

MARKETING PROCESS OF HOTEL SERVICES

CASE: TRANSCORP HILTON HOTEL, NIGERIA

Lahti University of Applied Sciences
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Case: Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is to develop the business prospect of Transcorp Hilton Hotel marketing process for implementation of their marketing activities. This process will enable Hilton Hotel to be more profitable in terms of sales and marketing.

The research problem is to examine the marketing activities of Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Nigeria. The Question is raised, for Transcorp Hotel as regards to their marketing activities.

This thesis aims at observing where improvement is needed for Transcorp Hilton Hotel in the area of marketing communication. This thesis will further give suggestions on how Hilton Hotel could improve its marketing communication approach; also some of the marketing techniques that could be used will be introduced to Transcorp Hilton Hotel.

The theoretical part of this thesis consists of marketing communication from different sources and the most valuable one will be selected for the thesis. Secondly, the theoretical part concentrates on the marketing 4P's place, price, product, promotion, and will also segment the marketing 4P's in various categories. The empirical part of this thesis describes the case company; Transcorp Hilton Hotel's marketing activities in Nigeria.

The research method is data collection, which was obtained from the conducted research. Data was also collected from interviews with top executives of Hilton Hotel regarding their marketing activities.

The research shows how Transcorp Hilton Hotel marketing communication can be improved. The interview results give a possible answer for improvement. The thesis will give an accurate solution for improving the Transcorp Hilton Hotel with the best suitable marketing tool.

The thesis gives some suggestions on how private persons and organizations can benefit from Transcorp Hilton sales promotion and advertising.

Keywords: Marketing communication, 4P's, Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Nigeria

Lahden ammattikorkeakoulu
Liiketalouden koulutusohjelma

Williams Christopher Owolabi

Marketing process of hotel services
Case: Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Nigeria

Kansainvälisen kaupan koulutusohjelma opinnäytetyö, 40 sivua , 2 liitesivua

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on kehittää Transcorp Hilton Hotelin markkinointiprosessia markkinointitoimintojen parantamiseksi. Tämä prosessi auttaa Transcorp Hilton Hotelia olemaan tuottavampi myynissä ja markkinoinnissa.

Tavoitteena on tutkia markkinointitoimintoja Transcorp Hilton Hotelissa Nigeriassa. Kysytään miten Transcorp Hilton Hotel voi parantaa markkinointiviestintäänsä.

Tämä opinnäytetyö pyrkii tutkimaan missä tarvitaan parannuksia Transcorp Hilton Hotelin markkinointiviestinnässä. Tämä opinnäytetyö antaa lisäksi ehdotuksia Transcorp Hilton Hotelille markkinointiviestinnän parantamiseksi, myös joitakin mahdollisesti sopivia markkinointitekniikoita esitellään.

Opinnäytetyön teoreettinen osa koostuu markkinointiviestinnästä eri lähteistä ja paras valitaan tähän opinnäytetyöhön. Seuraavaksi teoreettinen osa keskittyy markkinointi 4p's, Product (tuote), Price (hinta), Place (saatavuus) ja Promotion (viestintä) ja myös segmentoi markkinoinnin eri kategorioihin.

Empiirinen osa opinnäytetyötä kuvaa case-yrityksen Transcorp Hilton Hotelin markkinointia Nigeriassa. Tutkimusmenetelmänä on tiedonkeruu, mikä tehtiin suoritettulla tutkimuksella. Tietoa kerättiin myös Transcorp Hilton Hotelin huippujohtajien haastatteluista markkinointitoimintoja koskien.

Tutkimus osoittaa kuinka Transcorp Hilton Hotelin markkinointiviestintää voi parantaa.

Haastattelun tulokset antavat mahdollisesti vastauksen parannukseen. Opinnäytetyö antaa ratkaisun Transcorp Hilton Hotelin kehittämiseen parhaiten sopivalla työkalulla. Opinnäytetyö antaa joitakin ratkaisuehdotuksia kuinka yksityiset ja organisaatiot voivat hyötyä Transcorp Hilton Hotelin myynninedistämisestä ja mainonnasta.

Avainsanat: markkinointiviestintä, 4P's, Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Nigeria

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1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is to develop the business prospect of Transcorp Hilton Hotel marketing communication for implementing their marketing activities. The process will enable Transcorp Hilton hotel to be highly profitable in terms of sales and marketing. The objective of this thesis is to clarify the marketing communication of Transcorp Hilton Hotel; furthermore this is done in order to find out whether the approach could be useful for Transcorp Hilton Hotel.

The second chapter of this thesis will further explain more about the general background of the thesis, some descriptions on how this topic was chosen and why the writer decided to use Transcorp Hilton Hotel as the case study. Furthermore the third chapter of this thesis explains the limitations, and the final fourth chapter explains the aims and objectives of the thesis more deeply. The process for conducting the research questions will be mentioned and the forms of the collection of the research data.

1.1 Background of the thesis

This thesis looks at the marketing communication of Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Nigeria, the present situation of their marketing activities and how their marketing communication is being carried out in Nigeria since the operations began. Also what could be put into consideration for selecting which marketing communication mode is most suitable and recommended for Transcorp Hilton Hotel.

The main reason that motivated the writer to choose this subject was because the writer had his practical training in Hilton Hotel, and during this training period the writer found out that some improvement is needed, precisely the marketing communication of the company, which would be more profitable.

1.2 Limitations of the thesis

This thesis will focus on the marketing communication of Transcorp Hilton Hotel and also some sources will be used for references purpose for Transcorp Hilton Hotel. This thesis is not aimed at focusing on the economics part of the hotel. This thesis will, basically, focus on explaining more about the marketing mix 4P's for proceeding to the main marketing communication that will be used to an improvement Transcorp Hilton Hotel marketing communication.

This thesis will not mention the budgeted amount used for their yearly activities. This thesis only concentrates on the marketing activities that were targeted to private customers in Nigeria.

