

Navigating Business Competition In The Endemic Era: Marketing Strategies At Pandawa Resort Nusa Penida

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the tourism industry, prompting a need to investigate effective marketing strategies in the endemic era. This qualitative study examines the utilization of the marketing mix (7Ps) at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida to address business competition. Through observation, interviews, and documentation, data were collected from seven informants. The findings indicate that Pandawa Resort offers diverse room options with comprehensive amenities, implementing five key marketing strategies. These include product diversification to meet customer preferences, streamlined booking processes, strategic location selection, effective human resource management through employee training and local hiring, and creating a comfortable, modern environment. The study underscores the importance of each marketing mix element in enhancing hotel competitiveness, particularly amidst the endemic era's challenges. However, there is room for improvement in the promotion strategy, which currently falls short in capturing consumer attention. Enhancements in this area are crucial for bolstering the competitive edge of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida in the hotel market.

Keywords: Marketing strategy, Marketing mix 7P, Endemic Era, Business Competition

1. INTRODUCTION

In the realm of tourism business, particularly in providing accommodations at tourist destinations, a robust marketing strategy is essential to attract visitors. To garner a substantial consumer base, stakeholders in the tourism industry understand the needs and desires of potential tourists (Subandi, 2023). Implementing precise marketing strategies and leveraging opportunities to boost sales is crucial as operators of accommodation facilities, such as Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, undertake practical marketing endeavors to enhance revenue streams. However, it is widely acknowledged that Bali, particularly its tourism sector, was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic 2020 (Misbah et al., 2021; Nugrahani et al., 2022). The pandemic led to widespread job losses and instilled concerns among business owners regarding their ability to withstand the declining consumer purchasing power (Chen & Hu, 2018). Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida Hotel in the tourist area of Nusa Penida District, Klungkung Regency, Bali. Nusa

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Penida is one of the islands that is famous for its beautiful and enchanting natural tourism, so there are many accommodations to support tourism for tourists who stay and decide to stay overnight.

Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, as one of the SMEs contributing to the tourism sector in Nusa Penida, plays a significant role. Bali's tourism appeal lies in its hospitality industry, offering various amenities, advantages, and distinct beauty. The hotel industry is closely intertwined with tourism, as before visitors explore attractions, they require a place to rest, with hotels being the preferred choice. Nusa Penida, situated in the Klungkung Regency of Bali, stands as one of the island's regions favored by both local and international tourists (Jubaedah & Anas, 2019). The area boasts star-rated hotels with many facilities and scenic landscapes, alluring both local and foreign tourists. Among these hotels is the Pandawa Resort and Spa Seaview Nusa Penida, located in Batununggul, Nusa Penida, Klungkung Regency, Bali. Like many other hotels in Bali, Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida felt the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, being situated in the tourism hub of Nusa Penida, Klungkung Regency, Bali. It is proximate to shopping centers, various beach attractions, and restaurants within the Nusa Penida area. Over time, Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida have garnered popularity among local and foreign tourists as a temporary lodging option for holidaymakers on the island of Nusa Penida.

In this endemic era, Pandawa Resort and Spa Seaview Nusa Penida consistently prioritizes Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) enforced by its staff to ensure the comfort of hotel guests. Beyond facilities, attracting guests or clients necessitates a focus on the quality of service provided, particularly in front office operations, as it forms the initial impression for guests. Thus, hotels must ensure the quality of service provided when welcoming, hosting, and bidding farewell to guests. Given the pandemic's circumstances, researchers are interested in understanding the marketing patterns and strategies at Hotel Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida to address business competition during the endemic era, as many businesses have struggled or ceased operations due to the pandemic.

Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida have managed to survive the pandemic by implementing stringent preventive measures to ensure the safety and health of visiting guests. These measures include temperature checks, widespread disinfection, and the provision of sanitation facilities. Additionally, the hotel offers attractive prices to entice guests and maintain reasonable occupancy rates, along with special packages such as discounts or all-inclusive offers. Amidst international travel restrictions during the pandemic, Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida shifted its focus to target the domestic market, enabling the hotel to continue operating while maintaining reasonable occupancy levels. The hotel also adopted flexibility in cancellation policies, providing more lenient cancellation terms to attract guests and allow them to cancel reservations if pandemic-related situations change. Many hotels, including Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, expanded their services to include other areas such as virtual conferences, takeaway food services, or even remote workspace facilities. Diversification of services allows hotels to remain open for business during the pandemic while retaining marketing strategies.

