

# ***Comparison and Analysis of Marketing Management Between Five-Star Hotels: Xiangxi Atour Hotel in Qinhuangdao, Hebei Province, and Weidu International Hotel in Datong, Shanxi Province, China***

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to research and find out how effective the marketing strategies used by hotels in two tourist destinations, including Xiangxi Atour Hotel in Qinhuangdao and Weidu International Hotel in Datong. As a result, the study will compare these strategies in terms of their appeal to tourists and customer retention. In order to do so, the study conducts a detailed analysis to find both different and similar items in the marketing approaches of the hotels. Through a merit review of relevant materials, delving into the mechanisms of marketing, and studying customer demographics as well as seasonal adaptations, the study reveals the pros and cons of the strategies utilized by both hotels. This study shows that there are obvious differences in the efficacy of traditional marketing and digital methods employed in different local markets and the most compelling case of customers. This section provides an evaluation of the findings, along with suggested strategies for corporate leaders to follow the firsthand urban context in order to maximize the miscellaneous marketing choices.

**Keywords:** marketing strategies, hotel management, Xiangxi Atour Hotel, Weidu International Hotel.

## **1. Introduction**

A hotel sector exists throughout the economy, massing up significant revenues from the tourist numbers. The foundation of a hotel marketing process is through engaging the client and ensuring that he or she is retained. The market today, presenting new customer behaviors as well as advanced technological developments, emphasizes the need for certain marketing strategies. The research studies and contrasts the hotels' marketing strategies in two Chinese cities: Xiangxi Atour Hotel in Qinhuangdao and Weidu International Hotel in Datong.

The methods deployed in hotel marketing encompass various techniques aiming to promote the services, improve the brand name, and create the channel of bookings. Formerly, the hotels took pride in applying traditional approaches such as printed advertisements, direct mail, and others. Nonetheless, this digital era has opened new channels such as social media, search engine optimization (SEO), and content marketing [1]. Digital tactics allow hotels to reach a wider and more geographically dispersed target audience, interact with potential clients in real-time, and adjust their messages for specific target market segments.

Amid the difficulty of competition, the Xiangxi Atour Hotel in Qinhuangdao has adopted a mix of digital and traditional marketing strategies. The hotel makes use of digital tools like social media, SEO, and content marketing to drive up its e-reputation and to cultivate a young techie group of customers. These traditional methods are also complemented through activities, such as themed promotions and partnerships with local tourist destinations. Xiangxi Atour Hotel proves that the usage of both digital and traditional tools is effective when reaching a multifaceted target group and positioning itself as the leader.

Similarly, Weidu International Hotel Datong has a multi-dimensional marketing strategy in place. The hotel collaborates with different kinds of online advertising, loyalty programs, and point-based programs, which are used for marketing campaigns to construct a brand and to gain customers' loyalty. In order to attain such guests, the hotel follows the outlined strategy that has a twofold objective; it not only seeks to invite fresh adventurers to stay but also ensures that the existing users build long-lasting loyalty. The mixture and application of marketing strategies are closely interconnected to the hotel's strengths and its market position.

The selection of marketing strategies is influenced by several factors, including the target demographic, the hotel's location, and the seasonal nature of tourism in each city. Qinhuangdao, lush with beautiful beaches and being a popular tourist spot, experiences an influx of tourists during the summer period. Given the sizzle of this area, hotels capitalize on seasonal events and promotions wherein visitors' numbers tend to be at their peak. Nevertheless, during wintertime, in Datong, with its notoriety for historical and cultural heritage, tourists pour into the city throughout the year. For this reason, Weidu International Hotel would incorporate culture-oriented events that are appealing and are planned on a schedule that makes sense for the steady flow of visitors who are there to gain more insight into the city's history.

The comparison of the marketing strategies adopted by Xiangxi Atour Hotel and Weidu International Hotel covers both areas of similarities and differences in that logistical aspect. Nevertheless, while both resorts exploit digital marketing tools, their practices and areas of focus derive from their respective performances. Furthermore, the role of new media, which includes virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI), is expected to become more and more vital in their marketing programs [2]. This technology proposes recent means relevant to everyday customers' proceedings and individual engagements, which, in turn, increases the overall results borne by the B2C marketers.

