

Anna: The other apartment when we broke we just didn't resign another lease, so we just like let it go. #00:01:37-2#

Thomas: Ok. #00:01:38-2#

Anna: Yeah that's it. I still do it. Pretty like I would say about 20 days of the month, every month, so. #00:01:48-2#

Thomas: Well, that's// #00:01:48-6#

Anna: A lot. #00:01:49-0#

Thomas: A lot of people coming along. How long do they stay? #00:01:51-7#

Anna: Usually it's a minimum of two nights, so usually I have like three to five different guests a month I would say. Most of them stay for at least like at least two nights but

usually like five or six nights, I would say. I try to get like longer rental than shorter rentals.
#00:02:08-6#

Thomas: Yeah, but if they come from overseas, so they usually stay like about a week?
#00:02:12-9#

Anna: About a week, yah. Never more than two weeks though. #00:02:16-6#

Thomas: Okay. #00:02:17-7#

Anna: Yah. #00:02:16-8#

Thomas: Do you also use Airbnb as a guest to travel? Or// #00:02:21-6#

Anna: Yah, I have. I don't like, it's not my number one thing that I use but I have used it in like other countries and stuff. #00:02:30-8#

Thomas: Okay. #00:02:30-8#

Anna: Yah. #00:02:32-2#

Thomas: But primarily you use it as a host, then? #00:02:35-2#

Anna: Mostly more as a host, yah. #00:02:37-4#

Thomas: And do you use any other platforms, or just Airbnb? #00:02:40-9#

Anna: Just Airbnb. I have joined, there is this Facebook group that I joined, that's called "Gypsy Housing" and it's about like people looking for short-term rentals in New York City. So sometimes if I am traveling for like a long period of time, I rent it out to like someone looking to sublet it. But, yah that's it. #00:03:00-1#

Thomas: Mhm. And, yeah. You already said why you (...) listed as a host. #00:03:06-7#

Anna: Yah. Pretty much. #00:03:08-9#

Thomas: And is there or generally what do you like about being an Airbnb host?
#00:03:16-1#

Anna: What I like about it? ... Well, I like a lot of things about it, like I like meeting people, I like talking to people. I guess I really like the convenience of it for me personally just it works easy for me, for my lifestyle. I am a bartender, so I work at night, so. The way it works pretty much is like Airbnb guests are out all day and I'm usually home during the day and then they sleep at night and I'm usually working at night. So it's like kind of just very convenient for me, to like have people and then I get to have like an entire apartment to myself and it's like this source of income that is pretty easy to maintain. #00:03:52-5#

Thomas: Mhm. #00:03:53-8#

Anna: Yah. #00:03:55-2#

Thomas: And also important for you to, to ... keep the flat and everything? #00:04:00-3#

Anna: Yah, definitely, like// #00:04:01-4#

Thomas: (...) #00:04:02-2#

Anna: Yah, definitely, like I don't think I would be able to afford living in this apartment without a roommate, unless I had airbnb'ed the apartment. #00:04:12-3#

Thomas: And is there anything, I mean you said, you ... not usually have not that much interaction probably if you don't meet that much, but// #00:04:21-7#

Anna: Yah// #00:04:22-5#

Thomas: you also said you went out of people and everything. So is there anything, a situation that you remember that is being particularly nice, fine, good? #00:04:32-8#

Anna: Well I mean I have// #00:04:33-0#

Thomas: That stays in memories? Something? #00:04:35-4#

Anna: Sure, like, well, okay. If you didn't think of this contacts I've been airbnb'ing for five, about five years, so I've had over two hundred different people stay with me. Probably more, probably close to five hundred people. If you think about it like that, like it's two people usually that stay, you know, and just like over the course of time like I've had a lot of people stay with me. I have over two hundred positive reviews on Airbnb which is a lot. ... So if you can think about it in that context, like I've had so many interactions with people and I would say 97% of them have been positive, but like as far as memorable, as in like, "Oh my god, that was the best night"? I've gone out at night with a couple of them and I've like gone to dinner, gone to breakfast, but I've never like ... I wouldn't say that there is one interaction that's been better than the next. The coolest guest I did have though was a magician that stayed with me and he showed me so many magic tricks in my apartment and that was pretty exciting. #00:05:39-7#

