



Cooperative Education Report

Marketing and OTA Conversion at OYO Nepal

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Degree: Bachelor of Business Administration

Major: Marketing

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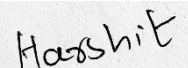
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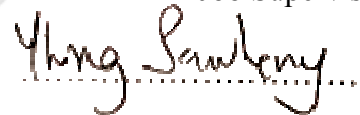
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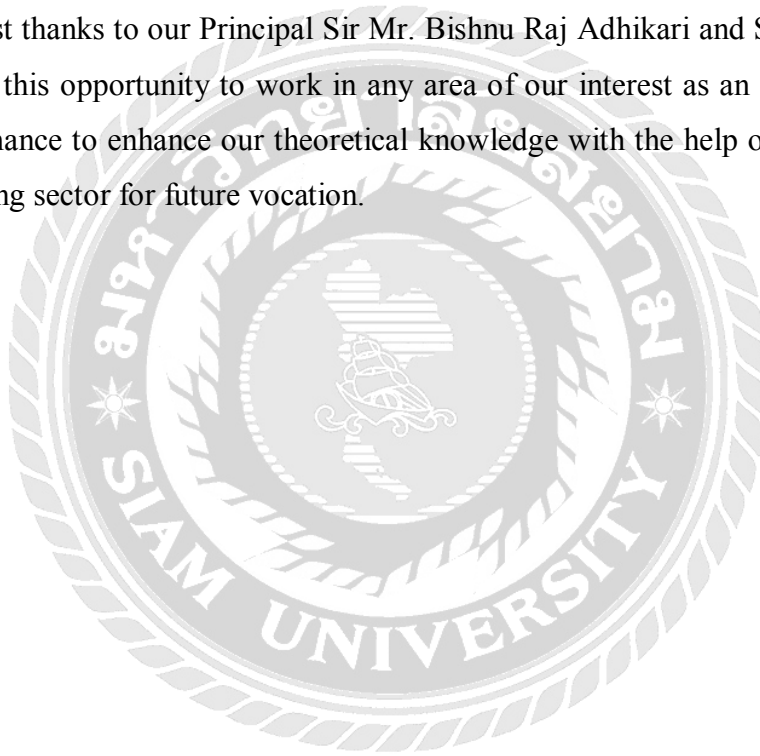
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Abstract

This cooperative report entitled Marketing and OTA Conversion at OYO Nepal has the goals to study the type of demand of the customers in OYO. Objectives of the study include: (1) to understand the marketing concepts of the organization by applying the theoretical knowledge I have acquired to the practical experience in the organization (2) to know the impact of online portals on demand (3) role of CRM to manage a company's interaction with current and potential customers. With the company, the student was assigned to work as a Marketing intern, in the department of Growth and Partnership. Main responsibilities are to customer reply the queries of Booking.com and Facebook, work for different marketing campaigns, demographic research and graphic designing, collecting database for Revenue department, Upon the completion of the internship, it was found that the problem was resolved by the means of practical learning and theories concerning Consumer Behavior, Brand Management, Sales and Innovation. In this matter, the student is able to learn more about demand pattern, customer handling, Operational management, innovating oneself to build client relation through digital platform, relation management with the suppliers which will prove a fruitful experience in the professional career.

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I would like to express my gratitude to all those who gave me an opportunity to explore and complete this internship. First of all, I would like to express my indebted gratitude and special thanks to Mr. Harshit Agarwal and Mrs. Shweta Bagla Garg who in spite of being busy with their duties, took time out to hear, guide and keep me on the correct path and allowed me to carry out my internship. Without their guidance, encouragement, feedback and suggestions throughout this internship, this internship program would not have been worthwhile. I also would like to express my gratitude to all the seniors of OYO Nepal for their continuous support. I also express my deepest thanks to our Principal Sir Mr. Bishnu Raj Adhikari and Siam University for providing us with this opportunity to work in any area of our interest as an intern. I'm grateful that we got this chance to enhance our theoretical knowledge with the help of professionals and experts in marketing sector for future vocation.



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List of Abbreviation

- i. BD: Business Development
- ii. TR: Transformation
- iii. Ops: Operations
- iv. AGM: Assistant General Manager
- v. PM: Property Manager
- vi. OTA: Online Travel Agents
- vii. CRS: Central Reservation System
- viii. DM's: Demand Managers
- ix. CX: Customer Experience
- x. UH: Unhappy



Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Company profile

Starting his journey in 2013, Ritesh Agrawal has successfully made OYO the south Asia's largest hotel and has been continuing to expand it to become new giant in hospitality industry. OYO is India's largest hotel chain operating in more than 230 cities across India, Malaysia, China and Nepal. With over 8000 exclusive hotels in its chain, OYO works near with its hotel partners while exercising full control over the hotels for ensuring a quality experience for travelers. OYO is on an expansion spree. Within this short period of time span it is was successful to be the largest hotel network with more than 100,000 rooms in 230 cities. OYO ensure hassle-free, comfortable and convenient accommodations for travelers at specially chosen OYO hotels across 230 cities around the world (OYO-About Us, 2019).