A marketing strategy outlines a company's steps to achieve goals by utilizing available resources (Varadarajan, 2020). Promotion, as one of the marketing functions, focuses on persuasively communicating marketing program components to target audiences to facilitate exchanges between marketers and consumers, aiding both parties (Shaddiq et al., 2021). Promotion plays a role in coordinating marketing communication efforts to influence consumer behavior (Ayu et al., 2022). A promotion's success is determined by how well it addresses consumer needs or desires (Sari et al., 2022). Therefore, companies must employ marketing strategies that can compete under various conditions. In its genetic strategy, employing stability and commonly practiced marketing, hotels typically utilize the 7Ps marketing mix concept. As per Kotler and (Kotler et al., 2012), these are product, price, promotion, place, process, people, and physical evidence. (Ravangard et al., 2020) emphasized the necessity of employing the 7Ps marketing strategy for hotels seeking profit improvement. By implementing effective marketing strategies and leveraging available opportunities, competitiveness in the market is expected to increase.

Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, operating in the service industry, utilize this service marketing mix to formulate strategies to achieve high perceived value by consumers, thereby determining their competitive position in the target market. First is Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida offers various room types, dining options, and leisure facilities. Second is the price; the hotel offers both published and contract rates, with contract rates being discounted for affiliated partners. Third is promotion; the hotel utilizes its website, social media platforms, and collaborations

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with online travel agents for promotional activities. Fourth is a process; the hotel ensures quality service through online reviews and continuous improvement initiatives. Fifth is the place; the strategic location of the hotel near the highway and Sampalan Port enhances accessibility. Sixth is people; employee placement based on skills and training ensures quality service. Seventh is physical evidence; the hotel's 4-star certification is tangible proof of its standardized management, service, and product aspects.

Based on Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida's room occupancy data over the years, the hotel experienced a decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in fewer tourists staying overnight in Nusa Penida. However, with tourism in Nusa Penida gradually recovering post-2023, tourists are now opting to stay overnight, leading to increased demand for accommodations. To capitalize on this, Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida should innovate to enhance guest comfort, offering comprehensive facilities for visitors. Marketing strategies are crucial to increasing room sales, especially in the endemic era (Vorhies et al., 2019).

Several studies related to marketing strategies in the hospitality industry have been conducted. (Do & Vu, 2020; Ravangard et al., 2020) utilizing innovative approaches and leveraging the 7Ps marketing strategy as a means of communication to the public, was deemed effective in enhancing the hotel's presence. Similarly, in line with the research of (Altay et al., 2022; Chana et al., 2021) Resort's utilization of stability and commonly practiced marketing strategies, through the implementation of the 7Ps marketing mix concept, was deemed effective in leveraging existing resources for competitive advantage. However, differing findings were observed by Pramesti et al. (2023), who concluded that utilizing the 7Ps marketing strategy at The Shala Bali was not maximized, attributed to discrepancies in several indicators.

Based on the studies mentioned above, the strategy of utilizing the 7Ps marketing mix remains relatively unknown. Hence, researchers are interested in conducting a study on Pandawa Resort and Spa Seaview Nusa Penida, which has managed to sustain and increase hotel occupancy rates during this endemic era by employing the 7Ps marketing mix strategy to address business competition. Considering this phenomenon, the problem statement for this research is: What is the marketing mix pattern (7Ps) at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida in addressing business competition during the endemic era?

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted at the Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, situated in the tourist area of Nusa Penida District, Klungkung Regency, Bali. The selection of this location on the island was based on the popularity of Nusa Penida as a renowned tourist destination celebrated for its natural beauty, attracting numerous travelers who opt to stay to immerse themselves fully in the experience. The study employed qualitative data, with primary data collected through direct interviews with relevant parties. Secondary data were sourced from various outlets, including prior research findings, books, journals, and other resources. The researcher served as the main instrument, acting as the human instrument responsible for planning, gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data. Data collection techniques involved observation, interviews, and documentation. Conversely, data analysis was conducted by reducing, presenting, and drawing conclusions from the data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Data Description

To answer the research question, a series of interviews were carried out involving diverse stakeholders, including the owner, manager, and guests from both local and international backgrounds. The subsequent section presents a condensed overview of the insights gleaned from these interviews.

a) Interview Results with informant 1, Owner of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida

Based on the interview results with informant 1, the owner of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, it can be concluded that the hotel offers two types of rooms, each equipped with comprehensive facilities, including bathrooms. These rooms are furnished with amenities such as a hairdryer, a main room with a TV, a wardrobe, bed options, a sofa, and tea, coffee, and hot water facilities. Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida sets prices through two types of arrangements: published rates for the general public and contract rates for partners or affiliates. Promotion strategies are carried out through digitization, utilizing the