Thomas: Okay, you can impress your friends now. #00:05:41-0#

Anna: Yah, yah. #00:05:43-3#

Thomas: With that knowledge. Okay. And is there anything that you don't like about being an Airbnb host, or which is annoying? #00:05:52-2#

Anna: The only thing that's annoying for me is, and I think you can put this into context with anybody's job, there's just some days that you don't wanna be social and you just don't wanna be friendly and you're just not in a good mood and it's really hard to do that, when you like are living with a person and your job is to consistently to host them. #00:06:09-0#

Thomas: Yeah. #00:06:09-6#

Anna: You know, so like everybody has bad days, I mean, I think there's more positive things about it than negative things otherwise I wouldn't continue to do it, obviously. But other than that, like, I mean, there's some days that I just wish I was alone, you know, there wasn't somebody here, but then there is somebody here, so you have to be ((blessed)) about it. #00:06:29-1#

Thomas: Okay, maybe helps then to have somebody around. #00:06:33-9#

Anna: Yah// #00:06:34-5#

Thomas: (...) nice// #00:06:35-5#

Anna: Maybe, yah, sometimes// #00:06:36-2#

Thomas: Sometimes (...)// #00:06:39-1#

Anna: Yah. #00:06:40-8#

Thomas: Did you have any bad experience? Like you said 97% positive? #00:06:44-8#

Anna: Have I had some bad experiences? I've had some experiences where people were like, "This apartment is disgusting, I don't know how you live here. I want my money back", like, "How dare you even think that these are standards to live in?". And it's like, "Well, I live here and so I'm sorry that it's not up to your standard of cleanliness". ... I did have a funny experience – people might think it's a negative experience –, where I had a prostitute rent out my room for one night. #00:07:14-8#

Thomas: Okay. #00:07:16-2#

Anna: And that was a weird experience because I didn't realize it was a prostitute until after they had left. And I was like, "Oh my god, I cannot believe what just happened. This is crazy". I like, l// #00:07:25-7#

Thomas: Did she use it for her services? #00:07:27-8#

Anna: For her services. Yah, for the night. Weirdly enough it was like a gay man and another man. #00:07:34-6#

Thomas: Okay. #00:07:35-9#

Anna: And I like figured it out like afterwards but that was an interesting situation but it wasn't like a bad experience. I guess, it was just like, "I can't believe that happened", you know? #00:07:44-8#

Thomas: Okay. #00:07:45-2#

Anna: Learned to laugh about it, maybe. Yah. #00:07:47-7#

Thomas: But no really bad, like somebody destroying something, or? #00:07:51-6#

Anna: No. #00:07:53-0#

Thomas: (...) in a way that// #00:07:54-6#

Anna: No, I mean. The room is so small, my apartment is so small. I mean there is nothing they could really do that like I would be uncomfortable with. Like, there is like, once I had like two guys, like check-in, at like midnight. And they were like huge and I would like woke up in the middle of the night and there is two guys in my house and I was just like, "Oh, hi", and I was like, felt a little threatened, but I was just, I guess, you know, it ended up being fine, there was no problem. Yeah. #00:08:20-9#

Thomas: You said that sometime you don't want to have somebody around because you are not feeling well, like that. Or how do you generally like integrate being a host with your daily routine? I mean you said that your work is at night, so it// #00:08:36-5#

Anna: right. #00:08:38-2#

Thomas: well, but, I don't know, also with privacy, and// #00:08:41-8#

Anna: Yeah. #00:08:43-3#

Thomas: Share things. #00:08:44-1#

Anna: So, the way my apartment is laid out, I feel like it's pretty private, where it's like my bedroom is on the side and their bedroom is on the side and it's pretty separate kind of and I know that most guests usually are like out about in the morning. So I like usually in the morning, I sleep little bit later or I go out with my dog for like an hour or two so they kind of have some privacy and they like get ready in that sense. ((This)) apartment is my daily routine. I mean, I have a pretty like strict check-in time and check-out time.

