

Analysis of How Hotels Can Achieve Innovative Transformation in Brand Marketing Strategies in the Digital Age

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Abstract: With the rapid development of information technology, driven by new technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and cloud computing, the commercial landscape in China is moving towards digitalization. Digitalization refers to the process and technology of expressing, storing, processing, and transmitting information in digital form. The concept and practice of digitalization permeate all aspects of modern society, symbolizing not only a technological transformation but also a cultural, economic, and social revolution. Through digitalization, human beings can manage information more efficiently, enhance productivity, and explore new possibilities for innovation and development. In other words, digital technology not only improves daily work efficiency but also brings many conveniences to people's lives; it is a product of the technological era. To stand out in the competitive digital age, hotels must master trends, seize opportunities, face challenges, and quickly achieve innovative transformation in brand marketing strategies to capture market share and become industry leaders. This paper explores how hotels should realize innovative transformation in brand marketing strategies under the new technological era.

Keywords: Digitalization, Hotel, Brand Marketing Strategy, Hotel Technology Transformation.

1. Introduction

The hotel industry, as a representative of labor-intensive industries, has previously experienced relatively slow development in the wave of digital transformation. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the hotel industry has been significantly impacted and has become one of the most severely affected sectors. According to a report by the China Hotel Association, the revenue loss for hotels and homestays in the first two months of 2020 exceeded 67 billion yuan, and rental apartments lost about 700 million yuan. The hotel industry is currently experiencing a gradual recovery after a period of marketing downturn.

Innovation is the driving force for hotels to keep up with the informationization trend. To address the issue of poor economic performance after the pandemic, more and more hotel professionals realize the importance of digital transformation for hotel development. Digitalization undoubtedly represents an opportunity for the hotel industry to emerge from its cocoon and become a butterfly. Therefore, to better meet consumer needs, the hotel industry must seize the opportunity of the digital age for innovative transformation. In the digital era, everything is data-driven. Without data collection and analysis, it is impossible to improve work efficiency and adapt to the times. Without talent skilled in data analysis and processing, the hotel industry will lack competitiveness in the future. Additionally, as hotels are frequently encountered in travel, business trips, and conferences, attracting consumer attention and making them choose your hotel is a core issue for hotel marketers. Digital technology offers new ideas for hotel marketing, allowing marketers to use technological innovation to attract more consumers. Therefore, digital operation in the hotel industry is imperative. This study focuses on modern economy hotels, such as Hanting Hotels in China.

Travelers who frequently stay in hotels have noticed that

service systems at hotels have varied greatly in recent years. Some hotels maintain the traditional service model with online reservations, front desk check-in, and room key cards; others have introduced self-service kiosks for check-in; some hotels allow guests to use facial recognition for check-in and room access after completing procedures via mobile apps. Some domestic and international hotels are experimenting with unmanned hotels where guests have a completely self-service experience. These differences stem from two main influences: evolving consumer demand and the need for hotels to improve profitability due to low revenue rates. Digital transformation in services can enhance consumer experience, increase customer loyalty, reduce labor costs, and boost customer traffic, which are the driving forces behind hotel digital transformation. Despite the evident advantages of digital transformation, many hotels still face significant challenges on the path to digitalization.

2. Current Status of Domestic and International Hotel Digitalization Development

According to relevant literature, most studies mention the current trend of digital transformation in the hotel industry, emphasizing the advantages and promising future of hotel digitalization and intelligence. For example, scholar Deng Li pointed out, "In the digital age, hotels need to shift their entire business strategy to be customer-centric and treat the customer database as the most valuable asset. By tailoring quality and satisfaction to each customer's preferences and needs, customer loyalty can be ensured." Professor Zhang Ping also mentioned in her paper that "The advantages of digital transformation are evident. At the same time, the rapid development of electronic information technology in the new technological era brings more possibilities for technology applications. The hotel digital transformation can adapt to this,

but many hotels still struggle with digital transformation." Furthermore, "Digital technology offers new ideas for hotel marketing, allowing marketers to innovate marketing strategies to attract more consumers." Scholar Hu Bao zhu also emphasized the importance of innovation in hotel marketing strategies in the digital era, addressing existing problems and feasible solutions. This paper combines previous academic research with a case study of the modern economy hotel Hanting Hotels, analyzing recent revenue data and conducting consumer surveys to explore current issues and propose effective innovative transformation solutions for marketing, pricing, and product strategies in the hotel industry in the digital age.

2.1. Analysis of Research Status

This study focuses on modern economy hotel Hanting Hotels, exploring how to use digital and intelligent technologies to address current shortcomings in digital transformation strategies. The study will offer innovative transformation suggestions from various dimensions including marketing, pricing, and product strategies to achieve a leap from traditional to intelligent hotels, enhance consumer experience, increase hotel occupancy, reduce marketing costs, and strengthen brand competitiveness and customer loyalty.

