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Strategies To Build Competitive Advantage Through Digital Marketing Communication

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Abstract

Technological developments have changed the business landscape in various sectors, including the hospitality industry. Hotel companies are now increasingly relying on digital marketing strategies to achieve a competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive market. Puri Asri Hotel Magelang is a company engaged in the provision of services and accommodation. This research aims to explore how the implementation of digital marketing by the marketing department of Puri Asri hotel can help generate competitive advantage, focusing on the communication aspect through digital marketing communication. The research conducted by the author uses a qualitative approach and observation method where the author conducts an internship at the company. By using SWOT analysis (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat). The results showed that the use of digital marketing in the hospitality industry has provided a significant competitive advantage. Through digital platforms such as social media, websites, and email campaigns, hotel companies can increase their reach to potential guests, strengthen brand image, and increase interaction with customers. Appropriate and targeted communication through digital channels has also helped hotel companies to be more responsive to customer feedback, allowing for quick adjustments to changing market needs.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, Digital Marketing, Digital Marketing Communication, Competitive Advantage.

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INTRODUCTION

A hotel is an establishment that provides accommodation, usually on a short-term basis, to travelers, tourists, or individuals who require temporary lodging. It is a commercial entity that offers a range of services and facilities to its guests, often including guest rooms or suites, restaurants, bars, lounges, meeting and conference facilities, recreational facilities, and sometimes additional services such as spa treatments, room service, laundry, and transportation. Hotels vary in size and style, ranging from small businesses to large commercially-run businesses. They are usually categorized by star rating, which indicates the level of service, facilities, and overall quality provided. Common types of hotels include luxury hotels, boutique hotels, budget hotels, resort hotels, and extended stay hotels. The main purpose of a hotel is to provide guests with a comfortable and convenient place to stay while they are away from home on a temporary basis.

Puri Asri Hotel & Resort located in the city of Magelang which offers the feel of staying at a hotel that is different from hotels in general, by favoring resorts and views that directly lead to nature and mountains around the hotel, as well as its location which is close to Borobudur temple which is one of the tourist destinations visited by many tourists, both local and international tourists, is an advantage possessed by the hotel to compete with its competitors and is also used as one of the marketing strategies.

Marketing strategy is one of the most important elements for every business company, especially companies engaged in providing services and accommodation. One of the marketing strategies that can be used by companies is to build competitive advantage through marketing communication systems both digital and direct. Digital marketing communications refers to the use of digital channels and strategies to promote products or services, engage with customers, and drive business growth.

The hospitality industry has embraced digital marketing as a powerful tool to attract guests, increase bookings, and improve the overall guest experience. To face competition and provide added value, hotel management directs the hotel's marketing strategy well to strengthen marketing from the hotel itself.

The success in the marketing process both directly and indirectly is the responsibility of the hotel management, especially the Sales & Marketing department. The role of the Sales & Marketing department is to increase sales of various kinds of accommodation and services provided, so as to achieve the main goal of the company, which is to compete and develop. One of the strategies implemented to achieve these goals is by utilizing digital marketing communications.

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Digital marketing communications refers to the use of various digital channels and tools to communicate marketing messages and promote products or services where the products owned by hospitality companies are services and accommodation, this involves utilizing online platforms, such as websites, social media, email, search engines, mobile applications, and other digital channels, to reach and engage with target audiences.

The use of various digital channels for marketing activities such as promotion of the list of services and accommodation provided by the service and accommodation provider company. Types of accommodation such as rooms and meeting or conference facilities, ranging from standard type rooms to upscale types as well as meeting facilities that have a small to large capacity. Puri Asri Hotel itself has a standard room type, namely superior and an upscale type, namely penthouse, and various types of meeting and conference facilities.