According to a research that was carried out by CB Insights, a US based business Analytics firm, OYO Rooms might be the next start-up unicorns among all the growing startup companies. OYO provides standardized rooms at budget hotels with 6 Core Promises: air-conditioned room, complimentary breakfast, High Speed Wi-Fi, Spotless and clean Linen, 24 Hour Hot Water Service and 6 Inch Mattress (CB Insight on OYO, 2019). Since, the services are fully IT enabled, guests can also order their special request, take individual help with the OYO Captains and request room service through the OYO Rooms app. Hotel owners who partner with OYO Rooms are connected via world's first tablet-based property management App and become part of the OYO brand.

Nepal is the second overseas market for OYO, after its debut in Malaysia in January 2016 where it has grown to 200 hotels. OYO started to operate in Nepal from April 2017. Currently it is operating in Kathmandu and Pokhara. In Kathmandu it is mainly functioning in three cluster: Gaushala, Thamel and Lazimpat with 90plus Hotels and in Pokhara it is operating in Lakeside with 50 plus Hotels (FROM KUALA LUMPUR TO KATHMANDU, 2017). OYO Nepal is growing by leaps and bounds in many cities of Nepal like Dhulikhel, Nagarkot, Janakpur, Dhangadhi, Birgunj, Nepalgunj, Biratnagar, Bhairahawa, Bharatpur, and so on.

1.2 Services Provided or Products

OYO Rooms provides many more services than just hotel rooms to visitors. The services included in the OYO Rooms business are:

i. Hotel Rooms

When OYO began operating, its strategy was to book a part of the hotels' inventory and to maintain it as per the quality standard, hold it captive exclusively for OYO customers. For this, the company used to lease some rooms every month and provide them to their own customers at profits. But now the rooms are not leased instead operated as OYO Rooms franchise. By participating as the franchise, the hotel owners are bound to operate as per the pre-determined standards. The company even offers plans and standards where it runs the place instead of the hotel staff or owner.



Figure 1 First Hotel of OYO in Nepal

Source: (OYO 123 Prince Plaza, 2019)

ii. OYO Silver Key

OYO Silver key is targeted for the private lifestyle to its corporate guests with stylish interior and comfortable living spaces within the hotel rates which is highly appealing in terms of design, area, décor, services and security

iii. OYO Power station

OYO Power station is specially designed perfect space which can be used as the workspace for the startups, freelancers and other small business entity that want to have a workspace that is in cheaper price brackets with all the availability of services as in a regular office.



Figure 2 OYO Power station

Source: (OYO launches its first coworking space called “Powerstation India”, 2019)

iv. OYO Capital O

Capital O are the properties which are located in the most posh area where these hotels are near fashionable shopping location. Capital O provides advantage of OYO infrastructures and accessibility to other benefits that are of premium status and profile.



Figure 3 Capital O in Nepal

Source: (Capital O 338 Hotel Yellow Pagoda, 2019)

v. OYO Flagship

An OYO Flagship Hotel has been designed to target the demands of the new age traveler who want seamless experience for their stay where he/she can stay with an expectation that the hotel will be serving to his/her style of life and choices. These are fully operated by OYO and offer them a wholesome customized splendid experience.



Source: (OYO Flagship 111 Canal Road, 2019)

Figure 4 OYO Flagship 111 Canal Road Hotel, Dehradun

vi. OYO Townhouse

The company has recently launched the Oyo Townhouse to hone its value proposition and stand out of the competition when it comes to standardized hospitality. Oyo Townhouse is based on the needs of the millennial traveler. These hotels are planned and built based on the needs and wants of the millennial (INTRODUCING OYO TOWNHOUSE, 2017). They have:

- Smarter Rooms: specially designed beds, showers, sockets, and internet infrastructure.
- Smarter Spaces: common spaces designed to have meetings, business services, magazines, common area for coffee and tea.
- Smarter Menus: Kitchen facility through which one can order food from the mobile application.



Figure 5 OYO Townhouse in Dheradhun

Source: (OYO Townhouse 008 Greater Kailash, 2019)

vii. OYO Studio Stays

Oyo Rooms also provides fully furnished rooms and flats for long stays like internships, corporate stays, higher studies etc. The rooms/flats can be rented on single occupancy as well as on twin sharing basis as well (OYO makes rooms for different segment, 2017). Rents are paid on the monthly basis by the guest.



