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# **Marketing and Promotion in the Hotel Industry: A case study in Family Hotel and Hotel Group**

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## Abstract

Marketing shows its importance in every kind of tourist and hotel industry, since it presents itself as a tool that contributes to better management of hotel operations also help in defining appropriate strategies for their development, with the main objective, the increase in financial results. Thus, the thought of marketing and promotion strategy should be developed in a planned, staffed and structured to provide the enabling hospitality company to move the market in better condition that can ensure greater market share, making it possible to take the product or service to customers and potential customers. Marketing and promotion should define a set of actions for internal and external communication that can be put into practice by allowing hotel companies diversified forward messages with the aim of showing and raising awareness of the company, its products and services with ultimate goal of causing consumers consumer desire. To understand how marketing and promotion can take on this vital role for the hotel units, we did an exhaustive search to get collect information about: tourism, hospitality, hotel management, marketing and promotion (these topics that we consider crucial to our work research). To this was fundamental research in thematic books, consult scientific articles and academic theses already undertaken, the consultation of literature related to the two hotel units under study, conducting interviews with the direction of the family-run hotel unit for information about the hotel management and even a visit to the two hotels that were targeted by our research. After collecting and processing all the information and content that could meet the predefined objectives of our investigation, it was revealed that marketing and promotion is a vehicle of great importance for the management of hotels.

**Keywords:** tourism, hospitality, hotel management, marketing, promotion, internal communication, external communication.

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## Resumo

O marketing assume uma grande importância para todo o tipo de empresas turísticas na medida em que se apresenta como uma ferramenta de apoio à gestão e na ajuda da definição de estratégias adequadas para o desenvolvimento das mesmas, com o objetivo principal de potenciar resultados financeiros. Desta forma, o pensamento de marketing e a estratégia de comunicação desenvolvida de forma pensada e estruturada permite colocar a empresa em melhores condições de alcançar uma maior quota de mercado que permita fazer chegar o produto ou serviço junto dos clientes e do mercado. Assim, o marketing e a comunicação devem definir um conjunto de ações de comunicação interna e externa que possam ser colocadas em prática e que permitam transmitir mensagens com o objetivo de dar a conhecer a empresa, os seus produtos e serviços de forma a provocar nos consumidores o desejo de aquisição. Para perceber de que forma é que o marketing e a comunicação podem desempenhar este papel vital para as unidades hoteleiras, procurámos recolher um conjunto de informações sobre os temas do turismo, da hotelaria, da gestão hoteleira, do marketing e da comunicação, temas estes que admitimos serem determinantes para o nosso trabalho de investigação. Para tal, foi fundamental a pesquisa de livros temáticos, a consulta de artigos publicados, a leitura de teses já realizadas sobre estes assuntos, a realização de entrevista junto da direção de unidade hoteleira de gestão familiar para recolher informações sobre como é feita a gestão do hotel e a visita aos dois tipos de hotel que foram alvo do nosso trabalho de investigação. Após a recolha e tratamento de todas as informações e conteúdos que pudessem dar resposta aos objetivos da nossa investigação, foi possível perceber que o marketing e a comunicação são um veículo de grande importância para a gestão das unidades hoteleiras.

**Palavras-chave:** turismo, hotelaria, gestão hoteleira, marketing, comunicação, comunicação externa.

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## **Introduction**

Tourism is currently one of the main economic activities in the world contributing to, economic, cultural and political development of various regions and Krippendorf (1989) argues that we must be attentive to the growth of this activity, while the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2013) shows that Portugal has the ability to believe in its tourism potential, both in terms of revenues, job creation and the multiplier effect that recognizes this activity (Cunha, 2001).

The hotel industry is one of the main sub-sectors of tourism and Cunha (2003) believes that the hotel industry was one of the in the principal motives for the development and growth of tourism, which has led to increased number of establishments hoteliers, respective size and organizational complexity (Quintas, 1998). Also the national hotel accompanied the growth of international hospitality thus becoming in the activity with the highest weight among all activities covered by the national tourism.

Lima (2003) saw the first hotel units were managed by the owners, in the case of purely family business with management by the owner's family managed this, often seen as the first stage of development of hotel management. The development of the hotel business and management skills helped to create a set of techniques that together gave rise to the so-called "Hotel Management", becoming

management with greater complexity and professionalism (Werner, 2004).

The evolution of the hotel management made the hotel units to raise their greater concern with issues of image, promotion, service quality and customer satisfaction therefore was unable to marketing play an important role in guiding the market (Teare, 1998). Thus, Lambin (2000) feels that marketing and promotion are sufficiently important for the hotel it was necessary to develop techniques and strategies for promoting able to reach markets products and hotel services.

