

Promotion Strategies on the Number of Arrival Guests by the Reception Staff at Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Hospitality is one of industry selling a service. One of the people that provide service in the hotel is called as reception staff. He has responsibilities in handling guest check in and checkout including promoting the hotel rooms. The receptionist staff will handle everything the guest order including guest complaints. The receptionist staff will hear nicely the guest complaint and solve the guest problem. After that, the guests who are satisfied to the service then hopefully they will recommend to others. The good experience of the guest will bring them back to stay in the future. This is one of receptionist strategy to promote the hotel product. This research discussed how strategy to promote the hotel product by receptionist, what is the information of the receptionist during promoting the hotel products, how the guest satisfaction about hotel products informed by receptionist in Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang, Malaysia.

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1. Introduction

Hotels are companies or business entities providing lodging services in the form of rooms which are usually complete with eating and drinking facilities as well as other public facilities, both those who stay overnight at the hotel or those who only organize events such as training, meetings and others. The number of customers has a very large influence on the continuity of hotel companies engaged in the sale of services, because for hotels, customers are the main source of hotel income, the more customers the more hotel income. On the contrary, the fewer customers, the less revenue at the hotel is. In the world of services, especially hospitality, to get customers or guests, the hotel, especially the receptionist, is found to be able to carry out promotions. Promotion is an effort to notify or offer products or services with the aim of attracting prospective hotel guests to buy or consume it. With the promotion of producers or distributors, they expect an increase in the number of guest arrivals. The promotional strategy carried out by the reception staff at the hotel is to use energy whose specific function is to make guests feel at home for long at the hotel and then they can be satisfied, which will be after the stay finished, the consumer wants to recommend to others, so that information about the hotel can be disseminated directly from the hotel guests themselves.

The strategy that can be done by the hotel is collaborating with application-based online travel agents, initially the hotel only sells its products through the hotel's official website, through brochures, and direct or guests who come directly. Therefore the reception staff must know the product knowledge in the hotel. Product knowledge is knowledge or insight into information about products sold, available services, applicable regulations and policies, as well as any information related to hotels. The room occupancy rate at Hotel Sentral Seaview is low, so there is a need for a promotional strategy carried out by the reception staff in selling online room products and hotel facilities so that the hotel room occupancy rate is increasing.

The problems can be formulated as follow:

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1. How do promotion strategies done by reception staff in increasing the number of guest arrivals at the Sentral Seaview Hotel, Penang, Malaysia?
2. What is the reception staff knowledge of the product being promoted to guests at the Sentral Seaview Hotel, Penang, Malaysia?
3. How is the effect of promotion through online travel agents on the number of guest arrivals at the Sentral Seaview Hotel in Penang, Malaysia?

The objectives of this research based on the formulation of the problem above are increasing the hotel occupancy rate at the Sentral Seaview hotel, Penang, Malaysia and improving the quality of promotions carried out even better by the reception staff at the Sentral Seaview Hotel in Penang, Malaysia and providing training for staff at Hotel Sentral Seaview Penang, Malaysia.

2. Method

2.1 Location and Time of Research

The location of the research done by the author is at the Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang, Malaysia on CM Hashim Tanjong Tokong St, 11200 Penang. The research was carried out from November 15th, 2019 to January 9th, 2020.

2.2 Population and Sample

Population is a generalization area consisting of objects and subjects having certain qualities and characteristics determined by researchers to be studied and then drawn conclusions. The population in this study is 10 people including 1 Manager, 1 supervisor, 3 receptionists, and 5 guests at the Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang, Malaysia.

The sample is part of the total number of characteristics possessed by the population. What is learned from the sample, the conclusions will be applied to properly represent. The samples in this study are 10 people including 1 Manager, 1 Supervisor, 3 receptionists, and 5 guests at the Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang, Malaysia.

2.3 Method of Collecting Data

Methods used by the author in collecting the data are as follow:

a. Library Research (Library Research)

That is research conducted through libraries by reading books, training, and lecture materials received by the author during lectures that are closely related to this Final Project.

b. Field Research (Field Research)

That is research conducted to collect data directly in the field by conducting observations.

2.4 The History of the Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang, Malaysia

Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang is one of the oldest buildings in Penang. Previously, Hotel Sentral Seaview was named Hotel Golden Pearl. The Golden Pearl Hotel was built in 1995, which consists of 11 levels, 126 rooms, 3 ballrooms for seminars and 1 main ballroom (large) for 250 people, swimming pool, prayer room, business center, and also a restaurant. The area is close to the beach which is a tourist attraction; it is located on CM Hashim Tanjong Tokong St. No 555, 11200 Penang Island, Malaysia. In a few years later the Golden Pearl Hotel experienced a decline in revenue, so they wanted to sell the hotel to the Naza Group in 1998. Then Naza Group managed the hotel in 2002, at that time Hotel Naza Group wanted to change plans not to make accommodation again and the party sold the building and its contents to Sentral Management Hotel in 2013. Sentral Hotel Management is owned by Tan Sri Tan, the owner of the Wazlian Group. Sentral Hotel management gave the name of the building to Sentral Seaview Hotel which was formerly known as Hotel Naza Group. Sentral Seaview Hotel has officially been operating until now with a workforce of 40 people with the concept (*Every one can stay at home*).

3. Results and Analysis

1. The promotion strategy carried out by the reception staff in increasing the number of guest arrivals at the Seaview Sentral Hotel, Penang Malaysia

The promotion strategy in increasing the number of guest arrivals at Hotel Sentral Seaview Penang Malaysia is very important. The decline in the number of guest arrivals can have an impact on decreasing hotel revenues. The promotion strategy is carried out effectively and on target so that it can increase the number of guest arrivals, which must be carried out in a promotion strategy at the

Seaview Central Hotel, the reception staff needs to promote hotel facilities to guests so that guests are interested in staying at the hotel.