Through personal investigation, I studied the changes made by Hanting Hotels under the influence of digital transformation. I observed that Hanting Hotels has upgraded its smart room facilities, provided more intelligent room services, and introduced more data analysis and personalized services. Firstly, regarding the upgraded smart room facilities, I noted that Hanting Hotels has installed smart temperature control, lighting, and curtain systems in its rooms, allowing guests to conveniently control the room environment through smart devices or mobile apps. This greatly satisfies guests' control over the room environment and enhances comfort and satisfaction. Secondly, the introduction of intelligent room services, such as voice assistant technology, allows guests to request services like wake-up calls or room cleaning via voice commands. This significantly improves service convenience and response speed, enhancing guest satisfaction. Lastly, the introduction of data analysis and personalized services involves utilizing big data to analyze customer preferences and behaviors, providing more tailored services and recommendations. This undoubtedly improves guest satisfaction and loyalty, increasing return rates and positive word-of-mouth. However, Hanting Hotels faces some shortcomings, such as issues with technology integration and stability, data privacy and security, employee training and adaptation, and customer experience management. For example, integrating multiple new technologies and devices may cause compatibility and stability issues. Data privacy concerns require strict adherence to data protection laws, while employee training and balancing technology with personalized service are crucial. Hanting Hotels has demonstrated a clear digital transformation and innovation spirit through smart rooms but must continue to address challenges and improve these areas for future success.

3. Research Methods and Process

With the popularization of digital technology, the hotel industry faces new challenges. Consumers can easily compare and choose different hotel services and prices online, increasing brand substitutability and intensifying market

competition. Consumers increasingly rely on the internet and social media for information and decision support and expect personalized experiences and instant feedback. Traditional advertising and sales models are insufficient to meet these needs. Additionally, with extensive data collection and use, hotels must address data security and privacy challenges to avoid legal and ethical issues. How to stand out, enhance brand competitiveness, and increase customer loyalty are key issues for hotels to continuously consider and optimize.

3.1. Questionnaire Design

To help hotels innovate and transform their marketing, pricing, and product strategies in the digital age, I conducted a questionnaire survey on consumer preferences and expectations for future hotel stays. The survey included questions on preferred hotel types, price ranges, preferred hotel features, and desired improvements. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed, with 139 valid responses received.

3.2. Questionnaire Analysis

The survey revealed that the majority of respondents are aged 26-35 (35.97%), followed by 18-25 (20.86%) and 36-45 (20.14%), with older age groups (46 and above) accounting for 21.58%. Gender distribution is almost equal, with males at 50.36% and females at 49.64%. White-collar workers make up 60.43% of the respondents, students 14.39%, and freelancers 16.55%. Among hotel types, economy hotels are the most popular (41.73%), followed by business hotels (32.37%) and luxury resorts (23.02%). Most respondents prefer hotel prices between 150 and 500 yuan, with the 350-500 yuan range being the most popular (26.62%). This confirms the large market share of economy hotels and the necessity for digital transformation. For hotel features, comfort (83.45%) and convenient transportation (75.54%) are the most valued, followed by reasonable pricing (64.75%) and service quality (43.17%). Desired digital improvements include self-service check-in/check-out systems (71.22%) and smart room controls (57.55%), along with personalized services (52.52%) and electronic keys/mobile access (41.01%). Emphasizing network security and personal information protection (76.98%) and offering local cultural experiences (61.87%) are also crucial. Other areas for improvement include enhancing hygiene and safety, ensuring quiet environments, service quality, and transparent pricing. Future development should focus on intelligent services, security, privacy, comfort, and personalized experiences.

4. Research Recommendations

Based on the analysis, hotels should focus on enhancing digital and intelligent services, improving environmental and safety measures, offering personalized experiences, and maintaining service quality to meet consumer expectations and increase competitiveness. The following recommendations are proposed.

First of all, for the innovative transformation of brand marketing strategy, hotels can carry out better marketing activities by promoting personalized marketing, strengthening the use of social media and online channels, and using virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology.

Firstly, promoting personalized marketing means that hotels can use big data and AI technology to analyze customer data, and provide customers with personalized

recommendation services and marketing activities by collecting and analyzing customer preferences and behavior data, such as personalized push discount information and customized itinerary suggestions based on customer historical data. Etc., so as to achieve personalized marketing. Assuming that a customer often chooses a sea-view room before, the hotel can push an exclusive discount on the sea-view room when he visits again. The hotel can also use the AI recommendation system to provide personalized itinerary arrangements according to customers' interests and preferences, such as recommending local popular attractions, restaurants or activities. For example, for a customer who likes art, the hotel can recommend a nearby art exhibition or gallery. Here is a case of Marriott International: Marriott uses big data and AI to analyze customer preferences and provide personalized offers and suggestions through its Marriott Bonvoy loyalty program. The booking records and consumption habits of members in the case helped Marriott recommend tailor-made travel plans and special activities.