#00:09:18-0#

Thomas: Okay #00:09:18-1#

Anna: So, that like I just incorporated into my routine. Like they have to check out by noon, they can't check-in 'till three p.m., so like that, I kind of worked that into my routine, of like how I am gonna, you know, spend my day doing things. #00:09:31-9#

Thomas: Mhm. #00:09:31-7#

Anna: You know, just like based on like the check-in, check-out times, if I know I have guests. #00:09:35-5#

Thomas: Okay. #00:09:36-7#

Anna: Other than that I don't really like change anything about my lifestyle for Airbnb. #00:09:42-9#

Thomas: Okay, so you don't put stuff away, or, I don't know, prepare the room in a particular way? #00:09:48-5#

Anna: Well, I mean, I get it clean, like I have a cleaning lady come twice a month, I like you know, I try to like maintain a standard of cleanliness for them and like keep the apartment clean for them, but I wouldn't say like I change to much, I kind of just// #00:10:06-1#

Thomas: Like what you do, when a guest is arriving? Or preparing the room for the guest? Is there any? #00:10:12-5#

Anna: I really just clean the room, I change the sheets, I make the bed, I give them like kind of like instructions on like how to use the shower, how to access the keys, how to get the WiFi. #00:10:27-7#

Thomas: You have this personal, you, all this basic information, when they check in, you// #00:10:33-6#

Anna: Wwhen they check in I just send them a message through Airbnb that like says all that information, 'cause when they check in, I'm, most of the time I'm not here. I have a lock box downstairs, so I'm just like, "Okay, so check in any time after three o'clock, there's keys in the lock box downstairs", and I give them all the information about the apartment. I do have like a guidebook on the website and printed in the room of like places to eat and

places to see, like in the neighbourhood. But like personally I don't really say like, "Welcome, here is the shower, here is the toilet", you know, I like kind of just write it all out and if they, and I always tell them, "If you need anything, just ask me, let me know", but like, I'm not going to, unless they ask for something specifically, I'm not like gonna go out of my way and tell them what to do, you know? #00:11:20-8#

Thomas: Okay. So, would you consider being a host is sort of, how do you manage to do, it's some work, I guess? #00:11:31-0#

Anna: Yah, it's definitely work. #00:11:32-7#

Thomas: You have prepared all the things over time, but still. #00:11:36-7#

Anna: Right. What do you mean, like what's the question exactly? #00:11:42-2#

Thomas: How do you organize this work? Is it? #00:11:45-2#

Anna: How do I organize it? So, I have pretty much the same spiel you could say, like the same message that I have send to the guests all the time. And then I just organize it kind of based on their check-in, check-out times and you know, like I just maintain this bedroom as a guest room. So it's like I'm change-cleaning the sheets, like I buy things for the room, that I think// #00:12:11-8#

Thomas: You just use it a guest room and not for renting out? #00:12:14-2#

Anna: Just a guest room. Yeah, just, nothing else, it's only about ((so)) this for, you know? #00:12:18-3#

Thomas: Okay, and what do you think is special about your listing? What? #00:12:26-8#

Anna: What's special about it? That's a really good question. Well, one there's the really cool French bulldog that lives here, so I give it a lot of guests that are like dog-friendly or want a dog or have a dog or miss their dog or something like that and i always say that he is very unique. I would say (*name of the dog*) is the best Airbnb host that you'll ever meet. #00:12:47-6#

Thomas: Okay. You wrote this in your// #00:12:49-9#

Anna: yeah I wrote that in there and he's like my cover photo. So like as soon as, the first picture you see is (*name of the dog*) actually sitting on this couch and looking at the bedroom. #00:12:58-5#

