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IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITAL MARKETING IN IMPROVING
ROOM OCCUPANCY AT THE WESTIN RESORT & SPA, UBUD

By

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the application of digital marketing by The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, and the efforts made to increase room occupancy through digital marketing. Data collection methods used are observation, interviews, and documentation. In addition, a descriptive qualitative analysis is used to describe the information obtained through interviews from the sales and marketing party and relate it to the theories that support the discussion about dimensions and indicators of digital marketing conducted by The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud. The results show that this resort's digital marketing application is divided into four dimensions: websites, online travel agents, social media, and Marriott Bonvoy. Besides, efforts are being made to increase room occupancy, namely, increasing brand awareness on social media by implementing a monthly giveaway program.

Keywords: Implementation, Digital Marketing, Room Occupancy

INTRODUCTION

Hermawan *et al.* (2018) explained that a hotel is an industry or service business managed commercially⁵ Meanwhile, Bagyono (2012) argues that a hotel is a type of accommodation managed commercially, provided for a person or group of people, providing lodging, food and beverage services, and other supporting services according to the development of needs and technology. Therefore, hotels can be classified into eight categories based on the opinion of Bagyono (2012), namely: based on the room price, location, length of time open, area and number of rooms, room rates, length of stay, types of guests, and activities.

In running a business in a hotel, of course, there are supporting factors such as the departmental sector. Sections or departments are contained in hotels in general, as stated by Sulastiyono (2011). The sales & marketing department, according to Sihite (2000), is a function that carries out all planning, assignment, and supervision of a company's sales activities. The sales & marketing

department will later determine the high or low room occupancy from the sale of the room. Therefore we need an appropriate and effective marketing strategy by the sales & marketing department to increase hotel room occupancy.

Hermawan (2012) explains that marketing includes all systems related to planning and determining prices to promote and distribute goods and services that can satisfy the needs of actual and potential buyers. As Kotler (2012) said, a company needs to promote a product that it wants to market with a good marketing system to create customer or consumer satisfaction. Marketing is meeting needs profitability, meaning that marketing is the things that are done to meet every need (consumer needs) in ways that benefit all parties. The purpose of marketing described by Jajang (2017) is to increase product sales in quantity and quality. There are four core marketing concepts as described by Sudaryono (2016), namely: 1) Needs, wants, and requests 2) Product, value, cost, and satisfaction 3)



Exchanges, transactions, and relationships 4) Marketers, marketing and marketers

Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2019) argues that digital marketing is the application of the internet related to digital technology in which it relates to traditional communications to achieve marketing goals. Meanwhile, Sánchez-Franco *et al.* (2014) define digital marketing as the result of evolutionary marketing. Evolution occurs when companies use digital media channels for most of their marketing. As a result, digital media channels can be overcome and allow continuous, two-way, and personal conversations between marketers and consumers. Indirectly, the application of digital marketing is a promotional system that uses digital or online media related to Green Tourism.

According to Ringbeck *et al.* (2010), one of the pillars of Green Tourism is good waste and waste management. Therefore, it can be concluded that implementing digital marketing is one of the efforts in implementing green tourism because the implementation media is environmentally friendly without producing waste and is paperless.

According to Saveria (2016), the dimensions of Digital Marketing include Social Media Marketing, Search Engine Marketing (SEM), Content Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Campaign Marketing, E-Commerce Marketing, Display Advertising, and E-Books. Meanwhile, according to Ryan & Jones (2009), Digital Marketing is: Website, Search Engine Optimization, Pay Per Click Advertising, Affiliate Marketing, and Strategic Partnerships, Online Public Relations, Social Network, E-mail Marketing, Customer Relationship Management. According to Kim (2004), digital marketing has five indicators: Coordination, Commerce, Community, Content, and Communications.

