

A plan to sell products



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Merchandising, advertising, promotion, a plan to sell products, sales to the meet needs of customers, media planning are all well to be known as marketing. While these activities may be regarded as part of marketing, none of them is marketing itself.

It is remarkable that there are two conditions that must be met before marketing is possible. Firstly, there must be a person or company that desires to sell a product or a service. Secondly, there is a need for potential buyers of the product or service. No matter which comes first, but both must exist. If both factors exist, marketing is the process or series of activities that the prospective purchaser of the product or service with the product or service. If there is a no problem in selling your product or service for profit, the marketing has been a success. If the problem is not to make profits, the marketing has failed. It is important to recognize, then that marketing is the sum of all activities related to bringing buyer and seller profitably together.

1. 2 Introduction to Mauritius

Mauritius was first explored by the Portuguese in the 16th century and subsequently settled by the Dutch – who named it in honor of Prince Maurits van NASSAU – in the 17th century.

Uninhabited until the 17th century, the island was ruled first by the Dutch and then the French after the Dutch had abandoned it. The British took control during the Napoleonic Wars and Mauritius became independent from the UK in 1968. Mauritius is a parliamentary republic and is member of the Southern African Development Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa the African Union and the Commonwealth of Nations.

The main languages spoken in Mauritius are Mauritian Creole, French and English. English is the only official language but the lingua franca is Creole and the newspapers and television programs are usually in French.

Ethnically, the majority of the population is Indian and there are also many people of African descent on the island and there are also European and Chinese minorities. It is the only African nation where the largest religion is Hinduism although Christianity and Islam also have significant populations. The dodo has been extinct since the mid-to-late 17th century

1.3 Introduction to Maradiva

Maradiva Villas Resort & Spa, Mauritius, (member of Leading Small Hotels of the World) is an exclusive haven of luxury spread over 27 scenic acres with 750 m of pristine beach. It overlooks the serene, blue waters of Tamarin Bay at Wolmar. The 65 Suite Villas (from 163 to 345 m²) draw inspiration from the charming local architecture, each with a private pool adjoining a tranquil living-dining area, with the benefit of full butler service to ensure that every guest need is met. The villas are wonderfully spacious and include a large daylight bathroom with an indoor and an outdoor shower, a walk-in wardrobe, flat-screen television, DVD, music system, internet connectivity, espresso machine, personal bar and in-room safe. The blossoming park of Maradiva enhances already an appealing feature of the resort into a lush tropical garden with sculptured landscaping.

The resort offers to its guests a choice between 65 picturesque villas with a private pool of their own. The following is a table depicting the various categories of rooms that the resort has to offer with their numbers:

TYPE OF VILLAS

NUMBER OF VILLAS

Luxury Villas

46

Luxury Beachfront Villas

11

Luxury Suites Villas

6

Presidential Villas

2

Chapter 2

Micro Environment and Macro Environment

2. 1 Micro Environment

The micro environment includes internal factors close to the company that have a direct impact on the organizations strategy. These factors include:

2. 1. 1 Consumers

The maximum numbers of consumers staying in the hotel are from France, then Europe, USA, Middle East, India and other countries. All the clients from these places are of niche class.

There are different types of clientele like corporate, Leisure, Business & domestic clientele. Maradiva basically caters types of clientele they are:

Corporate clients: since the hotel is well connected it has a huge corporate client

Leisure Clients: since Maradiva is marketed as a leisure property it caters to many clients from around the global.

Domestic clients: since the hotel is seasonal it offers a special rate of 14, 000 MAU throughout the year for Mauritian guests. In this way it caters to the niche segment of the domestic clients

(Source: From the hotel monthly Occupancy report)

2. 1. 2 Suppliers

It is directly linked to the company's overall customer value delivery system. The suppliers provide resources to Maradiva to produce these services. If it faces any problems from suppliers it will directly affect the marketing strategies of the hotel.