Thomas: Okay. #00:12:58-2#

Anna: So you know, he's involved and I would also say that, like, you know, (*Anna's neighbourhood*) in general is a unique kind of experience, you know. It's definitely, I've had people from over the world, some of them were like, "I can't believe I'm in America right now!", you know, like that experience which I think is cool. It's pretty like a central, convenient location for things in lower Manhattan and like places to walk around. I've had a bunch of guests be like, "I always wanted to see like what a real New Yorker lives like, what it's like to live in a walk-up", or, you know, 'cause walking up like five flights of stairs every time you come to the apartment is like // #00:13:37-4#

Thomas: It's tiny, the stairs. #00:13:37-6#

Anna: Yeah, yeah, exactly, it's not, its's – I guess it's just like unique in general, I don't know how many like small apartments people stay in. And I think like for the price it's pretty decent. Like it's a cheap like alternative to a hotel, so. #00:13:53-8#

Thomas: Mhm and a good location. #00:13:54-7#

Anna: Yeah a good location. #00:13:57-5#

Thomas: And do you take care of the Profile? Do you update frequently? Or is it? #00:14:02-3#

Anna: Yeah. Well, ((update)) the calendar, like, I'm on the Airbnb website every day and their app is really convenient, so I can always respond. I don't really like change the profile too much, but I change like the calendar and like the pricing and like change that stuff around. But the profile has pretty much been the same since I started, so. #00:14:24-0#

Thomas: Okay. #00:14:25-3#

Anna: I know it's working, so I'm not gonna change anything about it, right? You know like. #00:14:28-2#

Thomas: Yeah. Maybe sometimes people// #00:14:32-3#

Anna: Change it consistently. #00:14:34-6#

Thomas: Yeah I don't know. Or put new photos or// #00:14:37-4#

Anna: Right. You know sometimes if I think I cleansed the room really well and made the bed really pretty I'll take another photo, if I've known no one's gonna be in there for a while. But now the photos are pretty much ((up to date)). #00:14:48-3#

Thomas: Mhm. #00:14:48-4#

Anna: Nothing's changed too much really. #00:14:50-6#

Thomas: How would you describe a good host? #00:14:55-3#

Anna: I would say a good host is friendly ... is like cautious of the guest where in the sense it's like they give them privacy, you give me privacy, but like if you need help I'm around kind of. I would also say a good host has recommendations and like can answer questions if you have them, you know? That's pretty much it. #00:15:19-7#

Thomas: Okay. And I think (name of a person) said that you are also a little bit engaged with other hosts. So, do you meet and exchange with other hosts or participate in many Airbnb events? #00:15:34-7#

Anna: Yes! Yes, so there is an Airbnb Host Community that I am a part of Airbnb is actually the one that organized it and invited me to it and it's like for hosts in lower Manhattan and I've been to like two or three meetings in the past couple of years and you know just like Bay, Airbnb actually ask me to attend them. I didn't choose to do it. And I was like, "Sure, I'll go, it's free", like it's not gonna do any harm and they just taught me about the laws, I've had to deal with like a lot, I owe a lot of money and taxes because of Airbnb and so they helped me ((dealt)) that. I'm not really, I've met a couple of other Airbnb hosts, but I'm not like engaged with them too much. #00:16:16-7#

Thomas: Okay. Mhm. Do you also use like forums, host forums online, or anything, or blogs? #00:16:26-5#

Anna: No, people have tagged me in a couple of blogs, nothing really. I actually would be interested to see some, to be honest. #00:16:35-5#

Thomas: There is airhosts forum, I guess where hosts exchange ideas or have questions about and deal with certain questions, I down know, yah. #00:16:43-1#

Anna: Oh yah? I ((should be writing them)). What's it called? Airhosts? #00:16:48-3#

Thomas: Airhostsforum, I guess. I think it's related to Airbnb in some sort of way but it's not quite clear. #00:16:54-2#

Anna: Okay. #00:16:55-9#

Thomas: Yeah, if you get a, do you have like instant booking or do you// #00:17:00-2#

