



Customer Relationship Management Initiatives and Patronage of Havilla Towers and Hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract

Customer relationship management initiatives in hospitality industry are the 4Ps combination of profiles, precision, preferences, and the property management system (PMS) variables it uses to differentiate itself from competition. The study was conducted to examine the influence of hotel marketing mix on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The study adopted the descriptive research design on a population of 200 staff of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The stratified proportionate and simple random sampling were employed in drawing a sample size of 133. The simple regression analysis was used for data analysis. Result shows that data precision has a significant positive influence on patronage in Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Results also revealed that preferences have a significant positive effect on patronage in Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. It was recommended among others that management of hotels should create efficient systems that would provide effective profiling environment to promote patronage of the hotels. It was concluded that data precision and preferences have a significant positive influence on patronage in Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Keywords: Marketing, Mix, Profiling, Precision, Preferences, Patronage.

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I. Introduction

A company's marketing mix in the hospitality industry is the combination of profiles, precision, preferences, and the property management system (PMS). It uses to differentiate itself from the competition. Unlike the marketing mix of product, price, place, and promotion, these four elements have strong dependency between each of the Ps. It is the set of actions, or tactics that a company uses to promote its brand or product in

the market. Similarly, hotel marketing mix also refers to the term used to denote the tools and instruments that the marketer uses to influence demand. It can also be considered as the four Ps (Kotler et al., 2012).

According to McCarthy (2023) four Ps acted as the corner stones upon which successful marketing strategies have been built. They provide a clear and comprehensive method to consider the essential elements of marketing a product or service. In the realm of hotels, marketing is a technique of guiding the customers to choose goods and services of their choice rather than electing the products of the rivals. If hotels are not accounting for this aspect to make its brand more relevant, they are hampering their profit level, sales, and occupancy. Marketing mix in hotel practice serves as a strategy for considering the different elements that go into promoting a brand and its products. It offers broad guidelines for putting the right products in the right place, at the right time, and price (Morch, 2019).

Outstanding marketing companies understand the market place and customer's needs, design value creating marketing strategies, develop integrated marketing programs that deliver customers value and delight, and build strong customer relationships. In return, they have value from customers in the form of sales, profits, and loyalty. However, to stay and become competitive in business, hotels can offer a product or service that fills a gap in the market, offer better sales promotions such as buy one and get one free, offer online discount codes or cashback, create a unique selling point (USP), and develop relationships with existing customers to make them more likely to buy again (Kotler, 2013).

Hotel marketing mix is the term used to denote the tools and instruments that the marketers uses to influence demand. These elements when utilized effectively increases hotel's profitability, innovative capabilities and thus, enables hotels to gain competitive advantage (Daniel, 2018). The four Ps no doubt helps businesses to improve their business processes, decrease costs and increase patronage. Therefore, most firms across the globe uses the hotel marketing mix(4Ps) in carrying out their daily business processes and activity to significantly contribute to an increase in a firm's business patronage, particularly the profiling, precision, preferences, and property management system (PMS) variables. Three out of the four Ps were examined as variables in this study, namely; profiling, precision, and preferences. Hence, the need to study the influence of hotel marketing mix on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Statement of the Problem

Hotel marketing mix is an instrument that built its role as a corner stones upon which successful marketing strategies have been built, has not been fully understood by researchers. The concept of marketing mix has been studied by many, however there seems to be a discrepancy in empirical findings regarding hotel marketing mix of profiling, precision, preferences, and property management system. For instance, the studies of Gutima (2017) found no positive relationship between the 4Ps of marketing and firm's business performance while Maina and Murigi (2022) in their findings revealed that marketing mix positively affects a firm's business growth. It is based on the above gaps in literature that this study investigated the influence of hotel marketing mix on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State in order to improve our knowledge and understanding of the role of these important customer relationship management initiatives.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of hotel marketing mix on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the effect of effective profiling on patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.
2. assess the influence of data precision on patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.
3. Ascertain the effect of preferences on patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

1. What is the effect of effective profiling on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?
2. What is the influence of data precision on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?
4. To what extent does preferences affect patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?

Hypotheses of the Study

1. H₀: Effective profiling has no significant effect on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.
2. H₀: Data precision has no significant influence on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels

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Uyo, Akwa Ibom state.

