
ANALYSIS OF ROOM PROMOTION ACTIVITIES AT KAMBANIRU BEACH HOTEL & RESORT, EAST SUMBA

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ABSTRACT

This research evaluates the impact of room promotions at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort, East Sumba, on increasing competitiveness and occupancy rates. Using a qualitative approach and case study method, the research focuses on five promotion elements: advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, and digital marketing. Data was collected through observation, in-depth interviews, literature reviews, and documentation analysis, then analyzed using data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing methods, with validation through triangulation. The research results show that using social media and digital platforms for promotions successfully attracts millennial customers, while sales promotions and public relations have a minor impact. The main findings reveal that bundled package offers and seasonal discounts are the most effective promotion strategies, significantly increasing occupancy rates. However, the main challenges are seasonal fluctuations, budget limitations, and a need for more staff training in digital tools. Based on these findings, practical implications include enhancing digital promotions, refining advertising messages, and regularly assessing service quality. This research concludes that integrated and diverse promotion strategies are crucial for consistently increasing hotel occupancy and revenue and strengthening marketing strategies in the competitive hospitality industry.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has emerged as one of the most significant sectors contributing to the global economy. Over the past decade, promotional strategies have been vital in attracting tourists, especially in competitive hospitality markets. Hotels and resorts worldwide have implemented various marketing tools to stay relevant, particularly in promoting their rooms and services (Smith, 2019). These strategies encompass traditional media like television and print and digital channels like social media, online advertisements, and email marketing. The shift towards digital promotion, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, has been pivotal for the hospitality industry's survival (Liu, 2020). The rise of online platforms such as Booking.com, Airbnb, and Expedia has also transformed how hotels engage with potential customers. As a result, personalized digital marketing and dynamic pricing strategies have become essential in promoting hotel rooms effectively (Duarte, 2021). By leveraging data analytics and digital trends, hotels can better target potential guests based on preferences and behaviors, increasing room occupancy rates (Tan, 2022).

Indonesia, known for its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty, has been a popular

tourist destination. However, competition within the local hospitality industry has intensified, particularly in remote areas like East Sumba, where natural beauty is the primary attraction (Rahman, 2020). Hotels in these regions face challenges related to promotion due to limited infrastructure and access to online platforms, which can restrict their reach to international tourists (Setiawan, 2021). One of the emerging destinations in Indonesia is East Sumba, which is well known for its unspoiled beaches, such as those near Kambaniru Beach. While the area holds great tourism potential, the hotels and resorts there need help with effective room promotion, which impacts their overall revenue and occupancy rates. Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort, one of the most prominent establishments in this area, has implemented various promotional strategies to attract domestic and international tourists. However, challenges persist in achieving high room occupancy throughout the year (Nugroho, 2021).

Several theoretical frameworks have been applied to analyze promotional activities in the hotel industry. One common approach is the Integrated Marketing Communication (I.M.C.) model, which emphasizes the importance of consistency in messages across all marketing channels. The I.M.C. model suggests that all promotional efforts, whether online or offline, should deliver a cohesive and consistent message to potential customers (Huang, 2020). Another significant framework is the A.I.D.A. model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action), often used to design promotional campaigns. The model explains that promotional efforts should capture attention, stimulate interest, create desire, and ultimately lead to action, such as booking a room (Ibrahim, 2022). These theoretical perspectives have been widely applied in understanding how promotional activities influence consumer behavior in the hospitality industry.

Numerous studies have explored promotional strategies in the hotel sector. (Liu, 2020a) emphasized that digital marketing tools, mainly social media campaigns, have proven effective in attracting millennial travelers, a growing market segment in the hospitality industry. According to (Tan, 2022), hotels that invested in digital advertising and influencer marketing saw increased bookings. These platforms allow hotels to target specific demographics, such as adventure travelers or those interested in ecotourism, particularly relevant to destinations like East Sumba. (Rahman, 2020) examined the challenges of promoting hotels in rural areas of Indonesia, highlighting the need for better infrastructure and digital accessibility. (Setiawan, 2021) extended this by analyzing how local hotels could collaborate with travel agencies and influencers to broaden their reach. Similarly, (Nugroho, 2021) pointed out that combining local cultural elements with modern promotional techniques could appeal to international tourists seeking authentic experiences.

