

In the Face of the Epidemic, How Does the Hotel Industry Recover: Evidence from Hilton's Strategy Adjustment

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Abstract: One of the biggest victims of COVID-19 has been the hotel industry, which has struggled to recover after the disease spread. Many hotels are going out of business, but others are finding different ways to survive. Hilton is an image standard for the hotel industry, able to respond quickly to damage. Marriott and OYO, as Hilton's counterpoint, face different challenges. This paper summarizes the methods of Hilton's rapid recovery through the vertical comparison with its pre-pandemic strategies, and some favorable strategies that other hotels can learn from through the horizontal comparison with another two hotels, Marriott and OYO, in hope of assisting more and more hotels to recover from the pandemic.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

As 2020 begins, COVID-19 is rapidly spreading in countries around the world. Due to the epidemic, China's tourism industry came to a complete halt during the traditional peak season of the Spring Festival. After March, the global tourism industry also came to a halt, resulting in huge economic losses and a major blow to the tourism economy. According to the EHL, international tourism arrivals in June 2020 were 93 percent lower than in 2019, while international tourism revenues fell about 74 percent, according to the World Tourism Organization [1]. The global hotel industry is bracing for a cold winter as many hotels are forced to close due to a sharp drop in tourist numbers and COVID-19 prevention policies.

COVID-19 has hit the hotel industry hard, as well as Hilton. According to Hilton's annual report, approximately 20% of Hilton hotels worldwide have completely or partially ceased operations due to COVID-19, which has directly contributed to the decline in Occupancy and ADRs at Hilton. Hilton's system-wide comparable revenue per available room decreased 59.2% and 56.7%, respectively, compared to the same period in 2019 [2]. It can be seen that the COVID-19 pandemic has also had a big impact on Hilton.

1.2 Literature review and creative points

Looking ahead, we expect budget hotels to recover most quickly to pre-pandemic levels and luxury and premium hotels to recover least quickly. That is partly because budget hotels are better able to tap into demand segments that remain relatively healthy despite travel restrictions, including truck drivers and long-stay guests. When asked what it would take to get them to travel again, a majority of U.S. leisure travelers want additional health and safety measures in place, according to the McKinsey Consumer Leisure Travel Survey of 3,498 travelers from five countries in April 2020. However, none of these measures will satisfy those questioned. Survey participants were asked to choose the answer to all applicable, respondents basically said "yes", they do not have to distinguish

the security measures, and that these are more or less valuable, when they consider these results, many hotels want to know what steps to take, in what order to ensure the safety of their property, and to show to the customers reluctant to this point. China, the first country affected by the crisis and the first to begin to emerge from it, may provide some answers.

Hotels face the prospect of long-term recovery. In the coming months and years, properties will vary based on many factors, including chain size, location, and demand conditions. There is no one right response for everyone, but some guidelines are universal. Hotels must care for their staff, stay in touch with them during the pandemic and ensure their safety when they return. They must manage customer expectations recognize that these will continue to evolve and be prepared to act flexibly to address health and safety issues. They have to revise their business strategy for the reboot to look at the next normal. In the long run, travel will return due to an important shift in consumption -- an accelerated shift from buying things to buying experiences [3].

While a growing number of studies only focus on the present situation of the whole hotel industry after the pandemic, few studies pay attention to a hotel case in detail. To fill this research gap, this study will highlight the dynamic strategies adjustments of Hilton during the ongoing crisis in the microcosmic perspective, aiming to find how Hilton responded quickly and what exactly it did to survive the disastrous COVID-19. More specifically, the comparative analysis will be used to compare hotels and business modes of different levels as a unit in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3 Remaining structure

This paper proceeds as follows: it starts with the STP analysis of the hospitality industry after pandemic based on three points. The case study about Hilton is then presented by looking first at pre-pandemic strategies followed by the adjustments in four parts after the epidemic. Next, use the value chain model to discuss post-pandemic strategies of Marriott and OYO these two international hotels, and make optimization suggestions for Hilton according to the vertical and horizontal comparison. Then, the replicable strategies other hotels can learn from are highlighted. Finally, the paper concludes by delivering weak points and future directions to further this study.