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website, bundled promotions, and social media promotions. The hotel's location near Sampalan Port is an advantage, providing easy access for travelers. Booking processes are also facilitated through e-commerce platforms such as Booking.com or Traveloka. Pandawa Resort provides training to all employees to enhance service quality, and the physical appearance of the resort is tailored to meet tourist expectations. The entire interview reflects Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida's efforts to provide quality service, maintain guest satisfaction, and adapt to the endemic era through effective marketing strategies.

b) Interview Results with informant 2, Manager of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida

From the interview with informant 2, the manager of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, it can be concluded that the most sought-after product by tourists is the room type with an ocean view, offering breathtaking sea vistas. Provided amenities include access to swimming pools, restaurants, gyms, bars, breakfast, air conditioning, and toiletries. Pricing aligned with the facilities has successfully captured tourists' interest, and promotional strategies via e-commerce, offering discounts and comprehensive amenities, have garnered positive responses from tourists. The advantage of being located near Sampalan Port and having easy access to tourist destinations is a major attraction in this endemic era. The booking process through websites and e-commerce platforms is considered to facilitate consumers, while management conducts regular evaluations of human resources to enhance performance. Management also pays attention to the physical appearance of the hotel by conducting routine maintenance on rooms, bathrooms, swimming pools, and gym facilities to meet tourists' expectations. The overall interview reflects Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida's efforts in providing satisfying accommodation experiences, navigating competition in the endemic era, and addressing critical aspects to maintain service quality.

c) Interview Results with informant 3 as a Local Guest Staying at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida

Based on the interview with informant 3, a local guest staying at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, it can be concluded that the products offered by the resort meet his expectations. The easily accessible location of the port and proximity to tourist destinations make him satisfied. The prices are considered pocket-friendly, especially with attractive promotions such as the 20% discount he obtained through booking.com. Informant 3 stated that the room booking process was very easy and aided by detailed information about each room type. The service provided by the staff was deemed exceptional, friendly, and informative. The resort also provided a positive experience with unique facilities like the gym, along with a strategic location that made him feel worthy of staying at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida again. Overall, this testimony from a local guest reflects the success of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida in providing satisfactory service and meeting guest expectations.

d) Interview Results with informant 4 as a Local Guest Staying at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida

Based on the interview with informant 4, a local guest staying at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, it can be concluded that the products offered meet his expectations. The strategically located resort, with facilities such as restaurants and bars, provides a satisfying stay experience. The offered prices are considered pocket-friendly, especially with attractive promotions accessed through the Traveloka platform. Informant 4 feels that the prices are commensurate with the facilities provided, including access to all resort amenities and breakfast. Regarding the location, informant 4 stated that the resort is easily accessible from the port and is centrally located in Nusa Penida. The room booking process is considered very easy, aided by detailed information about each room type via Traveloka. The service provided by the staff is rated as excellent, friendly, and responsive. The speed of providing assistance and information is a positive value that makes guests feel well served. The appearance of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida is deemed worthy of being chosen as a place to stay again by informant 4. The memorable impression creates a desire to return to this resort if given the opportunity. Overall, this testimony from a local guest reflects that Pandawa Resort has succeeded in providing a pleasant and satisfying stay experience.

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e) Interview Results with informant 5 as a Foreign Guest Staying at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida

Based on the interview with informant 5, a foreign guest residing at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida for 3 months, it can be concluded that the products offered by this resort meet her expectations. Informant 5 stated that the products they offer are quite appealing. In terms of pricing, informant 5 considers the prices offered by Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida to be very affordable, especially during the pandemic period. Although she did not utilize any special promotions, she obtained the best prices during that period with adequate facilities, including bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, bars, sitting areas, swimming pools, spas, and garages. The villa's location, occupied by informant 5, is considered quiet and strategic. Despite being close to tourist destinations, informant 5 prefers the peaceful atmosphere of the villa's location. The room booking process is deemed easy by informant 5, especially when she rented the hotel for a three-month stay. The prompt processing of her orders by the hotel management provided a comfortable experience.