Information about the accommodation offered by the hotel is listed on each of the company's social media, as well as how to book, price list, promos, and the atmosphere of the hotel. One of the social media that is often visited by customers is Instagram, where on Instagram there is a link or link that can direct customers directly to the WhatsApp application for the booking system and also payment either online or offline by coming directly to the hotel. All of these things can be done digitally making it easier for customers and practical.

In implementing a marketing strategy through digital marketing communication, there are many things that need to be prepared by a salesperson so that the strategy is successful. Based on the exposure to the background of the problem above, the author wants to conduct a study and research with the main research problem "Strategy for Building Competitive Advantage Through Digital Marketing Communication".

Objectives

Based on the regulations of the Management Study Program, Faculty of Business and Economics, Universitas Islam Indonesia, students are required to carry out an internship program by being oriented and observing a fact that exists in the industrial world. With the implementation of the internship program, the author has the following objectives to achieve:

Internships provide me with the opportunity to learn or practice directly in the field about what I have learned from campus about marketing which is the study program or major that I take so that it can provide experience regarding the marketing process of a company in real life and increase the knowledge that I have gained from learning on

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campus, so that I can apply theoretical knowledge about marketing to the world of the hospitality industry, and allow me to understand how marketing concepts and strategies are applied in the hospitality industry.

It is one of the requirements offered by the study program to students in order to complete their education at the Faculty of Business and Economics, Universitas Islam Indonesia. Can analyze the marketing strategy of the company, especially regarding the field of marketing strategy through digital marketing communication or digital marketing.

LITERATURE ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

Marketing Strategy

Marketing Strategy is a series of goals and objectives, policies and rules that guide the marketing efforts of a company within a certain period of time, at a level and reference and application, especially the company's response to the changing environment and competition (Assauri, 2017). The concept of marketing strategy is:

1. Market segmentation

Every consumer has different needs, wants, and habits. Therefore, companies must group heterogeneous markets into homogeneous market units.

2. Target Market

The target market is a group of customers who are targeted by a business approach to be willing to buy the products to be offered, where here the products offered are services and accommodation.

3. Market Position

Positioning or Market Position is a condition of a type of business where there is competition regarding the same type of business or not in an area that can affect the sale of a product.

The purpose of a marketing strategy is to achieve certain results that will help a business or company achieve its overall goals.

Marketing Communication

Marketing communication refers to the various strategies and tactics used by organizations to communicate and promote their products, services, or brands to their target audiences, one of which is digital marketing. It involves developing and disseminating messages through different channels and media to inform, persuade, and influence customers or potential customers.

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Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is an effort or method to market a brand or product using supporting media in digital form. This method is able to reach consumers both personally, relevant and right on target according to consumer needs or desires (Musnaini, Suherman et al. 2020). Digital marketing media, among others, are:

1. Website
2. Search Engine Marketing (SEM)
3. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
4. Social Media Marketing
5. Content Marketing
6. Email Marketing
7. Display Advertising
8. Infuencer Marketing
9. Video Marketing
10. Mobile Marketing

While the benefits of Digital Marketing are:

1. Global Reach: Access to a worldwide audience.
2. Cost Effectiveness: Lower investment compared to traditional marketing.
3. Targeted Advertising: Precise targeting based on demographics, interests, and behavior.
4. Measurable results: Track and measure campaign performance.
5. Flexibility and Agility: Make real-time adjustments to stay relevant.
6. Increased Engagement: Foster interaction and build customer relationships.
7. Brand Building: Build brand identity and reputation.
8. Integration and Automation: Streamline processes and save time.

Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage stems from activities that can come from outside the firm to design, run production and marketing, supply, and other support to produce products. Each of these activities can contribute to the relative cost of the firm's position and be a means of differentiation (Jones, 2003). Competitive advantage refers to the unique attributes or resources that enable a firm or organization to outperform its competitors and achieve superior results in the marketplace.

Hotel

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Hotel is a type of accommodation that is managed commercially in a professional manner, intended for everyone who needs lodging services (Hermawan et al., 2018).