2. The analysis of the hotel industry

2.1 Method

The hotel industry especially the hotel market has changed significantly due to the pandemic. STP analysis as a vital tool in strategic marketing is used to analyze in this paper. It contains market segmenting, market targeting, and market positioning. Market segmenting is based on differences in consumer needs, purchasing behaviors, and preferences. Based on it, a company will select target markets and develop appropriate products and services to achieve maximum economic benefits.

2.2 STP analysis of hotel industry after the pandemic

2.2.1 Market segmenting

After the epidemic, the hotel's target customer groups have changed greatly, so it's indispensable for them to further adjust the market segmenting. First, with the second outbreak of an epidemic, the tourism industry will continue to slump in a relatively long period, but peripheral travel and road trips show a good signal. Second, online meetings are preferred due to the epidemic prevention. Thus there will be few gathering meetings in conference hotels. Third, the market shares of the government market as the main source of hotel income will have a certain decline within the strict policy adopted by the government [4]. Fourth, the online booking market will be emphasized due to the utilization of intelligent technology such as robots and remote control. Through this new mode of human-machine integration, it will enhance the efficiency of the hotels to the corporates in the management process and subsequently upgrade the whole hotel industry after the pandemic.

2.2.2 Market targeting

Based on comprehensive analysis and accurate grasp of post-epidemic market information, the hotel re-combined the post-epidemic government market, business market, tourism vacation market, conference market, and network booking platform and other types of market consumption share, and combined with the hotel's actual, matching customer characteristics, targeted target market development, tap potential customer groups, remodel the source structure. The survey shows that the top three types of hotels favored by middle-class white-collar workers are resort hotels, international brand hotels, and boutique hotels, with the demand for quality accommodation services deepening among contemporary young people.

2.2.3 Market positioning

As the epidemic continues to ferment, the hotel industry is facing a reshuffle. High-end hotels cut prices to save themselves and seize the market share of mid-range hotels. Low-end hotels are under great operating pressure due to safety, health, quality, and cash flow, and will close down or close down. According to the economic situation and consumption environment after the epidemic, the hotel should analyze the operation status of surrounding high school and low-grade hotels, adjust the market positioning after the epidemic promptly according to the characteristics of industry competitors and the requirements of target market selection, and improve the competitiveness of the hotel.

3. The analysis of Hilton

3.1 Pre-pandemic strategies

The generic strategy of Hilton is differentiation, which lays the solid foundation of the other strategies performed by Hilton. Leading with culture, winning with customers, enhancing network effect, and maximizing performance as four key strategic priorities show an overall picture of the pre-pandemic strategies of Hilton [5].

For leading with culture, as the world's first global hospitality company, Hilton is guided by their powerful values, which sets a good example in the hotel industry. The word "HILTON" represents hospitality, integrity, leadership, teamwork, ownership, now respectively. These are the core factors of Hilton culture, spiritually navigating Hilton into the correct direction for every guest in every hotel at any time.

For winning with customers, based on its culture, Hilton adopts a customer-oriented market strategy and owner-centric service. The staff there always keep passionate about delivering guests personalized offers and exceptional experiences. Hilton will hire a company that gives feedbacks to the center after experiencing the whole process from booking to checking in and checking out in Hilton. The evaluation results will be regularly transmitted to Hilton Headquarters, which will then be distributed to each branch so that managers can find new issues and solve them in time.

For enhancing the network effect, after winning with some customers, it's time for Hilton to enlarge its number. Hilton has owned seventeen differentiated brands worldwide in total before the pandemic. The brands are divided into six levels, luxury, upper-upscale, upscale, upper-midscale, midscale, timeshare. Its global footprint is mainly in five parts worldwide, The Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Middle East, and Africa, with 6,110 total properties, 971,780 total rooms, more than 387,000 rooms in the pipeline before COVID-19. The global presence is expected to grow at a record pace, according to an expansion plan that is keeping consecutive record-breaking growth by opening more than one hotel a day.

