

Promotional Strategies Of Star Hotels

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ABSTRACT

The hotel industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. The hotel industry alone is a multi-billion dollar and growing enterprise. Good quality products and services at affordable prices should be the USP of any successful venture and hotels in the country looking forward for the same. Hotel today not only cater to the basic needs of the guest like food and shelter but also provide much more than that, like personalized service. Today, the hotel industry is facing an increasingly competitive market that pushes the hotels to have a greater need to differentiate for their customers. In order to survive in this present world of competition, hotels will have to formulate marketing strategies in a way to not only woo customers toward them but also retain them. Indian tourism and hospitality sector has reached new heights today. Travellers are taking new interests in the country which leads to the upgrading of the hospitality sector. Even an increase in business travel has driven the hospitality sector to serve their guests better. Hospitality Industry is closely linked with travel and tourism industries. India is experiencing huge footfalls as a favourite vacation destination of foreigners and natives and the hospitality industry is going into a tizzy working towards improving itself. There is tough competition in hospitality industry. The hotelier has to use various Promotional Strategies to attract the customer. In this research, researchers have tried to find out various strategies adopted by the star hotels regarding to Promotion.

Key Words: Hotel Industry, Star Hotel, Marketing Mix, Promotional Strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Promotion covers the methods of communication that hotels use to provide information about its products or services to customers. Information can be both verbal and visual. Hotels undertake activities to promote its products or services to the targeted customers. The objective of promotion is to increase demand and generate sales. It aims to create awareness, knowledge, preference, conviction and purchase of the products or services. In this regard the researcher has studied various promotional strategies which are prepared for satisfaction of customers.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this research paper are:

1. To understand various promotional tools used by star hotels.
2. To get acquainted about advertisement media used by star hotel.

3. To aware about social networking websites used by star hotel.
4. To understand about the sales promotion tools used at consumer level by star hotel.
3. To acquainted about the various public relation tools used by the star hotels.
4. To understand the various methods of direct marketing used by the star hotels.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper aims at examine the promotional strategies of star hotels in Pune city. The data was collected by administering a structured questionnaire from 30 star hotels. In order to supplement the information collected through the questionnaire method, interview of all HR managers were conducted with the help of interview guide. The researcher has also collected the secondary data from various sources to supplement the primary data. The data collected with the help of questionnaire was tabulated and then analysed with the help of some simple statistical tools.

SAMPLE SIZE & METHOD

For the present study the sample size was 30 star hotels out of those 15 are five star, 10 are four star and 5 are three star hotels. All managers were interviewed. All five star and four star hotels were selected whereas 5 three star hotels were selected by using Random Sampling Method.

SCOPE

The scope of the present research is as follows:

- The scope of the present study is confined to the geographical and corporation limit of Pune city.
- This research includes only three, four and five star hotels.
- This research is related to only promotional strategies.
- The sample size for the study is 30.
- The findings of the study are based on the primary data as well as secondary data. The primary data was collected through questionnaire and interviews.

HYPOTHESIS

The main hypotheses of the present research are:

1. Sales promotion and Direct Marketing are the important promotional tools used by the star hotels.
2. Hotel websites, internet, hoardings are the important advertisement media whereas face-book, twitter are the important social media used by the star hotels.
3. Trade discount, complementary service are important promotional tools whereas identity media, public service activity are the important public relations activity used by the star hotels.
4. Star hotels mainly used hotel website and face to face selling as the methods of direct marketing.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- 1.) Lawrence C. Voss¹ (2006) has conducted the research on the topic of 'The Importance of Customer Satisfaction and Cultural Influences in the European Hospitality Industry - A Case Study of a Four Star Hotel in Spain, Germany and England' at Spain, Germany and England. The Sample Size was 166 Hotel Guests.

Objectives:

1. To determine the importance of cultural influence affecting customer satisfaction.
2. To determine the level of customer satisfaction of staying guests at four-star hotel in Spain, Germany and England.
3. To evaluate staying guests' satisfaction levels in relation to cultural influences at each four-star hotel.

Findings:

1. The overall level of satisfaction of guests staying at all three hotels has been high.
2. The majority of customers generally perceived the staff as friendly and cooperative in terms of obtaining information from them.
3. The condition of premises and the room comfort reveal that the optional service offered by the hotel also achieve high satisfaction levels.

Recommendations:

1. Fully train and provide forms of empowerment to staff would further increase customer satisfaction level.
2. In terms of preventing future customer dissatisfaction in the area of language adjustments and abilities of staff to speak the customer's language.
3. The managers of these hotels need to adjust their recruitment policies.

- 2.) Perunjodi Naidoo, Prabha Ramseook-Munhurrin and Ashwin K. Seetaram² (2011) have conducted the research on the topic of 'Marketing the Hotel Sector in Economic Crisis Evidence from Mauritius' at Mauritius. The Sample Size was 75 Hotel Managers.

Objective:

1. The aim of this study was to determine the marketing mix strategies of product, price, place and promotion used by the hotel industry in the economic crisis to increase the hotel occupancy rates.

Findings:

1. In terms of product strategies, it has been seen that hotels carry out intensive marketing strategies, especially in international markets to strengthen the image and positioning of the organisation.
2. The pricing strategies that were most successful for hoteliers were product sold in bundles such as packages sold to travel agents and tour operators. Additionally, discriminatory pricing was also useful since it enabled the hoteliers to offer tailor-made prices to specific markets.
3. The internet and tour operators were found to be the most effective distribution channels in times of economic crisis. The most effective promotion strategies were sales promotion, exhibitions and fairs as well as advertising.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that hoteliers use the marketing mix variables judiciously.
2. It is also suggested that the hotels focus on repeat visitors who are confident about the product that they have already experienced.