3. H0₃: Preferences have no significant influence on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom state.

II. Review of Related Literature

Customer Relationship Management Initiatives in the Hotel Industry

Customer relationship management initiatives may be defined as the mixture of controllable marketing variable that the firm uses to pursue the sought of sales in a target market. Accordingly, any self-respecting customer relationship management toolbox contains its own. Four P^s that are tactical elements required for a successful customer relationship management initiative in any hotel company include profiles, preferences, precision, and property (Maina and Murigi, 2022).

Effective profiling is at the heart of having one to one communications with hotels' guests. It has little to do with police officers determining whom to pull over or not, and everything to do with capturing relevant information about the guest and their behaviour, both observed and reported. Identifying the data elements to capture and retain represents a major tactical decision in a hotel customer relationship management initiative. The dilemma is between capturing so much information that service delivery is overwhelmed versus not capturing enough detail to do anything useful with it. Related issues include guests' legitimate concerns about the potential for privacy abuse. Some of the key elements to consider in defining your profile data include multiple addresses and telephone numbers, payment methods (i.e. credit card numbers), prior visit history, typically at some summary level with details available, some ranking measurement indicative of value to the brand, family composition, comments, and correspondence history (Gituma, 2017).

Precision of data input is a crucial element for any customer relationship management in any industry. Go to the front desk and pull a dozen folios out of the trash can. Scan the address and comment fields for accurate and standardized data input. You are almost certain to find wild variations in abbreviations, addressing and formatting. The variation cripples a customer relationship management effort that attempts to match new stays with prior guest visits. It becomes almost impossible for the system to match the new record with the old one if the new one is a reservation for IBM and the old one is for IBM. The answer is standardized data input. Corporate management owns the responsibility to define data input standards for all address, comment or other fields that allow text entry. Property management systems (PMS) owns the responsibility to train reservations and front office personnel on those standards and reinforce their use. Global distribution systems (GDS) and internet reservations often come in with non-standard addresses and must be tidied up or matched to a guest history record (Rowley, 2011).

Sophisticated data hygiene and matching algorithms somewhat address the precision issue, but establishing, training and reinforcing data input standards is the only effective remedy. Note that some legacy PMS will aggravate this problem by erroneously matching stay detail history records under the wrong history master record, making a bad situation worse. Again, data input standards will minimize the negative impact of the primitive logic used in these systems (Eze et al., 2015).

Preference data may be either observed or reported. For example, a preference for golfing could be reported by the guest in a profile form completed when registering for a frequency programme. Likewise, an observed golfing preference could be measured by noting that a given guest went to a golf resort and had green fees and pro shop purchases on their folio. Either way, you now have a topic to engage the customer in a dialog about a topic of value interest to your guest (Sigala, 2015). Make the communication enticing and attractive and increase your share of guest's wallet and mind. One challenging thing about preferences is that a single guest's preferences vary according to the purpose of a given trip and the destination. The vacationer's preference for a room near the pool usually does not apply on a business trip to Manhattan. The trick for the hotel company is to identify what are global preferences versus local ones unique to a property (Kotler, 2013).

Many hotel enterprises use a third party system or service as the heart of their customer relationship management initiative. Some of these systems are specific to the hospitality industry such as guest ware. Others are modules of horizontal customer relationship management platforms from well-known vendors such as pivoted systems or others. However, in the hotel environment the measure of excellence in service almost always comes down to a face to face interaction in the hotel with the guest. The property management system is crucial part of servicing that deals with interactions. Getting what we know about the guest and their preferences in front of the employee is a required element in supporting them through that moment of truth interaction. All

the profiling and preference capture in the world won't help if service delivery fails due to faulty or missing information (Daniel, 2018).

Property Management System (PMS) in hotel enterprises are used as a third party system or service as the heart of their customer relationship management initiative. Some of these systems are specific to the hospitality industry such as guest ware. Property management systems are built to drive the operation and not to perform detailed analyses or manage personalized communications. However, in the hotel environment the measure of excellence in service often comes down to a face to face interaction in the hotel with the guest. The property management system is a crucial part of servicing that deals with interaction. Getting information about the guest and their preferences in front of the employee is a required element in supporting them through that moment of an ideal interaction, thus, all the profiling and preference capture in the world will be of no importance if service delivery fails due to faulty or missing information (Rowley, 2011).