The local travel agents that Maradiva deals with are:-

Mauritours

The White Sand Tours

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Summer Times

Elite Voyage

Connections

Expression holidays

2. 1. 3 Competitors

Maradiva provides different strategies & packages to generate customer value & satisfaction. These strategies help them to compete with their competitors. The hotel by using these strategies must gain strategic advantage by positing their offerings strongly against competitor's offerings.

EXISTING

ROOMS

Maradiva Villas and spa, Mauritius

65

Four seasons, Mauritius

145

Sugar Beach resorts, Mauritius

258

Shanti Ananda Maurice

61

Sofitel imperial resort & spa

191

Total

720

2. 1. 4 Media

The modes of advertisements that are used there are printed media and the hoardings. In the printed media local newspapers were used and the local newspapers were Le Mauricien and l'express.

2. 2 Macro Environment

2. 2. 1 Political

2. 2. 2 Economical

GDP (2009 est., official exchange rate):

\$9. 156 billion

Real growth rate (2009 est.):

2. 1%

Per capita income (2009 est., purchasing power parity):

\$12, 400

Avg. inflation rate (2009 est.):

3. 4%

Agriculture

(4. 5% of GDP): Products–sugar, sugar derivatives, tea, tobacco, vegetables, fruits, flowers, cattle and fishing.

Manufacturing, including export processing zone

(19. 4% of GDP): Types–labor-intensive goods for export, including textiles and clothing, watches and clocks, jewelry, optical goods, toys and games, and cut flowers.

Financial services:

(10. 9% of GDP)

Tourism sector

(8. 7% of GDP): Main countries of origin–France, including nearby French island Reunion, South Africa, and west European countries.

(Source: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2833.htm>)

2. 2. 3 Social

The forebears of the various ethnic groups composing Mauritian society arrived as settlers, slaves, indentured laborers, and immigrants. Ethnicity, religion, and language have been important factors in shaping the way Mauritians relate to each other in the social spheres.

The Mauritian Constitution makes no mention of an official language and its one million citizens speak Mauritian Creole, a French-based Creole, English or French. It is only in the Parliament that the official language is English but any member of the National Assembly can still address the chair in French.

Population:

Island of Mauritius only: 1, 288. 2 (In Thousands 2009)

Population growth rate:

0. 7%

Birth rate:

16. 66 births/1, 000 population (2000 est.)

Death rate:

6. 83 deaths/1, 000 population (2000 est.)

Sex ratio:

Total population: 98 male(s)/100 female

Infant mortality rate:

17. 73 deaths/1, 000 live births (2000 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

Male: 66. 98 years

female: 75.04 years (2000 est.)

Ethnic groups:

Indian 68%, Creole 27%, Chinese 3%, French 2%

Religions:

Hinduism 52%, Christianity 28.3% (Roman Catholicism 26%, Protestant 2.3%), Islam 16.6%, other 3.1%

Literacy:

Total population: 82.9%

male: 87.1%

female: 78.8% (1995 est.)

(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Mauritius,

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind/population.htm#tech>)

2.2.4 Technological

It is commonly assumed in the literature that the successful accumulation of technology in a given developing country depends only on access to new information, stable macroeconomic conditions, market-driven signals and the supply of human capital. Mauritius is an outlier in the African scene in terms of its trade, industrial and macroeconomic regime. From the 1970s, Mauritius followed a mixed trade policy of import substitution coupled with incentives

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for exports through the Export Processing Zone. There have been three phases of adjustment since the mid-1980s, each with a different pace and coverage.

Industries also plays an important role in an economy, the main industries in Mauritius are textiles, chemicals, food processing, tourism, metal products, non-electrical machinery and transport equipment. The food processing industry in Mauritius is largely composed of sugar milling. The Sugar cane industry arrived in Mauritius in the year of 1639. There are so many sugar-cane fields in Mauritius. There is also now organic sugar production on the island. Textiles industries have been one of the major industries in Mauritius for past 30 years. The Chinese population is mainly responsible for the development of textile on the island.

(Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Ricky_Morgan

Oxford Development Studies, Vol. 30, No. 1, 2002

Firm Size, Technological Capabilities and

Market-oriented Policies in Mauritius

GANESHAN WIGNARAJA*)

2. 2. 5 Environmental

In recent years, the United Nation Development Programme UNDP Environment Unit Mauritius has succeeded in mobilizing resources and increasing environmental sustainability in both Mauritius and Seychelles. The main achievements include:

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The adoption of a sustainable environmental management plan for an industrial estate that has served as a model for replication in other industrial estates;

The creation of a co-management unit and the designation of a Marine Protected Area in Rodrigues;

A comprehensive portfolio of Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects developed for implementation;

Promotion of biodiversity conservation in Seychelles;

Supporting the development of an Energy Policy for Mauritius

Assessment of national capacity gaps for environmental management in Seychelles

National Plan for phase out of POPs in Mauritius

UNDP remains committed to the continuation and enhancement of support and local and regional initiatives so as to promote environmental protection in Mauritius, Seychelles and the region.

(Source: http://un.intnet.mu/UNDP/html/mauritius/energy_env.htm#top)

2. 2. 6 Legal

Government's objective is to transform Mauritius into an international financial and business hub built on strong foundations. A number of important legislations were passed over the past few years to ensure that the legislative framework meets all the international standards and also

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aimed at improving the efficiency and competitiveness of our financial services sector.

Company law

Business Facilitation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 (Act No. 21 Of 2006)

Business Registration Act 2002

Co-operatives (Amendment) Act 2006 (Act No. 6 Of 2006)

Development Works Corporation (Repeal) Act 2007 (Act No. 1 Of 2007)

Regulations made by the Minister under section 360 of the Companies Act 2001(purchase of own shares)

Regulations made by the Minister under sections 355 and 360 of the Companies Act 2001

The Companies Act 2001

The Trust Act 2001

(Source: [http://www. lexadin. nl/wlg/legis/nofr/oeur/lxwemau. htm](http://www.lexadin.nl/wlg/legis/nofr/oeur/lxwemau.htm))

Chapter 3

SWOT of Maradiva, Mauritius

Strengths

A perfect destination for honeymooners, with complete silent surrounding and privacy.

Only all a la carte menu provided on the island.

Offering a novel sort of idea to the customers – An all villa concept

Basic category of the villa starts from 163 m², and is the largest square footage accommodation per room in Mauritius.

Each Villa has its own private plunge pool.

The Only resort with Ayurvedic Spa in Mauritius which is a big competitor for Shanti Ananda hotel Mauritius, who are world famous for their spas.

Cilantro, one of its restaurants has a live teppanyaki Japanese Cuisine which is very famous all over Mauritius.

Weakness

Due to the removal of brand Taj, the product “ Maradiva” is unknown to the market, and has to create its new position in the market.

Proximity from the airport isn't that good; it takes more than an hour from the airport.

The resort does not have a mix of rooms and villas, due to which it faces severe business losses in the slack season.

Lack of qualified and trained personnel is a very big problem in Mauritius due to the reason that most of the staff members are employed just after the schooling.

Location- the resort is on the west coast, whereas most of the hotels, water sports activities, places to visit are on the other side of the island.

The hotel only caters to the niche customers.

Opportunity

The resort should target more guests from the Middle East.

They should try and target the tourist from Russia, China and Switzerland.

The growing interest of tourist looking for private holidays.

Threat

Upcoming five star hotels.

Duplication of concept with minor changes by new upcoming hotels.

Being on seashore it always has a danger of the high tide in the sea.