Kotler (2003) show us that to communicate with the outside the hotel unit must perform various actions external, structured and developed based on a promotion and effective marketing promotion strategy, allowing to get the message from the market and acquire a wide range of information about the market, customers and competition (Peppers & Rogers, 1999). This strategy could be very important if give to hotel the opportunity to obtaining competitive advantages, including the ability to develop and customize the product/service, providing customer satisfaction, thereby increasing the likelihood of this loyalty is (Gordon, 1998).

## **Literature Review**

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) the "Tourism" is the set of all temporary movements of an individual for other than their usual place of residence or work (WTO, 2013). Cunha

(1997) adds that there have always been several tourist motivations to travel, be they religious, commercial, sport, leisure or the simple desire to know other people and cultures.

To further enhance the growth and development of tourism, Macintosh (1995) highlighted the following factors: the onset of motor traffic, the extension of paid leave, the trend of annual real wages, the tendency to a certain economic smoothing, reduction of hours work and the consequent increase of free time available, the increasing life expectancy, the reforms and the monotony of some current professions.

Cooper, Fletcher, Wanhill, Gilbert and Shepherd (1998) believes that tourism industry is a major economic activity worldwide, and is now a vital activity for various countries and regions with a continuous growth of this activity over the past few years (Krippendorf, 1989). Portugal is no exception and given its characteristics and its tourist potential, where we highlight various tourism products with the ability to attract tourists, has managed to capture a considerable flow of tourists has allowed boost national tourism (Albuquerque & Godinho, 2001).

Beni (2003) considered that all tourism activities that make up the tourism, hotel is one of the most important sub-sectors, with the housing to establish itself as a key component of this activity by checking the increase in the number of hotel establishments, while growing tourist activity (Batista, 2003)

Pine (1995) considered that the evolution of transport, technologies and the phenomenon of the globalization, along with the changes in consumer behavior, created the conditions for increasing the number of trips which forced the creation of conditions for the reception of these tourists, notably higher number of hotel establishments and while their size and organizational complexity.

We saw that the hotel management can be characterized as a particular case of business management but their goals are similar, and in the case of hotel management, this arises due to the evolution and development of the hotel business, which has become increasingly complex and together with the evolution of transport and technology, resulted in the emergence of management techniques (Hall, 1997).

This specific technical management of the hotels may have arisen from the management techniques applied in family hotels, admitting even that was in this kind of hotels that arose organizational evolution that is now recognized to hotels (Lima, 2003).

The same author saw that also under development of tourism and hospitality and consequent increase in the number of hotels, there were conditions for the increasing complexity of establishments which forced the increased complexity of management techniques (Gee & Fayos-Solá, 2003).

Lechter (2003) argues that the development of hospitality forced hoteliers to look to the market in a more dynamic

way and one of the novelties was the need to realize the desires, tastes and demands of the market itself and moreover, we can't forget that only through the provision of service with great quality is possible to maintain high levels of consumption by customers.

To Lambin (2000), "marketing" is the "set of tools for analysis, forecasting methods and market research put into practice in order to develop job prospecting needs demand, and Costa and Talarico (2000) adds that marketing encompasses all steps from creation related to the development of a product or service and promotion respective target market correspondent, always looking for a bi-directional communication with the client, hoping that this is the message sent with the goal of achieving valuable information for the adaptation of the product or service to your target market. "

Zeithaml and Bitner (2000) warned that the product or hotel service should be developed with the help of marketing so that they can together cause a desire to be purchased and consumed by the customer, while the marketing techniques giving a helping hand in designing and implementing a strategy to achieve the market to ensure a greater number of customers, sales and results.

The contribution of marketing techniques allowed the hotels go to apply communication techniques that broadcast messages to customers and the market with information about all products and services available, while the various actions of external communication could be

developed to increase engagement with the client and ensure the conditions necessary for the satisfaction and loyalty (Rublescki, 2009). To reinforce the idea, in addition to the actions of external communication, interests highlight the importance of internal communication actions with regard to motivation and engagement of employees with the hotel, increasing their productivity and motivation to provide high quality service to customers.

To continue our investigation a case study where we identified promotion strategies applied in two hotel units with different management types was performed. Hotels are completely different in either dimension, the typology, the organization, management and classification but what is intended is not making a comparison between both. Our intention is to identify a hotel which recognizes a large capacity for the application of marketing techniques and gather the largest number of shares of internal and external communication.