1.3 Objectives and research questions

The objective of this thesis is to clarify and improve the marketing process and marketing communication of Transcorp Hilton Hotel. Furthermore this research process is done in order to find out which modes could be useful for Transcorp Hilton Hotel, when improving their marketing process. One of the research question of this thesis is to know how Transcorp Hilton Hotel Nigeria conducts their marketing process and communication, for example, to explain how often in a month their marketing activities take place?, What has the reaction of their customers been through their marketing communication? Also materials from marketing articles relating to Transcorp Hilton Hotel Nigeria will be used in this thesis. Furthermore, more detailed information about Transcorp Hilton Hotel Nigeria will be concentrated on.

The scope of this thesis is to mainly look into the marketing communication of Transcorp Hilton Hotel and select the activities that will be suitable for the Nigerian market. Also it will be studied, what will make people to adopt with these new marketing activities.

1.4 Theoretical frame work

The theoretical part of this thesis consists of the marketing 4P's. This thesis will also segment the marketing 4P's into various categories. Secondly, the marketing communication from different sources will be explained and the most valuable one will be selected for this thesis. The marketing 4P's will be more explained in details. Furthermore how the marketing 4P's is being processed in the marketing communication's mix books will be stated. This thesis will also clarify what the writer achieved after the whole process of the research, how the process could be useful for Transcorp Hilton Hotel as case study.

The empirical parts of this thesis describe the case company, Transcorp Hilton Hotel activities in Nigeria. Also the study is helping on how to improve the marketing process of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Nigeria. This thesis will also rely on some useful articles that explained more about Transcorp Hilton Hotel Nigeria market.

1.5 Research method

The research method is data collection conducted for the research. Also the research is in forms of interview with two departments, which are sales & marketing and reservation departments of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Nigeria, while the interviewees are the top executives of those departments that the author mentioned early in previous pages. The interview is about their marketing activities in Nigeria. Written sources are references to rely on such as marketing books, hotel convention sales services, and operations. Furthermore, internet sources, articles up – to- date are applicable sources in carrying out the research. The interviewees were representatives of sales and marketing and reservation departments. The interviews were made by using qualitative research method, also the interview questions can found in the appendix 1.

A qualitative research was selected because the interviewees were not chosen randomly. Top executives of Transcorp Hilton Hotel were selected based on their marketing experience.

2 THE THEORETICAL PART OF THE THESIS

This chapter will explain the theoretical part of this thesis in detail. Also this chapter will start with the definitions as regards to marketing, before going further to the marketing 4P's. However this part will mainly consist of marketing books, articles, internet pages and diagrams for the achievement of this chapter.

2.1 Definition of Marketing

Marketing is about understanding human social needs and wants. Nevertheless marketing creates a relationship between a product and end use. (Kotler 2006, 44)

Marketing is a method that arranges the output of a product into practice by putting the following into consideration - price, promotion, distribution of ideas, goods, and services for human satisfaction. Also marketing needs customer satisfaction more than the profit. Customer satisfaction should always be the number one priority for the organization. Furthermore, the organization should always learn from the customers' feedback.

Today's marketing is about building a cordial relationship between the company and their customers by understanding customer satisfaction. As a matter of fact customer satisfaction usually keeps a value to the company image in the area of sales. The mission and vision of marketing is to keep the present customers for continuous growth while looking for new customers to purchase their product. (Kotler 2004, 4)

There are universal marketing cycle activities that consist of the marketing process. These processes are more needed in everyday marketing process and how human wants, needs and demands are accomplished based on their consumption. As you would see in the following illustration (figure 1) core marketing concepts.



Figure 1. The core marketing concept cycle. (Kotler 2004, 5)

Needs

Human needs are stated as depending on how important it's for consumption purposes. These needs are physical things that can be visible such as food, clothing, and warmth and safety. All these physical things are more involved in human day- to -day activities. Furthermore those things mentioned to be human physical needs are personal needs that are familiar to them; also these things are not made by the marketers. They are an essential part of human decision making. (Kotler 2004, 5)

Wants

Wants are made or created by people depending on their culture or recognition in the society. However, these wants are determined by individual choice for selecting the combination that will be good and affordable for consumption.

Demand

Demand is wants and needs that are profitable for human consumption and services; also it can be affordable to the person paying for the product or services. For example, most people demand a mobile phone for the purpose of receiving calls and sending text messages. While they don't care about other functions or features of the phone, so far the phone can serve their satisfaction.

Products and Services

Products and services is information that is presented to the market for satisfy needs and wants of human. Nevertheless information is obtainable for human satisfactions. (Kotler2004, 6) Product and services are a large collection of intangible goods that can be displayed in the market for customer satisfaction. While some companies or an organization usually sells service alone. (Mc- Graw 2006, 5)

Value and satisfaction

Value and satisfaction is the importance of the product and the willingness. Nevertheless the value of a product is more recognized depending on the product's performance and customer expectation. A customer satisfaction is the motivation that encouraged the customer to make the buying decision. (Kotler 2004, 6)

Exchange, Transactions and Relationship

Exchange, Transactions and Relationship are processes or systems for acquiring something from someone else in return for something valuable.

Market

Market is a relationship between a buyer and a product. Nevertheless markets always structure the major needs or wants that are suitable for the customer's satisfaction. Furthermore the market size determines the amount of people who occupy the trade and are willing to purchase the product or services. (Kotler 2004,9)

2.1.1 Services Marketing Mix Process

Services marketing mix process is an activity plan that invoices sales for a particular target market. Furthermore sales is component of marketing mix process while marketing plan long term business (Pat 2007, 116)

Services marketing mix process is a task monitor that evaluates the effect of marketing and sales effort. Moreover services marketing mix process can be used to identify increases in revenues for a target market. However valuable services marketing process mix always covers a three – year's period. (Milton 2006, 37)

Services marketing mix process is usually defined as each factor that controls the sales effort. The factors are marketing tools that make products or services are in demand. Those marketing tool diagrams can be seen in the next chapter of this thesis.



