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BRAND FORMATION OF HOTEL SERVICES ENTERPRISES

Introduction

The relevance of the topic is due to the need to find effective approaches and methods of increasing the competitiveness of hotel enterprises in the market of hotel services, while forming the brand of hotel services enterprises.

Based on the analysis of the semantic content of the concept of “brand” and the nature of its emergence, it is appropriate to note that until now researchers have not developed a unified vision, scientific and methodical approaches to its formation in the context of industry affiliation. Starting from the 1930s of the last century and to this day, the works of such authors as D. Aaker, D. Grant, S. Davis, P. Doyle, A. Ellwood, J.-N. Kapferer, K. Keller, F. Kotler, M. MacDonald, T. Nilsson, D. Ogilvy, P. Feldwick, A. Wheeler and many others have received the greatest fame among foreign scientists. Scientific works of A. Dlihach, O. Zozul'ov, O. Kendyukhov, T. Mel'nyk, S. Mel'nychenko, H. P'yatnyts'ka, Y. Romat, S. Sydoruk, D. Fayvishenko, E. Yurchak and others gained the greatest popularity with domestic researchers on the development of branding in various fields.

The problem of creating a national brand and identifying the content of national branding is raised by A. Valibusova, T. Melnyk [9], A. Mazaraki, H. P'yatnyts'ka, O. Hryhorenko [8] who conduct a thorough comparative analysis in the global economy and create authors' concepts of a successful brand development; H. Studins'ka [11] substantiates the territory branding indicator as a measure of the level of economic development of the region; Y. Romat devotes his research to revealing the concept of brand-marketing communications, analysis of the main approaches to the formation of brand-marketing strategies, without reference to the industry characteristic [10]; D. Fayvishenko is interested in the issues of the development of strategic brand management [14]. Analyzing scientific studies devoted to the strategic development of the brand of enterprises in the field of hotel business, it was found that D. Basyuk and M. Barna [1], L. Zavidna [4], O. Oklander [12], A. Mazaraki [18] and other authors are among other scientists who thoroughly investigated these issues recently. Noting the significant scientific achievements of most researchers, it is worth noting that

theoretical and methodological approaches to the formation of the brand of hotel service enterprises based on strategic competencies remain outside their attention.

The main purpose of the publication is to develop recommendations for increasing competitive advantages in the hotel services market when forming the brand of hotel services enterprises.

The subject and research methods

Considering the essence of the brand, it is worth noting that most scientists consider it twofold: on the one hand, as a name or symbol that identifies a product that has undeniable competitive advantages, and on the other hand – as a complex of objective and virtual parameters that combines the real characteristics of the product and its subjective impression in the minds of consumers together with the virtual benefits and values generated with the help of marketing tools [11]. Most Ukrainian researchers interpret the brand according to the “non-commodity scheme” as an intangible addition to the product, which is jointly formed by producers and consumers [12]. The brand becomes an integrated combination of the impression it makes on consumers and the result of their experience in using the product which contains four key aspects from the company's point of view: brand as an identifiable system; brand as a tool for risk reduction; brand as a vintage contract; brand as added value from the consumer's point of view and as a personified relationship [10, p. 35].

The main value and significant difference for consumers and at the same time the basis for creating productive relations with them are such elements as: culture, employees, hotel development program and means of creating a hotel product.

Under branding in the field of hotel business, scientists proposed to understand the technology of creating and promoting branded tourist services, activities to form a long-term preference for them, which is based on the increased influence of a trade emblem, trademark, advertising argumentation, materials and sales promotion measures on a certain segment of consumers; design and organization of service outlets, as well as other elements and promotions in the field of advertising activities, combined by a separate idea that distinguish the organization's services from competitors, create its image, emphasize positions and uniqueness. The main task of branding of hotel services enterprises is the formation and further development of positive associations associated with its brand by the consumer [3, p. 133].

