



Marketing Solution to Attract Customers at Huong TRA Hotel

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ABSTRACTS

The tourism industry has become a "key economic sector" of many countries around the world, including Vietnam. However, due to the impact of the covid-19 pandemic, the tourism industry has been severely affected. In 2020, annual revenue from accommodation and food services decreased by 13% compared to 2019. In 2021, travel businesses fell into crisis, 90-95% stopped operating; Changing industries, changing business models, cutting staff. By the beginning of 2022, Vietnam's tourism industry has gradually recovered. During the 9 days of the Lunar New Year holiday alone, a series of accommodation establishments were fully booked for the first time after 2 years of suffering due to the pandemic. Facing positive changes of the tourism industry, Huong Tra Hotel is constantly changing to bring customers the best experiences. The problem for Huong Tra Hotel is how to attract customers to the hotel. Recognizing the importance of Marketing in attracting customers, using qualitative research methods, the author has proposed marketing solutions to attract customers for Huong Tra Hotel.

Keywords: *hotel, tourism, customer attraction, marketing solutions*

1. INTRODUCTION

Our country, Vietnam, is on the path of economic development, people's lives are increasingly improving, and the needs for entertainment and tourism are becoming more and more popular. Therefore, the Tourism economic sector has become an important economic sector of our country. Currently, one of the most developed areas of the industry is the hotel service business. The development of this business field has contributed an important part to the overall development of the country's tourism industry. Every hotel business strives not only for its own business results but also for the overall development of the country's economy. Immersing itself in the general development trend of the hotel business, Huong Tra Hotel needs to build reasonable marketing policies to attract customers and thereby gain a certain position in the competitive business industry. This.

Huong Tra Hotel was established in September 2003 under Thien Phu Company Limited, located on National Highway 1A in Gia Vien district, Ninh Binh province. The hotel has 27 rooms, a dining room that can accommodate 500 people, a conference room that can accommodate 50-100 people with 2-star standard facilities. With the motto "Customer is king", "Always listen, ready to serve!" Huong Tra Hotel has become a safe stopping place - an ideal meeting point for customers around the world. Since its inception, the hotel has had the honor of welcoming many domestic and foreign guests, especially leaders of ministries, branches and provinces in Vietnam..

2. THEORETICAL BASIS

Hospitality and tourism marketing is a series of methods and techniques supported by a special and methodical spirit aimed at satisfying the unspoken needs of customers, be it entertainment or other purposes. another destination. Marketing in hotel business has the following characteristics: Shorter service access time; More diversity and types of distribution channels; Greater reliance on add-on services; Buying appeal is based more on the emotional aspect; Pay more attention to "evidence" management; More emphasis on image and stature; Duplicating services is easier; Pay more attention to peak hour promotions.

Factors affecting hotel marketing activities include:

– Factors of the macro environment: The macro environment is the forces on a broader social level that affect the micro environment, such as demographic, economic, natural, and technical factors. art, politics and culture,...

– Factors of the macro environment: The micro environment are forces that have a direct relationship with the company itself. Micro-environment factors include: Customers, Competitors, Suppliers, Public, Marketing intermediaries, and the business itself.

In the hotel business, customers both directly participate in the service provision process and directly use the service. Customers deciding to use certain hotel services must go through many stages.

Marketing policies to attract customers in the hotel business including:

Product Policy: A product is a marketing effort related to everything offered level to meet consumer needs (Kotler and Keller, 2009) [24]. Product decisions are of strategic importance to the business.

Price policy: Price is a factor that has a rapid impact in the marketing mix. At the same time, price is influenced by many factors, and affects many factors such as profit, revenue, market share, and output.

Distribution policy: In the service industry, products are intangible, so decisions about where to supply the product often have to be a compromise between the needs of the product supplier and the needs of the customer.

Promotion policy: Promotion is the process of building and maintaining a communication mix aimed at the target market to attract customers, contributing to the short-term and long-term marketing goals of the business.

Human Policy: Human factors can be defined as the role humans play in providing goods or services that can influence consumer perceptions (Kukanja et al., 2016). Due to the characteristics of services, people are considered the most important resource in service businesses.

Service provision process: Related to procedures, tasks, schedules, operating mechanisms and distribution routes for products and services to customers.

Tangible evidence: Physical evidence focuses on the physical conditions at the place of business including the surrounding area. (Khan, 2014).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The project mainly uses qualitative research methods. Specifically, the comparative method, the dialectical materialist method, and the synthetic analysis method.

Techniques used: Analysis and synthesis methods, descriptive statistics techniques and data processing.