- 3.) Shreya Bhargav³ (2015) has conducted the research on the topic of 'Impact of Marketing Mix in Hotel Industry: A Comparative Study of Five Star Hotels in Rajasthan', at Rajasthan. The

Sample Size was 550 Hotel Guest.

Objectives:

1. To study the importance of room quality and ambience in hotel industry. 2. To understand the increased role of F and B and popularity of Rajasthan as a hub of tourism, conventions, exhibitions and corporate events. 3. To study the significance of location of a hotel on customer's buying process. 4. To study the impact of pricing on acquiring customers in highly competitive hotel industry. 5. To study the impact of physical evidence on visitors while selecting hotel.

Findings:

1. Majority of the respondents are satisfied with the hotel accommodation due to the aesthetics of the rooms. 2. Majority of the respondents are satisfied with food and beverages. 3. Location is also important for the visitors while deciding about the hotel to stay. 4. The study concluded that the prices charged by the hotels have major impact on selecting the hotel. 5. Majority of the respondents are satisfied regarding interior decoration, neatness and cleanliness, parking and other amenities of sample hotels.

Recommendations:

1. Hotel management should revise its room tariff during off-peak season and competitive scenario. 2. The management should introduce economic package in non peak season. 3. Hotel management should focus on soft skills of front line employees. 4. In the technological era, hotel should give more focus on online booking portals and after that company's website. 5. Effective marketing approach need to be planned by hotel management due to increasing intense competition from three and four star hotel category.

4.) Dr. Suryakant Lasune⁴ (2012) has conducted the research on the topic of 'Marketing Strategies and Quality Management of Five Star Hotels in order to Improve its Revenue with special reference to Selected Five Star Hotels in Mumbai', at Mumbai.

Objectives:

1. To find out quality standard of product and services. 2. To find out promotional strategies. 3. To analyse study of the competitive position of product/services/brand.

Findings:

1. Quality is considered as most powerful factor to achieving customer's satisfaction. Five star hotels are positioned at the top of the market, selling high quality product and services at high prices. 2. Providing a unique quality food and services is core of five star hotels philosophy. They are providing best of modern amenities with personalised and warm service with genuine care. The design and architecture of the hotels is inspired by the historical style of the region. 3. Marketing strategies is a key to improving hotels revenue. As advertising and promotional strategies affects revenue faster and in a sustain manner compared to one time hotel promotion.

RESEARCH GAP:

Number of researches has been carried out by the researchers to understand the customer's satisfaction regarding hotels. Few researches have been carried out to study the various strategies used by hotel management. The researcher has not come across any research where

promotional strategy of hotels has been studied. Now a days hotel industry is growing very fast. To attract the customers, hotel owners are preparing various promotional strategies. Every hotel are spending huge amount on promotional activity, when it comes about star hotel, the amount increases more.

It is, therefore important to understand what are the various promotional strategies adopted by the star hotels. The researcher has not come across any research which is focussing on promotional strategies of star hotel. Therefore the researcher felt a need to conduct a research on the topic, 'Promotional Strategies of Star Hotels'.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

i.) Promotional Tools Used

Promotional tools consist of a specific blend of advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and direct marketing to achieve promotional objectives. Each promotional tool has its own unique characteristics and costs. It is important for the researcher to understand the promotional tools used by the hotel. Therefore the researcher has asked the respondents regarding the promotional tools used by the hotel and their responses are presented in the following table.

Table 1: Promotional Tools Used

Promotional Tools	Very Often	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never	Total	Rank
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Advertising	10 (33.33)	10 (33.33)	5 (16.67)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	V
Sales promotion	25 (83.33)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	I
Personal selling: (using sales force)	20 (66.67)	5 (16.67)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	III
Public relations and publicity	19 (63.33)	9 (30.00)	2 (6.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	IV
Direct marketing	20 (66.67)	10 (33.33)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	II

- The above table reveals that 33.33% of the respondents were used advertising as a promotional tool very often, 33.33% of the respondents were used this tool often, 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes and 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that 66.66% of the respondents were used advertising as a promotional tool often.
- The data presents that 83.33% of the respondents were used sales promotion as a promotional tool very often and 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool often.
This concludes that 100% of the respondents were used sales promotion as a promotional tool often.

- The data presents that 66.67% of the respondents were used personal selling as a promotional tool very often, 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool often and 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes.
This concludes that 83.34% of the respondents were used personal selling as a promotional tool often.
- The data presents that 63.33% of the respondents were used public relation and publicity as a promotional tool very often, 30% of the respondents were used this tool often and 6.67% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes.
This concludes that 93.33% of the respondents were used public relation and publicity as a promotional tool often.
- The data presents that 66.67% of the respondents were used direct marketing as a promotional tool very often and 33.33% of the respondents were used this tool often.
This concludes that 100% of the respondents were used direct marketing as a promotional tool often.