Problem solving framework

The problem-solving framework is a series of procedures and steps in research that aims to make research systematic and scheduled, so that research can be carried out more effectively and efficiently.

DISCUSSION

The marketing strategy of Puri Asri Hotel Magelang refers to SWOT analysis, which stands for Strengths and Weaknesses which are the internal environment of a company, then there are Opportunities and Threats which are the external environment of a company in the business world. The formation of this SWOT model is based on an escalation of the strengths and opportunities that exist in a company and on the other hand minimizing weaknesses and threats. With an understanding of these two factors, both internal factors and external factors, the company can determine a more appropriate strategy in making a policy or decision for the company.

i. Identification of Marketing Strategy Factors at Puri Asri Hotel Magelang

Internal Factor Analysis

1. Strengths

a. Increasing business digitalization

In today's digital era, the existence of the internet is something that is very helpful in running a business, even companies develop their potential in business to achieve digitalization, it cannot be denied that digitalization has a very good influence on the development and growth process of a company. This makes a progress for the marketing strategy of Puri Asri Magelang Hotel, from just distributing brochures for a promo or installing banners in the area around the hotel so that it cannot reach a wider audience as in the era of digitalization now.

b. Strategic Hotel Area

By prioritizing the theme of nature owned by Puri Asri Magelang Hotel and also referred to as a Resort, this is one of its advantages. Presenting the view of the mountainous atmosphere, the progo river and also the rice fields, this is certainly the main attraction for every tourist who is tired of the hustle and bustle of the crowd in the city so they need a new atmosphere.

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With this advantage, Puri Asri Magelang Hotel presents in every content they provide for social media in the form of stunning scenery and also a variety of complete and adequate facilities to enjoy the natural beauty around the hotel.

c. Sales Blast

This activity aims to take advantage of the current digitalization era that facilitates the system for marketing facilities for business people in order to reach a wider target than the marketing system without utilizing the development of the digital era today.

This activity focuses on distributing promos or various kinds of offers provided by the hotel through social media such as Whatsapp, with the advantages possessed by Whatsapp and allowing us to create a business Whatsapp which has features that prioritize its function to help business people in running their business, with this feature, a marketer can broadcast messages that can send messages to all contacts in a short time.

d. Sales call

Activities carried out by the sales and marketing department team in the form of visits to each company that is targeted to have a budget from an activity that is the same as the standard price owned by Puri Asri Hotel Magelang. This activity is usually carried out in the city of Magelang and its surroundings as well as outside the city, with a budget that has been provided by the company to carry out this activity, the sales and marketing department team usually carries out this marketing activity 2 to 3 times a week, with a target per day of 4 to 5 companies that have great potential to hold an activity or event at the hotel.

e. Negotiable Price

With the negotiable price, the customers or customers of Puri Asri Magelang Hotel have an advantage where if the rental of meeting rooms and accommodation in the form of rooms is large or not too small, customers or prospective customers can negotiate with the sales and marketing department team at the price they want, until both parties have an agreement on the price to be given and paid.

f. Customer Relationship

Establishing relationships with customers is something that must be done by every part of the sales and marketing department team, because companies that sell services and accommodation always prioritize hospitality or hospitality, that way the customer will feel respected, and served wholeheartedly.

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2. Weakness

a. Prices are quite expensive

Because almost every marketing activity always includes a price for each product. The five stars that exist in this hotel are also one of the reasons why the price offered will be very high, so therefore the target of the intended customers or prospective customers is always people and companies who are in the upper middle class.

b. Not maximizing all social media

With so many social media in the digitalization era now, it should be easier for the sales and marketing department team to market every product they sell and cover more audiences, but because the members of the sales and marketing department team are older people, they are less up to date with the times and do not understand the benefits of social media in helping to develop various kinds of activities in the marketing process of a product, where the products offered are services and accommodation.

c. Offers made are always monotonous

The lack of development that occurs in the company in the form of room accommodation, meeting rooms, and entertainment accommodation is just that. If at the time of the marketing process, the team from the sales and marketing department will provide a variety of offers which, if they can be examined one by one, are only accommodation products that are just that and tend to be monotonous.