Data collection methods:

- Collect and analyze documents and secondary data from many information sources, including articles, previous domestic and foreign research articles and reports at Huong Tra Hotel.
- Collect information and data by sending surveys to customers using Huong Tra hotel's services.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Research results

Target market selection

Regarding market segmentation, Huong Tra Hotel segments as follows: Domestic tourist market; Domestic business traveler market; International tourist market; International business traveler market; Other guests. Regarding target market selection, in the period before the covid-19 epidemic and now the hotel is oriented to the tourist market, especially international tourists. During the covid - 19 period, Huong Tra Hotel focuses on the domestic tourist market and other guests.

It can be seen that the hotel mainly selects target markets based on existing experience and does not clearly research competitors and customers. Chính sách sản phẩm

Huong Tra Hotel provides the main product of accommodation services. There are also additional services such as restaurants, seminars, parties, laundry services, shuttle buses,...

Lodging:

Huong Tra Hotel has a room system of 27 rooms with 4 types: 09 Double rooms, 11 Twin rooms, 04 Triple rooms and 03 Family rooms.

Bonus services

Restaurant - Bar services: Capacity up to 500 guests offering different dishes in Asian and European styles.

Meeting and event services: Meeting rooms can accommodate 50 - 100. Car service: Shuttle customers to locations upon request.

There are also other services: travel consulting, massage, sauna,...

Currently, Huong Tra Hotel is implementing a market penetration policy. From the survey sent to customers, it can be seen that the products at Huong Tra basically meet customer requirements, most customers agree or strongly agree with the given criteria. However, it is still assessed that the equipment in the room is not complete and modern (6/258 people account for 2.3%), additional services do not meet their needs (3/258 people account for 1, 2%), the accommodation environment is not safe (3/258 people, accounting for 1.2%), although these are small numbers, they still show gaps in the implementation of product policies of the company. Huong Tra.

In general, the services at Huong Tra are quite diverse compared to other competitors in Ninh Binh province. However, the products at the hotel lack differentiation, the Restaurant - Bar services are not effective and the hotel has not researched and developed new products.

Price policy

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Table 1. Room price list at Huong Tra hotel

Kind of room	Room price/night (VND)
Double Room	530.000
Twin Room	530.000
Triple Room	650.000
Family Room	880.000

Source: Huong Tra Hotel Sales and Marketing Department

For restaurant - bar services, prices will be listed on the menu. For the remaining services, prices depend on different requirements. Prices for these services will have separate incentives for special customers.

From the survey results, it shows that customers quite agree about Huong Tra's price, but there is still a small number of customers (accounting for 1.2%) who do not agree that the price is worthy of the service and can be competitive. compared to competitors in the segment and the accompanying service fees are reasonable. Besides, there are still 6/258 customers (accounting for 2.3%) who have not been provided with clear and quick service prices at the hotel.

Compared to other competitors in Ninh Binh, the price of services at Huong Tra hotel also has a difference but not much. In general, the prices of services at Huong Tra hotel are relatively flexible and suitable for the 2-star hotel market in Ninh Binh. However, the accommodation service here does not have a pricing policy for each different audience.

Distribution policy

Huong Tra has used both direct and indirect distribution channels. Direct distribution channel: Customers will contact the hotel themselves without going through any intermediary channels. The number of visitors using this channel is quite small - only nearly 28% of the total number of visitors and most of them are in Ninh Binh province. Huong Tra Hotel usually does not focus on direct distribution channels.

Indirect distribution channel: Huong Tra Hotel cooperates with many travel businesses such as: Worldwide Agency Travel, Saigontouris,... and online travel companies: Traveloka, Agoda,... Customer source of Hotels mainly come from this distribution channel, accounting for more than 72% of total visitors. That's why hotels always prioritize investing in this distribution channel over the direct channel.

Regarding distribution policy, more than 75% of customers agree, strongly agree that the hotel cooperates with many travel agencies and booking websites, as well as booking rooms at the hotel is reasonable. This result is completely reasonable because customers mainly know Huong Tra through travel agents and the hotel's main distribution channel is indirect through travel companies and agents, so the hotel always focuses on cooperation with travel businesses. The hotel's failure to invest in direct channels leads to failure to update complete and timely information on the website system. That's why there were 8.1% of responses that disagreed and 45.3% of responses that were neutral when customers were commented on the criterion "The hotel's website system helps customers find complete information." enough and easily. Through this result, Huong Tra Hotel needs to be proactive and pay attention to quickly updating hotel information on the website system.