Figure 6 Hotelier Middle East

Source: (India's Oyo to debut in Saudi Arabia, 2019)

viii. Oyo Wizard

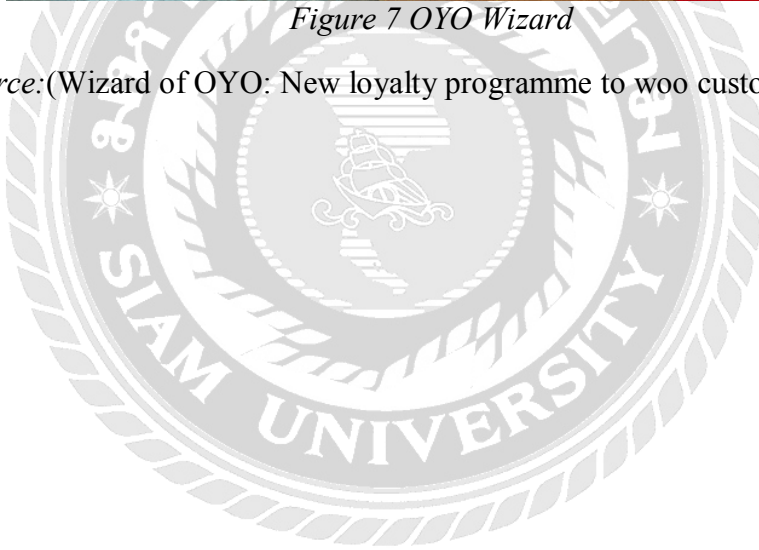
The company has also launched a subscription model where the subscribers get exclusive discounts, deals, and cashback offers. Moreover, OYO's hotel-booking app is among the fastest

in the world, enabling guests to search and book a room in less than five seconds with just three taps. (OYO Wizard, 2019)



Figure 7 OYO Wizard

Source: (Wizard of OYO: New loyalty programme to woo customers, 2018)



1.3 Company structure

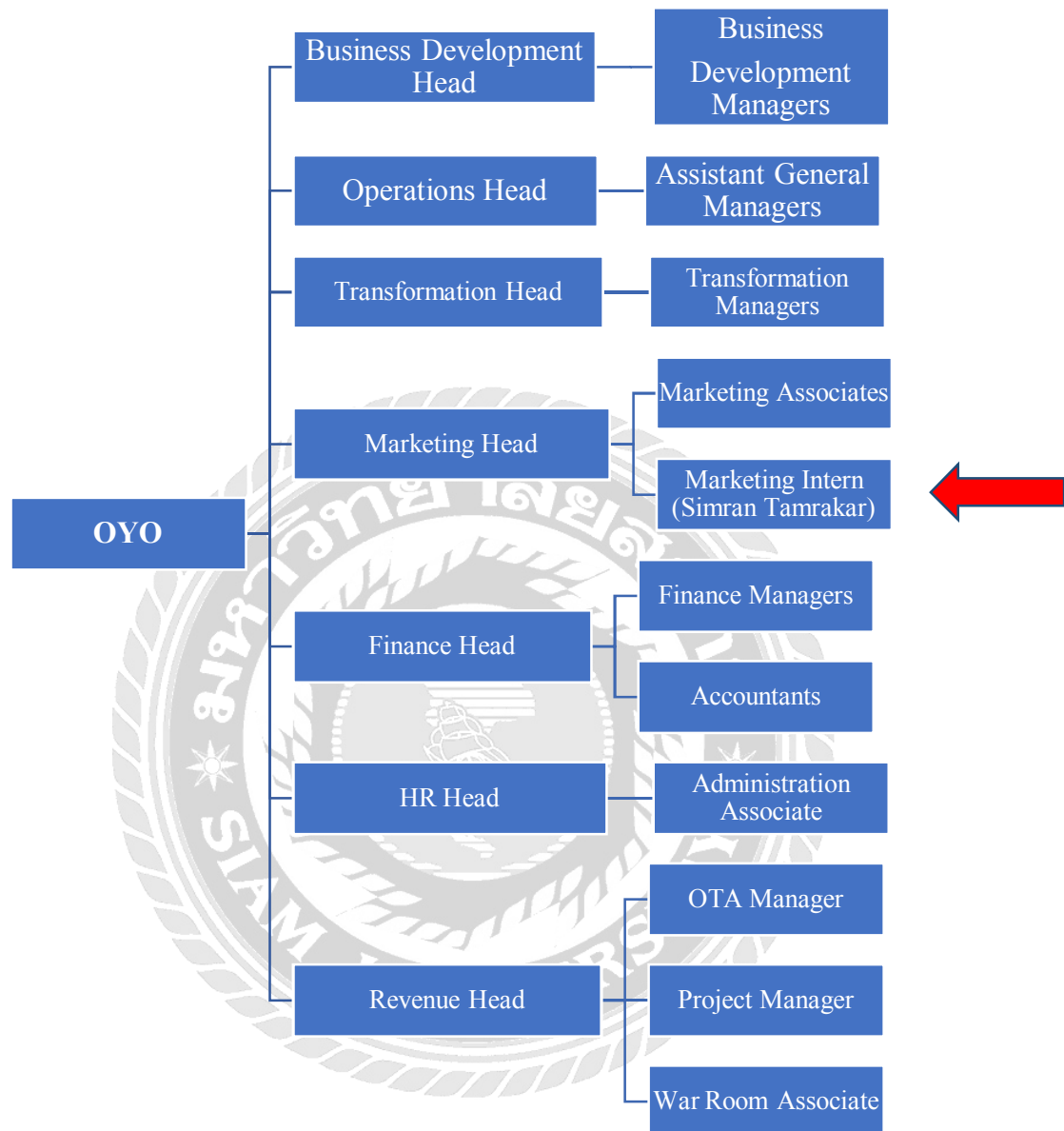


Figure 8 Organizational Structure of OYO Nepal

The Department for Nepal are as follows:

- i. Business Development Head: Mr.Saurav Panda
- ii. Operations Head: Mr. Harshit Agarwal

- iii. Transformation Head: Mr. Shashank Jadhav
- iv. Marketing Head: Mrs. Shweta Bagla Garg
- v. Finance Head: Mr. Nitesh Yadav
- vi. HR Head: Mrs. Shafalta Shrestha
- vii. Revenue Head: Mr. Shivam Mishra

1.4 Statement of Purpose

This Internship is completed as per the requirement of Business Administration undergraduate program at Siam University. This is a part of the curriculum to complete 14 weeks' internship for better understanding of the concepts and overall functionality of corporate industry. This internship also provides the opportunity to develop professionalism among the students and gain experience of working in actual market before completion of the undergraduate degree. I also got to expand our theoretical knowledge with the help of professionals and experts in marketing sector for future vocation.

1.5 Objectives of the reportI have divided my objectives into two categories.

The main objective of my study is:

- i. To understand the marketing concepts of the organization by applying the theoretical knowledge I have acquired to the practical experience in the organization.

Following are the specific objectives of my study:

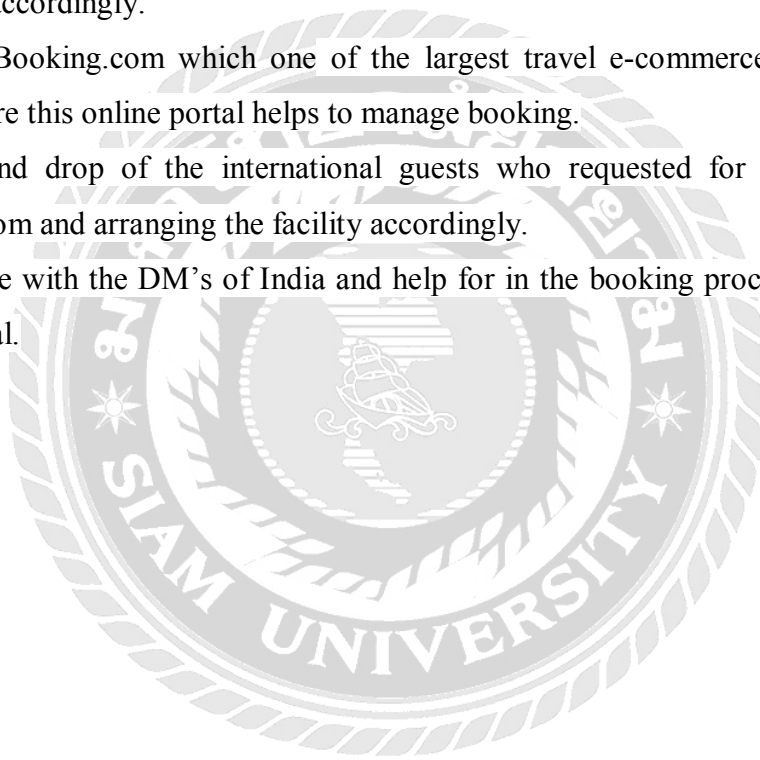
- ii. To acknowledge how Marketing campaigns are activated to create brand awareness and maintain customer loyalty.
- iii. To study about the effective use of marketing communication.
- iv. To study how online portals are able to cater the demand of the customers.
- v. To also study how CRM helps to manage a company's interaction with current and potential customers.

1.6 Roles and responsibility of the student

Marketing and Growth

In today's world where there are a lot of business running as well as large amount of goods produced to lure the customers into buying the goods, marketing plays a huge role in any business. Whether it is a physical product/good or a service to be provided to the customers, without proper marketing, no business can sustain its growth for a longer period of time. Some roles and responsibilities as an intern in OYO are:

- i. Check the online queries of the guests in Facebook and handle the issues accordingly.
- ii. Create graphic designing for Facebook content and post it in the social media.
- iii. Demographic research of the market which helped to understand and create promotional strategies accordingly.
- iv. Handling Booking.com which one of the largest travel e-commerce companies in the world where this online portal helps to manage booking.
- v. Pick up and drop of the international guests who requested for transfer facility in Booking.com and arranging the facility accordingly.
- vi. Co-ordinate with the DM's of India and help for in the booking process for the guest in OYO Nepal.