Figure 2 The four P's of the Marketing Mix (Pat 2007, 116)

2.1.2 Definition of Product / Services

Transcorp Hilton Hotel does not offer any concrete product to its customers, it is services provider. Therefore, I am going to discuss mainly their services.

Services are processes that involve interaction between customer and manufacturer. In most cases services can be a physical operation carried out for a customer as a result of interaction. While some services are an individual service that does not involve an interaction between customer and manufacturer. Most of the interaction services that involve manufacturer are usually created for customer satisfaction also for having an edge over the competitors.

Services are a wide collection of intangible products that satisfy customer values in the market environment. Furthermore companies like hotels, transporters and health care servers sell services to customers. Meanwhile non service companies are producers of technology products to the market. (Mc- Graw 2006, 4) Most hotel services are hospitality services which are rendered to customers. Hospitality

services are to satisfy the wants and needs of traveler and company or organization. Hospitality services are accommodation, food and beverage, business services and leisure.

2.1.3 Brand Name

A Brand name is a protection for a product; it enhances the product or services to be recognized in the market with the brand name. Furthermore the brand name is represented by sign, symbol or design or combination in different style and pattern. Also the brand name of the product or services is important for the customers to see how the product is made and what the product consists of in terms of manufacturing. This design or symbol usually helps the consumer or customers to be able to describe the product, services or identify the product, services in the market quickly. (Kotler 2004, 259)

Today, brand name is becoming so important in the market for product or services recognition that it is unusual for a product not to have a brand name in the market. The brand's name gives more information about the quality of a product /service to a marketer in order to market it with much confidence. Furthermore, the brand name and trade mark give legal protection for single product features in order for the competitor not to copy the product. Furthermore, brands' names usually help the marketer to quickly recognize the potential customers in the market for the product by identifying, age range, demography of the people. (Kotler 2004, 259)

A Brand name is a social benefit that makes people to stay in a prominent hotel. Maybe the hotel services are more unique compared to other hotels around. (Peter 2006, 193)

2.1.4 Functionality

Functionality is a relationship between production and consumption, Moreover, producing a product involves several departments in a company or organization from human resources, operations, personnel and other departments that contribute to the final process of a product for customers' usage. (John 2000, 246)

2.1.5 Quality

Quality is what encourages a marketer to give direct information about product or service performances. Furthermore, quality of a product or services is observed by customer evaluation .Nevertheless it depends on the outreach of the product or services. (Mc Graw 2006, 116)

Services can be acquired from the market by customers when making a calculation how a product or service performs. As matter of fact, when a customer uses services, he or she can make a comparison of the service performance, with the expectations mentioned by the manufacturer. Nevertheless performance or expectation can be regarded as quality outcome. (David 1996, 161)

The customer evaluation is the outcome of the service`s performance, this evaluation will determines how good or bad services work, nevertheless the customer often uses price to determine the quality of services.

2.1.6 Safety

Safety is the condition of being safe or protected against physical, social accident or harmed. Furthermore, safety can be classified into external and internal. External safety is regarded as protection against climate, home invasion, while internal safety is regarded as safety against harmful or dangerous things like home appliances, stairs .e.t.c

A Service guarantee can be an agreement or clause stated for unforeseen accidents that may happen to a person which may lead to harmful or dangerous things that can damage the physical body. Nevertheless the agreement or clause can be put into action when such damage happen depends on who is responsible for the cost. (Mc-Graw 2006, 236) Guarantee is reduction of risk that a company or organization gives to their customers. Furthermore this gives customers more confidence in services that will be rendered by the company or organization. (Peter 2006, 259)

2.2 Price

Price is what we pay for an exchange of a product or services rendered for consumption. It's the aggregate money that is charged for services. Furthermore, price is amounted of all values that were consumed for exchange of human satisfaction. Price is been the involved in the making of buying decisions of services. (Kotler 2004, 314) Price is the only factor in the marketing activities that generate revenue to the company or organization. Price is a flexible thing that can be changed depending on customer demand in the market. (Kotler 2006, 263) Price determines the amount that can be paid for services depending on the customers' decision. Nevertheless price usually allows the customer to make a decision before buying or selecting the product or services. (Mc Graw 2006, 514)

Price is among the four P's of marketing mix that must be considered before making the choice of buying the product or services in the market (John 2007, 35).

2.2.1 Price Strategy

Price strategies are regularly used as the product moves through its life cycles and usually take place when a company or organization produces a new product to the market; they consider the customers' interest in the product, or the changes in the situation before creating the price strategy. They consider which of the price strat-

egies can be applicable to their product strategies like market-skimming and market penetration pricing. (Kotler 2006, 366) Market skimming pricing is putting a high price on a new product in order to make the maximum profit on each level by level of the demography of the people that are willing to pay the high price placed on a product. This makes the company to produce a small amount of the product and make big profit on the sales. (Kotler 2006, 366) Market penetration pricing is putting a low price on a new product in order to gain more ground and draw people's attention to buying a product. Market penetration creates a large market for a product; it uses companies in order to enter a country market to gain a large number of new customers to purchase their product in a foreign environment. (Kotler 2006, 366)

2.2.2 Payment

Payment is the means of exchange used for transaction purpose in the market or it's the identification used in forms of money for purchased products or services in the market, it is obvious that in the business world, payment is used for commercial behavior where a trader receives money from a consumer after purchasing products or services, nevertheless payment is referred to as an instrument forms of money. Moreover payment method is regarded as an instrument used for completing a transaction in a particular area of business. These payments usually have different forms of device used for all kinds of payments available.

