

PROPOSED MARKETING STRATEGY TO INCREASE BRAND AWARENESS OF SERUNI HOTEL, BOGOR

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Abstrak. Puncak Bogor is one of the most popular tourist destinations because it offers natural beauty and is close to the capital city of Jakarta. After the Covid pandemic, the number of tourists visiting Puncak Bogor is estimated at 10,960,348 people, an increase of 166% from 2021, but it's not aligned with the occupancy rate of hotel rooms. This condition is exacerbated by increasing competition with many hotel competitors in *Puncak Bogor*. Hotel *Seruni* is one of the longest established lodgings providers but faces the same problem. Hotel *Seruni* faces challenges regarding brand awareness and marketing existing service products, resulting in a decrease in room occupancy rates because potential customers do not know of the hotel's existence. This research aims to enhance *Seruni Hotel's* brand awareness, analyze key factors influencing purchase intention, and develop effective marketing strategies to increase the brand value of *Seruni Hotel*, as well as improve its room occupancy performance. This study applies quantitative analysis to assess customer behavior and test hypotheses, with data analyzed through *SMART PLS*, as well as qualitative methods to gather insights from internal company sources. The research findings indicate that every aspect of the marketing mix has a positive influence on brand awareness. These findings lead to recommendations such as improving products and services, enhancing human resource quality, optimizing promotional channel activities, and utilizing advertising to reach a broader audience. The proposed marketing strategies are developed based on both internal and external analyses, including *SWOT* and *TOWS* frameworks.

Keywords: Hotel, Hospitality Industry, Brand Awareness, Marketing Mix, Marketing Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is renowned as one of the world's most beautiful tourism destinations, attracting millions of both domestic and international tourists and playing a significant role in supporting the national economy. Prior to the pandemic in 2019, tourism contributed approximately USD 16.91 billion to Indonesia's economic output (Trading Economics, 2024). However, this level of contribution did not continue into the years 2023–2024. The tourism industry has experienced considerable setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with substantial declines in visitor numbers and revenue.

One of the affected areas is *Puncak Bogor*, a highly favored tourist destination due to its proximity to Jakarta and its beautiful natural resources. In 2021, when several areas were opened by the government with all the requirements, only 4.1 million tourists visited the *Puncak Bogor* tourist area. This situation did not persist for long. Over time, the number of visitors began to show signs of improvement, and by 2023, the tourism sector in Bogor started to exhibit positive recovery trends, with increasing numbers of travelers and a revival in domestic tourism activities. Based on data, tourists visiting Bogor City, Bogor Regency, and Cianjur Regency reached 10.9 million people in total (BPS Jawa Barat, 2023).

When observing the tourism industry as a whole, the number of tourists is not the only key indicator. The recovery of the tourism sector can also be measured through supporting aspects such as accommodation services. Data published by Indonesia Statistics (BPS Jawa Barat, 2023) shows that the Room Occupancy Rate (*TPK*) in Bogor Regency was 20.34 percent in December 2021 and increased to 29.68 percent in December 2023. This change over two years reflects a growth of only 9.3 basis points, or approximately 45.8%. Although the tourism sector is showing signs of recovery, the accommodation industry has not yet fully recovered. The increase in tourist visits to *Puncak Bogor* is not directly proportional to the increase in occupancy rates.

Seruni Hotel, recognized as one of the pioneering star-rated hotels in the *Puncak Bogor* region, has been operating for many years and holds a strong legacy in the local hospitality industry. However, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic that began impacting Indonesia in 2020, the hotel has been facing significant challenges in sustaining its guest purchase rates. A notable decline in room occupancy has been observed, particularly during weekdays, where the reduction has been especially drastic. This downward trend highlights the hotel's struggle to regain pre-pandemic performance levels and adapt to the evolving travel behaviors and expectations of guests. Based on internal data provided by the management, the average occupancy rate in 2023 was 19.0%, still below the average occupancy rate of star hotels in Bogor, which was recorded at 29.58%. In 2024, *Seruni Hotel* managed to slightly increase its occupancy rate to 21.82%; however, this increase is still considered unsatisfactory and not in line with the desired recovery of the hotel's financial performance.

This situation highlights a critical issue for *Seruni Hotel*: low brand awareness, which directly correlates with the internal business problem of low room occupancy rates. Without strong recognition in the market, *Seruni Hotel* struggles to attract new guests despite its facilities. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis is needed to address this issue, enabling the hotel to develop effective marketing strategies and support the achievement of long-term sustainable competitive advantage.

