

1. Introduction

Marketing of any kind of services can be challenging but at the same time interesting. How to market a product in a way that it awakens people's interest and make them think, "I want to have that"? Especially since people are more and more aware of their needs and wants and they will not settle for less.

The basis for this thesis is the fact that I used to work at Hotel X myself. Hotel X is a small hotel and does not have the big marketing development departments that other nation-wide hotel chains might have. So what chances does a small hotel have against such big competitors? As the Hotel X did not have any kind of clear marketing agendas to start with it gave me a good starting line to start developing new ideas in regard to marketing the hotel's services.

1.1 Aim of the study

The aim of the thesis is to create a strategic marketing plan for Hotel X; first to assess the current marketing situation of the hotel and what possible needs and gaps it might have. With the basic information of the situation a marketing plan can be formed. The aim is also for the new marketing plan is realistic and applicable so that the hotel can use it in their marketing.

1.2 Structure of the thesis

The thesis starts with the theoretical part researching different aspects of marketing and specifically marketing in a hotel. In the theoretical part the emphasis is on marketing but the basics of tourism and hotels are also defined and then continuing on examining more closely on how a marketing plan is formed, what parts it contains and what different information is needed to form it.

In the empirical part of the thesis there is first the basic information on how the marketing plan itself will be formed. Starting with the goals of the research as well as the methods on how information will be gathered. The research continues to its more active stage where personal interviews of the Hotel staff and owners

are conducted. With the information gathered from the theoretical part as well as from the interviews the strategic marketing plan is formed.

1.3 Restrictions

Marketing can be a very broad concept and it has numerous different aspects to it. That is why the theoretical part of the thesis is restricted to only research marketing from a service company's point of view. The aim is to create a marketing plan for a hotel so it is important to find out how specifically a hotel can use marketing and what different marketing tools there are available to do so.

In the empirical part the research is restricted to deal with only the hotel in question. All the information gathered in the empirical part concerns only Hotel X meaning that the marketing plan can only be used by the hotel in question.

1.4 Hotel X

Hotel X is a small privately owned hotel in Helsinki, Finland. More precisely it is located in Malmi, close to the Malmi train station and shopping mall Nova. The hotel was established in 1989. In the early 90's the hotel was rented for a couple of years but then returned to its owners in 1994 and the owners have been practicing their hotel business at Hotel X since then.

The business idea of Hotel X is to provide accommodation and restaurant services to its customers. The CEO (chief executive officer) of the company is male and his wife operates as Hotel Manager. Additionally to the CEO and the hotel manager there are five permanent employees at the hotel. The restaurant services of the hotel are outsourced to another company.

In the hotel there are 39 rooms including single and double rooms as well as 3 suites. All of the rooms have air conditioning, minibar, telephone, TV and a shower. The hotel services also include a bar, buffet breakfast and lunch and á la carte restaurant in the evenings. Additionally there is also a sauna and a meeting

room available. Hotel X also owns and rents two furnished apartments for guests staying for a longer period of time. The apartments are located near the Hotel X.