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HOW TO WRITE A TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Step 1
Review the marketing methods and results of years past in an attempt to illustrate what has worked and what needs to be improved with the new year's approach. Create a first section of your marketing plan titled "Past Campaigns." List the campaigns that have resulted in increased visits and use of your travel destination separately from those that have failed, along with their cost and some suggestions about possible improvements.
Step 2
Research current market trends in tourism to gauge the climate in which you will be advertising. Review the successes and failures of your competitors so you do not repeat any mistakes made but can capitalize on any successful initiatives. Analyze the geographic areas and demographics you wish to target with your marketing.
Step 3
Lay out the strategies you favor to market the destination. These strategies should be broken down into categories like online marketing, print marketing and partnership marketing, for example. Call the section "Marketing Strategies" and use it to describe the purpose of each strategy as compared to the others, the intended audience and reach, and the potential benefits of each method.
Step 4
Describe the goals of your approach in the fourth section of the plan, "Objectives." Here you describe the intended market placement of the destination itself, growth goals over the short and the long term, and financial goals regarding return on the overall marketing investment. These projections should be based on past performance and should highlight the cost of each initiative versus its potential return.
Step 5
Break down the strategies portion of your plan into individual marketing campaigns in the fifth section of your plan, which you should label "Initiatives." List each specific funded program that will be undertaken as part of the year's marketing for the destination. This includes everything from internal website postings to mailers to major television ad launches. Each listing should include a description of the initiative, cost analysis, projected audience and potential return figure. List the theme of each campaign and if possible, include some copy and or samples of the ads themselves to best convey the concept and allow for fine tuning and adjustment.
Step 6
Close your plan with a detailed schedule of all marketing for the entire year to come with specific dates for each initiative to be run. Timing can be the most important aspect of any marketing piece, so plan your dates wisely based on the product or destination you are selling, the high and low travel seasons, any holidays that may come into play and the goals you are trying to reach at certain points throughout the year.

(da http://smallbusiness.chron.com)

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HOTEL ADVERTISING IDEAS

Advertising ideas geared to the hotel industry can help hotels establish market prominence, spark relationships with previous customers and attract new clientele.

Branding

You can maximize the effectiveness of hotel advertising by linking the hotel's brand image to the message portrayed. In February 2010 a hotel promoting fitness, health and wellness offerings ran an advertisement with the tag line, "Give us your body and we'll give you back your mind." A photograph of a toned, woman portrayed as a healthy tree accompanied the slogan.

Traveling Ads

Some hotels have begun advertising offerings to travelers by broadcasting specials during airplane flights. This could include footage of room suites, event calendars and images of restaurant offerings. This en-route advertising idea could also be featured on commuter trains and cruise.

Advertising Gimmicks

Hotels can use massive, outdoor signs as an advertising technique. Multiple-story banners can advertise other companies with high-quality printing, but the sleek and sophisticated imagery serves to attract attention to the hotel building itself. The Hyatt chain of hotels offers rewards cards functioning as credit cards–advertising that cardholders will enjoy two free night stays at any Hyatt hotel in the world. Other hotels advertise indirectly by allowing racy advertising partnerships with outside agencies. Extended Stay Hotels, for example, partnered with PETA to place pillowcases, printed with suggestive messages linking meat-eating with impotence, on their hotel beds. The pillow talk buzz landed the hotel chain in the media spotlight.

Website Advertising

Hotel advertising on company websites has become mainstream practice, but some hotels have begun creating website-only advertising campaigns. Downtown New York boutique hotels used website-only ads to compete against new competitors by featuring artistic dreamscapes of the iconic surrounding neighborhoods.

Social Networking

Social networking has emerged as a powerful hotel advertising tool. Travelers often use social networking to describe their experiences at hotels–both positive and negative–allowing hotels the opportunity to highlight positive testimonials and address or appease dissatisfied customers. Hotels can use social networking sites to broadcast advertisements, promotions and special offerings to a following of thousands of people including past, current and potential customers.