A more recent study by (Duarte, 2021) revealed that offering personalized promotional content based on guest preferences led to higher conversion rates in room bookings. Hotels that use data analytics to tailor their marketing messages are better positioned to capture customer interest and foster loyalty. These studies highlight the importance of digital transformation and personalized marketing in enhancing promotional efforts for hotels like Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort. Despite the significant body of literature on hotel promotion, more specific research should focus on rural and less developed tourism areas like East Sumba. The unique challenges hotels face in these regions, such as limited internet infrastructure, low brand recognition, and dependency on seasonal tourism, make this an urgent area for academic exploration (Rahman, 2020). By analyzing the promotional activities at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort, this research aims to provide actionable insights that can improve the marketing strategies of hotels in remote destinations.

The post-pandemic recovery phase presents a crucial opportunity for East Sumba's tourism industry to reposition itself. Effective room promotion is essential for increasing occupancy rates, directly tied to the region's economic development. Therefore, understanding the current promotional strategies and identifying gaps will contribute to the overall

sustainability of tourism in East Sumba. This study seeks to analyze the effectiveness of the room promotion activities at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort, with the following objectives: To assess the current promotional strategies employed by Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort, To identify the challenges faced in promoting rooms to domestic and international tourists, To recommend strategies for improving room promotions, with a particular focus on digital marketing tools and partnerships with travel influencers. By achieving these objectives, the research will contribute to the broader understanding of how rural hotels in emerging tourist destinations can enhance their promotional activities and compete globally.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative approach aimed at exploring the promotional activities of Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort in East Sumba. The qualitative method allows an in-depth understanding of how the hotel implements its promotional strategies and its challenges in reaching target audiences. Through this approach, we seek to identify practical solutions that can be applied to improve the hotel's promotional efforts without explicitly discussing or detailing the particular methods used in this study. The research was conducted at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort, a four-star establishment in East Sumba, Indonesia. This region is known for its natural beauty and cultural richness, providing a unique context for analyzing how hotels market their rooms in a competitive yet underdeveloped tourist destination. The study occurred over six months, allowing for comprehensive observations of peak and off-peak tourism seasons. This time frame provided insights into how the hotel's promotional strategies fluctuated based on seasonal demands and other external factors.

The research encompasses several critical aspects of the hotel's promotional activities, including advertising, sales promotions, public relations, direct marketing, and digital marketing. Each area was examined to assess how effectively the hotel leverages them to attract local and international tourists. The study also delves into how Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort incorporates sustainability into its promotional efforts, which is increasingly essential in today's hospitality industry. The research further explores the hotel's challenges in promoting its rooms, such as budget constraints, a lack of digital marketing expertise, and the seasonality of tourism in East Sumba. This study aims to provide actionable insights into how these challenges can be addressed through strategic promotional activities.

The population for this study consisted of individuals involved in the hotel's promotional activities, including the hotel management, marketing staff, and guests. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select the most relevant participants who could provide insights into the hotel's promotional strategies. A total of six key informants were interviewed, including two members of the hotel management team, two marketing staff members, and two long-term guests who had interacted with the hotel's promotional materials. These participants were selected based on their direct involvement in Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort's promotional activities. Their ability to provide detailed insights into the effectiveness of these efforts, including hotel staff and guests, allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the promotional strategies from an internal and external perspective.

Given the qualitative nature of this study, the researcher served as the primary data collection instrument. This involved conducting in-depth interviews with the selected participants, observing the hotel's promotional activities, and analyzing relevant documents such as marketing materials, social media posts, and promotional brochures. The interviews were semi-structured, allowing for flexibility in the conversation while still covering critical topics related to the research. The observation component of the study focused on how the hotel's promotional activities were executed in real-time, providing valuable insights into

their strengths and weaknesses. Document analysis was used to assess the hotel's promotional messages' consistency across different platforms and identify any gaps in their marketing strategy.

Data for this research was collected through multiple methods, including interviews, observations, and document analysis. This triangulation of data sources helped ensure the validity of the findings by providing a well-rounded understanding of the hotel's promotional activities. The interviews were conducted face-to-face and lasted 30 minutes to one hour each. The interview guide covered topics such as the objectives of the hotel's promotional strategies, the challenges faced in implementing these strategies, and suggestions for improvement. The data from these interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis.