Customers and Hotel Patronage

Hotel patronage is the business that comes into an establishment generating revenue in the form of customers, other businesses or companies. It can be seen as business or activity provided by a patron. The patron in tourism context refers to the tourist who patronizes a destination (Morch, 2019). Customer patronage according to Ogwo and Igwe (2012) is the total purchase by a buyer and the level of sales recorded by a business firm. Customer patronage is the approval or support provided by customers with respect to a particular brand. Customer patronage is the method of obtaining and buying a firm's product. In the service or hospitality industry, patronage is the acquisition of the service offered by a firm. Kotler and Armstrong (2007) assert that customers have varying degree of patronage to specific services, store and other entities, and they can be divided into four groups according to patronage status. Hard core patrons (customers who purchase services from one service provider all the time), split patron (customers who are loyal to two or three service providers), shifting patrons (customers who shift from one service to the other), and switchers (customers who show no loyalty to any service provider) (Powers and Barrow, 2013).

It is therefore, imperative for hotel managers to identify the determinant factors that influence customers' patronage, with particular reference to effective profiling, data precision, and preferences as used in the study. Some of the factors in hospitality sector are service delivery, cleanliness of guest room, problem resolution, employee courteous attitude, security, ambience, just to mention a few. Also, Pricing, proximity to hotel, purchasing power of the customer and demographic variables play a major influence on customer patronage of hotel. Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) in Kotler *et al.*, (2012) posited that when customers are well satisfied, there is likely to be a repeat visit or repurchase intention to patronize the service.

Repurchase intention is one of the consumers' post-purchase decisions that is used to choose the services of the same hotel when customers do not experience unresolved service related problems. The consumer decision to repurchase intention depends on the evaluation of the service quality received (Kumar and Manshor, 2017). Kheng *et al.* (2012) pointed out that if the evaluation of service quality exceeds consumer expectations, then the consumer will repurchase the services. Otherwise, the evaluation of service quality is lower than consumer expectation and will produce the opposite effect. The consumer's decision to continue using the same hotel services will provide assurance to the organization for business sustainability and ensure consumers do not switch to other service providers. Customers are essential investors in business organizations and services provider's success depend on high standard of service provided and the satisfaction derived by the customers which positively affect their level of patronage (Garga and Bambale, 2016).

Theoretical Review Assimilation Theory

Assimilation theory by David Ausubel in (1960) cited in Kotler *et al.* (2012) is based on dissonance theory. Dissonance theory posits that consumers make some kind of cognitive comparison between expectations about the product and the perceived product performance (Peyton *et al.*, 2013). This view of the consumer post usage evaluation was introduced into the satisfaction literature in the form of assimilation theory. According to Anderson (2003) cited in Edidijus and Von (2015), consumers seek to avoid dissonance by adjusting perceptions about a given product to bring it more in line with expectations. Consumers can also reduce the tension resulting from a discrepancy between expectations and product performance either by distorting expectations so that they coincide with perceived product performance or by raising the level of satisfaction by minimizing the relative importance of the disconfirmation experienced (Vavra, 1997 in Aremu and Lawal, 2012). Payne and Frow (2015) argues that Assimilation theory has a number of shortcomings. First, the approach assumes that there is a relationship between expectation and satisfaction but does not specify how disconfirmation of an expectation leads to either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Second, the theory also assumes that consumers are motivated enough to adjust either their expectations or their perceptions about the performance of the product. A number of researchers have found that controlling for actual product performance can lead to a positive relationship

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between expectation and satisfaction (Olson and Dover, 2009 in Daniel, 2018). Therefore, it would appear that dissatisfaction could never occur unless the evaluative processes were to begin with negative consumer expectations.

Empirical Framework

Berry (2010) assessed data precision on business performance in a developing context. The researcher used quantitative methodology. The Structural path model analysis was used to test the hypotheses concerning the relationship between data precision and business performance. The findings indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between data precision and business performance. It was concluded that data precision has significant relationship with business performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended that significant data precision system should be adequately provided to enhance business performance.

Odhiambo (2013) studied the effect of pricing as a competitive strategy on sales performance of selected pharmaceutical companies in Nairobi. The researcher adopted the survey research design in a population of 180 employees selected randomly from the companies. Simple regression analysis was used for data analysis. The findings indicate that pricing have significant positive effect on sales performance. It was concluded that pricing as a competitive strategy have significant positive effect on sales performance.

III. Methodology

The research employed a descriptive survey research design on a population of 200 staff of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. A pilot testing was conducted using few populations in determining the efficiency of the questionnaires and also as a way of determining the accuracy and validity of the gathered data. Self-completion questionnaires were employed using open and closed ended questions and used the multiple regression method for data analysis.