Later we intend to identify which communication actions are performed in a smaller hotel with fewer resources, familiar management and lower rating so we can understand what kind of actions can be introduced in the latter to increase its performance in marketing to help you improve your results operational.

In first case, we choose the *Hotel Tivoli Oriente* - Hotels & Resorts (one of the biggest hotels group in Portugal), and soon identified in their structure a marketing department with skilled professionals for the development and implementation of

marketing and promotion strategy. A wide range of external communication actions that are applied in order to establish a link with the market constantly communicating a lot of content related to the hotel. Are also carried out some internal communication activities aiming to involve all employees with the hotel, motivating them to take pride in belonging to the group Tivoli Hotels (HTO, 2013).

In the second case, we choose *Albergaria Josefa D' Obidos Hotel*, with typically family-run and we've seen that does not exhibit a clearly defined marketing strategy though it carries some marketing and promotion sporadically. Regarding internal communication actions conclude that they are not applied in a regular and structured (AJDOH 2013).

## Methodology

Our research offers a first theoretical part where we discuss topics such as tourism, hotel, hotel management and marketing. We began our work to make an introduction to tourism, its growth, development and its importance to the various tourist destinations worldwide. Still in initial phase sought to understand how the hotel business emerges and develops a national and global context, trying to understand how growth is sued and that changes were happening.

In the second theoretical part of our research we tried to understand the evolution of hotel techniques and how the hotel management increased its complexity, while we identify the time

when marketing began to take on a key role in the management of hotels. At the end of the theoretical part we discuss how marketing has become an important tool for the management of hotels and where we present the communication actions which can be undertaken to promote the hotel with customers and market.

The second part dedicated to the research methodology, which marks the passage from theoretical to empirical part of the work and where we yet any description of how the whole case study was designed.

After gathering all the theoretical elements needed to develop empirical study was necessary to conduct a case study and thus give rise to the practical part of our research work to make it possible to achieve the objectives initially envisaged.

To this we added further to information previously obtained, a set of information collected through visits to both hotels in the study and conducting an interview with the managers of each hotels to reach the promotion strategy and all the communication actions development.

As the main objective of our work is to analyze the importance of marketing and promotion strategy in hotels, our case study provides an analysis of how this promotion strategy is developed in hotels with typically family-run hotel group with hotels management professional.

Analysis of marketing and promotion applied in family-run hotel group and applied professional hotel management strategy, we identified that marketing and



promotion are applied in each case in order to find possible actions that can be applied for family members to increase their awareness, occupancy rates and overall outcomes hotels.

This analysis assumes that family-run hotels do not provide a strategy for effective communication unlike what happens with hotels hotel group with professional management seeking to develop a marketing strategy and promotion according to marketing theory predicts for hospitality and hotel units.

#### 4. Results

Thus, we have seen that tourism is a major economic activity around the world, becoming a vital activity for various countries and regions with a continuous growth over the years (Krippendorf, 1989) in which Portugal is no exception, given their characteristics which can highlight various tourism products with the capacity to attract tourists (Albuquerque & Godinho, 2001).

According to the World Tourism Organization, international tourist activity recorded in 2010 approximately 952 million international tourist arrivals, 996 million in 2011 and 1 billion trips in 2012, thereby recording a new record for international arrivals passing the first time barrier "trillion international travel" (WTO, 2013).

As mentioned earlier, there are several tourist motivations that are the cause of international travel and emphasize that in 2012 the main motivations for traveling

were the "leisure, recreation and holidays" account for about 52% of total international travel, the "visits to family, health and religion "responsible for 27% of journeys and motivations" professional / business "account for 14% (INE, 2013).

International tourism receipts in 2012 had an approximate value of € 837 billion and Europe being the region with the greatest ability to capture tourist flows, we emphasize that only this region achieved revenues from tourism in the order of € 356 billion (INE, 2013).

According to UNWTO believe that tourism can become the main global economic activity (Cooper, Fletcher, Wanhill, Gilbert & Shepherd, 1998), with a prediction that points to some 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals in 2020, and 1.8 billion arrivals by 2030 (WTO, 2013).

Due to its characteristics, Portugal has managed to show all his willingness to establish itself as a country facing the tourism activity, since it has to offer a wide range of tourism products and services with the capacity to attract tourists (Albuquerque & Godinho, 2001), although the product "sun and sea" is the one with greater capacity to capture domestic and foreign tourist flows.

According to data for 2010, Portugal emerged during the 26th position among the countries with the highest ability to generate income from tourism, with around € 8 billion, a figure, far cry from the € 43 billion achieved by neighboring Spain.