Chapter Two: Internship Activities performed in Marketing and OTA Management

Marketing can be defined as the process by which a company, a business or a service provider communicates about their products and services to their customers through various mediums. In many cases marketing is done by marketing agency where the company needs to pay some amount of money in return of doing so.

2.1 Assignments and responsibilities

i. OTA Handling

An Online Travel Agency (OTA) is an agency that is involved in selling and arranging accommodations for travelers on an online platform where hotels can learn how to implement distribution channel marketing, points of difference (POD) and parity. Oyo being the largest growing hotel chain in South Asia has also won the 2nd title of being the Most Innovative Company 2018 of India. Its innovation factors are that the booking is made within 3 taps via the OYO Application and are available in many OTA platform i.e. Booking.com, Agoda, Trip Advisor, Makemytrip.com, Goibibo that make the customers easy to find a perfect space for their accommodation according to their preferred location and room expectations. Similarly in the supplier's side, they get an advantage of getting visible to international guests worldwide as a result of OYO'S partnership with these OTA platform.

- **Booking.com**

Similarly among these OTA platforms, I was assigned to work for Booking.com which is the most used travel metasearch engine for lodging or accommodation which is the second most revenue generating portal which gets maximum number of bookings among the OTA. In Booking.com I had been responsible to handle the guest queries and manage accordingly so that it will help them to assure about their bookings as well as well as maintain guest experience through the query replies and help to maintain the reply score of the OYO listed hotel in Booking.com.

ID	Name	Location	Status	Arrival/Departure for today & tomorrow	Guest Messages	Booking.com Messages
4842310	OYO 361 Jhugu Chikan	Chulikhel 45, Aranku Highway, Chulikhel, Chulikhel, Chulikhel	Open/Bookable	1 1	1	1
4879009	OYO 298 Hotel Asha	Shankaruna 225, Shankaruna-Tikaharib Rd, Kanyabari, Lalitpur, Lalitpur	Closed/Not bookable	1 1	1	1
4840203	OYO 300 Farm House Resort	Shankaruna 225, Shankaruna-Tikaharib Rd, Kanyabari, Lalitpur, Lalitpur	Open/Bookable	1 1	1	1
4840110	OYO 353 The Green Palace Hotel	Chopani Chopani Road, Biratnagar, Biratnagar	Closed/Not bookable	1 1	1	1
4840203	OYO 352 Hotel Konark Inn	Kumari Marg, Kumari Marg-1, Kathmandu, Kathmandu	Open/Bookable	1 1	1	1
4840993	OYO 350 Annapali Cottage	Kulsum Varga Annapali Cottage & Restaurant, Kulsum Varga, Butwal, Butwal, Butwal	Open/Bookable	1 1	1	1
4840977	OYO 347 Hotel New Azithi	Bangadhi Hotel New Azithi, Ward No. 5, Highway, Bangadhi, Bangadhi, Bangadhi	Open/Bookable	1 1	1	1
4840993	OYO 333 Hotel Shree Krishna	Shankaruna 225, Shankaruna-Tikaharib Rd, Kanyabari, Lalitpur, Lalitpur	Closed/Not bookable	1 1	1	1

Figure 9 Screenshot of the list of hotels in Booking.com

- **Fulfillment of guest's special queries**

While dealing with regular queries some guests frequently ask for the special queries like decorating the room for their anniversary, special birthday cake and customize gifts in Booking.com where their request had always fulfilled in their booking period by coordination with hotels PM or AGM's who made it possible. This helped to create brand loyalty maintaining the CX of the guests who then spread positive word of mouth.

- **Manage Pickup and Drop service**

In respect to lower the cancellation rate, I was also responsible to scheduling and managing the guest's airport pickup and drop by coordinating with the vendor that is responsible for the airport transfer facility of the international guests who have already created bookings from Booking.com. This created hassle free booking where they were easily transferred to the respective hotel resulting to delighted guest and decreasing the UH rate of the guest.

ii. Marketing

- **Research for Marketing Campaigns and promotional activities**

Conducting a market research has always played a vital role to make any effective campaigns or promotional activities. Similarly Nepal's demographic market has always been challenging in creating strategies for any marketing activities. Relating to this, I was assigned to make an extensive demographic research based on their religion and ethnicity to make promotional activities in respective of occasions and festivals of major target population. This research then help to implement the activities targeting wide number of audience and making it successful by generating leads.



Figure 10 Handing gift to the Guest on Mother's Day Campaign

- **Creating and posting content**

Content of any piece of information always needs to be attractive with perfect visualization and quality that creates a positive impact. Having said that some of my self-leant Graphic designing skills mademe accountable for content creation for web-based social networkingthat was to be posted in Facebook and banner creation for promotional events following the company guidelines.



Figure 11 Flyer for the Targets

- **Conversion of queries into actual customer leads**

While Facebook always gave other companies a platform to connect to its potential customer, the official Facebook page of OYO also got many queries about how the app was to be used and other guest queries. Replying to these queries and assisting customers with the guidelines to use the application, it helped to convert the potential customer into an actual lead customer.