With this little update, a prospective customer who if they have seen once or twice of the products offered by the hotel they will easily guess that only that is offered, so that effect makes a lack of interest from potential customers in exploring the marketed products.

d. Lack of response to customer complaints

The lack of professionalism of each worker at Puri Asri Magelang Hotel makes the slow reaction to a complaint submitted by the customer so that it must make the customer wait. With the five-star label on the hotel, it should be the same as the quality of service provided to customers.

External factor analysis

1. Opportunities

a. Rapid digital development

The growth of various kinds of technology including digital technology every day is a benchmark for every business actor, both small-scale and large-scale business actors, to improve the quality of their marketing strategies in order to compete with other companies engaged in the same field.

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b. Use of social media

By using various kinds of social media that exist in the digital era now marketers or marketing must be able to master the products of the development of the digital era. The use of social media has a huge impact on every company and marketing strategy because it can cover a larger target market.

c. Product Development

With the development of products or facilities that will be provided to customers, it can directly help the marketing strategy because the sales and marketing department team has new products to market to customers or prospective customers.

2. Threat or Threatness

a. Competitors with affordable prices

The number of tourist areas in Magelang city also makes a lot of service and accommodation companies or commonly called hotels, the number of hotels in Magelang city and none of them have 5 stars other than Puri Asri Hotel Magelang, star hotels under Puri Asri Hotel are a threat because they have a lower price rate and have a Modern Hotel concept which is undeniably an option for people who prefer practicality compared to natural nuanced hotels such as Puri Asri Hotel Magelang.

b. Little Market Share

Capitalizing as a five-star hotel is both an advantage and a curse for Puri Asri Hotel, this is because the hotel cannot determine the price arbitrarily and cannot accept all groups who do not necessarily want to pay more just to get the feel of nature. In Magelang city itself, there are few companies, both private and state-owned companies, who want to spend more money to enjoy or use the accommodation provided by Puri Asri Hotel Magelang.

Based on the identification of data analysis that has been done, using a descriptive approach of participatory observation where the author as an internship student at Puri Asri Hotel Magelang so that it can be taken as a basis that the company takes the S-O Strategy and W-O Strategy where promoting through social media routinely so that it has attractive results and can reach a wider market share and maximize every part, both from the quality of accommodation in the form of rooms, meeting rooms, restaurants, entertainment facilities provided, and of course service to customers both individuals and companies.

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CONCLUSION

Utilizing digital communication media is one of the important factors in the marketing field of a company, with the development of the times towards the era of digitalization in almost every factor in the world, especially in marketing factors. Digital marketing or marketing activities that use digital media can help business types in the marketing process.

Companies engaged in the provision of services and accommodation really need a marketing strategy using digital marketing in order to build a competitive advantage through marketing communications. With digital marketing, the marketing process can cover a wider and diverse target market both locally and internationally so as to increase product sales in the form of accommodation and can make the company grow rapidly.

Moving in the field of hospitality makes service and accommodation provider companies certainly prioritize service and provide good product quality. The experience gained by the author during his internship at the company is the importance of good service to customers either directly or through communication devices through digital media.

The importance of service can also affect the responses of potential customers regarding the way product marketing is carried out through social media, because basically good service can affect everything in companies engaged in service and accommodation providers so as to improve the quality of the company and this is a means of a good company marketing strategy.

Every basis of marketing both digitally and non-digitally has a big impact on a company in building business excellence, the importance of good and correct marketing communication in order to help improve the quality of a company so that it can grow, because the influence of each customer's response or review of the company becomes a reputation at stake so that the company can compete and excel in its field.

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