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THE OPTIMIZATION OF FLASH SALE VOUCHER FOR PROMOTION AT VILA LUMBUNG HOTEL, SEMINYAK-BALI

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Abstract

Voucher Flash Sale is a form of marketing strategy carried out by Hotel Vila Lumbung. Unfortunately, the use of Flash Sale vouchers has not been effective because the sales results have not been able to reach the target. The purpose of this study was to develop a promotional strategy through the use of flash sale vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung. The research method used is qualitative by collecting data through interviews, using marketing mix theory and using SWOT analysis techniques. The results of the study reveal strategies that can be carried out including promoting Flash Sale Vouchers at other OTAs such as fave, traveloka, hotelbeds, roiback and others who have collaborated with the hotel; provide free charge rewards for one day using hotel facilities for each internal staff who successfully sells Flash Sale Vouchers; provide a special barcode in the Flash Sale Voucher which can be accessed online or offline; utilizing hotel facilities as a form of benefit to those who promote it, so that this can minimize the use of budget in the promotion process of Flash Sale Vouchers. With this research, it is hoped that Hotel Vila Lumbung Seminyak-Badung can maximize its strategy in promoting Flash Sale Vouchers.

Keywords: SWOT, Marketing Mix Communication, Hotel

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the business sectors highly susceptible to external issues affecting the business itself. A recent example is the COVID-19 pandemic, a global health issue impacting nearly all sectors of life, including tourism activities. Tourism is a sector significantly affected by policies reducing mobility, such as government regulations implementing restrictions on community activities (PPKM) and bans on domestic and international tourism activities to mitigate transmission risks.

These various restrictions have certainly affected hotel room occupancy rates. Data on Room Occupancy Rates (TPK) in Bali, the center of Indonesia's tourism, showed a sharp decline following the implementation of PPKM. In April 2020, the TPK recorded was 3.22%, while in March 2020, it was still at 25.41% (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Bali, 2020). This global phenomenon has led various tourism accommodation businesses to adopt survival strategies, including promoting their hotels.

Hotel Vila Lumbung is a 4-star hotel located in Seminyak. Its location is considered very strategic, being close to several tourist attractions, such as Seminyak Beach, which is a 3-minute drive away, and Kuta and Legian, which are a 5-minute drive away. Besides tourist attractions, Hotel Vila Lumbung is near several attractions like Seminyak Square, Pura Petitenget, Waterbom Bali, and Taksu Gallery. This can be an added value for tourists to enjoy their holidays even more.

Hotel Vila Lumbung is one of the hotels under PT Lumbung Mas Sentosa. PT Lumbung Mas Sentosa's owner is Mr. Widono Salim from Jakarta, while Hotel Vila Lumbung's advisor is Mr. Eka Pertama. Hotel Vila Lumbung has a sister company named The One Legian. Hotel Vila Lumbung has 70 rooms, including 36 Superior Rooms, 14 Deluxe Lumbung Downstairs, 13 Deluxe Lumbung Upstairs, 5 Deluxe Lumbung with Kitchenette, and 2 Three-Bedroom Deluxe Lumbung.

Karmayanti, the Sales Marketing Manager (interview, 2022), revealed that in 2019, Hotel Vila Lumbung had an average occupancy rate of 62.8% each month. In 2020, the average occupancy rate was 16.8% each month, and it further decreased in 2021 to 10.3% each month.

As a hotel engaged in accommodation, Hotel Vila Lumbung has several marketing strategies, such as collaborating with several online travel agents and influencers and creating Flash Sale Vouchers. Flash Sale Vouchers are one of the marketing strategies employed by Hotel Vila Lumbung, including cooperation with travel agents that promote the Flash Sale Vouchers, influencers, and through the hotel's social media.