As a tool for the development of the hotel business, branding is primarily an investment that is implemented to obtain high economic results. The ideal environment for its development is the Internet space, in which the target audience of any product and service is gathered, which can be filtered in various ways (the “targeting” process). Promotion of the hotel through the Internet includes such

elements of the system as: media and contextual advertising, search marketing and SEO, promotion in social networks: SMO and SMM, direct marketing using e-mail, RSS, Internet branding, etc. [5]. The means of online communication are the opportunity to conduct a direct and open dialogue with consumers of services, to answer their questions, to promptly inform about any innovations or promotions that are being held [5]. In addition, brand promotion in the network can be carried out with significantly lower costs compared to online promotion, or even without financial costs at all (depending on the chosen methods). One of the ways to increase the effective operation of the domestic hotel business is the use of foreign experience in the operation of the subject of the hotel business and their use of vintage strategies in order to maintain influence and strengthen the trademark. They include the following basic strategies: 1) corporate brand strategy (promoting products and services under a single trademark and creating conditions for its stable position on the market, which greatly facilitates the process of introducing innovations and allows saving money); 2) individual brand strategy (different hotels have their own individual brand, name, image, but at the same time belong to the same hotel chain). This strategy makes it possible to segment the market in detail, taking into account the requirements of target audience groups [3, p. 140].

The hotel brand carries an extremely important semantic load, which includes rational and emotional elements, expressed through the tangible and intangible values of the enterprise. This load is usually determined by the target group of service consumers and positioning practice. However, it should be noted that with all the diversity of hotel segments, almost all hotel brands are united by a related structure.

Usually, the basis of a hotel brand is the category of the hotel itself and the range of services it provides. At the same time, the basic set of hotel services is determined by the category of the hotel and includes a set of standard services designed to meet the client's primary needs (a place to stay, catering, guest safety, etc.).

However, the difference between one brand and another is usually additional services aimed, as a rule, at meeting the specific needs of specific client groups (pool services, sauna, business center, wireless Internet, etc.).

The hotel has a wide scope for activity: they can express their uniqueness by simplifying the procedure for booking rooms and registering customers, implementing special programs for regular customers, offering a wider range of room service, laundry or cleaning services, and creating special conditions for businessmen to stay, expanding the network of restaurants and bars, gyms, etc.

The purpose of additional services in the hospitality industry is not only to meet specific needs, but also to exceed the expectations of consumers. Experienced consumers highly appreciate the range and quality of additional

services, which undoubtedly increases the value of the hotel enterprise in their eyes, even if they do not intend to use all services.

Therefore, an integral component of the brand of hotel service enterprises is the level of quality and completeness of services, which is reflected in the symbolic of the hotel using the star system and is probably the most obvious attribute of the hotel brand for consumers.

A brand in the hospitality industry performs three main functions:

- the function of differentiation, since it is the brand that gives the client a clear idea of the main values of the company, which allows to convey to the client the uniqueness of the hotel, its dissimilarity to competitors, material and non-material benefits of staying in it, thus positioning the hotel on the market;
- serves as a promotional tool creating additional marketing investments that pay off due to increased demand for hotel services;
- creates a complex of emotional and rational prerequisites for customers who repeatedly and constantly comes to the hotel. It is the presence of a permanent, loyal audience that guarantees the sustainable development of the hotel [1, p.72].

Every hotel in its business strives to create a strong brand, while it must ensure communication with every aspect of the business relationship with the customer to create a long-term relationship between the consumer and the brand of the hotel business.

The long-term relationship between the consumer and the brand, based on respect and trust, contributes to the sustainable advantage of the consumer of the hotel itself and its services. So, a process aimed at creating an atmosphere of consumer loyalty is at the heart of the formation and management of brands in the hospitality industry.

Many brand-customer relationships arise when the brand is viewed more in relation to the business itself than to its services. In hospitality marketing, the quality and completeness of services directly depends on the positions of the hotel enterprise, therefore, the key point of branding is a hotel capable of offering quality services.

An interesting example of attracting, retaining a customer and creating a long-term relationship between a consumer and a brand is the opening and operation of design hotels.