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TRAVEL AGENTS INCREASE USE OF GDS TO BOOK HOTEL ROOMS

Findings from the 2011 Global Travel Agent GDS Study, a bi-annual survey of global travel agents commissioned by TravelClick, the leading global provider of revenue generating solutions for hoteliers, clearly demonstrates how crucial Global Distribution System (GDS) platforms and GDS Shopping Displays are to travel agents:
– 84 percent of respondents indicated that they were using their GDS platform the same amount or more often than in the past, with 35 percent stating that they are using GDS more;
– 75 percent of respondents indicated that they were using GDS Shopping Displays the same amount or more often than in the past, with 27 percent stating that they are using GDS Shopping Displays more.
This represents a significant change since the study was last conducted in 2009, where 26 percent of travel agents stated that they used their GDS platform more often than in the past and 19 percent said they used the GDS Shopping Displays more often than before. The survey was conducted by Phoenix Marketing International, an independent marketing research firm. Travel agents in 25 countries across the Americas, EMEA (Europe/Middle East/Africa) and Asia/Pacific regions who subscribe to one of the four major GDS systems were asked to participate. Agents surveyed utilize all four major Global Distribution Systems (GDSs) – Amadeus, Galileo, Sabre, and Worldspan. The survey window opened on October 15, 2011 and closed on November 4, 2011. The study elicited 495 responses globally.
In the survey, travel agents worldwide also indicated that promotional messages are effective and often prompt bookings:
– 66 percent of all travel agents surveyed who were aware of promotional messages requested additional information by looking at the screen attached to the promotional message;
– 68 percent of these same travel agents looked inside the GDS systems for additional information;
– among all travel agents aware of their system's promotional messaging:
– 46 percent made a North American booking in the past three months as a result of that messaging.
– 44 percent made a non-North American booking in the past three months as a result of that messaging.

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HOW TO START A HOTEL: 5 KEYS TO SUCCESS

Starting a hotel requires careful choice of a location and strategy, a business plan, access to considerable financial resources, and a customer service mindset.

1) Location and Opportunity

The location for your hotel is highly linked with the opportunity that you feel there is for your hotel. In the right location, where competitors are not fulfilling all customer needs, a hotel can thrive. However, in a beautiful neighborhood that happens to have heavy competition from existing hotels, success may not be so forthcoming. Likewise, if the neighborhood leaves too much to be desired, you may not be able to price the rooms low enough to encourage travelers to stay at your hotel, even if you are within walking distance of key attractions.

2) Strategy

The next step is to know how customers will answer the question "why my hotel?" How will you tailor your services to the customers you want to attract, whether they are families with kids, couples on romantic vacations, businesspeople, or international tourists? Consider the combination of amenities, atmosphere, location, and services that will be right for your customers. Always keep in mind that strategy means making tradeoffs - it is almost impossible to be everything to everyone and succeed. You might have to forgo certain customer target markets in order to make your service offering perfect for your most desired customers.

3) Planning

A simple, clear, but persuasive hotel business plan will be necessary not only for you to think through how you will take on the opportunity, but for you to convince any investor or lender that you have the ability to do so. No savvy investor will be attracted by a lack of planning. There is no excuse to not create a plan with the wealth of information available on writing business plans and even business plan templates tailored to the hotel business sector.

4) Fundraising

Whether you buy an existing hotel, build one from scratch, or renovate a building into a hotel, you will need millions of dollars to invest. Assuming you do not have this money, you will need to seek bank loans and/or angel investment in your hotel. As you will be working with considerable assets, dependable and experienced legal and accounting help is a must as you create deals with investors.

5) Hospitality Mindset

Finally, you must have an ingrained sense of how you want your guests to be treated so that you can instill this mindset in your top management and they can, in turn, teach this to the staff. Staying at a hotel can be stressful and uncomfortable, and guests demand the highest attention to their needs or they will have no problem complaining loudly and publicly. If employees sense you have higher motives than customer satisfaction, customer service may fall by the wayside and your hotel business may fail or never take off in the first place.