For maximizing performance, Hilton adopts a resilient, fee-driven business model that delivers industry-leading premiums. In online performances, it introduces Digital Key in 2015 that provides guests the choice to bypass the hotel check-in counter by digitally selecting and accessing their room via the Hilton Honors app, and Connected Room, through partnerships with Netflix, that enables guests to control and personalize their stay from smartphones. In practical performances, Hilton founds Hotel and Restaurant Management in the University of Houston to appeal to exceptional

employees worldwide. Also, it develops franchised system to gain more popularity and market shares.

Above all, Hilton executes against a consistent strategy with clear objectives and performs a remarkable job in the hospitality industry.

3.2 Existing post-pandemic strategies

3.2.1 Strategy adjustments

There is no denying that the epidemic has caused A great impact on Hilton, but at the same time, Hilton has also made rapid responses from four aspects: guest experience, communities, global growth and expansion, and team members. The practice has proved that these measures have successfully helped Hilton to go through 2020.

3.2.1.1 Guest experience

The heightened hygiene awareness caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has forced hotels to raise cleanliness standards to keep guests comfortable. In partnership with RB, the manufacturer of Lysol and Dettol, Hilton Clean Stay™ has launched and redesigned the meeting and event experience as an industry standard for cleaning and sanitizing, setting a new standard for event cleaning and customer service.

In addition, the arrival of COVID-19 has disrupted many customers' travel plans, and hotels need to carefully consider how to refund fees and how to exchange points for hotels booked in advance. As a result, Hilton has revised its cancellation policy and taken several steps to provide Hilton Honor Club members with greater flexibility, including membership and point renewals.

At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic has also changed people's way of contact, with zero contact becoming a priority. To that end, Hilton is taking advantage of its technology to continue offering contactless guest experience options through the free Hilton Honor Club APP, allowing guests to personalize the experience by selecting a room, digitally checking in and out, and using their phone as a digital key. This digital technology is necessary and effective during a pandemic, as it greatly reduces customer social interaction and helps ensure customer safety.

3.2.1.2 Response to communities

Hilton has always been a company with a sense of social responsibility. Even when there was no outbreak of COVID-19, Hilton has repeatedly assisted the community. This time, Hilton has demonstrated its corporate responsibility as always.

Hilton reportedly gave more than \$1 million to the Hilton Effect Foundation in 2020. And has partnered with American Express to donate up to 1 million nights of hotel stays across the United States to front-line healthcare professionals leading the fight against COVID-19; Expanding partnership with American Express by donating \$1 million to World Central Kitchen to provide healthy, freshly cooked meals to front-line healthcare professionals staying at Hilton hotels in cities across the U.S. during the coronavirus pandemic.

Hilton has not only contributed to the COVID-19 fight on its own but has also rallied and provided a platform for others to contribute. According to Hilton's official press release, they create opportunities for Hilton Honor Society members to respond to the global pandemic by donating points that can be converted into cash and sent directly to organizations such as World Central Kitchen, Clean The World, Project Hope, or Direct Relief; In addition to supporting Hilton team members in finding virtual and remote volunteer opportunities, they help the travel industry unite and share wonderful stories of teams around the world supporting each other and helping communities through Hilton and other relevant media.

3.2.1.3 Continued global growth and expansion

Hilton's expansion plans never stopped, even in the face of the pandemic.

Announced key additions to Hilton's robust pipeline, which are located in the Americas (Club and Resorts World Las Vegas), Africa (Conrad Abu Dhabi Etihad Towers), Tokyo (Waldorf Astoria Tokyo) and Singapore (Hilton Singapore Orchard).

Opened new notable properties around the world including Conrad Punta de Mita in the Americas and Susana Bodrum, LXR Hotels & Resorts in EMEA, Hilton Goa Resort, and Hilton Okinawa Sesoko Resort in APAC [6].

Launched by Hilton Tempo, an elevated and approachable lifestyle brand that offers a thoughtful design, efficient service, and exciting partnerships, and achieves brand milestones including the 600th Doubletree by Hilton, which also reflects Hilton’s response to market demand.

3.2.1.4 Response to team members

Hilton is consistently ranked as one of the best places to work in America, thanks to its care and love for its employees. In this COVID-19 outbreak, Hilton inevitably encountered the problem of whether to lay off employees or let employees take a vacation. Without the panic of ordinary companies, this industry leader skillfully solved this problem with its most enthusiastic and caring values.