The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, is a hotel that can still survive until now amid the competition in the hospitality industry in the Ubud area. The role of the sales & marketing department at The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, is very important in determining the level of room occupancy. Digital marketing, as stated at

the website of The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, has not been maximized in terms of room occupancy in the last two years since its establishment in 2019. Suarthana (2006) stated that promotion needs to be considered in increasing the room occupancy rate. It shows that the implementation of digital marketing promotion has not been optimal. Therefore, we write an article entitled "The Application of Digital Marketing in Increasing Room Occupancy at The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud".

METHODS

This research was conducted at The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, from October 2021 to March 2022. The object of this research is the application of digital marketing in increasing room occupancy at The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud. The variables related to this research are website, affiliate marketing & strategic partnership, social media marketing, and customer relationship management indicators of coordination, commerce, content, community, and coordination. We observe, interview, and document data collection techniques with purposive sampling. This study uses qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. Miles & Huberman in Sugiyono (2013) argue that the activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and take place continuously until complete so that the data is saturated. Some of the activities in data analysis are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, uses a website for marketing because its implementation is easy and accessible to all internet users and contains all information related to the products being sold, as shown in Figure 1.

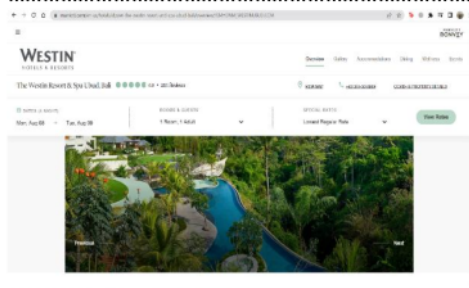


Figure 1. Website Implementation

The website's function always implements coordination from all parties, including all departments, content creators, marketing and communication, and the Director of Sales & Marketing. The website's content is always based on the standards of the Marriott Guidelines because it has become a stipulation from Marriott International, as shown in Figure 2. The content defined here is in the form of product photos, designs, and descriptions, such as captions for each product published on the website. The hotel always provides the best product pictures in each content by hiring a professional photographer. The application of commerce on the website always provides the advantages and benefits obtained from the most expensive product by comparing cheaper products so that consumers will consider choosing the most expensive product and getting better benefits. The hotel will manipulate consumer thinking so that they tend to upgrade the booking. The application of the community on the website always provides convenience to the community or consumers in accessing the website, namely by providing convenience in finding the desired product, the contact person needed if there is a question, and displaying content with high-quality photos. It attracts consumers' interest in accessing the website of The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud. The last application is communication on the website, which implements two-way communication between consumers and the hotel so that all problems and the implementation of bookings can run practically and quickly via e-mail or telephone.

The application of online travel agents in promoting hotel products is very effective because it is packaged through application

containers and easily accessed by potential consumers. Furthermore, it is supported by the page views of each online travel agent.

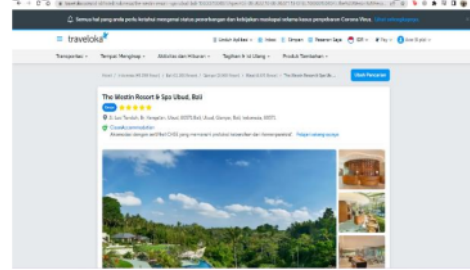


Figure 2. Online Travel Agent Implementation

The website carries the coordination of the department at The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, with the online travel agent. Everything is directly submitted to the online travel agent by posting product content, booking rooms, and the obstacles potential consumers feel in accessing online travel agents and hotels. It also coordinates with the online travel agent regarding the possible value the hotel will get after promotions through each online travel agent's media. Then, everything is returned to the hotel for content application in online travel agents. The hotel always provides high-quality content following the Marriott Guidelines with clear and informative product descriptions. Implementing the community in the online travel agent always makes them comfortable accessing products from The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, by displaying the best content with clear product descriptions. It also keeps potential customers accessing products from The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, and submits directly to the relevant online travel agents to prioritize hotels in their search engines. So that potential consumers will prioritize choosing The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, as the destination. For the application of communication in online travel agents, it carries out three-way communication, from consumers informing the customer service online travel agents, then from online travel agents directly informing the hotel. It is carried out both in implementing bookings and in informing the available products so that they are always upgraded.