Furthermore these payment devices are the interaction between the traders and the consumers during the transaction period in which both can decide what kinds of devices will be suitable for their transactions payment system. These payment devices made for customer are credit, debit or prepaid payment. Credit card transactions are usually charged later from the customers or buyers at the end of the month. While the debit card transactions are usually charged instantly, the prepaid is a transaction that the customers need to pay for before using the services. With all these three major electronic payments that mentioned early, the customers always have an agreement with the banks. (Card payment system 2002, 1)

Payment method is regarded as a policy for making exchange transaction with various means of payment like credit, debit, and master card as was mentioned earlier. Furthermore hotels charge more on those cards. Moreover, the processes for receiving the money from the bank into the hotel's account take weeks. (Milton 2006, 560)

2.2.3 Seasonal Pricing

Seasonal pricing is regarded as price that can be paid for a product or services depending on the period or situation. Furthermore, this seasonal pricing often takes place when there are events or festivals in the environment or country. Moreover some companies or hotels offer cheap price during the seasonal period nevertheless some companies or organizations take advantages of the market situation to determine if the price needs to be reduced or increased for them to be able to make some added profit. (Kotler 2004, 343)

2.2.1 Price Flexibility

Price flexibility is an unstable amount that can be paid for the same product by two different customers or it can be an adjustable price for different customers with the same product depending on the customer relationship. (Keyes.2010, 104) Price flexibility is regarded as a price of product to different customers considering the purchasing power in the location where the product is bought or purchased. Furthermore the location determines the demand for a product in the environment. Moreover the company or organization uses price flexibility to beat competitors in the market (Kotler 2008, 340) Price flexibility can affect a product in the market and may lead to shortages or over supply in the market. This price flexibility can cause changes in the resources or employee salaries. Furthermore, this price flexibility can be increased or decreased in production of the product.

2.2.2 Price Discrimination

Price discrimination is prices that are offered to people depending on their nationality, age, demography. For example, Finland public transportation has different price ranges for people depending on their categories such as people are students, children, workers, elders, disabled people. Students pay half price for the transportation, while the worker pays full payment for transportation. These can be regarded as price discrimination because people of different demography pay different price.

2.3 Place

Place is regarded as the location or where a product or service can be found for consumption uses, Furthermore place can also be described as availability of a products or services. This availability means how often the product can be found or where a product is located in the market.

2.3.1 Distribution Channels

Distribution channels are availability of a product or service for customer use. Moreover, customers consider the delivery network as a connection or location for a product or services location. Furthermore, distribution channel in the area of logistics is usually recognized to be a warehouse where goods are kept for purchases and assembling. (Kotler 2008, 370) In the past years, most companies usually have a single distribution channel for their product or services, these single distribution channels always affect customers in making it difficult to reach their services or product at the time of need, also these not create a value for the product and the customer. For example, a company like Amway is an American company based in America, but most of their products can be found in many homes in the United States and other parts of the world. The company website is their distribution channel where clients can make requests for their product quickly and fast.

2.3.2 Marketing Coverage

Marketing coverage consists of two major processes such as availability and coverage, Availability is the media information of a product or service that involves newspaper, television, display of a product or services, while coverage is regarded as adequate information and regularity of the product or services to a customer with different media communication. (Ogenyi2009, 117)

2.3.3 Processing

Processing is regarded as a system which the organization or company uses for planning their Production establishment. This processing usually starts from the customers' end which is the external processing such as feedback on product or services. The accounting department arranges salaries for workers and other variable expenses, while the human resources arranged hiring of staff and recruiting staff for the purposes production (Kotler 2008, 1)

2.3.4 Transportation

Transportation is a movement of product or service from one place to the other for customer satisfaction. Furthermore, transportation is considered from semi – assembly of product to the final assembly of product or services. (Kotler 2004, 383) Moreover, transportation is very important in a company or organization for the movement of product or services, without transportation the company or organization is not complete. Nevertheless transportation should be among the marketing mix, because without transportation the product cannot be delivered. most companies or organizations uses different kinds of transportation modes for their services. Those transportation modes are truck, air, water, rail, and pipeline, while some regard the internet as part of transportation mode.

2.4 Promotion

Promotion is a plan for increasing sales within a short period of product or services. Moreover, promotions drive a customer to purchase a product or services, nevertheless promotions become more reliable over long-term sales. (John 2007, 197) Promotion is information that encourages customers to a make buying decision of a product or service in the market. Promotions usually develop an interest in purchasing a product or service by customers, meanwhile the company or organization uses promotion to convince people. (Ogeniy 2009, 368)

Promotion is an approach used to adjust international market or local market. This approach helps customers to recognize the product or service. Sometimes the company or organization offers benefits like discount, bonus and samples to customers during the promotion time (Kotler 2004, 555) Promotion as a marketing mix has five major components. These are advertising, sale promotion, publicity & public relations, personal selling. Furthermore these five components are what derive customers to make purchasing decisions when buying product or services.

2.4.1 Promotion Strategies

A Promotion strategy is a plan that a company or organization uses for promoting a product or service, this plan usually happens when a company or organization wants to increase sales or close down its market.

The promotion strategies are always used by the marketers, Also these strategies are classified into two: push strategy and pull strategy. Furthermore, the push strategy engages in pushing the product through personal selling, trade promotion. The same process continues to the consumers end. (Kotler 2004, 436)

2.4.2 Advertising

Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, product or services by an identified sponsor. Moreover, advertising is passing information to single demography buyers at a very reduced level of exposure, it allows the seller to repeat information from time to time to the customers to understand a product or service. Advertising usually explains more about a new product or services to the entire nation for recognition, Furthermore advertising always creates a chance for drawing new customers to buy a product. Advertising can inform the market about the price changes for a particular product. (Kotler 2004, 448)

2.4.3 Personal Selling & Sales Forces

Personal selling & Sales Force is an oral presentation for discussion with one or more potential purchaser (buyer) for the purpose of sales. Personal selling is one of the oldest business presentation conversations used for marketing product or services. These people that go around with products for marketing are called sales people, or sales representatives. These people are individuals acting on behalf of the company or organization to sell a product or services to customers (Kotler, 2006, 402). Nevertheless personal selling & sales force involves telephone calls in some firms or companies, Most firms use this system to look for customers and do more follow-up with the customers. This follow-up usually work for hotels depending on the person interest in the product or services (Milton 2006, 218)