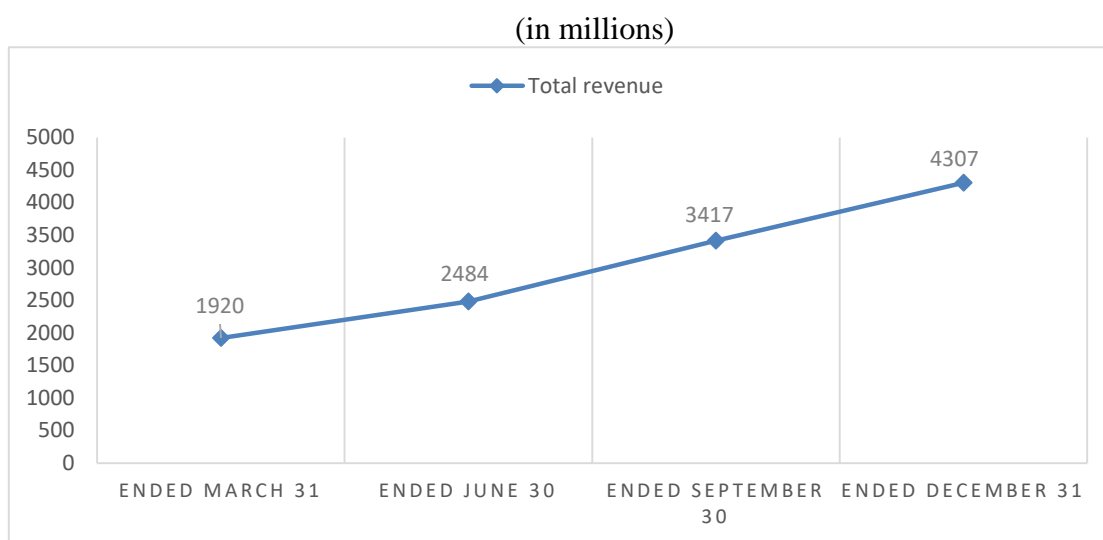
First, they activated the Hilton Team Member Assistance Fund to support Hilton team members who have been directly affected by COVID-19 or family members who have been affected by the virus, which is a great insurance policy for sick families.

What’s more, Hilton has moved quickly to optimize its employment process, connecting team members affected by furloughs and layoffs with more than one million job opportunities through the Hilton Workforce Resource Center. In addition, Hilton also launched a new Hilton Alumni network portal that provides career opportunities, resources, news, and information to help employees quickly access the latest career information, and is committed to accelerating the recruitment process for team members to reapply for future positions if conditions allow.

In addition to the optimization of employment channels, Hilton also pays attention to the expression and spirit of employees. They listen to the views of the team members, and restart the network composed of eight members of the team resource group, and launch a series of dialogue “brave”, let the Hilton hear the dialogue, also let the world hear, in addition, Hilton has created a new Hotel Hero Award to recognize heroism by front-line team members.

3.2.2 The effect of strategy adjustments

Table.1. Total revenue for 2020 about Hilton



Thanks to Hilton’s strategic adjustment and rapid response, although Hilton’s year-on-year revenue declined in 2020, it can be seen from the Table 1 that Hilton maintained an overall growth trend rather than a continuous decline. Hilton’s 2020 annual report reflects this, reaching its 1 million room milestone in the fourth quarter.

4. Post-pandemic strategies for other hotels

The value chain model will be used to analyze the post-pandemic strategies of Hilton's two competitors, Marriott and OYO. Value activities in this model are divided into two parts, primary activities, and support activities. The primary activities contain inbound logistics, Operations, Outbound Logistics: Marketing and Sales, service. The support activities include procurement, human resource management, technological development, infrastructure. The value chain displays a series of activities a firm performs to combine with its economics. The value activities mentioned expose differences that determine the competitive advantages of different competitors.

4.1 Marriott's post-pandemic strategies

Marriott's total number of hotels worldwide ranked top after it purchased Starwood in 2016, which is about one and a half times the size of Hilton now. According to Marriott International Reports Third Quarter 2021 Results, its RevPAR increased 118.4 percent worldwide, 134.7 percent in the U.S. and Canada, 76.3 percent in international markets compared to the 2020 third quarter [7].