Developing a comprehensive marketing strategy begins with clearly defining the company's mission, establishing both marketing and financial objectives, identifying the needs that the market offering intends to fulfill, and positioning the offering competitively. As stated by Kotler & Keller (2012), this entire process requires cross-departmental collaboration within the company. One of the most common methods for formulating a strategy is through

the application of the marketing mix. Marketing mix analysis serves as a key approach in building a well-rounded marketing strategy. According to Kotler & Keller (2016), "Marketing Mix is the set of controllable variables that the firm can use to influence the buyer's response." When aligned with the holistic marketing concept, the marketing mix evolves into a more representative model that reflects modern marketing realities, encompassing people, processes, and programs.

This makes the marketing mix a valuable foundation not only for formulating strategies but also for addressing existing marketing challenges. One common issue in organizations is the weakness in brand value or brand awareness. Brand awareness refers to a consumer's ability to recognize or recall a brand within a particular product category (Abdul Syukur & Syahbudin, 2017; Huda, 2017; Išoraitė, 2015; Mardiyanto, 2021; Scorita & Handayani, 2022; Susilo, 2023; Syukur & Syahbudin, 2020). It is typically evaluated by how easily consumers can identify a brand's name, logo, product line, or other unique brand attributes. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), brand awareness illustrates the extent to which consumers can recognize or remember a brand, which directly influences their purchase decisions. This awareness is rooted in how deeply the brand is embedded in the consumer's memory, becoming evident when the brand is recognized or recalled across various contexts.

Each element of the marketing mix is believed to affect brand equity. The product is the central element of the mix and significantly influences consumer behavior by fulfilling their needs and desires (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020; Kotler & Keller, 2021, 2016). Therefore, improving all aspects of the marketing mix can serve as the foundation for developing strategies aimed at enhancing brand awareness. Price also shapes consumers' perceptions of value by helping them assess the balance between cost and expected benefits (Amidu et al., 2019; Cao et al., 2003; Cohan, 2018; Shan et al., 2023; Tang et al., 2023). Enhancing the place component can improve product accessibility and directly contribute to greater brand visibility (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Meanwhile, promotion strategies, which communicate the product's value, play a crucial role in building awareness and encouraging purchases (Kotler & Keller, 2016). For companies with high customer interaction, clear service standards and active participation from consumers in service delivery improve their experience, boosting brand recognition and awareness. Lastly, physical evidence reduces perceived risks by presenting tangible indicators of service quality. Since every aspect of the marketing mix contributes to brand equity, enhancing these components forms a strong basis for marketing strategies focused on strengthening brand awareness.

In this research, a conceptual framework is needed to understand why the highlighted issue happens. A conceptual framework can also be interpreted as a generative structure that reflects the thoughts of the entire research process. This research integrates two primary theories: the 7P marketing mix and brand awareness theory. The diagram was created by the authors to clearly outline the research constructs, illustrating how the marketing mix is related to and affects brand awareness through the use of arrows. The theories in this framework are applied to investigate what the market needs in choosing accommodation, as well as how brand awareness of a hotel in the *Puncak Bogor* area, especially *Seruni Hotel*, can be enhanced.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research started with business problem identification, followed by parallel internal and external analysis. The internal analysis included *STP Analysis*, *VRIO Analysis*, and *Marketing Mix Analysis* to evaluate the current state of the organization. This study applied quantitative analysis to assess customer behavior and test hypotheses, with data analyzed through *SMART PLS*, as well as qualitative methods to gather insights from internal company sources. Meanwhile, the external analysis used *PESTEL Analysis* and *Porter's Five Forces* to understand the market environment. These analyses converged into a *SWOT Analysis*, which was then translated into strategic planning through the *TOWS Matrix*, and in the end, this research could be a recommendation for *Seruni Hotel* in implementing its business strategy. The research design was carried out extensively to reduce bias, optimize data reliability, and build a fundamental framework for the entire research project.

Data collection involved gathering and analyzing information from various sources and stakeholders related to the research topic. Primary data was collected by distributing questionnaires to tourists in the *Puncak Bogor* area and those potentially becoming prospective consumers at *Seruni Hotel*. Internal data and marketing documentation were also used for internal analysis, including the marketing mix and *STP*. Secondary data collection came from internal data, observations, conversations with management, literature studies, government policies, and market insights.