An in-depth examination and consequent application of the marketing strategies of hotels across different cities could provide an intelligent roadmap to marketing campaigns that can exploit these uneven opportunities. This research's goal is to elaborate on the effectiveness of several marketing methods while rendering practical ideas to the hotels concerned with improving their marketing approaches. As the study focuses on the exact strategies used by Xiangxi Atour Hotel and Weidu International Hotel, it will provide a detailed contribution to the field of marketing in tourism, especially being competitive in a changing industry.

## 2. Literature Review

Marketing campaigns undertaken by hotel companies have unquestionably encountered a sea change through this period since they have utilized technological innovations together with the changing tastes and preferences of the consumers [3]. The central role of the marketing management system in elevating the organization's performance as well as the contentment of the clients within the hotel sector [4]. The research categorizes the existing literature into frameworks, strategies, services, and customer-focused approaches, which allows an in-depth study of the industry. The use of emerging technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) in marketing strategies has also been recommended as a way to increase customer engagement and quicken the booking process

[5]. Alternately, through Orieno et al. discussed the change of the marketing strategies from traditional method to digital form, outlining that embracing the modern innovation continually is of the essence alongside traditions [6].

### **3. Selection Criteria for Xiangxi Atour Hotel and Weidu International Hotel**

The selection of Xiangxi Atour Hotel in Qinhuangdao and Weidu International Hotel in Datong was made on the basis of distinct criteria. These are both five-star hotels that are a mere seven hours' journey from each other, with tourist attraction as well as economic influence. At the same time, a huge difference in the tourist flow is obviously observed due to the location specifics. Xiangxi Atour Hotel is located in a residential city whose economy is driven by seasonal tourism. It is the focus of the study to assess the effect of seasonal marketing strategies. Conversely, the paper finds the Weidu International Hotel in a city notable for its standing in history and a magnet for tourists all year round. This approach takes into account tourism-cultural-oriented marketing strategies as well as the promotion of heritage. In addition, both these hotels have pursued a marketing blending mix relating digital and traditional methods, which enable the basis for comparison.

#### **3.1. Marketing Strategies of Weidu International Hotel**

##### **3.1.1. Product Strategy**

The hotel provides both international standard services and traditional culture to its guests, thereby forming a unique product, which is a fusion of modern facilities with elements of local culture [7]. In addition to its accommodation, the hotel provides experiences, which are in line with the city's identity founded on the shore. This is seen in the themed rooms, seasonal offerings such as summer beach packages, and wellness services that target healthy travelers. The main product strategy of the hotel combines a holistic approach oriented to go beyond the accommodation component and demystify the local culture and lifestyle.

##### **3.1.2. Price Strategy**

At Xiangxi Atour Hotel, which is located in Qinhuangdao, a city known for its sea coast, pricing is fiercely competitive yet occupies the middle-to-upper-end niche in the market. The hotel employs a dynamic pricing system where room prices fluctuate in response to the demand changes, especially during peak times such as in summer. This means ensures maximum revenue for the hotel by maintaining reasonable prices for their customers. Occupancy rates in the off-peak periods are upped by offering discounts, along with packages that combine services such as dining and tours to provide better perceived value of the merchandise.

##### **3.1.3. Promotion Strategy**

Two aspects of the hotel's marketing strategies are advertising and other marketing functions. Xiangxi Atour Hotel has established an integrated digital marketing strategy, where it is heavily present on social media platforms like WeChat and Weibo for prospective customers' engagement. With its application of online advertising, the hotel successfully adverts to a vast audience, with emphasis on youthful customers who are very active on social media [8]. While tapping digital social media advertising, the hotel cements a close partnership with local tourism authorities, the latter serving as the driving force at the regional amenities like events and festivals. Various promotional tools, such as discounts and special packages, are employed, most importantly during peak seasons when influxes of visitors come to the hotel.

### **3.1.4. Place Strategy**

The orientation of the hotel in a particular online direction and among other OTAs (online travel agencies) plays a very significant role in this process. Xiangxi Atour Hotel promises to be a preferred option for travelers through large online channels such as Ctrip, Expedia, and Booking.com. The website of the hotel where guests can directly reserve is one of the tools of getting more customers, which provides discounts and complimentary services. The hotel engages in the formation of partnerships with the local travel companies and tour providers, which has given it an entrance into the regional tourism system. The multichannel distribution method is helping in expanding the customer base since it gives room to reach out to a larger group of the potential customers.