Figure 1. Flash Sale Voucher of Hotel Vila Lumbung

Hotel Vila Lumbung implements the Flash Sale Voucher as one of its promotional instruments. This voucher allows the company to offer limited-time deals to attract customers and increase room occupancy rates. However, the promotion is considered ineffective and thus requires a mix of other marketing communication strategies. This voucher offers several benefits for stays within a specified period, making it more popular than other vouchers.

The decline in tourist visits to Hotel Vila Lumbung is due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in decreased hotel occupancy. Each hotel has developed new strategies to maintain operations during the pandemic, prompting Hotel Vila Lumbung to devise new strategies to promote the Flash Sale Voucher. These new promotional strategies are expected to attract tourists and increase the hotel's occupancy rates. Therefore, research is needed on the Promotional Strategy by utilizing Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung.

Wijaya & Santoso (2018) revealed that efforts to increase room occupancy can be made by maintaining good relationships with the community, brand positioning, collaboration with travel agents, providing excellent service, utilizing technology, and improving service quality. The Flash Sale Voucher is part of digital marketing that utilizes social media, a practical, cheap, and growing marketing medium. Flash sale vouchers can significantly increase occupancy if comprehensively combined with other marketing communication techniques (Silawati et al., 2023).

The effectiveness of using flash sale vouchers in increasing sales is also related to the brand image of the company running this type of sales promotion.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Promotion is a part of marketing activities responsible for the communication process with the market. It aims to provide information about the product, influence consumer decisions to use the product, and remind the market of the product's existence. This is done not only to make the target market aware of and use the product but also to build loyalty to the product (Tjiptono, 2001).

Promotional activities are aimed not only at consumers who will buy the product immediately or shortly after the promotion is carried out but also at potential consumers. The promotion direction toward potential consumers can be an initiative to create a desire to buy, even if the purchase action will be done in the future (Sistaningrum, 2002). A promotional strategy is a marketing plan carried out by a business to create value and gain benefits from its relationship with consumers. The promotional plan cannot be viewed partially as a one-on-one relationship between seller and buyer, but it must develop a program comprehensively (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). According to Moekijat (2000), a promotional strategy is: "A company's activities to encourage sales by directing convincing communications to buyers".

Several expert opinions suggest that the promotional strategy in this study is the company's efforts to attract consumers to a product offered, either individually, in groups directly, or through online activities. The strategy formulated is a series of efforts to optimize flash sale vouchers as a promotional medium for Hotel Vila Lumbung, which still needs to be optimally applied in sales.

Dinata & Setyanto (2021) study on flash sales conducted by Traveloka reveals that the flash sale method must also be accompanied by other marketing communication methods that can enhance brand image and brand awareness. This research uses the marketing communication mix theory according to Kotler & Armstrong (2012), which states that marketing communications include advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, and direct marketing tools companies use to communicate customer value persuasively and build customer relationships. Marketing communications encompass advertising, sales promotion, events and experiences, public relations and publicity, direct marketing, interactive marketing, word-of-mouth marketing, and personal selling.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a qualitative method, collecting data through interviews. It also employed SWOT analysis techniques, which systematically identify various factors to formulate appropriate strategies (Rangkuti, 2022). The data collection methods used in this study are as follows:

- a. Observation Method: This involves the systematic observation and recording of the phenomena being investigated. Observations in this study were conducted directly at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak—Badung.
- b. Documentation Study: This method was employed to obtain data from Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung, and reference journals used in the research.
- c. Interviews: Interviews were conducted to gather information from relevant parties to obtain the necessary data for the discussion. Interviews were conducted with guests staying at Hotel Vila Lumbung Seminyak-Badung, the sales marketing manager in charge, and online or offline travel agents collaborating with Hotel Vila Lumbung Seminyak-Badung. The interviews were unstructured to avoid rigidity and to gather more in-depth data.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research employs five techniques to analyze the data. The first is SWOT Analysis, which systematically identifies various factors to formulate service strategies. This analysis is based on logic that can maximize opportunities while minimizing weaknesses and threats. SWOT analysis was conducted to analyze strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to find promotional strategies using Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung. These four components are presented in a SWOT matrix that illustrates the opportunities and threats faced, adjusted to the strengths and weaknesses. This matrix can generate four sets of possible strategic alternatives, namely SO (Strength-Opportunities) strategies, ST (Strength-Threats) strategies, WO (Weakness-Opportunities) strategies, and WT (Weakness-Threats) strategies.