Applying social media marketing can certainly be said to be something that must be



carried out in promoting the products being sold, as shown in Figure 3. Considering today's era, almost all potential consumers use social media in searching for information due to its easy and practical use and can reach all social media in the world.

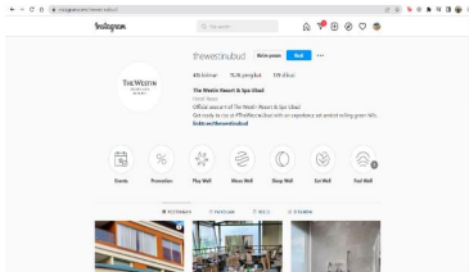


Figure 3. Social Media Marketing Implementation

For the implementation of coordination in social media marketing, the social media creative team is supported by content creators, graphic design, and also marketing and communication. Coordination is done for any posts that are published on social media. It is based on the marketing plan that has been made and Marriott Guideline with high-quality images and videos. The hotel also hires photographers and videographers to create social media content and implement commerce in social media marketing using Instagram Ads and Facebook Ads. The hotel will pay according to the amount determined by the feedback of advertisement created will be targeted to social media following the target market that the hotel determines depending on the product and event created. Community application in social media marketing provides quality videos and interesting content to followers to feel satisfied and comfortable when viewing social media content from The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud. It also made a giveaway as a form of appreciation to followers on Instagram. The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, applies communication in social media marketing through two-way communication from consumers to sales and marketing via e-mail and telephone.

Customer relationship management is a way for the hotel to maintain relationships with customers who have stayed and as a form of

7) appreciation for the hotel for customer loyalty. At The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, the form of customer relationship management is Marriott Bonvoy, as shown in Figure 4. It is a place for loyal consumers to stay at hotels under the auspices of Marriott, one of which is The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud. With appreciation in the form of giving discounts and events according to the points earned.

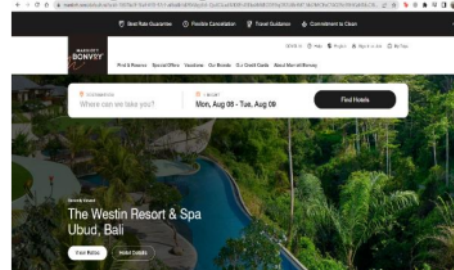


Figure 4. Marriott Bonvoy Implementation

Customer relationship management is implemented by coordination from the central Marriott related to updating information related to consumers. Content application in customer relationship management applies the Marriott Guidelines standardize with a design slightly different from other digital marketing platforms because the platform is more general. For commerce in customer relationship management, product sales are implemented by providing member discounts according to the points earned and creating events. The implementation to the community in customer relationship management is done by providing the latest information to Marriott Bonvoy via e-mail to registered consumers. For the application of communication in customer relationship management, there are three forms of communication. First, all consumer information will be received by the central Marriott, which handles Marriott Bonvoy, and then forwarded to the hotel.

CONCLUSION

The digital marketing implemented by The Westin Resort & Spa, Ubud, has four dimensions: Websites, Affiliate Marketing and Strategic Partnerships, Social Media Marketing, and Customer Relationship Management. Furthermore, the assessment is

based on five predetermined indicators: Coordination, Content, Commerce, Community, and Communication. It is shown in Figure 5. Based on the analysis that has been carried out, it can be concluded that all digital marketing indicators have been implemented by maximizing the implementation of the social media marketing dimensions and content indicators, as well as seeking maximum implementation of social media. Besides, efforts are being made to increase room occupancy, such as increasing brand awareness on social media by implementing a monthly giveaway program.



Figure 5. Description of Digital Marketing Dimensions and Indicators Outline of Digital Marketing

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