2.4.4 Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is regarded as a short-term incentive to encourage purchase or sales of a product, moreover sales promotion is the attraction that convinces a buyer to purchase a product or service immediately. Sales promotion usually boosts a product or services (Kotler 2006, 368) Sales promotion is regarded as a premium promotion offer to a potential customer as an encouragement for pur-

chasing a product or services. Moreover marketers use these systems to create familiarity between their product and services and the customers. (John 2007, 195)

2.4.5 Public Relations

Public relations are considered efforts made by the organization to modify a group of people and their feelings or views towards the organization. Moreover public relations are regarded as creating a cordial friendship between the organization and the customers. Nevertheless, these friendships create corporate image of the product or services with the identification in the market. According to "Kotler (2006, 390)" relations are applied to promote a product, human, location, organization, or event." Meanwhile public relations contribute more powerfully to public awareness at a lower price rate compared to advertising. (Kotler 2006, 390). Public relations is regarded as social interaction between individuals in the community. This is applied to working life which become the interaction between employee how is related to the customers. Moreover, these interactions usually occur in the form of a physical response that can impact to customer service. (David 1996, 178)

3 CASE COMPANY: HILTON HOTEL

The purpose of this case study is to examine the marketing process of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Abuja. The two researched departments of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Abuja are sales & marketing department and reservations department (Front Office). This part will start with a company presentation of Hilton in general, furthermore, this part will explain more about Transcorp Hilton Hotel Services. Nevertheless the business unit of Transcorp Hilton Hotel, the two departments under the study will be presented later in the case. The research interview was conducted with the head of the department.

3.1 Hilton Hotel Chain in General

Hilton Hotel is a family owned business enterprise. It was established in 1919 by Conrad Hilton. He was catering for the travelers. The owner of Hilton's Hotels began the hotel business in Mobley's Hotel where he had a chance to gain more customers. Also he had opportunities to make profit in a few days to purchase his own hotel. Conrad Hilton realized that the hotel is lacking facilities then he decided to make some changes in the building structures of his hotel for the customers' satisfaction. Furthermore, Conrad Hilton made sure that the customers were happy with his services at all times.

Today, Hilton Hotels is the biggest in the world of hospitality with over 3,000 hotels and 50,000 rooms in 8,000 countries, plus 100,000 workers worldwide. This can be found in the appendix 2.

3.2 Transcorp Hilton Hotel Nigeria

Transcorp Hilton Hotel was established in April 1987 under the Hilton International, with the name Nicon Noga Hotel. These hotel operations began immediately with over 670 rooms and suites carefully designed for personal comfort and styles with several facilities for customer satisfaction. At the federal capital of Abuja, in October 2005, the Transnational Corporation plc, bid to pay the sum of US 105million dollars to be able to be a shareholder as partnership in the hotel which was accepted by Hilton International. This made Transnational Corporation plc to have 51 % equity of the hotel properties. Since the hotel has opened its door in Nigeria, it still continues to be the choice for international and local events and meetings, for the government and individual bodies that can afford to pay for their services. Transcorp Hilton Hotel services are comprised of the following: accommodation, Dining, services for corporate and private person

Accommodations

The rooms are deco-styles rooms and the suites are bright with creative artwork and large open windows that provide a good view of the city to the customers during their stay in the hotel. Also the rooms are complete with desk, min chaise and marble bathrooms. The hotel has several different rooms for accommodations: Guest Rooms, Hilton Guest Room Plus, King Hilton Deluxe, and King Hilton Guest Room, king Hilton Guest Room Plus, King Royal Suite, and Twin Hilton Guest Room, suite Room, Deluxe and Executive Rooms. These rooms have the same names as other Hiltons in the world; they also have room facilities like rooms for disabled people, non-smoking rooms, individually controlled air-conditioning, mini-bar, tea-coffee making facilities, ironing and boards. Prices vary from each other depending on the room sizes and facilities.

Dining

Transcorp Hilton Hotel provides continental meal for local and international business men and women. This continental meal is available in three areas of the hotels depending on the customer's choice for selection. The names of those areas are Bukka Restaurant, Zuma Restaurant, and Oriental Restaurant. The Bukka Restaurant is where traditional meals are made with Africa –style.

Zuma Restaurant is where Mediterranean food is made for romantic relaxation with overlooking a fountain.

Oriental Restaurant is a fashionable for local and business its continental style that was brought from France for enjoyment and relaxation. Other places like the Fulani pool bar, capital bar, pastry shop are for enjoyment and relaxation for the guest and individual satisfaction.

Services for Companies and Private People

Transcorp Hilton arranges Nigeria meetings and events for both corporate and government, with wide range of facilities. Also they accommodate any style event from an informal to a business event .With various meetings room sizes, depending on the event; the hotel provides individually controlled air conditioning with flexibility and versatility alongside.

3.3 Transcorp Hilton Nigeria Marketing Process

This chapter is based on observation responses from the interview questionnaire responses and internet sources, Furthermore, Transcorp Hilton hotel marketing process will be explained and how it works. Nevertheless, the four marketing P's will be used as regards this part and the the marketing process of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Nigeria.

A qualitative research was used and the respondents were given the freedom to give their own observation. The interviews were made by email. A list of questions was sent to the head of Reservation and Sales and Marketing department of the Hotel. The interview was conducted by one of the managers in these two departments. The information was later transferred to Word document after the interview. Also the responses were sent back to the author on email written in a Word document and which they replied on their own time. The replied gives the author an idea on how to use the four marketing p's for the improvement of their marketing activities.

3.3.1 Product/Services

Transcorp Hilton is a Hotel that sells services for corporate and private person. Furthermore, most of their services are booking services which the hotel always makes sure there is available space for the events or accommodations as they

agree with the customer. Also they fulfill their promise as mentioned in the hotel website or conversion when making the bookings. The hotel tries to deliver more than what they promise for their customers to be more satisfied.