In general, the hotel has cooperated with many reputable travel businesses. However, Huong Tra Hotel has not really focused on attracting new guests and still has to rely on referrals from travel businesses. Therefore, the operation of the direct distribution channel is not effective as well as the hotel is too dependent on distribution intermediaries. This has affected the hotel's revenue as it has to give a portion of revenue to these distribution intermediaries.

Promotion policy

If you want to attract more guests to Huong Tra Hotel, the hotel must step up promotion activities.

Advertising: Advertising activities have not been paid attention to by Huong Tra Hotel.

– Outdoor advertising: signs in tourist areas, inside and around hotels;

– Advertising through paper and electronic newspapers: Cooperate with press agencies such as Ninh Binh Newspaper, Provincial Radio and Television,... and reputable electronic and online newspapers such as: bookhotel.vn, booking.com, vntrip.vn,...

– Advertising through Huong Tra hotel's website: This activity simply provides preliminary information about the hotel.

Promotions: Currently, Huong Tra mainly focuses on promotions, especially during the peak season to attract more guests to the hotel. Promotional activities that Huong Tra uses can include:

– Seasonal promotions, room discounts in low season,....

Table 2. Hotel seasonal promotions

Time	Content
Peak season	10% discount on room rates for groups (6 guests or more) and a 20% discount voucher when using the hotel's Restaurant - Bar services.
	Attractive incentives when using Service Combo:
Low season	- Combo 2D1D: 600,000 VND/guest including 1 night in Double/Twin room + food service at restaurant;

Source: *Huong Tra Hotel Sales and Marketing Department*

– Promotional programs according to major events of the hotel or Ninh Binh province: Support shuttle bus to King Dinh King Le Temple during the Dinh Le Festival, Give gifts on the occasion of the hotel's 15th anniversary, ...

– Promotion when customers book directly at the hotel: 25% room discount for the 2nd night when customers book directly at the hotel.

– Promotion program for loyal customers or long-stay customers: Room discount up to 25% for the 3rd night when customers stay 4 days or more at the hotel, etc.

Direct sales: In the process of communicating with customers, the hotel staff always maintains a warm and dedicated attitude, providing complete and detailed hotel information to customers as well as providing support when needed. customers encounter difficulties,...

Direct marketing: Huong Tra Hotel has built its own website to provide information to customers. However, currently the hotel is not really interested in website development.

Public relations: Huong Tra is not really interested in PR activities. Some of the hotel's PR activities include: Celebrating the hotel's 10th anniversary; Turn off the hotel's decorative electrical system to respond to Earth Hour activities; Make voluntary contributions to study promotion funds, funds for the poor,...

Through the survey results sent to customers, it can be seen that customers do not appreciate the promotion activities of Huong Tra Hotel. Up to 33.7% of customers think that customers

The hotel does not have many promotional activities or is only at a normal level and 41.8% of customers do not rate the promotional content highly. From then on, we realized that Huong Tra has not seriously invested in communication activities. With the criteria "The hotel has many promotional programs, especially in the low season" and "The hotel's promotional programs and promotions are fully conveyed to customers" the majority of customers are satisfied. With more than 80% of customers choosing the answer as agree and strongly agree. It can be seen that in promotion activities, Huong Tra Hotel only focuses on promotional tools but has not seriously studied and paid attention to other tools, especially advertising.

It can be seen that Huong Tra Hotel has had many reasonable promotional programs to increase the number of off-peak visitors as well as attract more visitors during the peak season. In addition, the hotel has also partly promoted the hotel's image to the public through advertising and public relations activities. However, the hotel has not really built unique and interesting promotion strategies, and the advertising content is not attractive. In particular, the hotel has not seriously invested in advertising activities via the internet; the hotel's website is quite basic, lacking much content and not updated regularly. Besides, the hotel's PR activities are still limited and have not really been effective in enhancing its image in the eyes of the *public*.

Human policy

Huong Tra Hotel currently has 76 employees, the educational level of staff and workers includes 25% university degree, 50% college - intermediate level, the remaining are unskilled workers. The staff at Huong Tra participate in hotel professional training courses before officially working and annually the hotel also carries out work to improve professional capacity for staff. All employees at Huong Tra must clearly understand the basic characteristics of the hotel and the policies the hotel is implementing. In addition to salaries in accordance with state regulations, Huong Tra Hotel always has a timely reward mechanism for employees with good achievements. Huong Tra Hotel always builds a friendly and open working environment as well as helps employees when they encounter difficulties.