Anna: Yeah, I have instant booking on. #00:17:01-7#

Thomas: Okay, but still. You need to approve them, right? #00:17:05-1#

Anna: Approve them? No, what it is, is that they have to have a verified profile with Airbnb. So Airbnb has to have verified them like as in their ID is correct or something. It's not like a ghost profile or something like that. #00:17:19-9#

Thomas: Okay. And do you look at the profile of the people that are coming and I don't know, if you ever not accept a guest, because of some things, or because it's// #00:17:34-3#

Anna: I would never not accept a guest based on their profile, what it is it's based on like the context of the message. So sometimes people will say like, "It's me and my husband and my six-month year old daughter", and I'll just be like, "You are not gonna be comfortable in this small room, walking up five flights of stairs with a new born baby", like "This is not a comfortable place for you". Or people be like, "There's three of us, we don't mind sleeping in one bed", and I'm like, "The thing is I don't wanna take the risk of you leaving me a bad review, because you think, you might not be comfortable". For me to make 85\$, like it's just not worth it. It's never based on someone's profile. I would, I don't think that the profiles really say too much about people. And usually people like, have like, when they message me and they wanna stay, and they want to stay, they tell me about themselves. So I don't have to really do too much like digging on their behalf. Like they'll say like, "I'm here for a conference", "I'm here for work", "I'm here for a wedding", like however, so I get vibe of who they are, I think, you know. #00:18:37-2#

Thomas: And do you also look on the reviews they have? Or? #00:18:40-6#

Anna: No. #00:18:40-4#

Thomas: No? Just basically the communication? #00:18:43-5#

Anna: Yeah. #00:18:45-8#

Thomas: Mhm. And how would you describe a good guest? #00:18:54-6#

Anna: A good guest? Uuhm, honestly? A good guest is just someone that's like easy going and convenient. I don't think that like, I think that there is a context of when the, when of what makes a good guest is kind of where they are staying, like this isn't a royal palace, this is a pretty casual place to stay. If you, you be a good guest be, you know, just being pretty simple and not being like - what's the word I'm looking for? Like high maintenance, kind of, you know? #00:19:29-4#

Thomas: Okay. Want to have look? #00:19:30-4#

Anna: Want I what? That? This? Oh no, some stupid thing. #00:19:34-2#

Thomas: Okay. #00:19:34-8#

Anna: Yah, nothing. #00:19:36-6#

Thomas: Yeah ... oh has it changed like what being a host, a mean, with all your experience has anything changed in all these years? Like// #00:19:53-9#

Anna: From the beginning to the end? Honestly? I used to make a lot more money of Airbnb and I've started to make less money and it's just because I think it's becoming more popular and more busy and there's more hosts around. Other than that I don't think that, it hasn't really changed, I haven't really changed. #00:20:09-6#

Thomas: Okay. So, did you do things differently now? #00:20:13-7#

Anna: No, it's all been pretty much the same. #00:20:16-4#

Thomas: Ok. #00:20:17-5#

Anna: I've always thought maybe changing it, to be honest, like maybe changing the room around or writing a new profile, but I know that it's been working for the past couple of years, that I just don't really want to, and it's been working fine. I don't like need more business. It's just like so if it's working I gonna keep it all the same, kind of, you know? #00:20:33-9#

Thomas: That's also some work to to// #00:20:36-2#

Anna: Yeah, it's like updated, you know, like why would i// #00:20:38-8#

Thomas: It's different from the ones before// #00:20:41-6#

Anna: Yeah. #00:20:41-8#

Thomas: Mhm. Yeah. Okay. And what do you do when the guests check out or after they have left? #00:20:51-8#

Anna: So there is a lock box downstairs. I usually have them return the keys to the lock box and then depending on when the next guest is coming, (burping) – excuse me! And when the cleaning lady is coming. It's either like I've cleaned the room or the room gets cleaned. #00:21:10-0#

Thomas: Okay. #00:21:11-1#

Anna: Yah. #00:21:12-9#

Thomas: And do you write review after they came, or? #00:21:14-9#

Anna: Not really. If they leave me a review, sometimes I leave them a review back but not always. If they, if I know they had bad experience and I know they gonna leave me a bad review, then sometimes I leave one, before they do but other than that, no I don't really leave them reviews. If it was a good guest, I don't leave a review. You know? #00:21:38-4#