Observation data were collected through several visits to Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort during peak and off-peak seasons. These observations focused on how the hotel's promotional strategies were implemented, such as the design and placement of promotional materials within the hotel and the use of digital platforms for marketing. The researcher also observed how guests interacted with these promotional efforts and whether they resulted in bookings. Document analysis involved reviewing the hotel's promotional materials, including brochures, Website content, and social media posts. This analysis aimed to assess the consistency of the promotional messages and identify areas where improvements could be made, particularly in aligning the promotions with sustainability principles.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Indicators of Room Promotion in the Hospitality Industry

This research shows that Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort utilizes a range of room promotion initiatives as a critical component of its marketing plan to increase sales and improve guest interaction. Five main promotion methods were found by analyzing qualitative data from interviews with the hotel's staff and guests: advertising, sales promotions, public relations, direct marketing, and digital marketing.

No.	Types of Promotional Activities	Forms of Promotional Activities	Implementation		Description
			Routine	Rarely	
1	Advertising	Social Media Advertising	√		Facebook & Instagram
		Billboard & Out-of-Home Advertising		√	Airport advertisements, public place advertisements, and flyers
2	Sales Promotion	Seasonal Discounts	√		Special discounts
		Special Packages	√		Honeymoon or family vacation packages
		Travel Agency Collaboration	√		Tour packages that include accommodation
		Table Top (Seller Meet Buyer)		√	Special offers directly to buyers
3	Public Relations	Door to Door Campaign		√	Providing food samples to clients
		Educational Workshops or Seminars		√	Cooking Class Demonstration at a Local Culinary Festival
		Word of Mouth (WOM)	√		Personal Recommendations at Events
4	Direct Marketing	Sales Call	√		Visits to Private and Government Offices
		Telemarketing	√		Room promotions by directly contacting prospects/guests
5	Digital Marketing	Social Media Marketing	√		Stories and posts related to room promotions/events
		Online Reviews and Reputation Management		√	Managing guest reviews online on digital platforms
		Email Marketing	√		Newsletters related to room promotions

Figure 1. The implementation of room promotion activities at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort

Various promotional activities mentioned above are crucial in encouraging guest engagement and increasing room bookings at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort. These activities include:

Advertising

This study concluded that room promotions at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort significantly impact increasing room occupancy rates and guest interactions, focusing on sustainable principles. The marketing activities investigated include social media marketing and outdoor advertising. Social media advertising on platforms like Facebook and Instagram has strengthened consumer understanding and interest in hotel services. In contrast, outdoor advertising, such as billboards and flyers in strategic locations, conveys product information to potential guests. Although both methods impact the hotel's visibility, their success in room bookings has yet to be optimal.

Additionally, it is recommended to use promotions through online platforms such as travel websites, Google Ads, and video ads to improve results and to implement additional strategies such as discount coupons, loyalty programs, last-minute offers, free upgrades, and flash sales. Adjusting promotion strategies with appropriate objectives, targets, and budgets is crucial to maximizing promotion impact and supporting sustainability in the hospitality sector. The results of this study support the concept of Kwornik and Thompson (2009) that combining messages with distribution channels is crucial in effectively reaching the target market.

Sales Promotion

This study found that the Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort uses various strategies to increase room reservations and enhance guest interaction by focusing on sustainable practices. The hotel offers lower booking rates during the month or on special occasions to boost revenue. The hotel offers special packages for occasions such as honeymoons and family vacations and collaborates with travel agents to provide tour packages. Vendors work together with customers to offer bundled deals, resulting in discounted prices on complete packages. These tactics have effectively increased room occupancy but have yet to reach their full potential. Williams and Blose (2009) propose that mismanaging sales promotions could decrease the perceived value even though they can accelerate purchase decisions. The hotel must use different promotional tactics, such as discount coupons, loyalty programs, last-minute offers, room upgrades, and flash sales, to attract and keep a more extensive customer base. It is crucial to match promotion strategies with the correct objectives, targets, and budgets to boost the efficiency of promotions and maintain sustainability in the hospitality industry.