Over the past few years, a whole network of hotels has been formed, which are conceptually so-called “design hotels” or hotels from designers. Today there are more than 100 of them all over the world. Talented and famous designers participated in the creation of each hotel, they tend to call their creations boutique hotels. Despite the fact that these hotels recently appeared on the market, they managed to win the recognition of travelers from different countries. The secret of success is that hotels, in addition to the usual amenities and comfort, create for guests an extraordinary atmosphere of different eras and historical events. It can

be argued that the popularity of design hotels is not a momentary fascination of consumers with a novelty, but the satisfaction of real market needs that deserve careful research.

To analyze the problem, it is necessary to define the portrait of the modern consumer of hotel services, taking into account the fact that the modern traveler is looking for a balance between comfort and originality, revitalization and peace, company and solitude. The needs of the modern guest are complex, contradictory and diverse, but they define a new standard of hotel service, forcing the industry to work in a new format. Design hotels fully comply with this format.

In the conditions of competition, a positive image of the hotel becomes a necessary condition for achieving stable and long-term business success, which protects the company from competitors, as well as strengthens its position on the market. It is impossible to consider the image without reference to the brand and its formation. The brand is the pinnacle of the efforts made by the enterprise in the realization of its product. The presence of a strong brand becomes a business engine, increases its profitability, determines the policy of work and stimulates the development of services to support the reputation of the brand. A good brand can be, if not decisive, then at least an indisputable advantage in the competition.

Many believe that the brand is more the prerogative of large enterprises, which, in most cases, are engaged in the sale of goods. However, the hotel industry knows many examples when the brand was born from one hotel, built up momentum for many years and became recognizable all over the world. Hilton, Kempinski, Sheraton – hotel brands that made a name for themselves not by trading goods but by providing quality service and maintaining it unchanged regardless of the location of the hotel. According to experts, it is necessary to create a new brand from the first day of the hotel's opening. For the market, where national hotel brands have just started to appear, it is time to review the approach to all actions for creating and strengthening the brand. Let's analyze the main differences between a service brand and a product brand.

The creation of a hotel brand is a complex of measures for promotion, advertising and, of course, the provision of services must be consistent and checked to the smallest detail. If for companies that sell sparkling water, TV commercials can bring a certain percentage of income, for a hotel, as for a service company, this measure will be a waste of money. A carefully designed program that includes client mailings, targeted mailings and a number of other actions can significantly increase brand recognition, which will naturally lead to an increase in its recognition.

The most successful hotel chains say that the state of affairs has the greatest potential when the interests and philosophy of enterprises merge with the interests and needs of the consumer. Thus, it is important to determine the nature and values of enterprises, which can become a criterion for the emotional and rational choice of a guest of your hotel.

Thus, a guest oriented towards the same goals as the hotel will subconsciously be more loyal to the brand and more likely to accept your offer. All the main concepts of brand formation and development of hotel services enterprises are based on increasing not only profit, but also market share. Successful and recognizable brands are usually either number one or number two in market share. In the hotel industry, as a service segment, market share is much less important than profit itself. As a rule, the local market is already divided between several hotels and the task of each of them is to attract the maximum number of customers and sell the largest number of services to achieve a practical result. At the same time, it is necessary to understand that the task of competitors is the same.

Consumers perceive the brand as a set of attributes and psychological associations that form distinctive elements of the brand's individuality. The task of brand attributes is, first of all, to identify the brand, distinguish it from a number of similar ones, and convey its valuable component, which was marked in the form of identification. In any contact with the attributes, the consumer must have a clear understanding of the brand presented to him. In this regard, matching brand identification is a task of attributes, which comes down to the ability to distinguish a brand from a competitor's brand at all levels of perception:

- visual perception;
- kinesthetic perception;
- sound channel of perception.

Notwithstanding the motive for visiting a hotel business, visitors need to be provided with a high level of satisfaction, which will lead to the formation of consumer loyalty, and loyalty, in its turn, leads to financial growth and well-being of the enterprise. That is, loyalty is one form of a buyer's behavior that is influenced by many different factors. Potential consumers perceive the brand as a set of attributes and psychological associations that form distinctive elements of the brand's individuality.