Secondly, hotels can strengthen the use of social media and online channels, enhance the presence and interactivity on social media platforms, and enhance the exposure and influence of the brand to the public through the active operation and marketing of social media accounts. For example, hotels can publish high-quality content on international platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, as well as domestic platforms such as TikTok, Little Red Book and Bilibili, such as photos of hotel rooms, customer reviews and special event information, through interaction with customers and response to comments. Improve the brand loyalty of customers.

What's more, hotels can use advertisements in targeted social media apps to accurately deliver them to users who are planning a vacation, so as to attract potential customers. Third, hotels need to strengthen the use of online channels such as OTA (online travel agencies) and direct sales channels to optimize search engine marketing (SEM) and search engine optimization (SEO) to improve the direct booking rate. The hotel needs to optimize its display effect on the OTA (online travel agency) platform, such as providing clear room photos, detailed facility descriptions and positive customer reviews. At the same time, hotels should also optimize their official websites and improve their search engine rankings.

Fourth, the hotel can also try to use more advanced and convenient VR and AR technology to provide customers with a novel and immersive booking experience and hotel tour, and enhance customers' sense of participation and confidence in booking decisions. Among them, the hotel can create a VR hotel navigation function, which allows customers to virtually visit the hotel's rooms, conference rooms and other facilities online. For example, customers can use VR screen projection to "visit" the hotel without leaving home. The hotel can also develop AR applications, so that customers can see additional virtual information and recommendations after scanning images of hotel facilities on their mobile phones. For example, when scanning the menu of the hotel restaurant, customers can see the 3D physical effects and user reviews of the dishes. Here is a case of Sheraton Hotel: Sheraton Hotel has launched a VR experience, which allows customers to explore their hotel rooms and public areas in virtual reality, which has improved customers' awareness and favorability of the hotel and the hotel's occupancy rate to a certain extent. This immersive experience not only improves the customer's booking confidence, but also increases the attractiveness of

the hotel.

In addition, regarding the innovative transformation of price strategy, hotels can adopt dynamic pricing, package price and promotion strategies, as well as the method of optimizing the reservation engine to better transform and upgrade. The hotel can implement a dynamic pricing strategy by using real-time data and predictive analysis. Adjust the hotel price according to the seasonal demand of the guest room, the competition in the market and the different behavior patterns of customers to maximize the revenue. Package price and promotion strategy refers to the packages and promotions that the hotel design can attract customers, such as early bird discounts, weekend specials, member-exclusive offers, etc., to improve customer stickiness and booking rate. In addition, optimizing the hotel's reservation engine is also an important step in the price strategy that needs to be improved. In the hotel's reservation engine, the user interface is friendly, responsive, and compatible with a variety of payment methods, which can simplify the customer's reservation process as much as possible and improve the reservation conversion rate.

Finally, regarding the innovative transformation of product strategy, the hotel can improve the overall service experience of the hotel by continuing to improve the smart room experience and using the concept of sustainable development and digital service awareness. Strengthen the practice of customers' awareness of environmental protection by introducing environmental protection facilities, such as energy-saving equipment, water resources management and waste treatment systems, to meet the needs of customers who pay more and more attention to sustainable travel. At the same time, the hotel can be committed to developing exclusive mobile applications or online platforms to provide customer self-service check-in, online customer service and online customer feedback system to better optimize the customer's check-in experience and improve service efficiency.

5. Conclusion

This study analyzes the current application of digital technology in the hotel industry, and draws the following suggestions through the questionnaire analysis of consumers' expectations for the future technological development of the hotel industry: First, promote personalized marketing, strengthen the use of social media and online channels, and use virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology to carry out better marketing activities. Secondly, dynamic pricing, package price and promotion strategies are adopted, as well as the method of optimizing the reservation engine to better transform and upgrade. At the same time, we should continue to improve the smart room experience, and use the concept of sustainable development and digital service awareness to improve the overall service experience of the hotel. It is believed that by combining the application of these digital intelligent technologies, modern economic business hotels can improve market competitiveness faster, improve customer satisfaction, create a good reputation and reputation, and achieve higher operational efficiency and revenue growth in digital transformation. However, we also realize that there are still many unknown areas for further exploration in the transformation of digital technology, such as how to cooperate with digital technology enterprise talents, use good digital technology means to support the comprehensive upgrading of the hotel industry, and make use of the future equipment and services of the hotel. Combined with the above

analysis, this study provides new insights for analyzing the current situation of digital transformation and upgrading of the hotel industry, and is expected to provide theoretical and practical support for the development and application of related fields.

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