4.1.1 Marketing and sales

Marriott adopts hyper-localized marketing and sales strategies. Compared to existing differentiated brand portfolios of "luxury" and "premium", demands for "select" positioned at a moderate price-point such as Fairfield has earned more popularity among both hotel owners and guests for the economic decline after a pandemic. To meet this growing demand, Marriott has introduced an "Enhanced Franchise" model. In this model, Marriott will appoint a general manager to train and equip franchisees to adjust to Marriott's service patterns for the first year of a hotel's opening. Enlarging franchised hotels is an achievable measure to find new financial sources and increase its market shares in the lockdown period.

In addition, it puts more emphasis on the Asia Pacific market especially Greater China as their second-largest market after pandemic since Greater China recovered from the recession in a relatively shorter period than the Americas and witnessed year-over-year domestic growth in 2020. The earnings in China were devoted largely to a rise in Marriott's average operating income. Thus, China is expected to become the world's largest personal luxury market by 2025 and the first country in the Asia Pacific to house all of Marriott's luxury hallmarks with the anticipated opening of the Ritz-Carlton Reserve.

Marriott also utilized local cultural customs and combined more travel experiences in Asian areas with its brand portfolio, including popular leisure destinations such as the expected opening of Sheraton in the Sichuan province, a culturally-rich destination such as The Westin Nanjing Resort and Spa, breathtaking resort destinations such as the JW Marriott brand slated to bring its warm luxury experience to Island in South Korea. The favorable combination with local landmarks enables Marriott to enter into other relevant industries and deliver innovative offerings apart from its traditional products. Guests can enjoy diverse living experiences as well.

4.1.2 Service and human resource management

In the Marriott loyalty program, Marriott provided maximum flexibility to more than 142 million global members, extending their expiration date until 2022. Marriott should nurture and maintain strong relationships with members, other clients as well as their owners, franchises in the downtime. Once things turn around, it will be ready to hit the ground for the first time.

To cope with a pandemic, Marriott rolled out a voluntary transition program for associates in the United States who may choose to leave the company to pursue other opportunities unlike many hotels announcing layoffs directly.

4.1.3 Firm infrastructure

For the rigorous epidemic prevention, Marriott established a cleanliness council exclusively to implement a new generation of global hospitality cleanliness standards and developed a multi-pronged platform to elevate them. Several cleaning practices have been made to maintain social distancing and enhance public space cleaning, including partitions installed in food and beverage service lines, personal protective equipment for every staff, electrostatic sprayers with

hospital-grade disinfectants, and so on. Also, both upgraded contactless service delivered right to guests' door via the Marriott Mobile app and thoroughly housekeeping cleaning service before guests' arrival comforted guests greatly.

Above all, Marriott made tremendous progress in mitigating the impact of low levels of demand, expanding footprints in Asia, strengthening financial position, adjusting operating protocols, with a focus on elevating our cleanliness standards.

4.2 OYO's post-pandemic strategies

OYO, India's hotel dark horse, became the country's second most valuable startup in 2019, but its acquisition and expansion strategy suffered a severe blow due to COVID-19 [8]. OYO originally adopted the rapid expansion of the hotel, mainly facing the middle and lower level of customers, India's population is the ordinary people as the main consumer, so the development of the hotel can quickly recover the capital through public consumption. Also, the base of people at the bottom is many times larger than the number of wealthy people, which leads to the improper management of the epidemic and the inability of the main consumers to maintain their living. As a result, most hotels have no income. In the face of such a loss crisis, they have to lay off a large number of employees and sell most hotels.

4.2.1 Marketing and sales

4.2.1.1 Market positioning

Even though OYO is one of the top three hotel chains in the world, there is still a big gap between it and Hilton hotels. They do not have particularly noble parties and locations. Their development places are mainly located in convenient transportation locations, so they cooperate with local low-star hotels to create profits. Their prices vary according to the luxury of the decor, with a maximum cost of around 4,000. Some people worry that rising consumption in nearby areas will lead to higher room rates for OYO hotels, so they will use the Internet to reach more customers to adjust the actual price fluctuations [9].

