

A comparison of the marketing methods of Six Senses and Holiday Inn

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The hospitality industry is one of the most dynamic and competitive industries globally. Hospitality companies need to have competitive marketing strategies to attract and retain customers. This essay compares the marketing methods of Six Senses (Six Senses, 2021) with those of Holiday Inn (Holiday Inn, 2021). Six Senses is a luxury hospitality brand that provides guests with a unique and personalized experience that is committed to sustainability practices (Beirnat, 2020), while Holiday Inn is a mass-market hotel brand that seeks to cater to budget-conscious travelers, offering standardized services and amenities (Gao & Wei, 2019). According to a report by Allied Market Research, the global hotel and hospitality industry reached \$1,170 billion in 2017 and is expected to grow to \$1,590 billion by 2026 (Allied Market Research, 2019).

Six Senses began in 1995 and since then has been a luxurious hotel chain, becoming more and more appealing to the wealthy people. While Holiday Inn, founded in 1952, is more focused on the younger generations by being more affordable.

In the case of Six Senses, the strength lies in the brand image they have created through their unique experiences, luxury stays, and sustainability practices. Also, Six Senses is known for its spa and wellness centers, which are unique compared to other hotels in the industry. On the other hand, the strength of Holiday Inn is that it is a well-known brand in the hospitality industry, and it has a global presence. It also provides affordable stays for its customers, which appeals to a wide range of customers. While Six Senses are having unique and luxurious resorts in exotic locations with a focus on sustainable tourism, they have limited number of properties compared to Holiday Inn. Six Senses also puts strong emphasis on sustainability in all aspects of operations, from eco-friendly buildings to local sourcing of products, where Holiday Inn have inconsistency in quality and standard across different locations. Unfortunately, perhaps the biggest weakness of Six Senses is the high cost associated with its luxurious stays that may limit its customer base. For the other one, the weakness is that Holiday Inn may not provide unique experiences compared to Six Senses, which may not attract niche customers. Holiday Inn is enjoying a wide network of properties globally, offering accessibility to a broad range of guests and therefore more accessible, while some of Six Senses's some locations may be difficult to reach or have limited transportation options.

According to their website, in 2003 Holiday Inn has become an international hospitality retailer by associating with InterContinental Hotel Group (Holiday Inn, 2015), Six Senses also taking this opportunity, joining the IHG on 13 february 2019. (Reed, Samantha 2019). Holiday Inn's expansion into new markets with a growing demand for budget-friendly accommodations also represents a good opportunity, however, Six Senses's are also having an expansion into new markets and destinations with growth potential.

While Six Senses's properties being mainly based in Asia, having limited global footprint, Holiday Inn are having a bigger geographic concentration, their hotels being placed on much more countries. However, Holiday Inn's competition could be increasing as newer and trendier hotel chains are founded. Six Senses faces threats from increased competition from other luxury hotel chains and negative publicity or reviews of the brand or individual properties, whereas Holiday Inn faces threats from increased competition from other budget hotel chains, negative reviews or feedback from guests, and cybersecurity threats or online booking scams.

In addition, conducting a PESTLE analysis of Six Senses and Holiday Inn, respectively, reveals that both brands face several internal and external factors that influence their marketing strategies. These factors include, but are not limited to, political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors (Osei-Kyei, Chan & Ameyaw, 2020).

Holiday Inn and Six Senses operate in different political environments as they have different locations in the world. Holiday Inn operates in 75 countries, while Six Senses operates in 15 countries. Both chains may be influenced by political events such as taxes, regulations, and travel restrictions.

Holiday Inn offers a more affordable option for travelers, while Six Senses is a more high-end luxury brand. Both brands are affected by fluctuations in the global economy, currency exchange rates, and consumer spending patterns. Trends in sustainable tourism may create a market demand for the eco-friendly practices of Six Senses (Gartner, 2016). Also, The global economy can impact the pricing of Six Senses accommodations (Varian, 2014).

Holiday Inn may attract more families, while Six Senses caters to the luxury traveler seeking a wellness or high-end experience. Both chains may need to adapt to changes in social trends such as increasing demand for eco-friendly and sustainable travel options.