The second technique is data reduction, where data obtained from interviews with the sales marketing manager and online or offline travel agents are summarized, along with observational data from Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung. The third technique is data triangulation, which is conducted to verify certain information through various methods and data acquisition sources. For example, besides interviews and observations, the researcher can use participatory observations, written documents, and photos or images produced at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung. The fourth technique is data analysis, where data reduction results are linked according to the theoretical foundation and literature review used. Finally, conclusions are drawn, which in this research are expected to be the promotional strategy for Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung.

This research is based on two factors: external and internal factors. The external factor underpinning this study is the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused a decline in room occupancy in Bali. The internal factor is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Hotel Vila Lumbung. Based on these two factors, this study titled "Promotional Strategies Through the Utilization of Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung" was conducted using a literature review of previous studies relevant to the current research and concepts to align the perceptions between the reader and the author. This study uses the Marketing Communication Mix theory with a descriptive qualitative research method. The two research questions are: How is the

situational analysis of Flash Sale Voucher implementation at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung? Second, what room sales promotion strategies are used for Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung?

The type of data used in this research is qualitative data obtained from primary data sources (from first-hand sources) and secondary data sources (from sources other than first-hand sources). Primary data sources were obtained from observations and interviews. Observations involved daily sales marketing activities in conducting the Flash Sale Voucher sales procedure at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung, with documentation and direct field observations. Interviews were conducted with the sales marketing manager at Hotel Vila Lumbung, Seminyak-Badung, who was responsible for the Flash Sale Voucher sales procedure, and with online or offline travel agents. According to Kotler, these interviews were based on SWOT analysis using the Marketing Communication Mix theory.

Several steps are taken by the sales marketing staff in handling room sales procedures with flash sale vouchers, from the preparation stage to the final stage. The preparation includes:

- a. **Meetings:** Held to discuss the room sales procedure with Flash Sale Vouchers and to convey information about the vouchers to be issued. Meetings also serve as a forum for participant suggestions and feedback, usually attended by the general manager and relevant department heads.
- b. **Flyer Design Creation:** After the meeting results are determined, the sales manager will request assistance from the marketing communication department to create a flyer design for the Flash Sale Vouchers. The flyer design must contain clear information to be well received by prospective consumers.
- c. **Data Entry:** Sales marketing staff must create a list in Microsoft Excel of guests who have made reservations via WhatsApp or the Hotel Vila Lumbung website. This data entry aims to facilitate the final process of the flash sale voucher, where consumer data previously filled in will be input into one Excel file. This process includes consumer payment information and transaction proof of voucher purchases, which will be stored in one folder.

Promotional activities for Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung are conducted online and offline. Online promotions are carried out on the Hotel Vila Lumbung website, where all societal levels can easily access detailed information about the hotel. This site is handled directly by the sales and marketing staff and contains comprehensive information about the hotel, including its complete address, phone number, facilities and services, and product prices. The hotel also promotes flash sale vouchers on its Instagram account for the same purpose. Offline promotions are conducted through offline travel agents.

The situational analysis of Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung aims to understand how the vouchers are evaluated based on current sales experiences. Data from this analysis is obtained using interviews and SWOT analysis. The analysis of Flash Sale Vouchers includes internal factors such as strengths and weaknesses and external factors such as opportunities and threats.

- a. Strengths of Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung include:
 - Promoted through paid accounts.
 - A form of sales promotion.
 - Can be promoted at various events.
 - Can be promoted with guaranteed content.

