

MARKETING STRATEGY ON TOURISM OF CULTURAL HERITAGE (Case Study at the Heritage Palace in Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java)

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Abstract

This study aims to depict the marketing strategy implemented by The Heritage Palace in increasing sales and to describe the constraints and solutions applied by The Heritage Palace in marketing activities. This type of research is qualitative with a case study research design. Research sources were managers, employees, and tourists of The Heritage Palace. Data collection methods used in this study were interviews, observation, and documentation. The validity of the data in this study employed the source and method triangulation. The data analysis technique utilized interactive analysis in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion and verification. The results of this study indicated that the marketing strategy used by The Heritage Place in increasing sales was to determine the price according to the facilities obtained and conduct promotions by utilizing social media, newspapers, and television and collaborating with tour and travel agents. Heritage Place also had a constraint in performing marketing activities in the pandemic condition that made the government issue regulations to temporarily close tourist attractions. From this constraint, The Heritage had a solution to overcome problems by monitoring and evaluating the situation. These solutions make Heritage Place easier to make decisions to conduct marketing strategies according to government regulations that shift during the pandemic.

Keywords: marketing strategy, sales, cultural heritage

1. Introduction

Every company must be established to develop its business towards prosperity. This target can be achieved by the company using defense efforts and increasing industrial profits by improving the marketing power of the goods produced. Marketing is a vital concept to the success of any business. Marketing is observing the willingness and techniques to meet consumer needs to achieve satisfaction that can have a positive impact on the industry. Marketing as part of a functional component is highly crucial in a business organization that supports the sustainability of the business field.

Marketing as part of it is a critical and dynamic subject for business and non-profit organizations both small and large scale and those engaged in manufacturing and services. Assauri (2014) defined marketing as a human activity to fulfill and satisfy needs and wants or desires with exchange activities. According to Melati (2020), marketing is a human activity that is directed at efforts to satisfy wants and needs through a process. Marketing activities are not only concerned with distributing products or services to customers but also an activity reducing or eliminating the use of an item. Marketing activities are usually conducted before the product or service is distributed from the producer to the consumer.

Marketing will run effectively if it has an applicable strategy for distributing products and services. A marketing strategy is an effort to serve the needs of the target market. According to Ratu & Adikampana (2016), the marketing strategy is an effort to achieve the target of visiting tourists to increase sales, which are managed by tourism managers. Meanwhile, Achsa, Destiningsih, & Hirawati (2020) specified that marketing strategy is a technique to accomplish the fierce competition for companies in producing goods or services. Marketing strategy can also be perceived as a way of planning the company as a whole.

In this case, business people need to master strategies in good marketing activities, so that the products sold are in great demand by consumers and can survive in a fierce level of competition. Therefore, business people can implement a marketing strategy in the form of a marketing mix consisting of the 4Ps, namely product, price, place, and promotion. An effective marketing strategy can increase sales results, so business people must implement a good marketing strategy. Atmoko (2018) stated that there are seven elements in the marketing strategy to increase sales, namely product, price, place, promotion, participants, physical evidence, and process.

According to Bernard, et al. (2021), in the current modern era, social media is highly influential in the promotion step; so, stakeholders must make more promotions on social media. Entrepreneurs can apply one of

the marketing strategies in designing innovative and magnetizing marketing strategies, namely promotion. Promotions are performed by utilizing social media that will increase sales and can introduce The Heritage Palace to society, especially to millennials today who always use social media in their daily lives. According to Sihombing et al., (2021), Social media functions as a medium to interact without being limited by space and time. According to Untari & Fajariana (2018), product sales can increase by marketing through social media such as Instagram. Social media is a means that has a role to promote goods and services created from marketing on the internet. Meanwhile, according to Amin & Priansah (2019), promotion is one determinant of the success of a marketing plan that can provide motivation and information. Thus, no matter how high the product is, if consumers have never recognized it and are not sure that the product is beneficial for them, then they are not interested in purchasing it. Therefore, appropriate promotions will be well received by consumers. The purpose of this research is to depict the marketing strategies implemented by The Heritage Palace in increasing sales and the constraints and solutions applied by The Heritage Palace in marketing activities.