- **Conversion of queries into partners**

Similarly, people who wanted to partner with OYO but could not contact the company directly also expressed their curiosity in Facebook whose queries were then handled and converted as partners with further assistance by the BDM team.



Figure 12 BDM signing an agreement for Partnership

iii. Supporting Sales Department

- **Updating amenities details**

Amenities of the hotels foremost states the standard of the hotel that makes it easy for the customers to avail the service according to the standards. These amenities are shown in the OYO application once the hotel goes live under OYO and is ready to take the bookings. Thus timely update of these amenities are necessary because some services might be added in the property that might not be shown in the app. Thus contacting with the owner and updating the added amenities of more than 180 properties were done in total.

- **Handling Micro Marketing Rocket app (MM App)**

MM app is the specialized app which is used by the sales team in OYO so as to get the pricing details of the properties listen in the actual OYO application to be aligned with the pricing changes. Hence, I was aligned to look after the budgeting, booking and planning of the bulk booking from Indian guests. Coordinating and negotiating with the TA and DM had been a crucial part of the duty.



Figure 13 Supporting Sales team during New Year

- **Fetching data collection for Warroom**

Warroom is one of the operational functioning part of the sales team where the pricing for the bulk booking is considered according to the occupants that stay in the hotels. These prices were then decided by the owners and PM of the hotel. Thus contacting the

owner and negotiating the room price according to the booking and referring the same to assist the team to further get the maximum number of possible bookings.

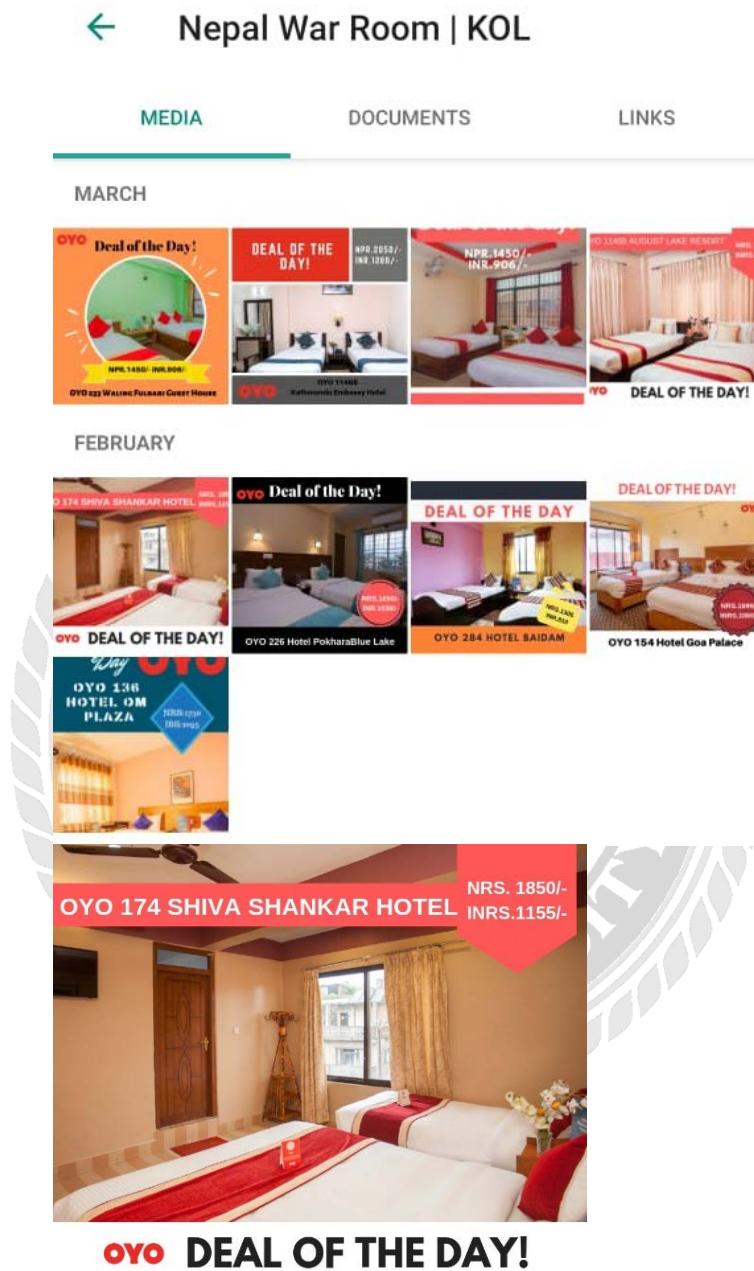


Figure 14 Creating of Deal of the Day for Warroom

Chapter Three: Identification of Problems Encountering during the Internship

3.1 Indicate how you successfully solved the problems

The important thing that people have to realize is that problems do show up in many steps in our journey of career where they prove as an opportunities to improve oneself and tactfully solve the problem. They are actually providing us with information that we can use to fix what needs fixing and do a better job. Working at OYO Nepal was a great chance to apply the knowledge and concepts learned during our academic course.