According to a SimilarWeb analysis, Six Senses' website had approximately 45,000 monthly website visitors. On the other hand, Holiday Inn's website had over six million monthly visitors, indicating a more significant online presence and higher brand awareness (SimilarWeb, 2021). Holiday Inn's online presence puts it in a strong position to reach a wide range of customers globally.

Both hotel chains rely heavily on technology for operations, such as online booking systems and mobile check-in options. Six Senses may integrate advanced technology such as smart rooms, while Holiday Inn may focus on efficiency to keep costs down.

Both chains need to comply with international and local laws and regulations, such as labor laws and food safety standards. Six Senses may face additional legal requirements for providing luxury services and adhering to high environmental standards.

Six Senses has a strong focus on sustainability and eco-friendliness as part of their brand identity. Holiday Inn may also need to address concerns about environmental impact, but may not prioritize it as much in their branding and operations.

Overall, both hotel chains face similar challenges in the global hospitality industry but offer different options for travelers. Six Senses emphasizes a high-end experience with a focus on sustainability, while Holiday Inn offers a more budget-friendly option with a broader reach.

The marketing mix includes the product, price, place, and promotion elements of any marketing strategy. Six Senses offers a luxury experience, including eco-friendly accommodations, personalized wellness, and cultural experiences for travelers seeking sustainable tourism (Beirnat, 2020). The brand relies on its unique brand image and reputation to justify its high price points. Six Senses' placement strategy is focused on positioning its hotels in exotic places with high ecological value and pristine nature (Beirnat, 2020). Additionally, Six Senses uses several promotion tactics such as targeted online campaigns, social media, influencers, and partnerships to reach its target audience (Pacheco & Bravo, 2020). In contrast, Holiday Inn focuses on offering standardized services for budget-conscious travelers. Its product strategy is based on providing reliable, comfortable, and predictable accommodations and services to its guests (Gao & Wei, 2019). Its pricing strategy is focused on offering affordable rates to attract budget-conscious travelers. Place strategy for Holiday Inn emphasizes on locating its hotels in places that are accessible and convenient for travelers. Finally, its promotion strategy is based on advertising its services through different mediums such as TV, print publications, and digital channels (Liu & Li, 2020).

Both Six Senses and Holiday Inn employ different segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies to reach their target customers. Six Senses segmentation strategy targets high net worth individuals who are interested in sustainable tourism, wellness, and unique cultural experiences. Its target market includes millennials and Gen-X, who seek authentic experiences (Yeh, Sun & Yen, 2016). Holiday Inn, on the other hand, uses a broad-based segmentation strategy targeting budget-conscious travelers who prioritize affordability and convenience when looking for accommodations. This segment includes families, business travelers, and leisure travelers (Gao & Wei, 2019). According to InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), the parent company of Holiday Inn, their marketing strategy focuses on providing consistent experiences across their hotel chain to build customer loyalty (IHG, 2021). Six Senses has an excellent reputation for its luxury and sustainable offerings. The brand's focus on sustainability has earned it recognition and awards in the industry, such as being named the "World's Best Green Hotel 2020" by Travel + Leisure (Travel + Leisure, 2020). Six Senses positioning strategy aims to differentiate it as a sustainable and eco-friendly luxury hospitality brand with a unique and personalized approach to hospitality. It wants to be recognized as the leading brand in sustainable tourism (Beirnat, 2020). In contrast, the Holiday Inn positioning strategy emphasizes on a consistent and reliable hotel brand that provides standardized services to its guests at an affordable price (Gao & Wei, 2019).

In conclusion, Six Senses and Holiday Inn are two hospitality brands that operate in different market segments. While Six Senses caters to customers seeking unique and sustainable luxury experiences, Holiday Inn targets budget-conscious travelers seeking affordable and predictable accommodations. Both brands use different marketing methods tailored to their target customers' needs and preferences. Although Six Senses and Holiday Inn are competing in different market segments, both brands face challenges that impact their marketing strategies potential. However, designing and executing effective marketing strategies are crucial to the longevity and success of both brands in the increasingly competitive hospitality market.

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