The hotel business in Portugal has also seen large changes accompanying the

development that happens internationally and according to data from the Portugal National Statistics Institute, we can say that the hotel business, including the sale of rooms is one that has greater weight has within all activities covered by tourism in Portugal, representing in 2010 approximately 38.4%. To understand its importance, it is sufficient to compare the activities of transport and food and beverage, which represent each of them, about 22% of the total value of around EUR 500 million (INE, 2013).

The latest statistics show that in 2012 there were 2046 hotelier in Portugal and that about half (about 992 hotels) are hotels with rating between 1 and 5 stars, the other half being reserved for Apartments Hotels, hostels and other types of establishments, thus showing the importance of hotel national hotel. It is important to emphasize that the existing 992 hotels in Portugal, about 65% of hotels are 3 and 4 star leaving the remainder, about 35%, divided by 1.2 and hotels 5 star and in relation to the distribution thereof, checks is that regions with the largest number of hotels are Center (255 hotels), North (251 hotels), Lisbon (192 hotels) and Algarve (115 hotels) (INE, 2013).

Unlike what happens with the family run hotel where the management is done in most cases by members of the family who own the hotel, professional hotel management employees are admitted based on criteria of competence rather than criteria familiarity (Gee & Fayos-Sola, 2003).

The growth of the number of hotels and respective dimension, which joined the technological development and consequent globalization forced the emergence of more complex structures and that triggered the need for a more developed management (Barreto Filho, 2001) thereby contributing to the development of a hotel increasingly professional management.

However, the hotels do not always have the financial and human resource capacity to invest in marketing departments who can develop well defined marketing strategies, what can put them vulnerable to competition, given the ability of large hotel groups have to devote resources directed to the marketing department. But with our investigation we will try to find some low expensive promotion actions could be applied in hotels with low resources.

The evolution of marketing has enabled a number of changes in management of hotels, increasing the intensity of the relationship between hotels, clients and market (Rublescki, 2009). The marketing emerges as an important tool in the exploration of customer needs and demand, thereby assisting in the design and development of the tourism product or service and the same respective promotion (Costa and Talarico, 2000).

For MacIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie (2002) the existence of a product or hotel service that can be changed in order to turn them into a set of expectations that arouse a desire to be consumed by the customer, making marketing an overriding tool is

required in the daily operation of a hotel (Berry, 1983).

The communication strategy of the hotels is very important and as advocates Lambin (2000) is no good having a product and service quality if the hotel does not have the ability to convey to the market and to provoke the desire to be acquired (MacIntosh, 2000)

After making our case study was possible to obtain a set of information about marketing and in this particular case on promotion strategies in hospitality. So within and external communication actions we find: advertising (for example: billboards or magazines.), direct marketing (telemarketing, email, newsletter), public relations (press releases or themed events), online actions (site, presence on social networking sites or content), sponsorship and patronage (financing or partnerships in events), sales promotions (or price reductions in training package with benefits for the customer), merchandising (selling products with identification name hotel), educational visits and familiarization (invitation to receive visits from journalists and opinion leaders and loyalty actions (Lambin, 2000).

According to the results obtained, it was still possible to analyze and identify some internal communication actions seeking to engage employees with the hotel and the brand, where you can highlight: employee manuals, birthday card or magazine hotel/brand.

In the case of *Albergaria Josefa D' Obidos Hotel*, we can identify some direct marketing (sending Christmas cards for

partners or hotel brochure), public relations (presence in tourism fairs or gatherings of disclosure in the media), online stock (hotel or presence on FACEBOOK site), sponsorship of events (for accommodation or meals), sales promotion (low prices just accommodation and throughout the year) and some loyalty actions (offering of flowers to birthdays or reduction 20% in the price of accommodation) (AJDOH, 2013).

In the case of *Tivoli Oriente Hotel*, we saw that the first step of the marketing strategy was the choice of positioning chains and the definition of the Mission, Values and Vision of Tivoli Hotels, while they made the change image (logo and stationary basic) and created a concept of experience, service and care. Some of the actions of external communication that are applied include advertising (magazines, brochures or basic stationary), direct marketing (telemarketing, email sending or receiving in the room with "Welcome" on the LCD), public relations (press releases or announcements press), online actions (site with lots of content, online brochure, presence on various social networks and in various content sites), sponsorship of events (tests of golf, equestrian or dining), sales promotions (discounts preparation or preparation promotional package), partnerships (with golf, leisure or catering businesses), merchandising (various Tivoli products) and actions loyalty (satisfaction questionnaires or offer voucher or loyalty card) (HTO, 2013).