Brand Name

Transcorp Hilton Hotel is one of the five- star hotels in Nigeria with different styles and patterns for they usually have a blue logo that represents the hotel and symbols accommodation and meeting rooms for events. Nevertheless the hotel is more professional than other hotels in Nigeria in the area of services for private persons and corporate organizations, furthermore the customers regard the hotel services highly when they talk of hospitality services.

Functionality

Transcorp Hilton arranges events or occasions such as banquets for corporate or private persons, political clubs, parties, educational, religious groups, government, labor unions and medical groups. Furthermore the hotel arranges meeting space and other equipment needed for the meeting before the meetings commence. Meanwhile they help the meeting planner to arranged accommodation for the customer with the reassurance for customer satisfaction. If the meeting planner has a problem in using any of the equipment or services rendered, the hotel will make sure they solve the problem. The reason for solving the problem is for future business to come to the hotel.

Quality

Transcorp Hilton Hotel has a new system for their customer relations by arranging pool cars to pick their guest from the airport to the hotel. These systems are for generating other revenue to the hotel. The pool cars are for security purposes for a new guest that is coming into the hotel for the first time. Furthermore the hotel arranges transportation for their staff.

Safety

Transcorp Hilton always states some clause for safety or guarantee between customers and the hotel in case of any harm or other loss or damage during the customer's stay. When any damage or harm occur the hotel with quickly checks who is responsible for the damage, whether is their employee or a customer. Then both parties will look at the clause mentioned for the damage and who will bear the responsibility. Nevertheless, both parties always hold a copy of the agreement in case of any problem or damage.

3.3.2 Price

The reservations, sales and marketing provide different price rates Most of the time they make sure that rates are specified clearly for accommodation and events rooms, furthermore if a rate is agreed by the customers the hotel always states the price clearly. The Dining department cannot give accurate prices for meals in advance when making a negotiation with the customer for an events budget. This can be a big problem for the events planner when making the budget for events. The hotel accepts e-payment method and cash transfer depending on the customers. The hotel provides an accommodation price list for their customer to make a decision when booking the room. Also they make complimentary arrangements for their loyalty customers. When company or individual bookings are made the hotel keeps the information on their computer till the appointed time with some extra hours and if the customer doesn't turn up the hotel releases the room.

Price Strategies

Transcorp Hilton usually considers marketing skimming price in a peak periods of demand for accommodation and the price is increased. The hotel always assures that everything that can be purchased during that period will increase in price in order for them to make more profit. Transcorp Hilton regards marketing penetration price to be those valley periods in times regarded as value season or low seasons for the hotel. At these periods the hotel management usually advises

the employees to receive an event or accommodation booking at reduced price. Nevertheless the sales & marketing department usually sends some of their staff to visit offices by asking them if they will be having an event or accommodating some of their workers.

Payment

Transcorp Hilton Hotel Abuja accepts every kind of payment from their customers, including credit, and debit cards which they confirm from the card verification company. After the guest payment is done through credit card or debit.

Furthermore the hotel arranges master account folio for events and accommodation bookings. This is done when an organization or company is having an event in the hotel keeping their billing because it's usually hard for the hotel to post bills to a company or organization without having an account. However the masters' account helps the hotel to arrange the bills easily and send them to the organization. Also the individual account folio changes are sent to the guest direct within the period of his or her stay in the hotel.

The hotel accepts time of payment and methods of payment from the customers depending on policy. Nevertheless, the hotel changes master credit more on the mater credit, then receiving the money in cash at a time, the reason the hotel usually charges more on this card is because the process of getting the payments takes a long time.

Seasonal Pricing

Today Transcorp Hilton Hotel Abuja arranges these seasonal prices twice a year, the reason was due to the Recession problem in the world, they decided around April 2009 to June 2009 to reduce their room's price rate for people to be able to stay in their hotel. Around August to November they increased their price rate because they realized that the under 17 FIFA World Cup Football tournament will commence in Nigeria and their hotel area is near of the football events.

Flexibility

Transcorp Hilton has price flexibility depending on the customers profile or the company; furthermore they offer this pricing to their potential customers like the government, religious groups.

Price Discrimination

Transcorp Hilton Hotel usually offers a different price for a tourist in Nigeria, compared to Nigerian citizens, the reason for these different prices is because the hotel considers the exchange rate and they collect foreign currency from the tourist which is more favorable to them when making the exchange transaction. They gain more profit.

3.3.3 Place

Transcorp Hilton is located in beautiful landscaped grounds in the heart of the federal capital of Abuja, Nigeria. Furthermore; the hotel is located in the business area where all activities take place. Also the hotel is accessible by every part of Nigeria. Transcorp Hilton Abuja has the best website for making reservations, and it's accessible for making multiple online booking for groups of guests and the kind of rooms available the hotel creates accurate phone access in every area of their hotel for urgent booking. In addition individual make a phone call to the hotel for bookings and inquire. When these telephone calls are made the hotel discovered what kind of inquires is needed by the customers and how they can satisfy the need of the customers on the phone without any future delay. Nevertheless, the hotel usually received email booking, and they quickly responded back to the customers for any inquires that was requested for within 24 hours. Meanwhile Transcorp Hilton creates a fax system for message from overseas for accommoda-

tion booking. They may follow up on a voice mail recorded voice with the customers' phone number.

Marketing Coverage

Transcorp Hilton usually sends the sales and marketing personnel out to some companies for marketing communication. The personal will visit the companies and speak with them about their services.

Processing

Once a group booking is made the reservation manager of the hotel will quickly check to find out what the organization is requesting and what kind of event are their people hosting. Nevertheless the request might take a long time for the manager to be sure with the payment but the hotel will still keep the date of the events in their records. Furthermore, the manager will always send a reminder to the events planner about the date of the event and the payment method.

Transportation

Transcorp Hilton Hotel has created a new system for their customer relations by arranging pool cars to pick of their guests from the airport to the hotel. These systems are for generating other revenue for the hotel.