It concludes that the respondents have given first rank to sales promotion as a promotional tool. The sales promotion is a short-term incentive to encourage the purchase or sales of products or services. It is important to increase the sales. They expressed that this tool is at most important for them followed by direct marketing, personal selling, public relations and publicity, and advertising.

ii.) Advertising Media Used

Advertising is a mass media. Advertising can be used to build up a long-term image for products or services and also stimulate quick sales. Advertising can efficiently reach masses of geographically dispersed buyers at a low cost per exposure. Each advertising media has its own costs, advantages and limitations. Hotel can select those advertising media, which are suitable in all the important aspects. It is important for the researcher to understand the various types of advertising media used by the hotel. Therefore the researcher has asked the respondents regarding the advertising media used by the hotel and their responses are presented in the following table.

Table 2: Advertising Media Used

Advertising Media	Very Often	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never	Total	Rank
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Television	3 (10.00)	5 (16.67)	9 (30.00)	10 (33.33)	3 (10.00)	30 (100)	X
Radio	3 (10.00)	5 (16.67)	11 (36.67)	9 (30.00)	2 (6.67)	30 (100)	IX
Press and newspapers	12 (40.00)	9 (30.00)	6 (20.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	IV
Magazines	6 (20.00)	12 (40.00)	6 (20.00)	6 (20.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	VII
Hotel directories	5 (16.67)	11 (36.67)	9 (30.00)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	VIII

Brochures and pamphlets	12 (40.00)	6 (20.00)	9 (30.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	V
Outdoor: hoardings, posters, neon signs etc.	12 (40.00)	10 (33.33)	5 (16.67)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	III
Transit media	3 (10.00)	2 (6.67)	9 (30.00)	15 (50.00)	1 (3.33)	30 (100)	XI
Specialty media: pens, key chains, t-shirts, etc.	10 (33.33)	11 (36.67)	6 (20.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	VI
Hotel website	25 (83.33)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	I
Internet	24 (80.00)	6 (20.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	II

- The above table presents that 10% of the respondents were used television as an advertising media very often, 16.67% of the respondents were used this media often, 30% of the respondents were used this media sometimes, 33.33% of the respondents were used this media rarely and 10% of the respondents were never used this media.
This concludes that only 26.67% of the respondents were used television as an advertising media often.
- The data shows that 10% of the respondents were used radio as an advertising media very often, 16.67% of the respondents were used this media often, 36.67% of the respondents were used this media sometimes, 30% of the respondents were used this media rarely and 6.67% of the respondents were never used this media.
This concludes that only 26.67% were used radio as an advertising media often.
- The data shows that 40% of the respondents were used press and newspapers as an advertising media very often, 30% were used this media often, 20% were used this media sometimes and 10% of the respondents were used this media rarely.
This concludes that 70% of the respondents were used press and newspapers as an advertising media often.
- The data shows that 20% of the respondents were used magazines as an advertising media very often, 40% were used this media often, 20% were used this media sometimes and 20% of the respondents were used this media rarely.
This concludes that 60% were used magazines as an advertising media often.
- The data shows that 16.67% of the respondents were used hotel directories as an advertising media very often, 36.67% were used this media often, 30% were used this media sometimes and 16.67% of the respondents were used this media rarely.
This concludes that 53.34% of the respondents were used hotel directories as an advertising media often.
- The data shows that 40% of the respondents were used brochures and pamphlets as an advertising media very often, 20% of the respondents were used this media often, 30% of the

respondents were used this media sometimes and 10% of the respondents were used this media rarely.

This concludes that 60% of the respondents were used brochures and pamphlets as an advertising media often.

- The data shows that 40% of the respondents were used outdoor media very often, 33.33% were used this media often, 16.67% were used this media sometimes and 10% of the respondents were used this media rarely.

This concludes that 73.33% of the respondents were used outdoor media often.

- The data shows that 10% of the respondents were used transit media very often, 6.67% were used this media often, 30% were used this media sometimes, 50% were used this media rarely and 3.33% were never used this media.

This concludes that only 16.67% of the respondents were used transit media often.

- The data shows that 33.33% of the respondents were used specialty media very often, 36.67% were used this media often, 20% were used this media sometimes and 10% of the respondents were used this media rarely.

This concludes that 70% of the respondents were used specialty media often.

- The data shows that 83.33% of the respondents were used hotel website as an online advertising media very often and 16.67% were used this media often.

This concludes that 100% of the respondents were used hotel website as an online advertising media often.

- The data shows that 80% of the respondents were used internet as an online advertising media very often and 20% were used this media often.

This concludes that 100% of the respondents were used internet as an online advertising media often.

It concludes that all the respondents have given first rank to hotel website and second rank to internet as an advertising media. Online advertising uses the Internet or the World Wide Web (www) for the purpose of attracting consumers to buy their product and services. Hotel uses website and internet to deliver promotional marketing messages to consumers. Marketing via hotel website and internet is easy, inexpensive and most importantly – extremely effective. The respondents expressed that these online advertising media are more important for them followed by outdoor, press and newspapers, brochures and pamphlets, specialty media, magazines, hotel directories, radio, television and transit media.

iii.)Social Networking Websites Used

Social media refers to websites and other online means of communication that are used by large groups of people to share information and to develop social and professional contacts. Hotel started to communicate their offerings and promotional activities through the social media to

generate sales. Therefore the researcher has asked the respondents regarding the social networking websites used by the hotel and their responses are presented in the following table.