i. Approval from the central team

While being responsible for content creation, there was a compulsive need for the approval of the poster, banners and flyers from the central team of India that made work pending for several days which had to be still worked upon once I got the approval. Thus setting reminder and continuous meeting with the responsible person helped to get the approval as soon as possible.

ii. Release of budget for marketing department

Regardless of what events were implemented, the budget would always have been fixed by the central team respect to the day wise expense that made the proposal of different events difficult to be implemented. To solve this, only the campaigns that could be fully implemented and were propose so that the budget was not go for other minor activities.

iii. Lacking in communication during transfer service management

One of the major problem during the airport transfer of guest is that Booking.com being the separate entity, the transfer was done through different vendor but the due to lack of communication and tech inefficiency the guest called directly at the hotels as well as our confirmation in the online platform that made dual pick up. To solve this problem, the entire pick as handover to me where all the queries for airport transfer was handled.

iv. Untimely data update

Despite of having CRS where all data are stored, they were then not regularly updated thus the owner should have been contacted time and again to get specific

information that were not being updated. Thus creating a separate database for the updates needed and handover to the respective department

v. Tech acknowledgement

While there were no guidelines on how to use the CRS, it was really difficult to understand the complexity of where to extract the data from. To encounter and make my work easy, I too assistance from my senior who helped me to understand what was where and when needed.

vi. Time Management

Every assigned work in OYO had its own time completion period where it was needed to complete. I faced a little difficulty for managing the time limit to handle the queries of Booking.com however with efficiency in work, I started to quick reply to the queries and utilize my time for other activities.

3.2 Provide some examples

Time management was a crucial part when I firstly joined in OYO where there were many task to be performed within a certain time bracket. I was assigned to complete the replies of OTA booking queries within 3 hours but it took more time than that. With efficiency in handling the queries, I started to catch up with the system and completed work within 1-2 hours where I could utilize my time to learn new things.

Bringing the guest from airport and transferring them to the hotel sometimes brought miscommunication, where guest from booking.com were confirmed in the online portal and once the guest reached the airport they made direct contact to the hotel where the owners did not know what was communicated online. To work on this, the complete authority for airport transfer was handled by me coordinating to the AGMs and owner who contacted me for any pick up of the guest.

On my last week of internship a problem raised when the amenities shown in the CRS and the OYO app was different or lacking, thus to deal with the untimely update of the data, we were assigned to call the hotel PMs and coordinate with them to update the amenities in the check list of google sheet and create a database Excel that was to be solved then and there.

Chapter Four: Contribution and Learning Process

4.1 Contributions of student made during the internship

In review, this internship has been an excellent and rewarding experience where my contributions during my internship was mainly focused on Growth and Partnership through which my theoretical knowledge was in practice.

i. Reaching to more customer and partner through digital platform

Connecting to the customer in Facebook and interacting with them helped to convert customer into actual leads and potential hotels into actual OYO partners.

ii. Relationship management with international guests and handle special queries

Booking.com brought 80% of the customers from all over the world who visited Nepal and stayed at OYO Nepal. Managing their special queries and making them easy for airport transfer encouraged to accommodate in OYO as a result that increased brand loyalty.

iii. Contributing in sales team through Warroom handling

Handling Warroom which is one of the functional part of the sales team taught me to work under pressure where in coordinating with the TA demand managers achieving the sale of about NPR.1,50,000/-which directly contributed in the target s of the sales team.

iv. Making the brand more visible to potential customer

Making posters, banner and flyers with respect to the company's guidelines attracted more customers and made the brand more visible in the market.

v. Negotiation with the hotel owners

One of the most difficult part was to negotiate the price of the rooms for the bulk booking with the owner who were never willing to work on the price but it could have brought great results in sales. Thus discussing with the owners and getting the reasonable price to quote for the bulk booking was responsible in meeting sales as well revenue targets

vi. Assisting the operations team

On the final week where I had to cross check the amenities of the hotels in respect to their amenities shown in the OYO. Coordinating with the property managers and updating accordingly helped the operations team to manage and work up to guests expectations.

vii. Spreading word of mouth

Having to work under OYO and knowing its standards was always a great deal which motivated myself to recommend it to my friends and family.