Segmentation

Market segmentation is the identification of portions of the market that are different from one another. Segmentation allows the firm to better satisfy the needs of its potential customers. Customers within any market rarely have similar needs and expectations. As the country of Mauritius had been under the rule of

British & French people the place still holds a lot of common ideologies thus making

it a hit destination amongst the British and French Nationals. Based on this fact the

resort segmented various markets of the world into key markets (UK, France, Germany, and Switzerland) and developing markets (India, Russia, South Africa,

Australia). As Mauritius has been known as a

Honeymooners Paradise so the hotel based in this fact has targeted young and affluent

individuals who would like to have their wedding done or a honeymoon. Not only the

young but the place is a hit even with the elderly people

Targeting

Targeting or Target market selection is the process of deciding which market segments of the company should actively pursue to generate sales. After segmenting it various customers into segments has then found out those market segments which are highly profitable. The resort in order to tap the honeymoon and wedding market has come out

with two explicit packages targeting those clients and are looking for a unique and distinctive experience. On more generic terms the resort looks at targeting key opinion makers,

corporate leaders, well traveled discerning, who have experience of finest luxury products

and services, disposed towards high end luxury goods, looking for unique/distinctive

experiences.

Positioning

Positioning is done to develop a unique selling proposition for the target segment. Positioning is the reason why hotels exist and why customers miss the company if it were to cease operation. Maradiva positioned itself as a destination resort. A company must be very specific in terms of its intended positioning or unique selling proposition if it wants to stand out among the clutter of choices confronting its potential customers.

Chapter 3

Marketing strategies of Maradiva

Maradiva majorly depends on foreign tourism, which states that the marketing strategies can never be over emphasized. Marketing department had the bonus of getting in the customers to the resort through various means and techniques. Maradiva knew that it cannot replicate the various marketing strategies being applied by other hotels as they offer a different

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sort of product and need to think out of the box in order to formulate new marketing strategies.

3. 1 Pay for few nights and stay for more!

Maradiva not only resorted to market themselves in the form of offers but also marketed themselves in the form of various packages which are designed as per the guest needs and preferences. Various packages like free night offer which includes, the guest has to pay for five nights and stay for seven or pay for seven nights and stay for nine nights etc. such type of offers are called tactical offers.

Maradiva is well aware of the booking patterns that take place and in accordance with the same; various offers are launched during lean as well as peak season. During periods of low occupancy these tactical offers are provided to boost sales from their key markets mainly the major tour operators who provide maximum business to the hotel. they are implemented with an idea of generating occupancy levels so as to keep the business running comfortably. The tactical offers are designed in such a way so as to garner maximum amount of business during lean season and to maintain the influx of guests during peak season. As the tactical offers are different for different tour operators and vary a lot with the country as well, in U. K (5nights= 10nights); France (one spa treatment per person);

3. 2 Mauritian Promotional Offer – A tool to capitalize on domestic market

Mauritius even though is a small island and the potential of domestic tourism is not phenomenal but every marketer feels that there is an opportunity in

every situation. There is no dearth of people who want to live a life of luxury or would want to spend a day or two at a place where they feel there's value for money. Taking all that into consideration the Sales & Marketing team of the resort came up with an offer known as Mauritian Promotion Offer in order to attract some local niche clientele. The offer was officially launched in December 2006 as a tactical offer but later owing to its potential it was later upgraded to an all year round offer. The offer included a rate of MRU 14, 000 per night for a Luxury Villa with pool, with a HB meal plan inclusive in the package.

3. 3 Wedding and Honeymooners

Maradiva is the perfect place for romantic luxurious holidays, the ideal love nest for newlyweds. During earlier times when the resort just came into being they had a basic and simple marketing strategy: to market the hotel as a wedding or a honeymoon destination among young couples in the form of wedding and honeymoon packages which would include the accommodation along with the various formalities that need to be performed which is taken care of by the guest relation manager. The guests are also provided with various facilities like candlelit dinner, champagne breakfast, and massage for the groom and various beauty treatments for the bride. The honeymoon package would constitute of providing a 50% discount on the bride's twin sharing rate along with various added values like coffee scrub, candlelit dinner, champagne breakfast, rose petal bath etc.