(da http://www.growthink.com)

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AT A LOSS

Guests are now bringing more valuable items into hotels than ever before. In addition to more traditional belongings, such as clothes, watches and jewellery, the modern traveller has with them a growing list of expensive electronic playthings - MP3 players, laptops, mobile phones, and digital cameras. Having to compensate a guest for loss or damage to a complete set of these goods is enough to give any hotel proprietor a nasty shock.

One of the quirks of English law means that hoteliers are often liable for the full value of any of their guests' property which is broken or stolen, even if it is through no fault of the establishment. This is because English law imposes a duty of 'strict liability' for such damage, provided that the goods were not damaged or stolen through the negligence of the customer. This goes back, in the words of one judge, to olden times when "it was not an uncommon thing for highwaymen and innkeepers to be in league together". The medieval rule that made the innkeeper compensate their guest for any property lost in unexplained circumstances and acted to deter the unscrupulous, might be said to be an expensive nuisance in the 21 st century. Fortunately, there are a number of ways to effectively limit potential liability, which proprietors and managers of hotels should pay close attention to.

By the middle of the 20th century, traditional inns had largely disappeared and were supplanted by hotels, which were often on a larger, more commercial scale, and less likely to be owned and managed as a family business. Parliament recognised this significant change in the Hotel Proprietors Act 1956 ("the Act"). Instead of abolishing the strict liability of innkeepers altogether, Parliament actually extended them to owners. The Act did, however, introduce reforms which partially softened the regime of strict liability. It abolished hotel proprietors' liability for damage to guests' vehicles (or goods inside them) and their animals. Any harm to a motor car, or injury to a pet brought to an establishment, therefore falls outside the scope of the owner's duty, although this is only in England and Wales, not Scotland. Furthermore, the Act only extends to customers for whom "sleeping accommodation has been engaged". Persons visiting a hotel, such as restaurantonly guests, cannot claim damages under the strict liability rule. It should also be noted that 'lodgers' - guests staying for a longer period and with whom individual terms have been negotiated - never fell within its scope.

The most significant reform, however, that the Act provided was its introduction of a mechanism by which hotel proprietors could limit their liability. It specified that owners would only be accountable for £50 per item lost or damaged, and £100 in the aggregate, if a statutory notice had been conspicuously displayed so that it could be read by guests at, or near the reception (or, if there was no latter, at or close to the entrance).

It is very important to recognise that the wording of the notice, if it is to be effective, must follow the prescribed text by verbatim, which may be found in Schedule Two of the Act. In the Greater London area, the limits have been increased to £750 per item and £1,500 in aggregate by the London Local Authorities Act 2004.

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LEGISLATIONS AND CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

The hospitality industry is subject to rules at local, national, EU and international level. HOTREC is responsible for monitoring and influencing, on behalf of its members, rules which are decided at EU level. It is important to emphasise here the link between EU and national legislation. Often this link is not easily visible as much of EU law consists of so-called Directives, which only become binding on enterprises following implementing legislation at national level. The individual entrepreneur might not realise, therefore, that the national legislation his or her business must abide by actually has a European origin.
Understanding the extent to which the legal and business environment of hospitality enterprises is determined by EU rules is crucial in three regards:
• First, the knowledge that the EU institutions are considering a measure enables the hospitality industry to participate actively in its preparatory phase, request amendments, or even a withdrawal, to the measure in question.
• Second, it is useful to be aware that national rules must conform to EU law. This can provide the necessary ammunition for criticising burdensome rules at national level, which might not fully comply with EU measures.
• Third, thanks to the HOTREC presence in Brussels, the industry representatives can easily provide with relevant information to the EU institutions for any initiative under consideration or even request a specific EU action if needed.
Classification systems exist at national and regional level in most European Union Member States. A great number of the HOTREC associations have contributed to the development of such systems, either on their own initiative or in collaboration with public authorities. These systems are widely used and widely known. Consumers refer to classification as an important help for choosing a hotel: it is therefore important that information on the meaning of the classification in the different countries be easily available to them.
In 2009, seven HOTREC Member Associations decided to create, under the patronage of HOTREC, the Hotelstars Union, with the aim of applying a hotel classification system based on harmonised criteria in their respective countries. Since then the number of countries within the Hotelstars Union is continously rising. With regard to hotel classification systems in general, differences in culture and geographical situations explain the differences between the criteria and methodology of the systems in the European countries. HOTREC member associations have undertaken to bring the classification systems closer together, using a bottom-up approach.