2. Method

This research uses qualitative research with a case study design. This research was conducted at The Heritage Palace, which is cultural heritage tourism in Sukoharjo regency, Central Java province, Indonesia. Data collection techniques used in this study were interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted directly with managers, employees, and tourists. Observations were done directly to The Heritage Palace to reveal the marketing strategies for increasing sales. In addition, documentation was performed in the form of photos while documents were in the form of images and writing.

The presence of researchers in this study was to plan, collect data, analyze data, and report research results. The validity of the data was examined through source triangulation to obtain a standard of data trustworthiness through re-checking the data against the information obtained. The data analysis technique was completed using a data reduction analysis model, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

3. Results and Discussion

A. Results

1) The Heritage Palace's Marketing Strategy to Increase Sales

The prompt development of business day by day is certainly experiencing very fierce competition, especially in the tourism sector. Many entrepreneurs improve their skills by opening businesses that exploit historical buildings, which have been built into attractive and appealing tourist attractions to be visited by tourists. Therefore, the entrepreneur of The Heritage Palace must have a defined strategy to face the competition. According to Sri, et al. (2015), sales promotion is one element of the marketing mix that is highly indispensable. Promotion is an essential element that needs to be considered to increase sales volume. Strategy is a technique of planning, implementing, and completing activities by the company in achieving its targets. Hence, in facing competition, The Heritage Palace entrepreneurs had a marketing strategy in increasing ticket sales by utilizing social media as a means for promoting tourist attractions that have been opened.

The marketing strategy that has been used by entrepreneurs to employees had prominently improved ticket sales at The Heritage Palace. They had a strategy of utilizing social media to introduce the views at The Heritage Palace tourist attractions; social media was used as a technique to meet current needs (Soliha, 2016). According to Hasiholan & Amboningtyas (2021), digital marketing includes delivering online content to customers to attract and involve them in engagement activities related to business goods and services. Thus, it triggers potential tourists curious about the tourism that has been promoted, especially promotions on Instagram social media, most of which are millennials who are very enthusiastic about tourist attractions that have interesting photo spots. Therefore, a marketing strategy that utilizes social media as a way to increase ticket sales is very applicable because they can provide reviews of these tourist attractions directly with photo and video evidence uploaded on social media.

The marketing strategy was run based on the plan from the process of introducing the places in The Heritage Palace to promotions that were used to be recognized by society. So, from the involvement of these employees, the strategy that had been planned and accompanied would be evaluated by observing the shortcomings of the marketing strategy implemented. From the determination to the participation of employees in performing the marketing strategy used by The Heritage Palace, it had received a very positive response from potential tourists who will visit The Heritage Palace. They were interested in the

efforts made by The Heritage Palace to attract tourists to come the tourist attractions of The Heritage Palace.

The impact of the promotion carried out by The Heritage Palace is very effective in marketing activities. Like when promoting on social media in a dissimilar way than before, such as during the Christmas holidays, New Year, and Eid holidays, these promotional activities led to a significant increase in ticket sales. Therefore, promotion using social media, newspapers, and television plays an essential role in the sustainability of the marketing strategy implemented. The promotions completed would attract tourists to visit this tourist spot at The Heritage Palace. According to Fauzi (2020), Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp are marketing media that are easy, cheap, and can reach all levels of society. Not only that but promotions are also done in collaboration with tour and travel agencies. The promotions that had been performed become a piece of evidence by the significant increase in ticket sales, especially during long holidays. So, it can be concluded that promotion using social media was done by publishing photos at The Heritage Palace, which would make it easier for tourists to see the outline on various social media. It was proved by the tourists that were interested in visiting the place because of a promotion on one of these social media. The increase in ticket sales was also higher when the Christmas, New Year, or Eid holidays. Hence, the promotion used by The Heritage Palace is currently appropriate and continues to be evaluated for any deficiencies in the promotion process.