Thomas: Okay. Mhm. And do they leave anything, like a note or something? Or presents? #00:21:45-3#

Anna: I've had a couple of people bring me presents from where they came from, like once I had these people from Dijon, France and they brought me like five different kinds of mustard, which I thought was really cool. And I've had other people bring me like random things, but never like a gift. I've had a couple people take pictures with (name of the dog) and then mail the pictures to me or leave the picture like if it's like a Polaroid or something like that. #00:22:14-0#

Thomas: Mhm. Make some memories. #00:22:16-2#

Anna: Yeah something like that. I used to have a map up of the world and I had people sign it everywhere they came from, but it started to look really crappy, so I took it down. #00:22:26-6#

Thomas: Mhm. Okay. So now a few questions because I am interested in the review stuff. I don't know if (*name of another interviewee*) wrote this or not. #00:22:35-8#

Anna: Mhh, I don't know. #00:22:37-4#

Thomas: If I wrote it. What do you generally think about the review system? #00:22:44-0#

Anna: For Airbnb? #00:22:44-3#

Thomas: At Airbnb, yeah. #00:22:45-4#

Anna: So it changed. You know how it changed? #00:22:49-2#

Thomas: Yeah, like in 2014, yeah. #00:22:53-0#

Anna: Right. So I think it was smart for it to change the way it did, 'cause now it's, you know, you can't read their review until you write one of their own and then it's not public for, I don't know, for like thirty days or something? ... What do I think of their review system? I guess it works, it just sucks sometimes, when someone leaves a bad review and I had no idea that they had a bad time and there's nothing I can do about it and let's be real, like reviews are everything nowadays, you know? So I mean I understand it. It definitely does make me a better host because I know the review can be threatening if it's bad. But yah, I understand it, it works ... yeah. #00:23:40-7#

Thomas: Mhm. And has there been a review that affected you and your listing? #00:23:45-9#

Anna: Yes. So when I was like away traveling for one month, I had someone rent out the room, when I wasn't here. And they were renting it out and I thought everything was going fine, and then I was like in (*place in the USA*) and they wrote a review that said that I had bedbugs. And I wasn't home, so I had no idea. And I had all of these other guests

scheduled to come while I wasn't here, so I started kind of like freaking out, 'cause I was like, "Oh my gosh, I have bedbugs, I have to get rid of all the furniture". So I had hired all these people to like come in, clean the room, inspect it, get rid of all this stuff and it cost me like close to 1.000 dollars. And I've never even had bedbugs. They just left it in the review and I wasn't here to like check it and it was, became a big hustle. Yah. They like saw a bug, but it wasn't like bedbugs, you know, ((they were mean)) and they wrote on my listing and I had to like contact Airbnb and be like, "You need to delete this review, it's not true. I've had everything inspected". I had to have to do a, an Airbnb bedbug verification, like it became a huge deal. #00:24:53-7#

Thomas: And did they delete it afterwards? #00:24:55-2#

Anna: They did delete it, yah. #00:24:57-1#

Thomas: But it was a// #00:24:57-5#

Anna: It was a process, yah. It was a process, yah. #00:25:03-4#

Thomas: And can you give me more details about it? How did it happen? #00:25:09-1#

Anna: I mean like, I like literally – oh, what Airbnb did? #00:25:13-4#

Thomas: Yah. #00:25:14-6#

Anna: So, I was freaking out for myself because I don't know of how much you know about bedbugs but they like ruin your entire apartment. #00:25:23-2#

Thomas: I know that there is famous for Brooklyn actually. #00:25:26-8#

Anna: Brooklyn? Bedbugs? #00:25:28-0#

Thomas: Yeah. I don't know really. #00:25:29-3#

Anna: Oh really? Really? #00:25:28-9#

Thomas: I've read some stories about it sometime, but it's been a while, I think. #00:25:32-1#