3.3.4 Promotion

Transcorp Hilton Hotel arranged incentives trip; this trip are usually done for their potential customers which are deluxe traveling package for motivating the customers to develop more interest in using the hotel services. They often arrange the best accommodation for these incentives traveling during the period of their

stay. Besides, the hotel often gives discount for special months like March, September, October, and December with 25 % discount. Meanwhile weekends discount is 50% offe for their customers. Nevertheless the special offer includes breakfast for the customers.

Promotion Strategies

Transcorp Hilton practices the push promotion strategy for their business by welcoming the guest in from the main entrance of the hotel and they collect the guest luggage and bags, check the guests booking and direct the guest to his or her rooms, nevertheless this gives the guest an impression of what the hotel will offer.

Advertising

Transcorp Hilton usually presents print advertising as a means of media. This gives the event planner more information about the hotel services and how things are handled in the hotel in terms of arranging events like weddings, annual meetings and educational programmes. Furthermore the printed media explains more about the type of rooms the hotel has and how the patterns and style are made. The hotel provides magazines that cover the whole picture of their services.

Personal Selling & Sales Force

Transcorp Hilton is involved in sales calls for selling their accommodations and event rooms. Furthermore they send their sales manager for face to face selling when they discover that potential customers are planning an event like an educational seminar, conference meeting and wedding. Nevertheless the hotel always wants to be involved themselves in arranging meeting rooms that are suitable for their customers.

Sales Promotion

Transcorp Hilton offers a membership card to their potential customers which card Hilton honors. These cards give the customer the rights to have discounts in the hotel. Also it helps the customers to enter into the hotel without standing in the line with other people. Nevertheless the hotel offers weekend rates, seasonal prices and incentive trips plans for their customers as part of their sales promotion.

Public Relation

Transcorp Hilton public relation is one of the best in Nigeria. In terms of hotels public relation the name Hilton has helps the hotel to edge over all other hotel in Nigeria. Furthermore Hilton was ranked number four in hospitality services in the world. These make the Transcorp Hilton publicity is strong .Moreover, the recognized personalities prefer using the hotel for events.

4 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL COMPARISON OF TRANSCORP HILTON HOTEL MARKETING PROCESS

This chapter will be used for the comparison of Transcorp Hilton marketing process in theory and practice. Also the comparison will identify how the services work in real life situation. Following tables will demonstrate the marketing 4P's in theory, while the Transcorp Hilton Hotel marketing activities will be used for the practical part of this chapter. The information used in this chapter is received from the interviews done January 2010 within Transcorp Hilton Nigeria.

4.1 Product /Services of Transcorp Hilton

The following tables will explain the Product /Services of Transcorp Hilton Hotel and how its work in theory and practice .The comparison is done to improve the existing marketing process.

Table 1. Comparison of theory and practice of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Marketing activities concerning Product /Services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product/services <p>Services are processes that involve interaction between the customer and the manufacturer. In most cases services is a physical operation carried out for a customer as a result of interaction, while some services are an individual service that does not involve an interaction between the customer and the manufacturer. The interaction services that involve a manufacturer are usually created for customer satisfaction and also for having an edge over the competitors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand Name <p>A Brand name is a protection for a product; it enhances the product or services to be recognized in the market. Furthermore the brand name is represented by sign, symbol or design or combination. Also the brand name of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product/Services <p>Transcorp Hilton is a Hotel that sells services for corporate and private person. Furthermore, most of their services are booking services which the hotel always makes sure there is available space for the events or accommodations as they agree with the customer Also they fulfill their promise as mentioned in the hotel website or conversion when making the bookings.The hotel tries to deliver more than what they promise for their customers to be more satisfied</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand Name <p>Transcorp Hilton Hotel is one of the five- star hotels in Nigeria with different styles and patterns; they usually have a blue logo that represents the</p>
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<p>the product or service is important for the customers. This design or symbol usually helps the consumer to be able to describe the product, services or identify the product and services quickly.</p>	<p>hotels accommodation and meeting rooms for events. The hotel is more professional than other hotels in Nigeria in the area of services for private persons and corporate organizations. Furthermore the customers regard the hotel services highly when their talk of hospitality services.</p>
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4.2 Pricing for Services in Transcorp Hilton

The following tables will explain the Pricing in theory and practice of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Service. The comparison is done to improve the existing Marketing process.

Table 2. Comparison of both theory and practice of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Marketing activities concerning Pricing.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price <p>Price is what we pay for an exchange of a product or services rendered for consumption. It's the aggregate money that is charged for services. Furthermore, price is amounted of all values that were consumed for exchange of human satisfaction. The Price has is been the involved in the making of buying decisions of services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price <p>The reservations, sales and marketing provide different price rates Most of the time they make sure that rates are specified clearly for accommodation and events rooms, furthermore if a rate is agreed by the customers the hotel always states the price clearly.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Price Strategies <p>Price strategies are regularly used as the product moves through its life cycle And usually take place when a company or organization produces a new product to the market; they consider the customers' interest in the product, or the changes in the situation before creating the price strategy. They consider which of the price strategies can be applicable to their product strategies like market-skimming and market penetration pricing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Price Strategies <p>Transcorp Hilton practices the push promotion strategy for their business by welcoming the guest from the main entrance of the hotel and they collect the guest luggage and bags, check the guests booking and direct the guest to his or her rooms,</p>
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4.3 Utility of Transcorp Hilton

The following table will explain the Utility of Transcorp Hillton Services both in theory and practice. The comparison is done to improve the existing marketing process

Table 3. Comparson of both theory and practice of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Marketing activities concereng Utility or Place.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place <p>Place is the location or where a product or service can be found for consumer uses, Furthermore place can also be described as availability of a products or services. This availability means how often the product can be found or where a product is located in the market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place <p>Transcorp Hilton is located in beautiful landscaped grounds in the heart of the federal capital of Abuja, Nigeria. The hotel is located in the business area where all activities take place. the hotel is accessible by every part of Nigeria. Transcorp Hilton Abuja has the best website for making reservations, and is accessible for making multiple online bookings for groups of guests and the kind of rooms available the hotel.</p>
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4.4 Promotion of Transcorp Hilton

The following tables will explain the promotion Transcorp Hilton Hotel Services both in theory and practice. The comparison is done to improve the existing marketing activities.