Table 3: Social Networking Websites Used

Social Networking Websites	Very Often	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never	Total	Rank
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Facebook	27 (90.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	I
Twitter	15 (50.00)	10 (33.33)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	II
LinkedIn	10 (33.33)	15 (50.00)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	IV
Google Plus (Google+)	11 (36.67)	10 (33.33)	6 (20.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	III
WhatsApp	10 (33.33)	11 (36.67)	6 (20.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	V
Flickr	0 (0.00)	3 (10.00)	5 (16.67)	11 (36.67)	11 (36.67)	30 (100)	VIII
Tumblr	0 (0.00)	1 (3.33)	2 (6.67)	12 (40.00)	15 (50.00)	30 (100)	IX
Bebo	0 (0.00)	1 (3.33)	1 (3.33)	9 (30.00)	19 (63.33)	30 (100)	X
Instagram	6 (20.00)	3 (10.00)	1 (3.33)	9 (30.00)	11 (36.67)	30 (100)	VI
Myspace	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	5 (16.67)	11 (36.67)	14 (46.67)	30 (100)	XI
YouTube	5 (16.67)	5 (16.67)	6 (20.00)	5 (16.67)	9 (30.00)	30 (100)	VII

- The above table presents that 90% of the respondents were used Facebook as a social networking website very often and 10% were used this website often.
This concludes that 100% of the respondents were used Facebook as a social networking website often.
- The data shows that 50% of the respondents were used Twitter as a social networking website very often, 33.33% of the respondents were used this website often and 16.67% of the respondents were used this website sometimes.
This concludes that 83.33% of the respondents were used Twitter as a social networking website often.
- The data shows that 33.33% of the respondents were used LinkedIn as a social networking website very often, 50% of the respondents were used this website often and 16.67% of the respondents were used this website sometimes.
This concludes that 83.33% of the respondents were used LinkedIn as a social networking website often.

- The data shows that 36.67% of the respondents were used Google Plus (Google+) as a social networking website very often, 33.33% of the respondents were used this website often, 20% of the respondents were used this website sometimes and 10% of the respondents were used this website rarely.

This concludes that 70% of the respondents were used Google Plus (Google+) as a social networking website often.

- The data shows that 33.33% of the respondents were used WhatsApp as a social networking website very often, 36.67% were used this website often, 20% were used this website sometimes and 10% were used this website rarely.

This concludes that 70% of the respondents were used WhatsApp as a social networking website often.

- The data shows that 10% of the respondents were used Flickr as a social networking website often, 16.67% were used this website sometimes, 36.67% were used this website rarely and 36.67% were never used this website.

This concludes that 10% were used Flickr as a social networking website often.

- The data shows that 3.33% of the respondents were used Tumblr as a social networking website often, 6.67% were used this website sometimes, 40% were used this website rarely and 50% of the respondents were never used this website.

This concludes that only 3.33% of the respondents were used Tumblr as a social networking website often.

- The data shows that 3.33% of the respondents were used Bebo as a social networking website often, 3.33% were used this website sometimes, 30% were used this website rarely and 63.33% were never used this website.

This concludes that only 3.33% of the respondents were used Bebo as a social networking website often.

- The data shows that 20% of the respondents were used Instagram as a social networking website very often, 10% were used this website often, 3.33% of the respondents were used this website sometimes, 30% of the respondents were used this website rarely and 36.67% of the respondents were never used this website.

This concludes that 30% were used Instagram as a social networking website often.

- The data shows that 16.67% of the respondents were used Myspace as a social networking website sometimes, 36.67% of the respondents were used this website rarely and 46.67% of the respondents were never used this website.

This concludes that only 16.67% of the respondents were used Myspace as a social networking website sometimes.

- The data shows that 16.67% of the respondents were used YouTube as a social networking website very often, 16.67% were used this website often, 20% of the respondents were used

this website sometimes, 16.67% of the respondents were used this website rarely and 30% of the respondents were never used this website.

This concludes that 33.34% of the respondents were used YouTube as a social networking website often.

It concludes that all the respondents were using social networking websites to promote their offering and event to target market. Social media can help to drive sales and to provide the perfect tool to interact directly with customers. Its goal is to improve customer satisfaction. In an interview with the respondents they expressed that social media networking is most effective tool in promotion of their offering. They ranked the social media as Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Flickr, Tumblr, Bebo and Myspace.

iv.) Sales Promotion Tools Used at Consumer Level

Sales promotion is designed to stimulate quicker or greater purchase of particular products or services by consumers. Sales promotion offers an incentive to buy and is mostly short term activity. Hotel use sales promotion tools to create a stronger and quicker response, and to give additional value to consumers. It is essential for the researcher to understand the sales promotion tools used by the hotels at consumer level. Therefore the researcher has asked respondents regarding the sales promotion tools used by the hotels and their responses are presented in the following table 4.22.