Anna: Yah, it had like a ((few)), well, there is a lot of buildings and apartments and like businesses in New York that had bedbugs. And they bite at you, you know, and you're itchy and they ruin your furniture. #00:25:45-5#

Thomas: I saw some pictures of bites, it didn't seem so nice. #00:25:49-2#

Anna: Yah, and, and the bugs are like miniscule, like very small, and they live in the mattress. So and then they like attach themselves to things and it's just like really gross. So, this women had written a review, "Nice apartment, but, girl, the ... bed definitely has bedbugs and you need to get it fixed". And I wasn't coming home for two more weeks, so I had someone come, I had, so I called the ... an exterminator. They came in, they said, they didn't see them. I had like my friends and like my family pretty much get like get rid of the mattress, buy a new mattress, get rid of all my sheets, come in here, clean and then I called Airbnb and was like, "Hey, what do I do about getting this review removed?", and they were like, "Oh, well, we have to send someone to verify it", so then I had to wait for their exterminator to come, which took like another week. Then they came, they did verify

it and it just became a process. I mean it was fine, but there was nothing I could do until then and there I was like who knows how many people weren't, ah, ... you know, making a reservation or making a booking because of that review in the time since then. So.
#00:27:06-1#

Thomas: Okay, so, you said a negative review can be quite a threat, so it's important for you to receive a positive review? #00:27:21-6#

Anna: Sure. #00:27:24-3#

Thomas: What is a positive review? #00:27:25-3#

Anna: What is a positive review? Like ... I would say a positive review just is like, "Bedroom is comfortable", you know, "Had a great time", like it doesn't say too much about, it's just pretty straight forward. A bad review can definitely hurt you, but I wouldn't say like a good review can necessarily help you. It's just better than a bad one. #00:27:47-2#

Thomas: Part of the deal. #00:27:48-8#

Anna: Part of the deal, yah. I would say only like 20 percent of my quests actually leave reviews. #00:27:55-9#

Thomas: Okay, that would be another question. Do you read them? #00:27:58-6#

Anna: Yah, I read them. #00:28:00-7#

Thomas: Yah, and if they don't leave a review its fine with you. #00:28:03-9#

Anna: Yah, its fine with me. #00:28:07-6#

Thomas: Okay. You already said the thing about the bedbug story, but in general how do you react to critique in these reviews? Do you write a review back, because you can ((look)) (...) it or do you write a message to them or to Airbnb depending on what//
#00:28:27-9#

Anna: How do I respond back? #00:28:28-7#

Thomas: Or not? #00:28:29-5#

Anna: I don't, you know, I don't really respond back that much. If they left a really bad review, there is a way that you can like comment on it publicly and anytime that they do that, I am always like, "I'm really sorry that you had a bad time" – most of the time if they had, if they didn't have a good time, they don't say anything. They wait 'till the end to leave a bad review. If they didn't have a good time, sometimes they just like leave halfway, they be like, "We don't wanna stay here, we're uncomfortable staying here", and I'm like, "That's fine, I'll give you a refund", you know what I mean? Like you just have to let me know so I can try to get the room rebooked. But ... is that a good answer? #00:29:10-9#

Thomas: Yeah. You said you don't really write reviews, if you write reviews, what do you consider when writing it? #00:29:24-0#

Anna: Hmm. #00:29:24-5#

Thomas: It's just like a // #00:29:26-2#

Anna: Like I think I write the same thing for every guest. Like, "Great guest, easy stay, follow instructions well, like clean and quiet", you know? That seems like the ideal guest to me. #00:29:39-6#

Thomas: Okay. And how you deal with problematic guests? Where you think they ((snapped)) or they will leave a bad review, or? Or I don't know maybe you don't know, but if there's something that you like think hasn't been that// #00:29:58-2#

Anna: Yeah like I had one or two guys say this winter say like they're really cold and can I make the heat, can I make it warmer, so I would give them like a space heater, but problematic guests? I really just, if they want, if they're not comfortable staying here, like I'm not gonna force them to stay here; they are more than welcome to leave and find another place to go. #00:30:18-0#