Huong Tra Hotel's human policy is rated very well by customers. All criteria were chosen by more than 83% of customers to agree and strongly agree. From there, it can be seen that hotel staff are well-trained, serious, work professionally and are always ready to serve customers.

It can be said that the hotel's workforce is increasingly highly qualified and always tries their best to work because the hotel focuses on investing in professional training as well as having good benefits, care, encouragement, and timely rewards. Besides, the hotel's human policy still has many limitations. Huong Tra Hotel has a large number of foreign guests, but the staff who have direct contact with customers at the hotel are still poor in foreign languages. Besides, the salary and bonus regime is not really good, leading to the loss of well-qualified employees. This problem is not unique to Huong Tra, but most 2-star hotels today also have the same situation. In addition, Huong Tra Hotel does not have a professional recruitment process as well as a specific employee evaluation process, but mainly relies on subjective assessments from superiors.

Service provision process

Currently, Huong Tra Hotel has not yet built a professional service provision model. However, staff at the hotel follow these basic steps

Receive and process customer requests

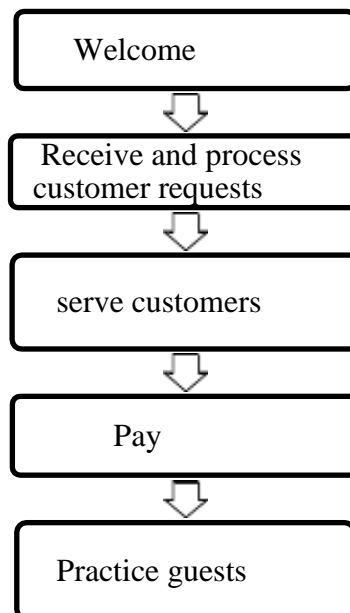


Diagram 1. Steps in the service provision process at Huong Tra Hotel

Source: Huong Tra Hotel Sales and Marketing Department

Huong Tra Hotel's service provision process is rated very well by customers.

All criteria were chosen by more than 83% of customers to agree and strongly agree.

In general, the hotel has identified the basic steps in the process of providing services to customers for staff to follow. Thereby, saving time for both hotel staff and customers also helps customers have a better experience when using services at Huong Tra. However, at Huong Tra Hotel, the service provision process is still just basic steps without dividing into each specific stage what employees need to do and has not yet become a standard and supervised. This is the shortcoming that Huong Tra needs to change in the future.

Tangible proof

As soon as they set foot in Huong Tra Hotel, customers can immerse themselves in the hotel's spacious, airy natural space with garden areas, fountains, etc. The lobby area has a spacious living room, beautifully decorated with full amenities. The room system at Huong Tra is recognized as meeting standard 2. The restaurant and bar areas are also fully and modernly designed. The office area at the hotel is also fully equipped with electronic equipment. Periodically, the hotel will conduct inspections of the equipment system. However, the hotel's weakness is that it is not located near tourist attractions and because it has been in operation for a long time, some areas have been degraded. In addition, many empty areas are not used by the hotel.

The tangible proof factor is highly appreciated by customers. In addition to the criterion that the hotel has a convenient location for customer activities, 71% of customers agree and strongly agree, the remaining factors are all over 83%.

Overall assessment, Huong Tra's interior systems, equipment, etc. have been increasingly improved in both quantity and quality over the years. However, because it has been in operation for a long time - 19 years, some areas of the hotel are in poor condition. The new hotel only focuses on the equipment system in the area where customer service activities take place. The new office area is only full of electronic equipment, but these electronic equipment are old and function poorly. In addition, the hotel's location, although easy to find, is not convenient for tourism activities. Furthermore, Huong Tra does not yet have its own publications specific to the hotel, and the hotel staff do not have uniform uniforms.

4.2. Discuss

Solution for selecting target market

One of the most important steps in selecting a target market is collecting information. Hotel information sources must be diverse to be able to serve market research well, including: Information about competitors in the industry; Internal business information: from internal documents and employee surveys; Information from customers; Information about the economic, political situation, etc. After collecting data, the business department

- Marketing needs to collect statistics, analyze and evaluate data to select the appropriate target market for the hotel.

Solutions to complete product policies

Diversifying products and services: Huong Tra Hotel can add a VIP room system with special offers such as: breakfast and dinner buffets,...; Add more dishes to the restaurant menu, organize bartender performances, music shows,... at the Bar area; Research and develop new additional services: karaoke room, children's game area,... Providing different service packages.

Improve product quality: Hotels can differentiate products for different guests; Improve food quality; Customer care before, during and after the sale; Improve hotel professionalism for staff who directly serve customers; Provide a set of service quality standards.