Table 4: Sales Promotion Tools Used at Consumer Level

Consumer-Promotion Tools	Very Often	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never	Total	Rank
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Coupons	5 (16.67)	5 (16.67)	14 (46.67)	6 (20.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	IV
Samples	2 (6.67)	5 (16.67)	15 (50.00)	5 (16.67)	3 (10.00)	30 (100)	V
Premiums (gifts)	2 (6.67)	5 (16.67)	6 (20.00)	12 (40.00)	5 (16.67)	30 (100)	VI
Prizes (contests, games)	1 (3.33)	2 (6.67)	6 (20.00)	9 (30.00)	12 (40.00)	30 (100)	VIII

Cash refund offers (rebates)	0 (0.00)	1 (3.33)	5 (16.67)	5 (16.67)	19 (63.33)	30 (100)	X
Price packs (cents-off deals): (reduced-price pack/ tour packages)	15 (50.00)	9 (30.00)	5 (16.67)	1 (3.33)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	I
Bonus pack/ multipacks: (bulk buying services)	10 (33.33)	12 (40.00)	5 (16.67)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	II
Point-of-Purchase (POP) displays and demonstrations	6 (20.00)	9 (30.00)	15 (50.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	III
Patronage rewards: (cash or other awards)	2 (6.67)	2 (6.67)	6 (20.00)	15 (50.00)	5 (16.67)	30 (100)	VII
Tie-in promotions : two or more brands/ companies team up	0 (0.00)	11 (36.67)	12 (40.00)	5 (16.67)	2 (6.67)	30 (100)	IX

- The above table reveals that 16.67% of the respondents were used coupons as a sales promotion tool very often, 16.67% were used this tool often, 46.67% were used this tool sometimes and 20% of the respondents were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that 33.34% were used coupons as a sales promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 6.67% of the respondents were used samples as a sales promotion tool very often, 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool often, 50% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes, 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool rarely and 10% of the respondents were never used this tool.
This concludes that 23.34% were used samples as a sales promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 6.67% of the respondents were used premiums as a sales promotion tool very often, 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool often, 20% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes, 40% of the respondents were used this tool rarely and 16.67% of the respondents were never used this tool.
This concludes that 23.34% were used premiums as a sales promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 3.33% of the respondents were used prizes as a sales promotion tool very often, 6.67% were used this tool often, 20% were used this tool sometimes, 30% were used this tool rarely and 40% were never used this tool.
This concludes that only 10% were used prizes as a sales promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 3.33% of the respondents were used cash refund offers as a sales promotion tool often, 16.67% were used this tool sometimes, 16.67% were used this tool rarely and 63.33% of the respondents were never used this tool.
This concludes that only 3.33% of the respondents were used cash refund offers as a sales promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 50% of the respondents were used price packs as a sales promotion tool very often, 30% were used this tool often, 16.67% were used this tool sometimes and 3.33% of the respondents were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that 80% were used price packs as a sales promotion tool often.

- The data presents that 33.33% of the respondents were used bonus pack/ multipacks as a sales promotion tool very often, 40% were used this tool often, 16.67% were used this tool sometimes and 10% were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that 73.33% of the respondents were used bonus pack/ multipacks as a sales promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 20% of the respondents were used point-of-purchase (POP) displays and demonstrations as a sales promotion tool very often, 30% were used this tool often and 50% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes.
This concludes that 50% of the respondents were used point-of-purchase (POP) displays and demonstrations as a sales promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 6.67% of the respondents were used patronage rewards as a sales promotion tool very often, 6.67% were used this tool often, 20% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes, 50% of the respondents were used this tool rarely and 16.67% of the respondents were never used this tool.
This concludes that only 13.34% of the respondents were used patronage rewards as a sales promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 36.67% of the respondents were used tie-in promotions as a sales promotion tool often, 40% were used this tool sometimes, 16.67% were used this tool rarely and 6.67% of the respondents were never used this tool.
This concludes that 36.67% of the respondents were used tie-in promotions as a sales promotion tool often.

It concludes that respondents have given first rank to price packs as a sales promotion tool at consumer levels. Consumers are offered a reduction in the regular price of a product. Price reduction may be a percentage marked on the package. They expressed that this sales promotion tool is at most important for them followed by bonus pack/ multipacks, point-of-purchase (pop) displays and demonstrations, coupons, samples, premiums, patronage rewards, prizes, tie-in promotions and cash refund offers.

v.) Trade-Promotion Tools Used at Channel Member

Trade Promotion refers to marketing campaign directed at channel members. In a trade promotion, organisation offer special price discounts or other incentives to channel members to get sales support. Hotel use various trade-promotion tools to increase the sales revenue. It is essential for the researcher to understand various trade-promotion tools used by the hotels. Therefore the researcher has asked the respondents regarding the trade-promotion tools used by the hotels and their responses are presented in the following table 4.23.

Table 5: Trade-Promotion Tools

Trade-Promotion Tools	Very	Often	Some	Rarely	Never	Total	Rank
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	Often		times				
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Price-off (off-invoice or off-list)	5 (16.67)	9 (30.00)	11 (36.67)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	III
Special offers/ trade discounts	11 (36.67)	10 (33.33)	9 (30.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	I
Trade contests/ sales contests: prizes	1 (3.33)	2 (6.67)	5 (16.67)	11 (36.67)	11 (36.67)	30 (100)	VI
Gifts	2 (6.67)	5 (16.67)	9 (30.00)	14 (46.67)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	V
Complimentary products and services	6 (20.00)	9 (30.00)	9 (30.00)	6 (20.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	II
Allowance: advertising allowance	0 (0.00)	3 (10.00)	9 (30.00)	15 (50.00)	3 (10.00)	30 (100)	VIII
Point of purchase displays	2 (6.67)	5 (16.67)	12 (40.00)	11 (36.67)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	IV
Patronage awards: cash/ other forms	0 (0.00)	6 (20.00)	3 (10.00)	12 (40.00)	9 (30.00)	30 (100)	VII