This study attempted to conduct an analysis with Creswell's qualitative analysis framework by adapting a flexible structured process. Creswell & Creswell (2017) outlined several important steps, namely organizing and preparing data, reading data thoroughly, selecting and classifying data, developing themes and categories, constructing interpretations, interpreting the meaning of data, and finally presenting findings. To analyze qualitative data, the author used the *PESTLE Framework*, *Porter's Five Forces*, *VRIO Analysis*, and *Competitor Analysis*. It was used to analyze the questionnaire data for consumer analysis and examine the relationships between variables by assisted *Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS)*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 210 respondents who had experience visit and stay overnight in *Puncak Bogor*, based on Malhotra (2017) explanation about market research sample size. Most respondents in demographic 26-35 years old with 54,3% and the others is older. In terms of occupation, most respondents are currently employed as private sector workers (47.1%), followed by professionals (18.1%), entrepreneurs (16.2%), and civil servants (14.8%), with the remainder consisting of freelancers, unemployed individuals, and others. Based on domicile, most respondents or 59% lived in the *Jabodetabek* area.

Loading Factor

Based on the rule of thumb, indicators to be valid if they have a loading factor value ≥ 0.70 (Wiyono, 2020). the results of the test conducted in this study, showing that all indicators for

the 7P variables (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, Physical Evidence) and the Brand Awareness variable have loading factor values ≥ 0.70 . These values range 0.764 to 0.891, which confirms that all indicators are valid and effectively represent their corresponding latent variables. This indicates that in this model every indicator satisfies the convergent validity criterion.

Reliability Testing

Reliability test in PLS-SEM aims to measure internal consistency between indicators in one construct. Two commonly used indicators in this test are Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. The reliability metric is commonly positioned between Cronbach's alpha and the composite reliability, making it an appropriate compromise between that two indicator. Wiyono (2020) also strengthens the statement that good Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability value must be more than 0.70, which indicates that the indicators in the construct are consistent in measuring the intended latent variable.

Table 1. Reliability test

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)
(X1) Product	0,737	0,787
(X2) Price	0,775	0,821
(X3) Place	0,841	0,844
(X4) Promotion	0,782	0,793
(X5) Process	0,768	0,777
(X6) People	0,757	0,760
(X7) Physical Evidence	0,825	0,826
(Y) Brand Awareness	0,783	0,787

Inner Model Testing

Hypothesis testing in the structural model is carried out by looking at the path coefficient value, t-statistic, and p-value to determine whether the relationship between variables in the model is statistically significant. Based on the results of path coefficient testing in Table IV.VI, the structural model used successfully explains the relationship between elements of the marketing mix (7P) and brand awareness in the context of hospitality services at Seruni Hotel. The positive path coefficients indicate that a higher respondent perception of the exogenous variables leads to a greater influence on the endogenous variable. Out of the seven hypotheses tested, six were accepted, while one hypothesis was rejected due to not meeting the significance criteria. Specifically, perceptions of physical evidence did not show a significant impact on brand awareness of Seruni Hotel.

Table 2. Hypothesis test

Variable	Original sample	T statistics	P values
Product -> Brand Awareness	0,164	2,938	0,003
Price -> Brand Awareness	0,189	4,142	0,000
Place -> Brand Awareness	0,166	3,899	0,000
Promotion -> Brand Awareness	0,242	6,185	0,000
Process -> Brand Awareness	0,231	5,183	0,000
People -> Brand Awareness	0,209	4,434	0,000
Physical Evidence -> Brand Awareness	0,064	1,880	0,060

Based on the result of analysis, there are six variables that have a t-value > 1.96, indicating a significant influence between these variables and brand awareness. This shows the results of respondents who agree that all marketing mix variables have an effect on brand awareness, except for one that is physical evidence.

H1: Product has a significant effect on brand awareness	Accepted
H2: Price has a significant effect on brand awareness	Accepted
H3: Place has a significant effect on brand awareness	Accepted
H4: Promotion has a significant effect on Brand Awareness	Accepted
H5: Process has a significant effect on Brand Awareness	Accepted
H6: People have a significant effect on Brand Awareness	Accepted
H7: Physical Evidence has no significant effect on Brand Awareness	Rejected

PESTLE Analysis

Seruni Hotel faces several threats driven by political, economic, legal, and environmental factors. The political transition in Indonesia has introduced new budget policies that limit government spending on meetings and travel, which may reduce revenue from government-related events. Economically, a slowdown in growth and a sharp decline in government spending could weaken consumer purchasing power and lower hotel occupancy rates. Although environmental factors weren't detailed, they generally pose ongoing risks related to sustainability and regulation. On the other hand, there are clear opportunities from technological and social trends. The rise of digital tools like cloud-based systems and CRM platforms can boost operational efficiency and personalize guest experiences. Meanwhile, the large, travel-ready population in West Java particularly young adults interested in staycations and lifestyle travel—offers a promising market for tailored tourism experiences close to home.