Complete solution for pricing policy

Huong Tra Hotel needs to have flexible price adjustment policies.

Package price: Provide many service packages including all services at the hotel or some additional services for customers who want to use many services at the hotel.

Preferential prices for special customers: Loyal customers: Get a price 10% lower than the hotel's listed price. In low season, it can be reduced by up to 15%; Customers booking directly with the hotel: A 5% discount will apply compared to the normal price; Group guests: A 20% lower price applies to guests booking 5 rooms or more with a stay of 3 days or more or guests booking 7 rooms or more.

Hourly/daily price: During the low season, Huong Tra should offer an hourly/daily price for guests who want to use room service to rest, etc. Hourly/daily price should be reduced by 25% compared to the listed price.

Solution to complete distribution policy

To improve the effectiveness of direct distribution channels, hotels should apply the following solutions: Find customers who are businesses that want to send employees on business trips to Ninh Binh, proactively contact businesses. that karma; Cooperate with local businesses that need to organize conferences, seminars, etc. Update the booking feature on the hotel website. In addition to promoting the development of direct distribution channels, Huong Tra Hotel needs to strengthen and maintain good relationships with businesses and travel agencies, and propose reasonable discounts to increase loyalty. of these intermediaries.

Solutions to improve promotion policies

To make advertising activities more effective, Huong Tra Hotel can refer to the following solutions: Promote advertising in newspapers, radio, industry magazines,... with attractive, diverse content, attract readers; Advertising via Social Media, running ads on Google Ads, Youtube Ads,... Set a budget for advertising activities, evaluate advertising effectiveness.

Huong Tra Hotel's promotional programs are quite reasonable, however the hotel also needs to plan in detail for each different time as well as evaluate the effectiveness of promotional activities. In particular, for this activity to be effective, Huong Tra needs to provide customers with complete information about incentives being applied at the hotel.

To attract more customers, Huong Tra Hotel needs to increase direct marketing activities. The hotel can refer to some of the following solutions: Send messages and emails to customers; Focus on developing content on websites and social networking sites; Build a reasonable website interface.

In the future, Huong Tra Hotel needs to promote and strengthen PR activities: Launch programs and raise charity funds; Organize year-end summary activities and express gratitude to customers. The hotel's PR activities must be synthesized by the Marketing department, writing articles and posting to media: website,...

Solutions to perfect human policy

Regarding recruitment policy: Provide a recruitment process appropriate to the scale of operations; Management, accounting, marketing, and human resources teams need to have university degrees in the right majors; The receptionist and sales team need to have a college degree or higher and have good foreign language skills. In particular, staff who have direct contact with customers need to be flexible to promptly handle arising situations.

For salary regime: Develop and complete a reasonable salary regime; There must be an attractive salary, worthy of their abilities, so they will stick with it for a long time.

For employee evaluation process: Develop an employee evaluation process suitable for the hotel.

Solution to complete the translation supply process

Hotels need to design a service delivery process associated with each stage. Each stage must have regulations on time and completion principles. The process needs to be public for customers to understand. This process will be supervised by the customer. The hotel also needs to establish a supervisory board to be able to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of the process as well as the work efficiency of the staff and then make adjustments to suit the hotel's business activities. .

Complete solution with tangible evidence

Internal facilities: Replace electrical equipment and cabinets in the office area; There should be a hotel map in the lobby as well as a TV screen showing hotel advertisements and information about the weather, tourist attractions in Ninh Binh,...; Set aside a small area in the lobby to decorate according to the theme of special occasions.

External means: Upgrading and renovating degraded areas; Invest in more ornamental plants; Renovate the parking area and separate areas for hotel staff and customers.

Other tangible evidence: Designing gifts for customers and close partners, distributing limited gifts to all customers using the service on special occasions; Design and sew uniforms for employees; Design your own business cards, media publications and place them in areas such as the lobby, reception desk, etc.

5. Conclusion

The process of globalization has recently developed strongly. Economic exchanges with regional and international countries have created conditions for businesses to learn and expand and develop international markets. Therefore, the Tourism economic sector has become an important economic sector of our country. Hotel business is one of the highly competitive industries today. Recognizing that, Huong Tra Hotel is constantly improving the quality of service at the hotel. During its business process, besides the successes it has achieved, the hotel also encountered some difficult problems. Especially in devising marketing policies to improve the ability to attract guests at the hotel. The project has researched the hotel's business situation and proposed a number of solutions to improve the hotel's ability to attract guests in the future.

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