2) Constraints and Solutions Made by The Heritage Palace in Conducting Marketing Activities

Constraints to marketing activities performed by The Heritage Palace include the temporary closure of tourist attractions during the government's PPKM (Implementation of Restrictions on Community Activities) policy. Thus, The Heritage Palace could not perform its standard marketing. Therefore, Heritage Palace did not carry out marketing temporarily until conditions allowed them to reopen their tourist attractions. However, they continued to monitor and evaluate so that their marketing can increase sales significantly. The constraint experienced by The Heritage Palace was regarding the pandemic conditions experienced by Indonesia. So, the government issued regulations to temporarily close existing tours. Therefore, the constraints they faced hindered the marketing activities of The Heritage Palace because they automatically could not conduct the marketing they had planned. It can be concluded that the current pandemic situation in Indonesia had become a constraint for The Heritage Palace in marketing. They could only do marketing when the regulations are changed or revoked. Therefore, they could conduct the planned marketing after the evaluation.

The solution to overcome these problems was in conducting a marketing strategy. The solution was more to monitor and re-evaluate the appropriate marketing activities used after the PPKM (Implementation of Restrictions on Community Activities) was revoked by the government. Hence, these constraints could be overcome by waiting for government regulations to reopen tourist attractions as previously. It can be concluded that the right solution was to evaluate the marketing activities that should be taken when government regulations were revoked. With careful preparation, it would give maximum results in marketing activities, for instance, when the tour was opened, The Heritage Palace immediately conducted promotions on social media to be recognized by the wider community. Not only using my social media, but The Heritage Palace also had to increase its promotional activities directly by word of mouth to provide interesting information to potential tourists who are interested in visiting the tourist attractions of The Heritage Palace.

B. Discussion

b) The Heritage Palace's Marketing Strategy to Increase Sales

Marketing strategy is a company's effort to survive during this fierce competition. The marketing strategy is adjusted to the objectives, capabilities, opportunities, and existing constraints. Therefore, The Heritage Palace must possess an appropriate marketing strategy so that the business it runs continues to grow from time to time. Achsa, Destiningsih, & Hirawati (2020) confirmed that using the appropriate marketing strategy will improve existing competitiveness, especially by increasing sales at tourist attractions. Before conducting the marketing strategy that had been determined, there must be a plan that has been made by the entrepreneurs of The Heritage Palace in achieving their business. They observed the conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic experienced by Indonesia at this time so that the marketing strategy planning was not missed. Thus, entrepreneurs continuously reviewed and obeyed government regulations by accepting 75% of tourist visits from before the covid-19 pandemic. However, with this regulation, the marketing strategy completed continued according to the arranged

plan. Therefore, companies did not experience losses. They reduced expenses by 25% from the previous so that expenses did not exceed existing income.

The first thing that The Heritage Palace did in increasing sales was by determining the price. Price is the total amount that consumers have to pay to obtain an item. Price is the most significant element in the sustainability of the marketing strategy used. In their research, Sayekti et al. (2018) mentioned that the price strategy offered is by considering how much each production cost expenses (Fahlevy & Saputri, 2019).

The next marketing strategy used was to promote by utilizing social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, the web, and others. The Heritage Palace had a promotional strategy by utilizing social media, newspapers, and television media to introduce The Heritage Palace to the wider community. Hence, utilizing social media was one of the techniques they used to increase ticket sales there. As expressed by Virgilenna & Anom (2018) in their research, social media is one way that can be done as a means of promoting products and services marketed via the internet.