4.2 Details of the related learning process and new knowledge I have received

i. Proficient in using meta-channel like Booking.com

It had always been easy to use the customer end of Booking.com however getting the credential of back end of booking.com of OYO Nepal had given me an honor to work in a new platform. Looking after the guest queries and handling helped to increase the reply score of the respective property and decrease the cancellation rate of the guest.

ii. Proficiency in use of software like CRS and MM Rocket Application

CRS is the central data storage software which had the entire working data of OYO, editing the data, extracting data could be easily done. These software helped to solve all the problems that came in the daily operations as well the pricing details that is directly related to the main OYO application.

iii. Study on consumer behavior and their special needs

Handling special queries in online platforms enabled me to understand the demand pattern of the guest according to the country of origin, lifestyle and preference. This also helped to build marketing strategies and build brand equity which further contributed in the expansion of the company.

iv. Dealing with customer in the front-end

Dealing with the customers directly enabled me to put the right thing at right place and gain the art of negotiation where not only we could handle the queries but also the tactics that could be used to solve any problems of the guest.

v. Working on brand management guidelines

Understanding the brand ethics and brand guidelines were only our part of academic course where as in OYO I actually understood and followed in the work assigned where the graphic designs needed to have the right color code, font size, placement, minimal use of color and so on.

vi. Improvement on Communication skills

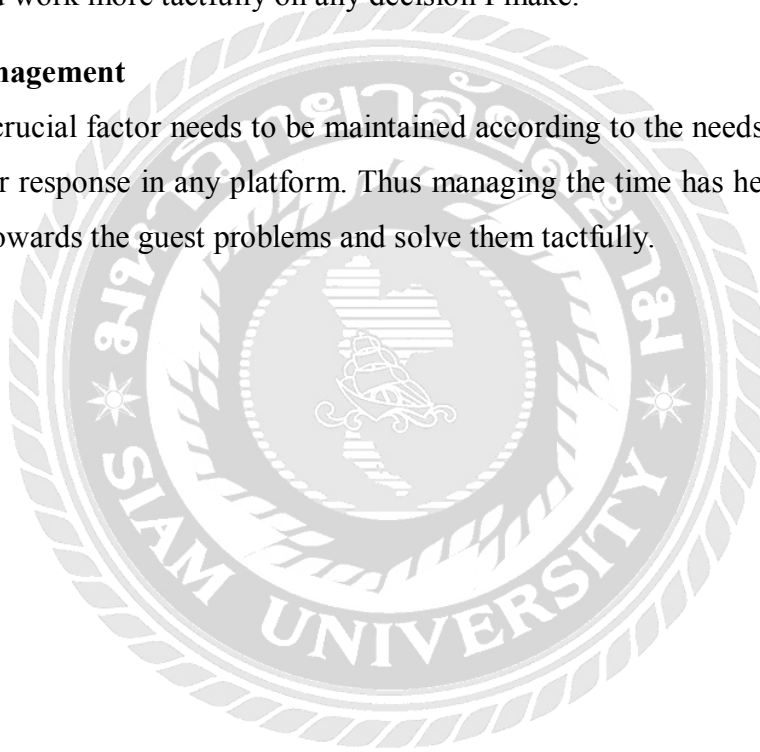
While dealing more with customer in meeting and phone calls it helped me to be more confident in my speech which led me to get more involved with the guests of OYO and understand their perception towards OYO, their expectation and the needful suggestion.

vii. Importance of decision making in hierarchy of the organization

As OYO has different departments which also have vast hierarchy level inside them which were responsible for decision making on which all the departments are connected indirectly. Thus knowing the importance of decisionmaking and its effects on other departments have made me to consider and work more tactfully on any decision I make.

viii. Time management

Time being a crucial factor needs to be maintained according to the needs of the guests so as to be quick in their response in any platform. Thus managing the time has helped me to become more responsive towards the guest problems and solve them tactfully.



Chapter Five: Conclusions

5.1 Self-assessment as a professional

My internship at OYO has been proven to bring me tremendous benefit as an excellent and rewarding experience where I have been able to actually relate to my academic learning. This internship not only provided me an opportunity to learn from the practical field of marketing management but also helped me to develop my ability to adapt to the requirements of today's dynamic business environment. Moreover I had been able to network many people who will be surely able to help me with opportunities in future.

Working for multinational company like OYO was one of the proudest and most productive moments of my life. Though I was an undergraduate intern my words and suggestions were valued and listened by the management. Having worked in Growth and partnership department there has been many promotional activities and awareness activities but there are more mile steps to go in where there needs to be a lot of promotional activities to be done through this department because marketing is the only department where the company has to spend so much on it as well as get revenue from it.

Working in OYO has also broaden my knowledge of practicing my course in the actual field where understanding the customer's demand, behavioral learnings and customer handling that will prove useful in my future journey of professional career.

Without experiencing in practical world my theoretical knowledge would not have been as effective and fruitful as it has been now after working in real life scenario for a young mind like me. It was an opportunity to work with such creative and professional bunch of people. The encouragement and motivation will be life time asset for me. It was a great journey to work with different department such as sales, operations, marketing and growth. The project on this report is done fully based on marketing and growth-related activities.

Annex



Figure 15 Briefing on the first day and planning for expansion



Figure 16 Picture taken with my department supervisor



Figure 17 With respective Department Heads



Figure 18 With the seniors of other Department



Figure 19 Gift hampers for Mother's Day

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