4.2.1.2 Market expansion

According to their current business model, they mainly face two big rivals in market expansion, one is Make My Trip and the other is Airbnb. Although OYO is an independent hotel brand, their hotel expansion will be more focused on data network hotel cooperation. Online hotel booking has always been their strength, so most of their most casual from the online hotel booking time to become [10].

However, due to the outbreak of the epidemic, OYO Hotel was in a state of collapse. Their rapidly expanding operation mode made them unable to stabilize the foundation and withstand the crisis. It is just like planting trees. They only guaranteed the rapid growth of the tree without laying more soil for the roots to solidify their most basic things. So on March 1, 2021, their administrators announced that they were canceling their global expansion plans and pulling out of the U.S. and China development plans [11]. Even its own OYO hotels have been unable to cope with the economic downturn caused by the pandemic, and such rapid expansion is like a piece of paper that can easily be poked in the face of a global crisis. If they had been able to develop according to the normal business strategy of the service industry, they would have been able to keep a little bit of the bottom line of retreat, and this would have wiped out the profit base of these years.

4.2.2 Service

4.2.2.1 Membership and human resource management

Even if OYO's strategy of rapid expansion makes them easy to destroy, another social value they bring is the huge number of jobs. OYO employs more than 18,000 people in each country, and the candidates for these positions do not need a high degree or experience, thus solving the employment problem in many regions.

When re-entering the hotel, they will provide each customer with a customer membership program named "Wizard." This opportunity is to facilitate each customer to have a more convenient hotel booking service and membership benefits. The plan has already passed the 7.5 million mark and is expected to grow even further in 2023. OYO Wizard is divided into four levels: Wizard Blue;

Wizard Sliver; Wizard Gold; and Wizard Lite. Each of these levels varies in terms of hotel discounts and cashback benefits, with the highest level of Wizard Lite offering discounts of up to 40% to entice customers to use the hotel better. Different from Hilton and Marriott hotels, they do not have a clear private VIP service system. Instead, they provide OYO service to every customer in a digital service unit [12].

4.2.3 Technology development and firm infrastructure

Their main technology lies in online pyramid selling and media communication, like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. In these places, they also automatically provide local attractions or features to help travelers plan their trips properly.

5. Optimization suggestions to Hilton

5.1 Suggestions from pre-pandemic and post-pandemic strategies of Hilton

First, with a long history of over one hundred years, Hilton should perfect its crisis management system to manage exceptions apart from managing routines and set up a department exclusively for epidemic prevention because the coronavirus will be existing with human beings for a long time. Second, it can be a better approach to focus more on Hilton members and guest groups like the business market instead of individuals as it can earn more stable operating income through the implementation of an award-winning guest loyalty program.

5.2 Suggestions from Marriott and OYO post-pandemic strategies

In terms of market expansion, Hilton's current direction is mainly concentrated on the Americas, Europe, and Africa, and the Asia-Pacific region is focused on Singapore. And we know that China is the world's second-largest economy with a vast market space. In addition, Greater China has recovered from the recession in a shorter period than the Americas, and despite the pandemic, the domestic economy will continue to grow year on year in 2020. Therefore, we suggest that Hilton in the strategic layout can consider the Chinese market more. For the Chinese market itself, due to the saturation of the hotel market in metropolitan cities, Hilton should lean to the expansion in western China, while following Marriott, appointing a general manager to integrate the original system with the local areas, using local cultural customs, adding tourism experience in China, creating a landmark hotel with Chinese characteristics.

Though OYO hotel suffered a severe blow in pandemic due to its acquisition and expansion strategy, the rapidly-rising rank is a testament to the success of their online hotel booking platform. Hilton should also leverage its online platforms, complete with the dynamic state of the epidemic, to find customers' preferences towards which brands and districts in the last year based on big data analysis. Also, it can make good use of the gap between reservation regulation and price elasticity to maximize profits after collecting local conferences, exhibitions, and festivals information.