IV. Data Analysis Results

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Marketing Mix Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Mkt. Mix	df1	df2	Sig. F Mkt. Mix
1	.824 ^a	.679	.659	.876	.679	33.783	3	48	.000

Source: research Data (2024)

The result in Table 1 shows that 0.659(65.9%) as the value of adjusted R Square showing the extent to which hotel patronage at Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, state is determined by effective profiling, data precision, and preferences. Therefore, the remaining percentage (34.1%) should be studied to determine how other factors influence the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	77.818	3	25.939	33.783	.000 ^a
	Residual	36.856	48	.768		
	Total	114.673	51			

Source: Research Data (2024)

The value 0.000^a shows that the significance level is less than 0.05. Showing a statistical significance of the model on how the independent variables studied influenced the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The results in Table. 2 also indicate that F calculated value is greater than the value of F tabulated (33.783 > 25.939) at 5% significance level confirming the significance of the model.

Table 3: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0.524	1.075		1.790	.000
Effective Profiling	0.643	.268	5.275	2.395	.001
Data Precision	0.855	.087	3.882	9.772	.004

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Preferences	0.525	.344	1.367	2.981	.002
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Source: Research Data (2024)

The findings in Table 3 revealed that holding the independent variables constant (effective profiling, data precision, and preferences) to a constant zero, the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State would be at 0.524 factor, a unit increase in effective profiling, data precision, and preferences would lead to a unit increase in patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo by a factor of 0.643, 0.855, and 0.525 respectively. The established regression equation was as follows; $Y = 0.524 + 0.643X_1 + 0.855X_2 + 0.525X_3$; Where Y = Patronage of hotel, X_1 = Effective Profiling, X_2 = Data Precision, X_3 = Preferences.

The result in Table 3 further indicate that data precision had the highest effect on patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State as shown by a factor of 0.855 followed by effective profiling with a factor of 0.643 and preferences with a factor of 0.525. The relationships ($p < 0.05$) was all significant with data precision ($t = 9.772, p < 0.05$). Data precision have a greater correlation with patronage of hotels as it has a direct involvement in major tactical decision in a hotel customer relationship management initiative. This study is in line with the work of Berry (2010) on data precision and business performance in a developing context that examined the relationship between data precision and business performance. The findings indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between data precision and business performance. The recommended that significant data precision system should be adequately provided to enhance business performance.

V. Discussion of Findings

Effective profiling is at the heart of having one to one communications with hotels' guests. From the responses, the respondents are of the belief that effective profiling, data precision, and reasonable preferences would enhance patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Regarding the effect effective profiling has on patronage of hotel, Table.3 reveals that effective profiling has a positive and significant ($B=0.624, P_{0.004}<0.005$) effect on patronage of hotel. The result shows that, as effective profiling is being improved, patronage of hotel will increase by 62.4%. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative by concluding that, effective profiling has positive and significant effect on hotel patronage in Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The study's findings are supported by that of Odhiambo (2013) that found a significant positive effect of pricing on sales performance of selected Pharmaceutical companies in Nairobi. However, the findings are contrary to the findings of Gituma (2017) whose findings indicated that effective profiling does not have a substantial impact on hotel patronage.

Precision of data input is a crucial element for any customer relationship management in any industry. The influence of data precision and preferences on patronage of hotels is revealed in the regression model of Table 3. The result indicated a positive and significant ($B=0.855, \text{ and } 0.525, P_{0.003}<0.005$) influence of data precision and preferences on patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Implying that an influence by hotel management on data precision and preferences improvement will increase patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State by 85.5% and 52.5 % respectively. The study's findings are supported by that of Muchiri (2016) that found a positive relationship between patronage of hotels and preferences. However, the findings indicated that preferences do have a substantial impact on hotel patronage.

VI. Conclusions

The study was conducted in order to examine the influence of customer relationship management initiative on the patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Regression results were all significant which led to the rejection of the three null hypotheses. The R^2 for all the hypotheses significantly influenced the dependent variable. This indicates that effective profiling has a significant positive effect on patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Findings also revealed that data precision and preferences have a significant positive influence on patronage of Havilla Towers and hotels Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

VII. Recommendations

1. The management of hotels should create efficient systems that would provide effective profiling environment to promote patronage of the hotels.
2. Workers should be adequately trained on the handling of data for good and proper guests continuous patronage.
3. Since a single guest's preferences vary according to the purpose of a given trip and the destination, communication should be enticing and attractive to increase to promote patronage of hotels.

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