The use of Instagram as a promotional medium significantly contributed to increasing the number of visitors, such as the Christmas holidays, New Year, and Eid holidays. The potential tourists were more interested in seeing the promotional methods used by The Heritage Palace on social media, namely Instagram. In line with research by Handika & Darma (2021) and strengthened by research from Untari & Fajariana (2018), utilizing Instagram can increase sales. Therefore, the use of social media significantly contributed to the increasing sales and business continuity at The Heritage Palace at this time. It can be assumed that the marketing strategy used by The Heritage Palace is currently in line with the targets and objectives of The Heritage Palace itself. Even with the Covid-19 pandemic, they could overcome it by evaluating it as a whole by designing the right marketing strategy.

c) **Constraint and Solution Done by The Heritage Palace in Conducting Marketing Activities**

The constraint experienced by The Heritage Palace was regarding the conditions that made them temporarily close due to government regulations in breaking the chain of the spread of COVID-19. Thus, the regulation made all tourist attractions, especially in Central Java, closed until conditions improve. It had resulted in the inhibition of marketing activities in increasing sales at The Heritage Palace. Not only that, but The Heritage Palace had also confined all activities and expenses to avoid losses until tourist attractions were allowed to operate again by the government.

Considering the constraint that occurred, The Heritage Palace continuously monitored and evaluated the current pandemic conditions to view opportunities when government regulations have been revoked. Thus, by this opportunity, The Heritage Palace could fix the shortcomings experienced by them. Starting from improving human resources to promotions were completed by them so that they could survive when the Covid-19 pandemic condition become a constraint to marketing activities. Virgilenna & Anom (2018) stated that with the existing constraint, there are certainly opportunities to deal with this constraint, especially by improving human resources. Human resources act as the front line in encouraging the progress of a business just as education in universities prepares quality and professional human resources who will be able to bring the impact of learning entrepreneurship education in the form of a generation of educated entrepreneurs (Hasmidyani, Suranto, & Soetjipto, 2019).

The first step they took in marketing activities was to promote The Heritage Palace on all social media that they had reopened The Heritage Palace with the applicable conditions. The use of social media by The Heritage Palace was to let the wider community know that they had been re-operating. Therefore, a marketing strategy done by promotion on social media was expected to increase tourism potential at Heritage Place. With a marketing communication strategy through advertising and social media, it can improve the potential of tourists (Amin & Priansah, 2019).

So, from the constraints faced and solutions offered, of course, it is necessary to increase marketing strategies to reduce constraints in marketing activities, namely by increasing activities in the promotion. It is by performing direct promotions to tour agents, travel agents, and schools providing information about The Heritage Palace that it is a comfortable and safe tourist spot for families and school groups and is worth visiting because they have a good place to take pictures. Tourist attractions will not succeed if they only rely on the existence of enchanting tourist attractions, but must also be supported by qualified, reliable, and responsive human resources to deal with various changes that will occur (Reza & Saputri, 2019). Other things to maximize the role of cultural tourism can be completed by developing various tourist facilities, maximizing promotions, conducting cultural festivals, and organizing various creative and innovative competitions that will be respected by the surrounding community (Suranto, Jayanti, Setyawati, & Jatmika, 2020).

Therefore, combining the use of promotions with social media and direct word-of-mouth promotions could increase sales at The Heritage Palace. It is in line with the expression stated by Atmoko (2018) in his research that the seven elements of the marketing mix have the potential to increase sales volume, namely by direct promotion and utilizing social and electronic media.

4. Conclusion

The marketing strategy used by The Heritage Palace is to utilize social media, newspapers, and television, and cooperate with tour and travel agents. In planning the marketing strategy, it is adjusted to government regulations that can only accept 75% of visitors from the previous condition. The ticket prices offered were by the facilities obtained so that they were attractive to visitors. Special ticket prices were applied to groups of school children who tour The Heritage Palace. This marketing strategy had proven to be appropriate in increasing visitor interest.

The constraint faced by The Heritage Palace in performing marketing activities was the pandemic condition that was experienced by Indonesia, which made tourist attractions temporarily closed. Thus, marketing activities could not be done properly. The solution from The Heritage Palace was to monitor and evaluate the right marketing strategy used after government regulations were no longer enforced. The Heritage Palace easily took a marketing step by promoting on social media. This study provides recommendations for future research to conduct broader research to obtain generalizable results.

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