- The above table reveals that 16.67% of the respondents were used price-off as a trade-promotion tool very often, 30% were used this tool often, 36.67% were used this tool sometimes and 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that 46.67% were used price-off as a trade-promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 36.67% of the respondents were used special offers/ trade discounts as a trade-promotion tools very often, 33.33% of the respondents were used this tool often and 30% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes.
This concludes that 70% of the respondents were used special offers/ trade discounts as a trade-promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 3.33% of the respondents were used trade contests/ sales contests as a trade-promotion tools very often, 6.67% were used this tool often, 16.67% were used this tool sometimes, 36.67% of the respondents were used this tool rarely and 36.67% of the respondents were never used this tool.
This concludes that only 10% of the respondents were used trade contests/ sales contests as a trade-promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 6.67% of the respondents were used gifts as a trade-promotion tools very often, 16.67% were used this tool often, 30% were used this tool sometimes and 46.67% of the respondents were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that only 23.34% were used gifts as a trade-promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 20% of the respondents were used complementary products and services as a trade-promotion tools very often, 30% were used this tool often, 30% were used this tool sometimes and 20% were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that 50% of the respondents were used complementary products and services as a trade-promotion tool often.

- The data presents that 10% of the respondents were used allowance as a trade-promotion tools often, 30% were used this tool sometimes, 50% of the respondents were used this tool rarely and 10% of the respondents were never used this tool.
This concludes that only 10% of the respondents were used allowance as a trade-promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 6.67% of the respondents were used point of purchase displays as a trade-promotion tools very often, 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool often, 40% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes, 36.67% of the respondents were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that only 23.34% of the respondents were using point of purchase displays as a trade-promotion tool often.
- The data presents that 20% of the respondents were used patronage awards as a trade-promotion tools often, 10% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes, 40% of the respondents were used this tool rarely and 30% of the respondents were never used this tool.
This concludes that only 20% of the respondents were using patronage awards as a trade-promotion tool often.

It concludes that the respondents have given first rank to special offers/ trade discounts as a trade-promotion tool. Channel members are given a reduction from the price list to increase the sales. They expressed that this tool is important for them followed by complimentary products and services, price-off, point of purchase displays, gifts, trade contests/ sales contests, patronage awards and allowance.

vi.) Public Relation Tools Used

Public relations refer to the practice of managing communication between an organisation and its publics. Public relations involve a variety of programmes designed to promote or protect a company's image or its individual products. A well-thought-out public relations campaign used with other promotion mix elements can be very effective and economical. It is important for the researcher to understand the various public relation tools used by the hotel. Therefore the researcher has asked the respondents regarding the public relation tools used by the hotel and their responses are presented in the following table.

Table 6:Public Relation Tools Used

Public Relation Tools	Very Often	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never	Total	Rank
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Publications: annual reports, articles, etc.	5 (16.67)	12 (40.00)	12 (40.00)	1 (3.33)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	V
Events	9 (30.00)	10 (33.33)	11 (36.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	III
Sponsorships	5 (16.67)	9 (30.00)	11 (36.67)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	VI
News: press releases (favourable news about the hotel, products, etc.)	6 (20.00)	12 (40.00)	9 (30.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	IV
Speeches	2 (6.67)	3 (10.00)	11 (36.67)	9 (30.00)	5 (16.67)	30 (100)	VII
Identity media: visual identity (logo, signs, brochures etc.)	15 (50.00)	9 (30.00)	6 (20.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	I
Public-service activities: community relations, lobbying	10 (33.33)	10 (33.33)	6 (20.00)	3 (10.00)	1 (3.33)	30 (100)	II

- The above table reveals that 16.67% of the respondents were used publications very often, 40% were used this tool often, 40% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes and 3.33% of the respondents were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that 56.67% of the respondents were used publications as a public relation tool often.
- The data indicates that 30% of the respondents were used events as a public relation tool very often, 33.33% of the respondents were used this tool often and 36.67% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes.
This concludes that 63.33% were used events as a public relation tool often.
- The data indicates that 16.67% of the respondents were used sponsorship as a public relation tool very often, 30% were used this tool often, 36.67% were used this tool sometimes and 16.67% of the respondents were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that 46.67% were used sponsorship as a public relation tool often.
- The data indicates that 20% of the respondents were used news as a public relation tool very often, 40% were used this tool often, 30% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes and 10% of the respondents were used this tool rarely.
This concludes that 60% were used news as a public relation tool often.
- The data indicates that 6.67% of the respondents were used speeches as a public relation tool very often, 10% were used this tool often, 36.67% were used this tool sometimes, 30% were used this tool rarely and 16.67% were never used this tool.
This concludes that 16.67% were used speeches as a public relation tool often.

- The data indicates that 50% of the respondents were used identity media as a public relation tool very often, 30% of the respondents were used this tool often and 20% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes.

This concludes that 80% were used identity media as a public relation tool often.

- The data indicates that 33.33% of the respondents were used public-service activities as a public relation tool very often, 33.33% of the respondents were used this tool often, 20% of the respondents were used this tool sometimes, 10% of the respondents were used this tool rarely and 3.33% of the respondents were never used this tool.

This concludes that 66.66% of the respondents were used public-service activities as a public relation tool often.