Brand is one of the most powerful tools of modern marketing communications. Increasing attention to the problems of forming branding strategies in hotels is explained by the fact that the popularity of the brand becomes an important condition for the stability of the enterprise on the market and a factor of its competitiveness.

Brands, as the most important intangible assets of enterprises, have already proven their ability not only to provide enterprises with strong competitive advantages, but also to significantly increase their market value. The experience of Western countries shows that in today's competitive market, brands are essentially fighting for their place in the minds of consumers.

Thus, branding allows you to ensure the stability of sales volumes and significantly facilitate the process of developing new markets.

Summing up, we can say that a brand is a complex phenomenon consisting of various factors that merge together.

That is why for the successful formation and maintenance of the hotel brand, it is necessary to pay attention to all the little things, carefully analyzing every step and considering every decision.

Thus, it is objectively necessary to first develop a plan for the formation of the brand of hotel services enterprises and to follow it during the lifetime of the enterprise.

It is important to remember that all elements of the plan must be interconnected and work as a whole. Building a brand is an art that requires long and time-consuming work. It is important to strive to ensure that the desired result of brand formation corresponds to the real one, that the created image meets the requirements of society and reflects the individuality of the enterprise. With the help of brand management, it is possible to influence and manage the emotions of consumers, which is the main value in the conditions of the modern service market. In addition to all this, the image of the hotel is its most powerful weapon in the fight against competitors.

Therefore, although it is quite effective for domestic hotels to use the brands of well-known hotel chains in order to increase the volume of sales of services and, accordingly, to increase their own profit, for such hotels it is necessary to form an individual brand among consumers in a competitive environment of numerous accommodation facilities.

Conclusions

Therefore, leading hotel chains have powerful brands with strong market positions and high customer loyalty, which gives hotels significant advantages. In particular, it reduces the risk of competition, makes the brand resistant to possible economic or market crises, softens the reaction of consumers to price fluctuations, and opens up opportunities for brand expansion. At the same time, the market for hotel services is very crowded, with new players appearing every year, so it is important to constantly improve brand management.

The following should be highlighted in the set of promising directions for hotel brand development: actively use integrated marketing communications; the advertising company should be focused on remembering the mark and brand by consumers; in the advertising campaign, it is advisable to focus on hotel services; maintain the loyalty of your customers, a positive image of the company through sponsorships, promotions, placement of mailing materials at retail outlets and the largest number of people – this is necessary to become a national brand; to offer new types of services, as consumers become more demanding in choosing a hotel, at the same time, Ukrainians are ready to pay more for a high-quality premium product; to improve the technology and organization of accommodation, paying more attention to each customer and quickly responding to any questions,

problems and drawbacks. Thus, modern conditions of competition require further differentiation of hotel services provided under a certain brand, taking into account the specific needs of individual customer groups. This specialization involves the creation of different trademarks under one brand, aimed at specific segments of the hotel market.

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Abstract

The article discusses the basic concepts and terms of the brand, as well as the strategy of positioning the brand of hotel enterprises in order to form a competitive advantage of enterprises of hotel services. The article describes the essence of branding and branding in the hotel business by different scientific approaches. It is suggested to refer to a brand as a name or symbol identifying a product that has a clear competitive advantage or an intangible complement to a product co-created by manufacturers and consumers. The aspects of branding of a hotel business entity are grounded and its importance in promoting hotel services is investigated. Effective ways to promote the brand to the market have been identified.

The basic task of hotel business branding is substantiated, which is to form and further develop in the consumer positive associations related to its brand. The main varieties of branding strategies are analyzed and the model of forming a strong brand under the influence of various factors is formed. Features of branded branding development strategies in the hotel business are revealed. The effectiveness of ways to promote the brand of a hotel business is analyzed. The definition of the concept "brand strength" as its integrated characteristic, which indicates the level of its popularity with the buyer. The authors propose a scheme of forming a strong brand in the hotel business, taking into account the impact of the environment.

Keywords: brand, psychological associations and competitors, positive image, popularity, objectives, perceptions, consumers, the market of hotel services, stages of development, audit, promotion.

JEL Classification: M3,