Porter's Five Forces

The result can show the threat of new entrants is low due to high capital requirements, long construction timelines, and strict spatial regulations in Puncak Bogor, making it difficult for new hotels to enter the market. The bargaining power of buyers is high, especially families and younger travellers now have easier access to information and often explore different hotel options before booking, giving them more influence over pricing and service expectations. Meanwhile, the bargaining power of suppliers is low, since hotels like Seruni typically work with multiple suppliers and have long-standing partnerships, allowing them to negotiate fair

prices and secure steady supply. However, the threat of substitute products is high, as travelers have many alternative options like budget hotels, villas, guesthouses, and Airbnb, which offer similar benefits at competitive prices. Lastly, the rivalry among existing firms is high due to the large number of competitors in the Puncak area, including international chains and budget hotels, pushing local hotels to lower prices and improve services to stay competitive.

SWOT Analysis

Table 3. SWOT Analysis

STRENGTH		WEAKNESS	
S1	Biggest hotel resort in Puncak, Bogor with 478 room capacity	W1	Lack of awareness from potential consumer
S2	Competitive Pricing	W2	Limited use of online booking channels
S3	Strategic location close to Jabodetabek and popular attractions	W3	
OPPORTUNITIES		THREAT	
O1	Huge market potential from West Java and Jakarta (62.2 million people) and 70.2% of tourists aged 25–44	T1	Declining consumer purchasing power due to economic slowdown
O2	Technology integration (CRM, booking platforms, etc)	T2	Intense competition from modern others competitor
O3	Positive influence of Promotion to drive brand awareness based on consumer analysis	T3	High price sensitivity in this market segments

Business Solution

In general, based on the SWOT analysis explanation, the recommended and implementable solutions for Seruni Hotel can be categorized into three main areas: service and product development, increased use of technology, and enhanced promotional efforts. These initiatives can be applied by Seruni Hotel by leveraging internal resources to support performance improvement and align with the goal of increasing Seruni Hotel's brand awareness.

Product Development

1. Create Family Vacation package and bundling package with attraction destinations

Seruni Hotel can design special packages that include fun activities for families, such as swimming, sightseeing, and games for kids. These packages can also be bundled with

tickets to nearby attractions like Taman Safari or local cultural spots. This approach makes the stay more attractive and convenient for families looking for a complete holiday experience.

Technology Adoption

1. Develop an online booking system

An easy-to-use online booking system will help guests make reservations anytime, anywhere, without needing to call or email. This system can show room availability, package deals, and payment options. It will improve customer convenience and reduce staff workload.

2. Utilize Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) platform

A CRM platform helps the hotel keep track of guest preferences, past bookings, and feedback. With this data, Seruni Hotel can offer more personalized services and better promotions. It also builds stronger relationships with loyal customers.

Promotion Strategy

1. Initiate social media and content marketing initiatives

Seruni Hotel can regularly post attractive photos, videos, and tips on platforms like Instagram and TikTok to reach more people. Sharing stories from satisfied guests or local travel guides can build interest and trust. This will help attract new customers, especially from younger age groups.

2. Establish collaborations with local media and tourism associations

Partnering with local media and tourism groups will help promote the hotel to wider audiences through articles, events, or joint promotions. These collaborations can increase visibility and attract tourists visiting nearby destinations. It also strengthens Seruni Hotel's role as a key player in the local tourism industry.

CONCLUSIONS

This study found that most elements of the marketing mix—specifically product, price, place, promotion, people, and process—had a strong and positive influence on *Seruni Hotel's* brand awareness, while physical evidence such as hotel appearance did not significantly impact guest perceptions. The findings reveal that guests prioritize service quality, fair pricing, efficient processes, and appealing promotions over physical aspects when selecting a hotel. The main challenge identified was the hotel's limited promotional activities, resulting in low brand awareness, compounded by intense competition, economic pressures, and rapid technological changes. To overcome these issues, the study recommends a TOWS-based marketing strategy centered on product development, technology adoption, and enhanced promotion, including family vacation packages, bundled offers with local attractions, an online booking system, CRM integration, and active digital marketing. These strategies should be implemented simultaneously to maximize effectiveness, with the expectation of improving brand awareness, strengthening market position, and increasing guest numbers. For future research, it is

suggested to explore the long-term impact of digital marketing initiatives and CRM systems on customer loyalty and hotel performance in the hospitality industry.

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