Table 4. Comparison of both theory and practice of Transcorp Hilton Hotel Marketing activities concerning promotion.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion <p>Promotion is a plan for increasing sales within a short period of product or services. Moreover, promotions drive a customer to purchase a product or services, nevertheless promotions become more reliable over long –term sales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion Strategies <p>Promotion strategy are plans that a company or organization uses for promoting a product or service, this plan usually happens when a company or organization wants to increase sales or close down its market. These strategies are classified into two : push strategy and pull strategy. Furthermore, the push strategy engages in pushing the product through personal selling, trade promotion. The same process continues to the consumers end.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion <p>Transcorp Hilton Hotel arranges incentives trip they often arrange the best accommodation during the period of their stay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion strategies <p>Transcorp Hilton practices the push promotion strategy for their business by welcoming the guest in from the main entrance of the hotel and they collect the guest luggage and bags, check the guests booking and direct the guest to his or her rooms, nevertheless this gives the guest an impression of what the hotel will offer.</p>
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5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter explains the recommendations and suggestions that have come up during the course of the thesis. The recommendations are based on interviews and marketing process in practice with the comparison to the theoretical part.

There is need for improvement in the area of sales promotion and advertising. Furthermore, whenever the hotel is organizing a sales promotion they should always inform the general public, not just their potential customers who will benefit from the sales promotion. With this the hotel can gain more customers which will be profitable for them. Nevertheless the hotel should always provide some take away gift or arranged promotional star prize for everybody that uses their services during their sale promotion time. This will promote the hotel services. Also it will increase of the Transcorp Hilton's company profile.

The hotel should increase their advertising. It should be more frequent than before. The advertising should also be carried out not only in the newspapers but also it should pass through other media communication like local television and private stations. And all their hotel services should always be displayed and mentioned both in international and local advertising. The hotel should try to sponsor some educational programs in Nigeria. Furthermore their site information should always be up to date and give more information about their services.

The hotel should always notify the general public about any events that will be organized by the hotel through the media communication. This was part of the observation received from the interview.

6 SUMMARY

Marketing process is communications that can work for every organization in order to make profit. Without these processes the organization cannot make profit.

Sales promotion and advertising give strategies for an organization to obtain customers from the competitor in the market. It also requires revenue and time from the organization to run the sales promotion. But sales promotion and advertising are not a project; they are continuing processes for an organization that will materialize in return in the future. These processes promote the organization's services and their profile in the market.

According to Hartly & Cross(1988, 35-42)', sales promotion encompasses such activities like discounts, incentive plans coupons , sweepstakes and value promotion ''all this attract the customers to make a buying decision for the services. These will encourage the customers to patronize their services. The interview shows that there is need for improvement in terms of sales promotion.

These improvements will surely motivate new customers to use their services at all times. Moreover the sales promotion will create more awareness or interest to Transcorp Hilton Hotel service. Also it will overshadow their competitors promotional or activities. Sales promotion will develop a relationship with new customers and the hotel. These will gather customers' information needs in the hotel.

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APPENDIX 1.

INTERVIEW QUESTION

AIM: the purpose of this thesis is to know what kind of marketing communication is used by Transcorp Hilton hotel Abuja, and how can the thesis writer introduce new marketing communication to Transcorp Hilton hotel Abuja, Nigeria.

1. Specify your department (A) sales &marketing Department (B) reservation (front office)Department

2. Sex (A) Male (B) Female

3. How often is Transcorp Hilton Hotel marketing communication conducted?
(A)Every month (B) semi Annual (C) Annual (D) Other.....
.....

4. What kind of marketing communication is Transcorp Hilton Hotel using?
(A) Promotion (B) Advertising (C) Personal selling (D) Public Relations Publicity (E) Sales Promotion (F) None of the above

5. What is your own opinion to the strength of Transcorp Hilton Hotel marketing communication?
(A) Poor (B) satisfactory (C) good (D) very good (E) excellent
Coments.....
.....
.....

6. What is the price ranges for Transcorp Hilton Hotel
(A) 20,000 -40,000 N (B) 50,000 – 70,000 N (C) 80,000-100,000N (D) others
.....

7. Does Transcorp Hilton Hotel offer the following prices

Seasonal price (YES) (NO)

Flexibility price (YES) (NO)

Discrimination price (YES) (NO)

8. What kind of payment modes are use in Transcorp Hilton Hotel Abuja

(A) Cash (B) cards (C) Check (E) others

9. How are reservations made in Transcorp Hilton Hotel Abuja?

(A) Internet (B) phone calls (C) desk reservation (E) agencies (F) others

.....

10. Are Hilton Hotel services are the same in Nigeria as in the rest of the world?

(YES) (NO) if NO what and why

.....

11. What are the main marketing media uses for promotion by Transcorp Hilton Abuja, Nigeria?

(A) internet

(B) Television

(C) Newspapers

(D) Public relations

(E) Others.....

APPENDIX 2.

Hilton position in the world ranking by number of hotels and rooms.

Hilton Hotels Brands (Rank # 6 globally by number of hotels and #4 globally by total rooms)

Hilton Hotels Corporation Hotel Brands	Hotels per Brand 3,265 Hotels (Hotelsmag.com) 3,197 (Hilton)	Market Segment	Rooms per brand 545,725 globally	Ranking in World Top 50 Brands (rooms)
Hilton Hotels	520	upscale	184,091 (Hilton) 185,540 (Hotelsmag.com)	4
Hampton Inn	1,600	midscale	159,689 (Hotels)	6
Hilton Garden Inn	450	midscale	58,658 (Hotels)	23
Doubletree	160	upscale	42,168 (Hilton) 52,541 (Hotels)	27
Embassy Suites	190	upscale	46,076 (Hilton) 48,022 (Hotels)	32