It concludes that the respondents have given first rank to identity media as a public relation tool. Hotels strive to create a visual identity that the public immediately recognises. The visual identity is carried by the hotel's logos, brochures, signs, buildings, stationary, etc. Just by looking these visual identities, customers can easily identify the company or its products. In an interview with the respondents they expressed that this tool is more important for them followed by public-service activities, events, news, publications, sponsorships and speeches.

vii.)Customer Loyalty Programmes

A customer loyalty programme is a rewards program offered by a company to customers who frequently make purchases. The objective of loyalty programme to increase sales, strengthen the relationship between the customer and the business, and keep the customer coming back on a regular basis. Hotel use customer loyalty programs to enhance customer satisfaction. It is important for the researcher to understand the various loyalty programme used by the hotels. Therefore the researcher has asked the respondents regarding the customer's loyalty programme used by the hotel and their responses are presented in the following table 4.25.

Table 7: Customer Loyalty Programmes

Customer Loyalty Programme	Very Often	Often	Some times	Rarely	Never	Total	Rank
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Discount programme: (giving discounts)	15 (50.00)	12 (40.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	II
Accumulating points programme	19 (63.33)	10 (33.33)	1 (3.33)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	I
Membership programme	12 (40.00)	12 (40.00)	5 (16.67)	1 (3.33)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	IV
Frequency programme (frequent stay programme)	15 (50.00)	10 (33.33)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	III
Surprise and delight programme	11 (36.67)	10 (33.33)	6 (20.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	V
Different pricing programme	11 (36.67)	9 (30.00)	9 (30.00)	1 (3.33)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	VI

Reward programme: (giving gifts, souvenirs)	5 (16.67)	9 (30.00)	11 (36.67)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	VII
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- The above table presents that 50% of the respondents were used discount programme as a customer loyalty programme very often, 40% were used this programme often and 10% were used this programme sometimes.
This concludes that 90% of the respondents were used discount programme as a customer loyalty programme often.
- The data shows that 63.33% of the respondents were used accumulating points programme as a customer loyalty programme very often, 33.33% were used this programme often and 3.33% were used this programme sometimes.
This concludes that 96.66% of the respondents were used accumulating points programme as a customer loyalty programme often.
- The data shows that 40% of the respondents were used membership programme as a loyalty programme very often, 40% were used this programme often, 16.67% were used this programme sometimes and 3.33% were used this programme rarely.
This concludes that 80% of the respondents were used membership programme as a customer loyalty programme often.
- The data shows that 50% of the respondents were used frequency programme as a customer loyalty programme very often, 33.33% were used this programme often and 16.67% of the respondents were used this programme sometimes.
This concludes that 83.33% of the respondents were used frequency programme as a customer loyalty programme often to guests who visited hotel frequently.
- The data shows that 36.67% of the respondents were used surprise and delight programme as a customer loyalty programme very often, 33.33% were used this programme often, 20% of the respondents were used this programme sometimes and 10% of the respondents were used this programme rarely.
This concludes that 70% of the respondents were used surprise and delight programme as a customer loyalty programme often.
- The data shows that 36.67% of the respondents were used different pricing programme as a customer loyalty programme very often, 30% were used this programme often, 30% of the respondents were used this programme sometimes and 3.33% of the respondents were used this programme rarely.
This concludes that 66.67% of the respondents were used different pricing programme as a customer loyalty programme often.
- The data shows that 16.67% of the respondents were used reward programme as a customer loyalty programme very often, 30% of the respondents were used this programme often, 36.67% of the respondents were used this programme sometimes and 16.67% of the respondents were used this programme rarely.

This concludes that 46.67% of the respondents were used reward programme as a customer loyalty programme often.

It concludes that the respondents have given first rank to accumulating points programme as a loyalty programme. Customers earn points relative to their transaction spend. Points can be stored and redeemed against rewards, discounts and customer purchases. As the customers visit the same hotel again in the future the points get accumulated on their cards. When customers reach to particular points they get some offers from the hotels. The loyal customers visit the same hotel frequently and get the benefits from the hotel. They expressed that this loyalty programme is more important for them followed by discount programme, frequency programmes, membership programme, surprise and delight programme, different pricing programme and reward programme.

viii.) Methods of Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is the use of consumer-direct channels to reach and deliver products and services to customers without using marketing middlemen. The hotels directly interact with the customer through direct marketing. It is important for the researcher to understand methods of direct marketing. Therefore the researcher has asked the respondents regarding the methods of direct marketing used by the hotels and their responses are presented in the following table.

Table 8:Methods of Direct Marketing

Methods of Direct Marketing	Very Often	Often	Some times	Rardly	Never	Total	Rank
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Telemarketing and m-commerce	12 (40.00)	15 (50.00)	3 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	V
E-mail	19 (63.33)	11 (36.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	IV
Direct mail	11 (36.67)	14 (46.67)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	VI
Internet/ hotel website	25 (83.33)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	I
Face-to-face selling	24 (80.00)	6 (20.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	II
Catalog marketing: consumer catalogs, CD, video, etc.	2 (6.67)	3 (10.00)	19 (63.33)	6 (20.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	VIII
Kiosk marketing: refreshment stands, newsstands, etc.	3 (10.00)	3 (10.00)	19 (63.33)	5 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	VII
e-marketing	20 (66.67)	10 (33.33)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	30 (100)	III

- The above table presents that 40% of the respondents were used telemarketing and m-commerce as a direct marketing method very often, 50% of the respondents were used this method often and 10% of the respondents were used this method sometimes.

This concludes that 90% of the respondents were used telemarketing and m-commerce as a direct marketing method often.