3. 4 Affiliation packages

Maradiva is affiliated to “ Leading group of small hotels”, “ Great hotels of the world”, “ Leading Spa’s f the world” which helps the resort to generate more room nights than its competitors. The customers had the choice of choosing the package amongst a wide array of packages depending on their needs. For example a guest could choose a 5 day

Maradiva Spa – Stress Relief and Relaxation which would spread across a span of 5 days and has been carefully designed inorder to provide absolute relaxation to the guest. The package would encompass things like Level 1 & 2 of Yoga & Meditation, Yoga Nidra, Trataka, Aroma Bath + Scrub & Wrap, Surya Namaskar and Pehlwan Malish. The resort also boosted of a Golf Package as the resort was in close proximity to the Tamarina Golf Course.

Recommendation

In this section the researcher has illustrated various marketing strategies implemented by Maradiva, Mauritius; and the SWOT analysis done by the researcher on the marketing strategies would enlisting few recommendations based on the knowledge and experience garnered during the operational and project stage of understudy:

Maradiva should look at penetrating other new emerging markets such as South Africa, Middle East, Australia, Russia and India by developing a holistic approach, with the use of explicit marketing tools catering in specific to the particular market. By doing so the resort would be able to remove the dependability factor on its few restricted key markets and in turn would help them in being better prepared for unforeseen situations.

With the growing spending power of people in the developing countries it would not be wrong to target those people who prefer travelling abroad during holidays by having country specific holiday packages in order to profit from situation. The hotel needs to take into consideration various countries trend for holidays.

Internal marketing: Hotels should practice internal marketing; the hotel should motivate their customer contact employees and all their service people to work as a team to provide customer satisfaction.

External marketing: The sales & marketing should have good communication skills and should provide more interactive sessions to their clients & should be able to market the product efficiently.

The resort has done a lot to their micro site but the researcher still feels that the website can be made more appealing by adding blogs, interactive event / activity calendars, hotel guest scrapbooks, photo sharing contests, testimonials which helps in generating interests & site stickiness & ultimately increase the bookings.

The airfare for a place like Mauritius is quite expensive and this discourages budget travellers from coming to the country. A possible solution for this could be combinable offers with airlines like Air Mauritius and Emirates which could help create a new segment of customers for the hotel. The hotel from its side needs to establish a healthy relationship with such airlines so that offers such as room fare inclusive of airfare would entice customers to come to the hotel.

In this tech savvy age the resort can also look at establishing a database of e – mail id of their loyal customers and can optimally use the e – mail marketing technique in order to reward customers and offer lower rates to them which do not generally feature on the website.

Conclusions

Marketing has been and would always be an integral part of the smooth functioning of a hotel. Without proper marketing strategies there wouldn't be any guests coming to the property or even if they would be the hotel would be targeting the wrong sort of clientele to cater to. Marketing in hospitality industry is a balanced form of being an art with a lot of science behind every decision being taken under its domain. A more common view is that marketing activities are prepared in order to inform the customers about the products that they may enjoy or that they may improve their life in some way. Few marketers also see it as an opportunity for specific reasons like encouraging repeat purchases and building brand loyalty and affinity.

Mauritius, having a very small population with large number of hotels coming up hospitality personnel are not afraid of losing their jobs. Their attitude is laid back, with the habit of procrastinating things. In order to attract and retain repeat guests it is necessary to primarily retain honest and loyal service personnel. The main reason why Maradiva had to roll down its shutters was its inability to attract guests to occupy its villas. There were a few minor errors with the marketing aspect. It was the price that did not suit many tourists pocket. Maradiva also faced a problem of its inventory being less i. e. only has villas. Other five star hotels which had a mixture of villas

and rooms did roaring business at the same time. This clearly goes to show that the hotel should have done a more precise market survey before going into such a loss.