## **3.2. Marketing Strategies of Weidu International Hotel**

### **3.2.1. Product Strategy**

Weidu International Hotel in Datong has a product portfolio that is fine-tuned to cater towards cultural and historical tourism, embodying the core idea of unique tourist experiences. The theme rooms, as well as the unique packages, will feature a visit to the city's historical sites, which means the guests will immerse into Datong's historic culture. In addition to luxury services like business facilities and wellness centers, the hotel also provides services, which are to the taste of both families and businessmen. Through incorporating the cultural capital in the tourism products that the hotel provides, it has found an effective way to attract cultural enthusiasts traveling in the region.

### **3.2.2. Price Strategy**

The pricing strategy of Weidu International Hotel is designed in such a way that it is adaptive and customized according to customer segments that it is targeting at. The hotel is a platform through which patrons can find various options for rooms and packages, thus ending up with varying price points. The hotel raises prices over crucial festivals and cultural events, which are very common in Datong (the city), when there is a high demand for services. Customers are also being rewarded via loyalty schemes and discounts programs, which ensures that the customers will always come back to the hotel again.

### **3.2.3. Promotion Strategy**

The mix strategy of advertising for Weidu International Hotel is through a combination of both digital and offline marketing techniques. In online presence, advertising is one of the major strategies that the hotel makes use of, and this includes search engine marketing as well as its campaigns on social media. The hotel employs a thorough search for travel influencers and bloggers, with whom the hotel would establish working relationships to promote its brand online. The traditional methods like taking part in tourism exhibitions and distributing pamphlets serve the purpose of attraction to the staunch ages and traditional travellers. The hotel has a culture of displaying cultural packages, which includes accommodations, meals, and guided tours, thus taking a position of an agency promoting the historical charm of the city for visitors.

### **3.2.4. Place Strategy**

The point of reference applied in Weidu International formulates a strategy which strikes a balance of attractive online and offline presentation. An online travel agency is hugely indispensable in this, and so, the hotel is on the look-out for a popular platform as well as regional and international travel corporations. The official site of Weidu International Hotel is primarily used for seamless online

reservations, the main attraction for the guests being the discount and incentives for direct booking. Further, the hotel has established alliances with airlines and travel agencies to offer packaged travel deals. This is a winning formula in reaching the wide spectrum of possible clients.

## **4. Analysis and Recommendations**

### **4.1. Comparison**

The comparative study on marketing strategies carried out by Xiangxi Atour Hotel in Qinhuangdao and Weidu International Hotel in Datong conveys a noticeable effect of cases where strategies are tailored for specific market conditions. Xiangxi Atour Hotel has managed to bring digital marketing on board, especially through the use of hospitality-specific platforms and search engine optimization (SEO), which helps them in attracting young and tech-loving people, mainly during the summer period. This approach is greatly appropriate for Qinhuangdao's case where the number of tourists drops dramatically with the end of the high season. On the other hand, Weidu International Hotel takes a well-balanced approach to marketing, which embraces not only new (digital) but also old (traditional) ways in order to ensure a constant influx of tourists interested in cultural tourism all year round. This approach showed its constant practicality during a steady tourist flow, which is popular among cultural tourists in Datong City. The analysis reflects the importance of adjustment of marketing strategies to the unique characteristics of considering the local population and touristic season periods.

### **4.2. Practical Implications for Hotels**

The research projects offer a few feasible suggestions for hotels as follow-up evidence. Such hotels as Xiangxi Atour Hotel can opt for digital marketing for it reflects the image of their clientele – the young people. However, they can imbue their strategy with a more personalized digital interface experience, virtual tours, an AI-driven bot, and other interactive opportunities to get a competitive advantage in such a segment. Weidu International Hotel's choice of balanced marketing, combining digital and non-digital means into their promotional strategies has shown to be of benefit so that a stable flow of guests is provided. The efforts of the hotel in promoting culture are good due to the fact that Datong's tourist market is appreciated for culture and heritage all year round. Still, room for better inclusion of advanced technology, such as big data analytics, to better know the clients is to be considered.