Thomas: Okay. #00:30:18-9#

Anna: You know, so if they wanna leave, like I gladly give them refund, that's on them. But I guess it's just like they have to communicate with me to let me know, kind of. Usually they contact Airbnb and Airbnb contacts me if there's a problem. #00:30:31-7#

Thomas: Okay. But if it's all been settled and they left and you think maybe they write a bad review, do you write one first? #00:30:42-3#

Anna: First? Sometimes// #00:30:45-2#

Thomas: Or do you just write (...) review and just keep it? #00:30:47-0#

Anna: I just, yeah, I kind of usually just write no review. I really don't write reviews for the people. #00:30:53-4#

Thomas: Mhm. #00:30:54-3#

Anna: Yah. #00:30:54-2#

Thomas: And you don't really read the reviews of the guests, you said. #00:30:59-1#

Anna: Mhm, yah. #00:30:58-9#

Thomas: ((I kind of asked you what you could say when we were here.)) And generally, if you look at Airbnb reviews they tend to be very positive, I guess. How do you make sure, that – (laughter), you don't read the reviews. #00:31:16-3#

Anna: (laughter) #00:31:17-6#

Thomas: But maybe generally what do you think about it, that they are all so positive and so? #00:31:21-0#

Anna: That they are so nice? Yah, I feel like that's, I feel like the reason is because every time a guest checks out or you check in to a place that you stay, Airbnb is like, "Write a review for this person". And then when I had stayed at a couple of places, they were like, "Would you mind writing us a good review?", so they kind of like asked for it. I think Airbnb kind of it emphasizes that it's necessary, so they push at it more. Like I had to turn off notifications for reviews, you know, like, "You have five days left to write a review for blablabla", and I was just like, "I'll turn it off, 'cause I'm not gonna write ... 30 reviews every

month, I'm like – or you know what I mean, how often it is”, but ... I guess, they emphasize – to be honest, I don't really read them that much. Yeah, that's it. #00:32:12-7#

Thomas: Yeah. Do you feel pressure to get a positive review in a way, or? #00:32:21-8#

Anna: Hmm, No, because I already have enough positive reviews, you know? I don't really feel the pressure for more. But I enjoy getting them, you know? I don't really, the only pressure I feel is that like if the room is dirty and I'm like, “Oh, I really have to make it look much cleaner, 'cause this could be a bad review”, like, like I'm always ((thinking)) of would I be comfortable staying in this room, a stranger's room? Looking at it like this, liking having it look like this. #00:32:47-8#

Thomas: Okay. Mhm. And do you think reviews in general are influencing the way you and your guests are acting during their stay? They are more disciplined? #00:33:03-0#

Anna: No, no I don't// #00:33:07-8#

Thomas: They take more care of it, or? #00:33:11-9#

Anna: Hm, I don't know. Maybe, I mean honestly? Most guests are very respectful with like other people's stuff. So, I don't think that their reviews have anything to do with how their treat the room. I think that's just how they act. #00:33:27-0#

Thomas: Yeah. I think that's basically all the questions I had. Is there anything else you? #00:33:39-3#

Anna: No. #00:33:41-2#

Thomas: I mean that's important for you as a host, I didn't come up with probably? #00:33:48-8#

Anna: No, how many other hosts have you interviewed? #00:33:54-9#

Thomas: Not too many, actually. We did more guest (...) interviews. #00:34:00-6#

Anna: Oh really? #00:34:02-8#

Thomas: One now in LA and couple of, three, five in Germany, Hamburg, so. #00:34:11-8#

Anna: I don't really know any other hosts in New York where I would give you their information, to be honest. #00:34:16-5#

Thomas: That's fine. The only thing, I don't know, actually I should do Interviews with Airbnb, like with the company itself. #00:34:29-2#

Anna: Oh, yah. #00:34:31-0#

Thomas: I'm a little bit struggling with that. I can put it out, right? #00:34:32-9#

Anna: Yah, sure. #00:34:35-6#