In terms of service, informant 5 provides positive testimony regarding the cleanliness of the rooms and the good service from the staff. The management's responsiveness to needs and complaints leaves a positive impression on her stay experience. The appearance of the villa occupied by informant 5 is considered worthy of being chosen as a place to stay again. The combination of strategic location and tranquility makes her feel that this villa is a highly suitable choice for accommodation. Overall, informant 5 gives a positive impression of the products, pricing, location, booking process, service, and physical appearance of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida.

f) Interview Results with informant 6 as a Foreign Guest Staying at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida

Based on the interview with informant 6, a foreign guest residing at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida, it can be concluded that the products offered by the hotel meet his expectations. Informant 6 stated that the room types offered aligned with his expectations and matched what he envisioned. In terms of pricing, informant 6 considers the prices offered by the hotel to be friendly to his wallet, giving the impression that the prices are commensurate with the quality and facilities received. Through the promotions received, informant 6 feels interested, especially with the discounts provided. The facilities received are also in line with those described on the Traveloka platform, where he made the reservation. The hotel's location is considered easily accessible and strategic, situated in the city center with good access to various tourist destinations. The room booking process is deemed easy by informant 6, especially because he made the reservation through an e-commerce platform, which provided him with the convenience of booking and knowing the details of the hotel he chose. In terms of service, informant 6 provides positive testimonials. He considers the service provided by the hotel staff to be excellent, including assistance in carrying luggage to his room and providing the information he needed. Overall, informant 6 recommends this hotel as a place to stay. According to him, the service, accommodation, and location of the hotel are highly suitable for residence, leaving a positive impression on his stay experience.

3.2 Discussions

This research depicts the marketing strategies adopted by Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida to face business competition in the endemic era. The research findings are reinforced by (Kotler, 2016) theory, which states that the marketing mix, also known as the "marketing mix," is a marketing tool used by companies to achieve desired market responses. In service marketing, the marketing mix consists of seven essential components: product, price, promotion, process, place, people, and physical evidence. According to (Mardlotillah, 2022; Saura, 2021), a marketing strategy is a plan that explains a company's expectations for how marketing activities or programs influence product demand in the target market.

a) Product

Monitoring product components includes planning and developing the right products or services for marketing, as well as modifying existing products or services by adding and taking other actions that impact various products or services, known as products (Lahtinen et al., 2020). Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida offer accommodation products with various facilities. The two main room types are Deluxe Ocean View Suites and Double Ocean View. They

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feature private bathrooms, AC, TVs, work desks, and various other amenities. This information is obtained from e-commerce platforms partnering with the resort and confirmed by the resort's owner and manager.

b) Price

Price is a system used by businesses to determine the right base price for goods or services, as well as related strategies such as payment discounts and various other associated variables (Darmawan & Grenier, 2021). Pricing is done with two strategies: published prices for the general public and contract rates for special cooperation with certain parties. Prices are adjusted according to the facilities offered to guests, which can be accessed through various e-commerce platforms. According to the interviewed guests, the prices are considered reasonable given the facilities provided.

c) Promotion

Businesses use promotion to inform the market about new goods or services they have. This can be achieved through publicity, sales promotion, personal selling, and advertising (Bondarenko & Vyshnivska, 2023). Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida promote through advertisements, sales promotions, and publications on various e-commerce platforms. They also use a website with a booking engine to facilitate direct bookings by guests. Package or bundling promotions and discounts are announced through the resort's social media.

d) Process

Customers using services will be happy if the delivery system is considered part of the service itself. For this reason, processes in services are very important in the service marketing category (Do & Vu, 2020). It is very easy to book a room at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida through various online platforms. Detailed information about room types, prices, and facilities can be viewed by potential guests before booking. Guests are facilitated by the transparent booking process.

e) Place

Place involves choosing and overseeing the trade channels used to deliver goods or services; serving the target market; and creating a distribution system that enables sales and delivery of goods physically (Asdi & Putra, 2020; Lahtinen et al., 2020). The resort's site is considered strategic, close to the harbor and popular tourist destinations. This is an advantage for Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida in terms of attracting guests. The location's accessibility to guests makes it more attractive.

f) People

The success of service delivery is influenced by all employee attitudes and actions, as well as their clothing and appearance (Abu et al., 2023; Ravangard et al., 2020). Management at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida prioritizes human resource management. Regular training is provided to staff to improve service quality. Interviewed guests provided positive feedback on the informative, friendly, and best service attitudes of resort staff.

g) Physical Evidence

The tangible physical appearance that influences customer decisions to purchase and use offered goods or services is known as physical evidence (Chang & Geng, 2022; Do & Vu, 2020). The resort maintains its physical appearance by regularly maintaining rooms, facilities, and the environment. Good management of physical aspects is part of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida's strategy for creating a positive image. This analysis is reinforced by (Kotler, 2016) theory on the marketing mix, also known as the marketing mix. Companies use it to achieve desired responses from the target market. Based on interview results and observations, Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida comprehensively implement this concept to face business challenges in the endemic era.

Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida's location is considered strategic, close to the harbor, and a popular tourist destination. This advantage is reinforced by routine maintenance of physical buildings, interiors, swimming pools, and gym facilities. Human resources (people) involved in service provision at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida are regularly trained to improve service quality. By combining all these elements, Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida have a robust strategy to face business competition in the endemic era. The success of this resort is not only supported by the products and facilities offered but also by appropriate pricing, effective promotion, easy booking processes, strategic location, quality human resources, and a well-maintained physical

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appearance. Overall, this marketing strategy reflects good responsibility from Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida management.

The analysis of interviews revealed that each component of the 7P marketing mix strategy, including product, price, promotion, process, place, people, and physical evidence, significantly contributes to understanding the marketing dynamics at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida amidst the challenges of business competition during the endemic period. (Kotler, 2016) portray the marketing mix as a set of strategic tools employed by businesses to provoke specific reactions from their intended consumer base. In this regard, the marketing mix strategy adopted by Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida has successfully aligned with the general definition of each element. The product offered includes two room types with comprehensive specifications and facilities. The pricing is deemed pocket-friendly and worthy of reservation, with attractive discounts offered through various online platforms. Promotions are effectively conducted through online booking with enticing discounts. The booking process is streamlined, and the resort's location in the heart of Nusa Penida offers easy access to popular tourist destinations. The personnel at Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida are friendly and informative, contributing to a positive guest experience. Furthermore, the resort consistently maintains its physical appearance to meet customer expectations.

Marketing strategy involves how hotels promote their goods and win competitions to achieve goals, considering the potential profits and risks from external sources, and maximizing their resources in dynamic environments (Darmawan & Grenier, 2021). By designing and managing all elements of the marketing mix effectively, Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida can enhance marketing success, build a strong brand image, and compete with other rivals in the endemic era. These research findings align with (Bondarenko & Vyshnivska, 2023; Camilleri, 2020) study focusing on marketing strategy analysis to increase room occupancy at Anantara Uluwatu Bali Resort, which concludes that utilizing the marketing mix concept comprising the 7Ps distinguishes the market, particularly for segmented businesses. Similarly, (Sari et al., 2022) research on changes in handcraft marketing strategies in Singaraja during the COVID-19 pandemic emphasizes the importance of product quality, pricing, location, and promotion. Additionally, (Ravangard et al., 2020) study on marketing mix strategy to increase tourist visits highlights the need for the right marketing strategy application. Likewise, (Tabelessy et al., 2023) study on hotel marketing strategies for the new normal era emphasizes the innovative approach of applying the "New Normal Concept" to each element of the 7P marketing mix to survive in the new normal era. (Pratama et al., 2023) research on marketing strategies for beachfront villas during the new normal pandemic period underscores the necessity of adapting all marketing mix components to meet changing market needs. However, (Pramesti et al., 2023) study on marketing strategies to increase room occupancy in Ubud during the New Normal era (a case study of The Shala Ubud hotel) reveals that the 7P strategy at The Shala Bali during the New Normal era is not effectively utilized.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In enhancing competitiveness against similar hotels, Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida implement a marketing mix strategy in their business management. Among the six prominent marketing mix strategies employed, the first is the product strategy, which offers a range of room choices tailored to consumer needs and desires, along with additional activities. Secondly, the pricing strategy set by Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida aligns with competitors' prices, offering comprehensive facilities and comfort, making the hotel a preferred choice for accommodation. Thirdly, the process strategy simplifies booking and transaction processes, with staff providing excellent, efficient, and professional service to consumers. Fourthly, the location selection strategy strategically places the hotel near highways, ports, tourist destinations, and dining venues. Fifthly, the superior HR management strategy entails training employees, employing locals, and organizing vacations to enhance solidarity among staff. Lastly, the physical appearance strategy ensures a comfortable and safe environment with a modern concept that meets consumer expectations and is equipped with comprehensive facilities. However, in the execution of the marketing mix strategy, one aspect remains underutilized: the promotional strategy. Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida's promotional efforts have not been as effective in attracting consumers due to the lack of organized promotions and the absence of specific promotional strategies targeting potential

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consumers. This study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the importance of each element of the marketing mix in shaping the competitiveness of hotels, particularly in the context of the endemic era. However, there is one aspect that still needs improvement, which is the promotion strategy due to its suboptimal execution, thus failing to capture consumer attention. Improvement in this aspect is expected to enhance the competitiveness of Pandawa Resort and Seaview Nusa Penida in the hotel market.

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