### **4.3. Recommendations for Improving Marketing Strategies**

Based on the analysis, several recommendations can be made to enhance the effectiveness of the hotels' marketing strategies. For Xiangxi Atour Hotel, the possibilities are to be more experimental with digital marketing such as employing emerging platforms and technologies. The virtual visits equipped with the VR technology do allow for the creation of appealing images for potential visitors, which, in turn, make the latter very interested in the hotel and the destinations in general, hence attractive packages [9]. Thus, extending their scopes through friendly relationships with other local organizations and attractions to create packages that are relevant and satisfying to a broader market would be a smart move. By means of integrating the digital marketing possibilities, for instance, native ads, email marketing, and customer service bots, Weidu International Hotel will inevitably satisfy their guests and develop customer loyalty. Additionally, besides creating a presence in global platforms like international travel websites and interaction with global influencers, this strategy could also be used for the attraction of more international tourists and therefore sustaining the occupancy rates all year round.



#### 4.4. Effectiveness of Strategies in Different Cities

The fact that these strategies are working appears to be a little uncertain since they work under the particular circumstances in which they are implemented. The digital media and seasonal promotions are priceless to Qinhuangdao where tourism is mostly seasonal since Xiangxi Atour Hotel makes use of these promotion methods. Therefore, to secure bookings for the high periods and carry out continuous advertisement during the off-season period. Meanwhile, in Datong (the place with a steady flow of cultural tourists), Weidu International Hotel's strategy of mixed marketing - through digital and non-digital means, simultaneously – is more successful. Besides, the traveler's preference in the present world is digital, but the traditional one is also good; the hotel continues to draw a line and, in the process, attracting a wide range of guests of different needs and age groups which in turn ensures business is consistent. The analysis shows that there is a wide range of both digital and traditional marketing strategies that may generate higher profits or not depending on the surroundings and characteristics of the demand side.

Therefore, the hotels must understand the key differentiating aspects of their marketing strategies, which should hence exemplify the local conditions of the place they are located in. Consequently, the effort will be very helpful for the hotels to take the right decisions aimed at customers' attraction and retention that facilitates an enhancement in the company's competitiveness.

#### 5. Conclusion

Moreover, the study gathered the source materials supporting the current trends in hotel marketing. The study select Xiangxi Atour Hotel in Qinhuangdao and Weidu International Hotel in Datong as case studies that would be used to highlight the marketing strategies in these hotels. The numerous activities performed in the course of the study involved examination of the hotels' use of digital and traditional marketing methods, demographic analysis of the guests, and the flexibility of their marketing strategies throughout the year. The research results showed that a combination of digital marketing and high traffic during the tourist season is a strong factor in reaching a good conversion rate in a highly competitive and seasonal business. In contrast, the blend of digital and traditional approaches adopted at Weidu International Hotel achieved 24/7 occupancy throughout the year due to the cultural clients. These findings thus ascertain the importance of marketing tactics that are location consistent and channelized towards the favored demographic groups.

The investigation results bring out several suggestions to the hotels bettering their marketing strategies. That might want to consider Xiangxi Atour Hotel integrating more technologies with an ever-emerging toolkit like virtual reality as well as artificial intelligence that provide very personalized experiences. Such an integration could reveal that a hotel can offer packages that would include interesting deals together with local firms and attractions which makes them desirable for the travelers' bookings during the peak period. The other empirical finding suggested developing service focused on gaining profound insight into consumers' tastes would extend more reliable marketing activities. For this, the hotel should create a presence on international travel platforms to communicate with influencers and online booking experience to attract a larger number of audiences. That should also be in constant monitoring of the effectiveness of the current marketing strategies and the changes in market conditions to be in a position of retaining a competitive edge.

The study confirms that effective marketing plays a very significant part in the competitiveness of the hospitality sector. The hotel industry has become more challenging, and the ability to attract and retain customers as a result of well-thought-out marketing plans has become very valuable. Hotel marketers should use digital marketing tools in their brand creation activities to reach larger audiences. At the same time, they have to remember that besides digital channels, there are specific offline advertising approaches that are effective in certain geographies. In addition, consumers can only be

expecting to see new technologies such as AR and VR incorporated in future marketing strategies that provide an immersive experience beyond the usual campaigns. In conclusion, for hotels to get ahead of the competition and be on top of the game, they should be focused on agility and flexibility, being customer-centric and keep on reinventing themselves through constant review of their strategies as customers' practical demands may change along their personal life journeys.

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