6. Summary

6.1 Some strategies other hotels can learn from

6.1.1 Target at the middle-end of the market

In terms of market demand, due to the impact of the epidemic and the slowdown of global economic growth, the demand for the high-end market and luxury markets decreases. On the contrary, mid-end hotels with moderate prices are more favored by people. Through the aforementioned analysis, we can also see that Hilton and Marriott also obviously prefer mid-end hotels in their hotel layout, for example, Launched Tempo by Hilton, an elevated and approachable lifestyle brand offering thoughtful design, efficient service, and exciting partnerships. Marriott has figured it out, demands for "select" positioned at a moderate price-point such as Fairfield has gained more popularity among both guests and hotel owners for the economic decline after the pandemic.

6.1.2 Set higher standards of cleanliness and use digital technology to reduce social distancing

Social distancing, individual experiences, and making sure to maintain a safe and healthy environment will dictate the customer behavior in the short and medium run. From the above, we find that both Hilton and Marriott have set higher standards of hotel cleanliness to win the trust of customers. In addition, due to the epidemic, customers want to reduce human contact, so in terms of technology, we can imitate Hilton Continued to provide contactless guest experience options through the free APP, enabling guests to personalize their experience with the ability to choose their rooms, check-in and out digitally and use their phones as digital keys.

6.1.3 Take care of employees

Employees are the core of an enterprise, which is related to its reputation and future development. Due to the impact of the epidemic, the business volume will decrease and the job demand will also decline, which forces the hotel to lay off employees, and the future development of the laid-off employees is the hotel needs to pay attention to. They could set up a special fund, as Hilton did, to provide workers with an extra layer of protection during unemployment, and open up employment channels so that when the pandemic improves, they can quickly regain employment opportunities. It could also follow Marriott's lead and introduce an overkill plan rather than outright layoffs.

6.1.4 Enhance the reputation of the hotel through social commitment

Hotels can donate hotel rooms to front-line healthcare professionals leading the fight against COVID-19, and provide healthy, freshly prepared meals to front-line healthcare workers staying in their hotels during the coronavirus pandemic. This socially responsible action will win the hearts and minds of the hotel and enhance its reputation.

6.2 Some adjustments other hotels need to pay attention to

Not every hotel can adapt to the same strategy. OYO, for example, is focused on expanding its profitability to quickly open up the market and attract the purchasing power of middle and low-end customers. While Hilton is committed to the traditional hotel industry, what he lacks is not the market but how to throw away old habits and how to retain customers. COVID-19 has hit the hotel industry harder than SARS in the past. To survive the outbreak and maintain sustainable development, we need to make extensive adjustments in both assets and operations. High-end hotels can have marketing plans ready to quickly tap into social concerns once the epidemic is over. Small hotels according to the situation to determine what kind of road they need to take to maintain the development of the hotel, business rectification, and careful budgeting will be more suitable for the survival of this type of hotel.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Main findings

In addition to summarizing the overall impact of COVID-19 on the hotel industry, this paper specifically combed the Hilton's strategies before and after the epidemic to form its vertical comparison. Through the horizontal comparison between Marriott, OYO, and Hilton, we concluded Hilton's optimization suggestions: first, to improve the emergency management system, increase the epidemic prevention department; Second, market expansion should pay more attention to China; The third is to attach importance to the role of an online platform so that it can form an effective complement with the customer loyalty program.

What is more, because Hilton, Marriott in the hotel industry's leading position, OYO in the impact of the special performance of the epidemic, their strategy for other hotels are also very useful, therefore, we through the above comparative analysis, from the Market positioning: More targeted at the middle-end of the market, launched cost-effective hotel rooms, Set higher standards of cleanliness and use digital technology to reduce social distancing, Take care of employees and Enhance the reputation of the hotel through social commitment four aspects to summarize the other hotels can learn from a few suggestions, at the same time, also through the OYO performance out of some inspiration.

7.2 Weak points and direction of future study

Our limitations are mainly in two aspects. First, when making analysis and suggestions, we only consider the epidemic as a single variable, while in reality, there are many other factors, such as the difference of cultural preferences in different regions and the layout tendency of leaders, which will have an impact on the company strategy. By the same token, the epidemic is not the only reason OYO's profits are falling. Secondly, the suggestions we put forward, in the end, are only based on the analysis and comparison of Hilton, Marriott, and OYO. However, different hotels face different specific situations and have different original resources, so our suggestions may not be suitable for each hotel.

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