(da http://www.hotrec.eu/)

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THE HOTEL MANAGER

A hotel manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of a hotel and its staff. They have commercial accountability for budgeting and financial management, planning, organising and directing all hotel services, including front-of-house (reception, concierge, reservations), food and beverage operations, and housekeeping. In larger hotels, managers often have a specific remit (guest services, accounting, marketing) and make up a general management team. While taking a strategic overview and planning ahead to maximise profits, the manager must also pay attention to the details, setting the example for staff to deliver a standard of service and presentation that meets guests' needs and expectations. Business and people management are equally important elements.

Typical work activities

Work activities vary depending on the size and type of hotel, but may include:

- planning and organising accommodation, catering and other hotel services;
- promoting and marketing the business;
- managing budgets and financial plans as well as controlling expenditure;
- maintaining statistical and financial records;
- setting and achieving sales and profit targets;
- analysing sales figures and devising marketing and revenue management strategies;
- recruiting, training and monitoring staff;
- planning work schedules for individuals and teams;
- meeting and greeting customers;
- dealing with customer complaints and comments;
- addressing problems and troubleshooting;
- ensuring events and conferences run smoothly;
- supervising maintenance, supplies, renovations and furnishings;
- dealing with contractors and suppliers;
- ensuring security is effective;
- carrying out inspections of property and services;
- ensuring compliance with licensing laws, health and safety and other statutory regulations.

The manager of a large hotel may have less contact with guests but will have regular meetings with heads of department to coordinate and monitor the progress of business strategies. In a smaller establishment, the manager is much more hands-on and involved in the day-to-day running of the hotel, which may include carrying out reception duties or serving meals if the need arises. A significant number of hotel managers are self-employed, which often results in a broader set of regular responsibilities, from greeting guests to managing finances.

(da http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

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THE OUTSOURCING REVOLUTION

Outsourcing is any task, operation, job or process that could be performed by employees within your company, but is instead contracted to a third party for a significant period of time. Hiring a temporary employee while your secretary is on maternity leave is not outsourcing. In addition, the functions that are performed by the third party can be performed on-site or off-site.

Why outsourcing?

There are many reasons why a company may choose to outsource a particular function of their business. Most managers have the end-result-in-mind that they are going to save time and/or money.

Benefits of Outsourcing

The main benefit of outsourcing that management want to exploit is a reduction in costs. Employees are expense for a company. There is the cost of finding employees, training, salary, benefits, pensions, payments, insurance, and many other unseen costs. By outsourcing a job or a whole department a company can remove those costs and pay a fixed fee to have that job or function performed. If the function is not being performed to the level of satisfaction that is required, a company can either have the contractor removed, without worrying about severance or legal issues, or end the contact with the outsourcing firm. Of course, the company loses some control as the outsourcing company is the de facto employer of the worker and therefore there is less of a relationship and less loyalty from the worker to the company they are contracted to. Another benefit that companies look for by outsourcing work is to have that work performed at a higher level than they could expect from their own employees.

Disadvantages of Outsourcing

Of course, outsourcing may be management's ideal scenario of saving their company's millions of dollars a year, but as with everything there is a number of downsides to the panacea of outsourcing. Outsourcing core functions can weaken a company's security and management should carefully consider this aspect when looking at outsourcing. Another aspect of outsourcing that can negatively affect a company is the public perception. If a company has thousands of complaints about outsourced call centers or incorrect billing, negative public opinion is very quickly communicated across social media.

(da http://logistics.about.com)

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