

Marketing Essentials

Module code: BMIH4005

Assessment Component 1

Title: An Essay: A comparison of the marketing methods of two multinational hotel brands.

Student ID : 2210009

Student Name : Denisa Feriova

Lecturer's name : Christopher Wilkin

Introduction:

Marketing strategies or methods are the strategies, techniques, initiatives and approaches that the marketing manager follows to aware customers of their brands, services and products and promote and distribute them with proper media and distribution channels to increase sales and overall performance of the business organisations (Kurtuluş and Karayağın, 2020). This essay is a comparative summary of marketing methods, strategies and approaches used by two well-known business firms in the UK tourism and hospitality industry, Marriott International and Ibis. The first portion of this essay focuses on the marketing choices and directions of both firms and then it demonstrates their current market position in the UK tourism industry. Additionally, this essay discusses the current marketing choices of the firms by using a marketing mix approach and illustrates their considerations regarding the green environment and sustainable tourism environment. Finally, this essay discusses how both firms have managed their customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Marriot International is a US company that franchises, operates and licences different types of lodging services in different countries in the form of hotels, timeshare properties, resorts and residential for nearly a hundred years and since then, their use of traditional marketing approaches and techniques have changed gradually changed. The marketing choices and directions of Ibis Hotels have also changed over time (Magnani, 2022). This part of the essay discusses the historic marketing choices and directions of both Marriott International and Ibis Hotels. Companies like Marriot International and other firms which have a vast localised zone of influence and operations in the market face complex competitive situations which are solved by effective marketing strategies. The tourism industry market is transparent for both Marriott International and Ibis and the services and products being in the same category facing competition with effective marketing is the only way to successfully reach and influence consumer behaviour on purchase (Nikbin et al., 2021). Since the beginning of Marriott International, they have been focusing on traditional marketing strategies and techniques using traditional media channels to promote and share their values with the customers. This resulted in lowering the prices of the hotel and other services of Marriott International, increasing the costs of the firm and shrinking the profitability margin of Marriott in the UK tourism industry. However, the firm has adopted digital marketing channels and strategies to promote its values and services to the customers which have helped the marketing manager to reduce

organisational costs in the marketing function. With the help of local marketing, the marketing manager always works for coordinating the efforts of retailers and suppliers to ensure the increased reputation and brand image of Marriott International (Rahman et al., 2019). Similar to the marketing activities of Marriott International, the promotional and value-sharing activities of Ibis Hotels have also changed over time shifting their focus toward the digitalisation of the services and promoting the services via digital channels. The marketing manager of Ibis hotels has ensured the use of telemarketing, mailing, e-mail marketing and other digital tools and technologies to get an advantage in terms of return on investment within the firm (Toma and Grădinaru, 2018). Within the Ibis hotels, the marketing manager has divided its customer segments into micro-zone of influence with the help of local marketing as well to ensure effective communication and relationships with the customers in the UK tourism industry.

Compared to other multinational businesses in the tourism industry, Marriott International has the highest market share, with almost 18% in the second quarter of 2022. Within its operation in more than 127 countries globally, Marriott International rules the tourism industry as the largest hotel chain business globally with more than 8000 hotels, 30 brands, and more than 1.2 million rooms in 6,500 properties (Marriott, 2022). According to the company's latest financial information for 2021, the firm had revenue of \$13.86 billion and \$14 billion in sales amount along with a \$1,000 billion market size in the global tourism industry. According to the performance indicator, the occupancy rate of Marriott International global has around 52 to 55% which is a good indicator of effective hotel performance and management of the company (Garrison et al., 2022). On the other side, as a comparatively new business, Ibis Hotels has some good market performance with operations in more than 110 countries worldwide however it's facing a decreasing profit margin in the market due to several factors such as cost-effective advantages and rapid improvement and adaptation of Airbnb (Ibis, 2022). Nearly, 15% of the UK tourism industry and 9% of the global tourism are firmly under Ibis Hotels.

Marketing strategies are well-planned and systematic processes or approaches to the customers and people in the market used in successfully promoting or marketing the goods or services of the firms (Kotler et al., 2020). Both Marriott International and Ibis Hotels have their marketing strategies to influence and shape the behaviour of the customers in the market. To understand the marketing strategies of Both Marriott International and Ibis Hotels, the marketing mix

approach with 4Ps are illustrated in this part of the discussion. The product strategy of Marriott International is to provide several types of hotel and resort services to the customers according to their choice, budget and locations providing a range of facilities according to the budget range of the customers (Wichmann et al., 2022). Ibis Hotels focuses on providing top-class and memorable hotel services to customers which are designed to impress the customers in the hospitality industry. The pricing strategy of Marriott International is a cost-leadership approach strategy where the organisational costs such as marketing or maintenance costs are reduced to offer better and more effective deals to customers from various social classes (Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick, 2020). Within Ibis Hotels, the customers also get to choose price variations based on a competitive pricing approach, where the firm decides service prices comparing them with other competitors in the market. The Promotional mix of Marriott International is now more focused on digital marketing and the use of different digital tools rather than using traditional marketing approaches to promote and be aware of the hospitality services (Bowie et al., 2017). Ibis Hotels make a mixture of traditional and digital marketing in promoting their hospitality services. Finally, the place mix of both Marriott and Ibis is the same as they operate in more than 5000 places locally and globally. So, these are the current marketing strategies of both Marriott and Ibis Hotels.

The marketing team of Marriott International is well-concerned about their considerations and responsibilities toward sustainability and eco-tourism and that is why they provide effective messages and directions to the customers from time to time about pollution and wastage in the hotels (Ogbeide, 2020). Similar to them, the Ibis Hotels has brought changes in their organisational policies and culture aligning it more with the idea of sustainable tourism development which provides a clear message to the customers that they are well-concerned about the safety and security of eco-tourism (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Both firms have significantly reduced their wastage, water usage and use of digital tools replacing paper usage regarding sustainability and green messaging.

The COVID-19 and pandemic situation has impacted the world tourism industry the most and as a part of it both Marriott International and Ibis Hotels had to suffer loss and disturbance in operation (Smith and Zook, 2020). COVID-19, the upper management of both firms was concerned about their employees and customers and maintained continuous communication and provided effective messages regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The marketing manager of Marriott International has delivered different effective promotional messages about COVID safety, sanitation and well-being to the customers to ensure their continuous commitment even

if their services are off. Similar to that, the marketing manager of Ibis Hotels has given several press briefings and marketing messages to the customers as well regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and safety from COVID-19. The manager of Marriott ensures improving and developing a relationship with tourism customers to ensure high customer engagement in the post-COVID tourism industry (Andriany et al., 2022). Ibis hotels have also maintained continuous communication and relationship to ensure high engagement of the firm with the customers during the COVID-19 pandemic period. So, it can be summarised that both firms have taken initiatives to provide messages to customers regarding the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Conclusion:

As the conclusive statement of the report, it can be said that the marketing techniques, approaches and methods undertaken by the firms in the market decide their sales and performance within the industry. In the case of both Marriot and Ibis, it can be noticed that both the firms are gradually developing and improving the marketing mix approaches and marketing techniques according to the market change and other factorial changes within the UK tourism industry to provide the best hotel and hospitality services to the customers in the market. These marketing strategies and techniques are helping these firms in ensuring business growth and success in both the short run and long run.

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