Public Relations: This research shows that promotions at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort significantly impact room occupancy rates and guest interactions, focusing on sustainability principles in the hospitality industry. Promotion activities involve workshops or educational seminars, such as cooking class demos at local culinary festivals, door-to-door campaigns with food testers, and word-of-mouth marketing. These PR activities are intended to create a good reputation and positive relationships with the community, visitors, and media, in line with Kruckeberg and Violette's theory (2010), highlighting the importance of interacting with the media and local events to influence public perception. Although PR activities can improve the hotel's reputation, their impact on room occupancy rates is often indirect and takes time. Activities such as door-to-door campaigns and word-of-mouth recommendations have yet to be fully utilized to improve room occupancy rates. To improve promotions, it is recommended to add other activities such as press releases, media visits, community engagement, participation in trade exhibitions, event sponsorship, and hotel tours. Combining these activities can strengthen the hotel's connections with visitors, the press, and the general public, thereby enhancing the hotel's reputation and competitiveness and

supporting sustainability in the hospitality industry.

Direct Marketing

This study shows that Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort uses direct marketing as its primary strategy to increase loyalty and room reservations, prioritizing direct communication with potential customers. The techniques used include sales calls, such as regularly visiting institutions and offices around Sumba, phone marketing, and offering room promotions through calls. According to Choi and Kim (2018), direct marketing can strengthen customer relationships through deep personalization approaches, but it needs to be continuously monitored and adjusted to remain effective. Although direct marketing is carried out regularly, its impact on room occupancy rates and guest participation has yet to show significant results. To make direct marketing more effective, it is recommended that the hotel add activities such as loyalty programs, personalized offers, referral programs, and retargeting campaigns. These activities are expected to increase room bookings efficiently and strengthen relationships with guests. Tailoring direct marketing strategies with these additional activities will help increase room occupancy rates and guest interactions and support business sustainability in the hotel industry.

Digital Marketing

This study concludes that Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort utilizes a diversified digital marketing strategy to expand market share and increase guest visits. Activities involved include sending email newsletters about room promotions, posting on Facebook and Instagram for social media marketing, and managing online reviews to manage the hotel's reputation. According to Mikalef et al.'s research (2018), digital marketing allows for broader audience interaction through specific and monitorable campaigns.

However, this study also shows that the effectiveness of digital marketing, primarily through social media, has yet to reach an optimal level in increasing room occupancy rates. Intense competition and platform algorithm changes are factors that impact results. Therefore, it is recommended that the strategy be enhanced by incorporating SEO (Search Engine Optimization), P.P.C. (Pay-Per-Click), content marketing, affiliate marketing, influencer marketing, mobile marketing, remarketing, and online booking systems. By combining these strategies, hotels can expand their market, increase customer satisfaction, and ultimately significantly increase room occupancy rates.

Evaluation of Effectiveness and Challenges in the Implementation of Room Promotion Activities

This study determines that the marketing campaigns carried out by Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort have a notable effect on the occupancy rates of rooms and guest involvement, emphasizing sustainability principles. Seasonal deals, exclusive promotions, and bundling options are successful strategies for drawing guest interest and boosting room occupancy rates. Promotional deals, including price cuts at specific times and unique holiday campaigns, successfully entice customers during peak seasons. At the same time, customers are drawn to bundled deals offering all-inclusive options for honeymoon and family trips, giving them additional benefits. The audience reacted favorably to digital marketing on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram. Interviews revealed that visitors are frequently swayed by the promotions they come across online. Even though digital marketing has potential, it must achieve the best results in boosting room occupancy rates. Hence, hotels must enhance their digital tactics by incorporating SEO, P.P.C., viral content, and remarketing to increase their audiences and conversion rates.

This study also found significant challenges, including reliance on tourism seasons, which causes inconsistent income and financial limitations and reduces the frequency of marketing campaigns. To tackle these obstacles, hotels must provide enticing discounts all year round, particularly during slow periods, and use affordable or no-cost marketing

campaigns like viral content. Providing thorough and consistent training is also necessary to address the need for more marketing staff training in utilizing digital technology. This research study supports the theory proposed by Mikalef et al. (2018) by emphasizing the significance of measurable digital interactions and demonstrating that blending different promotional tactics and adjusting to market demands can enhance sustainability and promotional efficiency within the hotel sector.