Also identified internal communication activities, with the goal of reaching all

employees and among some cases stand out: the Tivoli Hotels magazine, birthday card or the employee manual.

Some of the actions of communication that we have identified as potential application in hotels and family run, and that can improve the relationship with the market, promoting the image, increasing awareness, achieve better occupancy rates and overall results are:

- Development and application of survey and treatment evaluation of customer satisfaction;
- Deals, promotions and surprise customers as a means of achieving loyalty;
- To promote direct marketing with customers, potential customers and the market;
- Partnerships with golf courses in the region due to the potential of this product in attracting customers;
- Implementation of regular internal communication and in a structured manner in order to keep the team motivated and objectives and present;
- Hiring a specialized company or research group GITUR for developing and implementing a marketing strategy and plan to apply at the hotel;
- Vocational training in marketing to the heads of each department;
- Amendment of the hotel name, logo and stationary base;
- Modernization of the hotel and strengthening of activity in social networking site;
- Realization of themed events on a regular basis to increase the visibility

and recognition of the quality of the hotel.

## 5. Conclusion

Throughout our research was possible to realize that tourism is assumed as one of the main economic activities in the world taking into account a range of income and capital gains that generates around it. We have seen that the development of tourism potentiate the development of the hotel activity causing an increase in the number of establishments and their respective size, complexity and organization (Albuquerque & Godinho, 2001).

Also noticed that the hotel is part of the tourist offer, even being one of the most important subsectors, given that housing is a key component of this activity, which led to an increase in the number of hotel establishments at the same time that there has been growth of tourism (Beni, 2003).

The evolution of the transport system and the technological means, along with changing consumer behavior, has enabled an increase in the number of trips which led to the need to create conditions for the receipt of these tourists, which makes larger number of establishments arise, while its size and organizational complexity will also increase (Hall, 1997).

Hotel management can be seen as a particular case of business management but with very similar goals. The hotel management arises due to the evolution and development of the hotel business that has become increasingly complex and coupled to technological evolution makes

emerge management techniques that follow this same trend (Lima, 2003)

This development hotelier leads to the need to introduce a series of management techniques that subsequently give rise to a set of techniques encompassed what later comes to be known as hospitality management. Among various types of techniques and management strategies, some of them appear closely related to the topic of marketing and started attending a very close relationship between the hotel management and marketing relationship that brings numerous benefits to hotel operations.

We saw that the hotel group are better adapted to the evolution of hospitality, to the extent that accompanied the new trends in hotel management, in particular regarding the definition and implementation of a marketing thinking, developing marketing strategies and communication actions quite effective, trying to use every means to communicate and reach to customers or the market. Add that it was possible to define a set of external and internal actions that can be implemented easily and without great financial cost to the hotels and can bring added value in improving awareness and increasing occupancy rates and overall results.

Thus, we have seen that communication is essential to people's lives and businesses, and the proof is all the media around us and all the ways we receive messages, almost admitting that they do not communicate, there is no (Lambin, 2000). Thus communication in hospitality

is vital information to markets for products and services that can be consumed in hotels there, communicating to the outside several messages with the purpose of awakening in them a desire to purchase (MacIntosh, Goeldner & Ritchie 2002).

The marketing and communication to help in increasing knowledge of the tastes, desires and needs, provides conditions for the development of products that are better in accordance with the wishes of customers, thus increasing the likelihood of ensuring their satisfaction (Kotler, 1999; Pine, 1993). This knowledge allows the client to the hotel to customize the product or customer service making this feel special and with a quality service results in greater customer satisfaction (Gordon, 1998). This close relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction provides better conditions for it to fidelize the hotel thus increasing the customer value to the company (Caruana, 2003).

Analysis of marketing strategies and promotion of two hotels in the study, we noticed that the family-run hotel features large gaps with regard to the actions of external and internal communication, unlike what happens with the hotel group, which were identified various actions of external and internal communication that seeks to involve the client or collaborator with the hotel and the brand associated.

Finally, we saw that the hotel group is better adapted to the evolution of hospitality, to the extent that accompanied the new trends in hotel management, in particular regarding the definition and implementation of a marketing thinking,

developing marketing strategies and actions quite effective communication, making use every means to communicate and reach to customers or the market. Add that it was possible to define a set of external and internal actions that can be implemented easily and without great financial cost to the hotels and can bring added value in improving awareness and increasing occupancy rates and overall results.

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