Table 1

Computer System of Seaview Sentral Hotel

Hotel Date	Total room	000	Rent Room	Occ. Room	Occupancy (%)	Room Available
01/09/2019	126	4	122	35	28.7	87
02/09/2019	126	4	122	6	4.92	116
03/09/2019	126	4	122	9	7.38	113
04/09/2019	126	4	122	22	18.04	100
05/09/2019	126	4	122	11	9.02	111
06/09/2019	126	4	122	40	32.8	72
07/09/2019	126	4	122	43	35.26	79
08/09/2019	126	4	122	60	49.2	62
09/09/2019	126	4	122	23	18.86	99
10/09/2019	126	4	122	18	14.76	104
11/09/2019	126	4	122	10	8.2	112
12/09/2019	126	4	122	14	11.48	108
13/09/2019	126	4	122	27	22.14	95
14/09/2019	126	4	122	33	27.06	89
15/09/2019	126	4	122	41	33.62	81
16/09/2019	126	4	122	29	23.78	93
17/09/2019	126	4	122	20	16.4	102
18/09/2019	126	4	122	16	13.12	106
19/09/2019	126	4	122	17	13.94	105

Source: Computer System of Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang Malaysia 2019 (1 room = 0.82%)

Number of rooms 126 minus 4 rooms 000 (Out Of Order) So, the number of rooms that can be sold is 122 rooms

From the table above, it can be concluded that the sale of rooms at the Seaview Central Hotel is never more than 50% of the number of available rooms; therefore a better promotional strategy is needed. The supporting factors in encouraging the smooth running of the promotional program are:

a. Promotion facilities that are used

The promotion facility factor is a supporting factor in carrying out promotions, therefore the efforts made by the management of the Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang, Malaysia are to provide and improve hotel facilities. Every day the reception staff has the task of promoting rooms that rarely sell guest rooms and also other hotel facilities. The promotion method carried out by the hotel is through online and offline travel agents such as: Agoda, Traveloka, Booking.com, and local travel agents.

b. Services

One of the factors that support public relations activities in carrying out promotions is service. The reason is that services can provide satisfaction for hotel guests and will be able to support success in carrying out promotional programs offered to hotel guests.

Promotion Strategies in Increasing the Number of Guest Arrivals are:

- 1) Analyzing market trends that are developing to determine the right selling price by being more varied and creative in promoting the main product market share.
- 2) Having better coordination with travel agents for better promotion efforts in selling hotel products is one of the requirements in establishing good cooperative relationships.
- 3) Creating special voucher packages for guests such as room discount vouchers on holidays at the Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang Malaysia.

2. Reception Staff's Knowledge on Products that are Promoted to Guests at the Seaview Sentral Hotel, Penang Malaysia

The reception staff's knowledge of the products that are promoted to guests has been summarized in the following table.

Table 2

The reception staff's of products promoted to guests at the Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang, Malaysian

No	Description	Amount	Percentage %
1	Very Good	1	20

No	Description	Amount	Percentage %
2	Good	1	20
3	Not Good	3	60
Total		5	100

Source: questionnaire results of author's preparation in 2020

From the table above, it is explained that the knowledge of the reception staff in carrying out promotions of hotel products to guests is still minimal, especially in terms of promotion.

3. The Effect of Promotions through Online Travel Agents on the Number of Guest Arrivals at Hotel Sentral Seaview Penang, Malaysia

The reception staff as a source of hotel information must know the hotel's products to promote to guests who come to the hotel or guests who ask for information about hotel products by telephone. Good knowledge and delivery of product information to guests will make guests interested in staying at the hotel.

In addition to direct promotions, the efforts made by the Seaview Central Hotel to increase the room occupancy rate are by cooperating with online travel agents, such as booking.com, agoda, traveloka, expedia, and tripadvisor.

Table 3

The Effect of Promotions through Online Travel Agents on the Number of Guest Arrivals at Hotel Sentral Seaview Penang, Malaysia

No.	Response	Amount	Percentage %
1	There is Response	4	80
2	No Response	1	20
Total		5	100

Source: author questionnaire results 2020

From the table above, it can be concluded that promotions through online travel agents have an influence on the number of guest arrivals at Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang, Malaysia.

The promotion strategy through online travel agents has a good influence on room occupancy rates, where before adding collaboration with online travel agents, the number of guests who come to the Sentral Seaview Hotel is low. The increasing number of guest arrivals will increase hotel revenue. Promotion strategy through online is more profitable than promotion through offline. This is because promotions through online travel agents or through room booking applications have a wide range and are not limited by time and place. Promotions through online travel agents can reach anyone around the world at a low cost.

4. Conclusion

Based on the discussion that has been described in previous chapters, the conclusions can be drawn as follow:

- Receptionist Staff in carrying out promotions to increase guest arrivals at the Sentral Seaview Hotel by carrying out online sales promotion strategies for rooms and other facilities.
- There are still many staff who have not mastered the technique of selling rooms and other facilities to be promoted to guests.
- Guests are not satisfied with the products promoted by the receptionist because the reception staff do not master the product material being promoted

Based on the discussion in previous chapters, the author offers these suggestions:

- The Sentral Seaview Hotel Penang Malaysia needs to provide solutions and directions to the reception staff so that they can work professionally in carrying out promotions to increase guest arrivals at Sentral Seaview Hotel.
- Training for reception staff should be carried out to do a good job that can promote increased guest arrivals.
- The management should be able to provide better motivation to the reception staff.

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