Analysis of Strategies and Practical Implications in the Implementation of Room Promotion Activities at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort

This study analyzes room promotion activities at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort using elements of the Marketing Strategy Framework (Kotler & Keller, 2016), focusing on sustainability in the hospitality sector and providing strategic solutions to enhance guest engagement and room occupancy rates. The hotel has great potential through its natural beauty and local culture, but its promotional strategies still need improvement. The analysis shows that by varying promotion strategies according to market segmentation, dynamic pricing, product differentiation, proper distribution channels, and personalized promotional messages, the hotel can significantly improve the effectiveness of its promotions.

Regarding market segmentation, Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort targets various segments, such as business travelers and families. Still, the lack of variety in promotions leads to suboptimal results in increasing room occupancy. By adjusting strategies based on guest behavior and preferences, the hotel can meet the specific needs of each segment, which is in line with the theories of Kotler and Keller. These efforts will enhance the relevance of promotions and increase room occupancy rates. Regarding pricing strategies, the hotel has implemented seasonal discounts, but dynamic pricing adjusted to timing and market conditions can have a more significant impact. Value-based pricing and special offers, such as last-minute packages, can attract more guests during slow periods, supporting the hotel's financial sustainability by maximizing revenue throughout the year. Product differentiation at this hotel has yielded positive results by offering rooms with captivating beach views. However, the hotel must enhance room variety with design elements reflecting local culture and offering unique facilities.

This step aligns with the principle of product differentiation, which emphasizes the importance of creating unique experiences for guests, enhancing emotional engagement and guest satisfaction. Regarding distribution channels, digital promotions through social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram have effectively attracted millennials. However, collaboration with travel agents and online platforms (OTA) has also proven to help increase occupancy from domestic and international tourists. This distribution strategy can be expanded by optimizing direct promotions through the hotel's website, supported by exclusive discounts to increase direct bookings, ultimately expanding market reach and supporting the hotel's business sustainability. Finally, personalized promotional messages, such as birthday or anniversary discount offers, have effectively increased guest engagement. This supports the marketing communication theory that emphasizes the importance of promotional message relevance to target market segments and distribution channels. Overall, the most effective promotional activities at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort are seasonal discounts and bundling packages, which provide added value, attract guest attention, and have been proven to increase room occupancy rates. These strategies contribute to the hotel's sustainability by creating guest loyalty, supporting the local economy, and strengthening the hotel's competitive position in the hospitality industry.

The practical implications of research on room promotion activities at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort emphasize the importance of implementing sustainable promotion strategies to increase room occupancy rates and guest engagement. Digital marketing promotions through social media have proven effective in expanding audience reach, especially for

millennials more connected to digital platforms. Strengthening promotion messages consistently with brand identity is also essential to enhance the hotel's image and attract guests continuously. Regular evaluations of promotion activities are necessary to identify strengths and weaknesses and adjust strategies to the dynamic market conditions. The quality of room promotion services should be prioritized to ensure a positive guest experience, which ultimately can increase guest loyalty and word-of-mouth recommendations. Technology such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems can assist in managing customer data, enabling more effective and relevant promotion personalization.

Collaborating with Influencer Marketing also significantly increases the hotel's visibility, primarily through positive reviews that strengthen the hotel's reputation among tourists. Regular training for marketing staff is essential to ensure that the hotel team always follows the latest trends in digital promotion, enhancing the overall effectiveness of promotional activities. To sustain revenue, hotels can offer various attractive packages for the local market during off-peak seasons, reducing dependence on specific tourist seasons and maximizing occupancy rates throughout the year. From this research, digital promotions, seasonal discounts, and bundled packages have proven to be the most effective strategies in increasing room occupancy and guest engagement at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that the room promotion strategies implemented at Kambaniru Beach Hotel & Resort have successfully increased room occupancy rates and guest engagement. Promotions through social media and digital marketing have proven effective in attracting millennial travelers, although their effectiveness has yet to reach its full potential. Sales promotions, such as bundled package offers and seasonal discounts, are the most successful strategies in increasing customer interest, especially during low seasons. However, seasonal fluctuations, budget constraints, and lack of staff training in digital technology affect promotional performance. Therefore, the hotel must enhance its digital strategies by incorporating SEO, P.P.C., and loyalty programs to improve promotion effectiveness. This study highlights the importance of diverse and integrated promotion approaches to enhance guest engagement and hotel occupancy rates while ensuring business sustainability in the competitive hospitality industry.

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