- Can be promoted ineffective and low-cost media.
 - Can be sold directly or indirectly.
 - Can be promoted through Word of Mouth.
 - Personal selling available via WhatsApp and email
- b. Weaknesses of Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung include:
- Limited to social media and online travel agents.
 - Printed vouchers risk being lost.
 - Promoted only at internal events.
 - Limited reach to other companies or government bodies.
 - Lack of updates.
 - No dedicated staff for direct promotion.
 - Less effective word of mouth marketing due to lack of detail.
 - No 24-hour interaction service.
 - No internal staff dedicated to promoting the vouchers.
 - Direct marketing via email is less noticeable.
 - No compensation for internal staff who successfully sell the vouchers.
- c. Opportunities for Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung include:
- Not available through other online or offline travel agents.
 - Can be sold or promoted at external events.
 - Can serve as promotional guaranteed content.
 - Interactive marketing can attract new customers.
 - Discounted packages sold during limited periods are highly appealing.
- d. Threats to Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung include:
- Additional costs for promotion.
 - No unique barcode, risking counterfeiting.
 - Competition from other hotels offering flash sale vouchers.

The SWOT matrix presents the four components—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats—generating four sets of strategic alternatives. The SO (Strength-Opportunities) strategy leverages strengths to seize available opportunities. The ST (Strength-Threats) strategy uses strengths to counteract threats. The WO (Weakness-Opportunities) strategy is defensive, aiming to minimize weaknesses and avoid threats.

- a. SO Strategy: Flash Sale Vouchers are only promoted on two OTAs, Expedia and MG Holiday. This could be leveraged to promote the vouchers on other OTAs for broader promotion. According to Karmayanti (2022), Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung can be promoted on other OTAs since the hotel also promotes other products on different OTAs like Fave, Traveloka, Hotelbeds, Roiback, etc. Considering previous research findings that show the effectiveness of flash sale vouchers also depends on the company's brand image (Dinata & Setyanto, 2021), collaborating with reputable OTAs when selling flash sale vouchers is advisable.
- b. ST Strategy: Several Flash Sale Voucher promotion forms are available at Hotel Vila Lumbung. Karmayanti (2022) states that every staff member at the hotel is responsible for promoting its products, but they have yet to promote Flash Sale Vouchers. Even hotel staff can purchase Flash Sale Vouchers. Therefore, providing rewards for internal staff who successfully sell Flash Sale Vouchers, such as free access to hotel facilities like the gym and pool, is effective as it utilizes existing hotel

resources. This aligns with direct marketing promotions and word-of-mouth marketing by sharing purchase experiences.

- c. WO Strategy: Currently, Hotel Vila Lumbung's flash sale vouchers are simple coupons without special barcodes, risking counterfeiting. Therefore, a strategy to include unique barcodes accessible online and offline is deemed effective. Additionally, increasing e-WOM before the flash sale can enhance sales effectiveness by gathering potential buyers beforehand.
- d. WT Strategy: Various ways to promote Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung include collaborating with communities and leveraging hotel facilities as benefits for promoters, thus minimizing promotional budget usage. Collaborating with non-profit organizations and government offices can also help build the hotel's brand image and support long-term purchase intentions.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation of the results above, it can be concluded that, based on research through observation and interviews, several strategies can be prioritized to optimize the utilization of Flash Sale Vouchers at Hotel Vila Lumbung. These strategies include implementing the flash sale voucher program on reputable OTAs, providing incentives for staff who successfully sell a certain number of flash sale vouchers, increasing interaction through e-WOM, and enhancing collaboration with communities and government offices.

The results of this study are expected to provide practical contributions to the implementation of more comprehensive marketing communication programs. Flash Sale Vouchers are a form of sales promotion, but implementing sales promotion without maximizing other aspects of the marketing communication mix results in less optimal outcomes. It is hoped that this research can serve as a reference for future studies, facilitating data analysis related to this topic in subsequent research.

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