- The data presents that 63.33% of the respondents were used e-mail as a direct marketing method very often and 36.67% were used this method often.

This concludes that 100% were used e-mail as a direct marketing method often.

- The data presents that 36.67% of the respondents were used direct-mail as a direct marketing method very often, 46.67% of the respondents were used this method often and 16.67% of the respondents were used this method sometimes.

This concludes that 83.34% of the respondents were used direct-mail as a direct marketing method often.

- The data presents that 83.33% of the respondents were used internet/ hotel website as a direct marketing method very often and 16.67% were used this method often.

This concludes that 100% of the respondents were used internet/ hotel website as a direct marketing method often.

- The data presents that 80% of the respondents were used face-to-face selling as a direct marketing method very often and 20% were used this method often.

This concludes that 100% of the respondents were used face-to-face selling as a direct marketing method often.

- The data presents that 6.67% of the respondents were used catalog marketing as a direct marketing method very often, 10% of the respondents were used this method often, 63.33% of the respondents were used this method sometimes and 20% of the respondents were used this method rarely.

This concludes that 16.67% of the respondents were used catalog marketing as a direct marketing method often.

- The data presents that 10% of the respondents were used kiosk marketing as a direct marketing method very often, 10% were used this method often, 63.33% were used this method sometimes and 16.67% were used this method rarely.

This concludes that 20% of the respondents were used kiosk marketing as a direct marketing method often.

- The data presents that 66.67% of the respondents were used e-marketing as a direct marketing method very often and 33.33% were used this method often.

This concludes that 100% of the respondents were used e-marketing as a direct marketing method often.

It concludes that the respondents have given first rank to internet or hotel website as a direct marketing method. The internet or hotel website makes direct marketing easier and more targeted. Customers are using the internet or website of the hotel to get the more information related to accommodation, dining etc. They use the hotel website to do the online reservation. Hotel uses internet and website for promoting and capturing the sales of their products and

services to customers and increase revenues. They expressed that this method of direct marketing is at most important for them followed by face-to-face selling, e-marketing, e-mail, telemarketing and m-commerce, direct mail, kiosk marketing and catalog marketing.

FINDINGS

1. The respondents have given first rank to sales promotion as a promotional tool. The sales promotion is a short-term incentive to encourage the purchase or sales of products or services. It is important to increase the sales. They expressed that this tool is at most important for them followed by direct marketing, personal selling, public relations and publicity, and advertising.
2. All the respondents have given first rank to hotel website and second rank to internet as an advertising media. Online advertising uses the Internet or the World Wide Web (www) for the purpose of attracting consumers to buy their product and services. Hotel uses website and internet to deliver promotional marketing messages to consumers. Marketing via hotel website and internet is easy, inexpensive and most importantly – extremely effective. The respondents expressed that these online advertising media are more important for them followed by outdoor, press and newspapers, brochures and pamphlets, specialty media, magazines, hotel directories, radio, television and transit media.
3. All the respondents were using social networking websites to promote their offering and event to target market. Social media can help to drive sales and to provide the perfect tool to interact directly with customers. Its goal is to improve customer satisfaction. In an interview with the respondents they expressed that social media networking is most effective tool in promotion of their offering. They ranked the social media as Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Flickr, Tumblr, Bebo and Myspace.
4. Most of the respondents have given first rank to price packs as a sales promotion tool at consumer levels. Consumers are offered a reduction in the regular price of a product. Price reduction may be a percentage marked on the package. They expressed that this sales promotion tool is at most important for them followed by bonus pack/ multipacks, point-of-purchase (pop) displays and demonstrations, coupons, samples, premiums, patronage rewards, prizes, tie-in promotions and cash refund offers.
5. The respondents have given first rank to special offers/ trade discounts as a trade-promotion tool. Channel members are given a reduction from the price list to increase the sales. They expressed that this tool is important for them followed by complimentary products and services, price-off, point of purchase displays, gifts, trade contests/ sales contests, patronage awards and allowance.
6. The respondents have given first rank to identity media as a public relation tool. Hotels strive to create a visual identity that the public immediately recognises. The visual identity is carried by the hotel's logos, brochures, signs, buildings, stationary, etc. Just by looking these visual identities, customers can easily identify the company or its products. In an interview with the

respondents they expressed that this tool is more important for them followed by public-service activities, events, news, publications, sponsorships and speeches

7. The respondents have given first rank to accumulating points programme as a loyalty programme. Customers earn points relative to their transaction spend. Points can be stored and redeemed against rewards, discounts and customer purchases. As the customers visit the same hotel again in the future the points get accumulated on their cards. When customers reach to particular points they get some offers from the hotels. The loyal customers visit the same hotel frequently and get the benefits from the hotel. They expressed that this loyalty programme is more important for them followed by discount programme, frequency programmes, membership programme, surprise and delight programme, different pricing programme and reward programme.

8. The respondents have given first rank to internet or hotel website as a direct marketing method. The internet or hotel website makes direct marketing easier and more targeted. Customers are using the internet or website of the hotel to get the more information related to accommodation, dining, etc. They use the hotel website to do the online reservation. Hotel uses internet and website for promoting and capturing the sales of their products and services to customers and increase revenues. They expressed that this method of direct marketing is at most important for them followed by face-to-face selling, e-marketing, e-mail, telemarketing and m-commerce, direct mail, kiosk marketing and catalog marketing.

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