

Marketing Strategy of Hotel Link Solutions

Digital marketing for Hotels and Resorts in Bangladesh



HOTEL LINK SOLUTIONS
online marketing solutions for accommodation providers

BRAC University

BRAC Business School

Course Title: INTERSHIP REPORT (BUS 400)

REPORT ON

Marketing Strategy of Hotel Link Solutions:

Digital marketing for Hotels and Resorts in Bangladesh

Submitted to:

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Date of Submission: 22 June 2014

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

20 June 2014
Md. Tamzidul Islam
Senior Lecturer
BRAC Business School

Subject: Submission of Internship Project.

Dear Sir,

With due respect I beg to submit my internship report. I have done the report on " Marketing Strategy of Hotel Link solutions: Digital marketing solutions for Hotels and Resorts in Bangaladesh "under your active supervision of Academic Supervisor Md. Tamzidul Islam, Senior Lecturer BRAC Business School, BRAC University, and Organizational Supervisor Mr. Mohammad Iftekharul Islam, Director of HLS & Spellbound Communications ltd. . My study reveals a growing affluent service base and concentrated on the basic performance of the company on the context of marketing and overall performance of the organization.

Indeed, this is a practical and significant topic I tried my best to gather necessary information regard to this issue and arrange them sequentially. I must be admitted that without your kind hearted co-operation and proper guidance it would have been impossible on my part to prepare this report, so I express my gratitude to you for your helpful suggestion.

I, therefore, pray and hope that you would accept my report considering my efforts and constraints and I am ready to explain anything to you if you feel necessary.

Sincerely yours,

Namus Sakb
ID: 09304100
BRAC Business School

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank my honorable mentor Mr. Md. Tamzidul Islam for guiding me on completion of this report and on conducting the required studies. Without giving your courage and continuous support, it was quite impossible for me to carry out the preparations and proceedings of this report. I also thank the Mr. Mohammad Iftekharul Islam, of the “Hotel Link Solutions” for providing me the internship and clearance on condition of required data collection. Employees of all other departments are very helpful and the employees are to be thanked for their unperturbed assistance and guidance in finding out my desired data.

I am also grateful on the official’s support, without support it was quite impossible for me to continue the proceedings of this report. The officials supported me with every possible answers and queries that I asked for.

I had done this activity, where I work hard on Internship project. I would like to thank to you for helping to make this report. Once I again the heartiest thanks will go to my course instructor Mr. Md. Tamzidul Islam.

Executive Summary

Hotel Link Solutions is one of the leading digital marketing solution providers in today's world. Now-a-days a website with an email address is not enough. Travelers want to check availability instantly, and then book with their booking with their credit card. They use multiple channels and mobile devices to find properties. So Hotel Link Solutions has developed a modular digital marketing solution which gives you the right tools to manage your accommodation. The marketing strategies and activities instated by Hotel Link Solutions are innovative and out of the box. The pipedrive, resonline and health check makes the whole system work like an integrated network. The business model used by Hotel Link Solutions is totally unique combination of digital marketing efforts. Hotel Link Solution Bangladesh offers the same service as the global offers. For the last one year operation in Bangladesh they have achieve considerable amount of success in the industry.

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Introduction



1. Introduction:

The term Digital Marketing is a new phenomenon in today's world. Digital marketing is also known as internet marketing because it mainly uses the Internet as a core promotional medium, in addition to mobile and traditional TV and radio.

The definition of Business dictionary is given below:

Digital Marketing is the promotion of products or brands via one or more forms of electronic media. For example, advertising mediums that might be used as part of the digital marketing strategy of a business could include promotional efforts made via the Internet, social media, mobile phones and electronic billboards, as well as via digital and television and radio channels.

Hospitality marketers are facing a great challenge to reach their guests. But through search, social media, display media, or email marketing they can reach guests easily. So as every industry is changing hotel industry has also revolutionized. These changes have been driven by the emergence of new devices that allow consumers to access media and services where and when they want, using one or more four key screens:

- Television
- PC (desktop or laptop)
- Mobile (specifically 3G, 4G, and Wi-Fi-enabled Smartphone's)
- Tablet computers (such as the iPad, Nexus, Galaxy Note, or Kindle Fire)

According to the forbes.com this is called the "4 screen" revolutions. This "4 screen" landscape offers a variety of challenges as well as opportunities for hospitality marketers. According to recent research, nearly 90% of all media consumption every day occurs across these 4 screens. Televisions, PCs, mobile devices like smart phones, and tablets have replaced newspapers and magazines. Your ability to reach your customers going forward depends on your ability to reach across these 4 screens at the right time to engage and attract potential guests.

(Tim Peter, August 2012)

2. Origin of The Report:

This report was assigned as part of the Internship program of BRAC Business School after completing all the credits of Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program. In accordance with the specifications of this program, I have completed three month periods of the internship at Hotel Link Solutions, Bangladesh.

The assigned project titled “Marketing Strategy of Hotel Link solutions: Digital marketing solutions for Hotels and Resorts in Bangladesh” has been completed and report has been prepared under kind supervision of Academic Supervisor Md. Tamzidul Islam, Senior Lecturer BRAC Business School, BRAC University and Organizational Supervisor Mr. Mohammad Iftekharul Islam, Director of HLS & Spellbound Communications Ltd.

3. Objective of The Report:

The main objective of this report is to know about the concept of digital marketing strategies in context of Hotel Link Solutions Bangladesh. The world of business is dynamic it is subjected to continuous changes and a major cause is many of the companies are growing faster so that we need to change our strategy according to its environment. Here our major focus is on understanding the marketing strategies and activities of the company as well as knowledge about Digitalization of marketing.

4. Scope of the Study:

This report will give a clear idea about How Digital of Marketing works. The report covers the activities of "Hotel Link Solution". It has identified the major activities of the booking engine business. It only focuses on the overall mechanism of operating as well as marketing activities. The depth analysis of every department and sub sections are not covered here.

5. Methodology of the Study:

They have used both primary and secondary data for preparing the report. For primary data I have used the “Accommodation Health Check” generators data.

For secondary data: Various articles, publication, website etc available in the internet to prepare this report.

6. Limitation:

Limitation of the report are given below-

- As per the organizational policy, it was difficult to collect numeric data in this report.
- In many cases up to date information is not provide

- To get and to acquire information is very difficult.
- Clients are not willing to spare time to provide information. Some people are very rude.
- Organizational Information sharing is the most critical problem
- All procedural matters were Conducted Directly in the operations by the top management level
- Non-availability of the reference book is another limitation.

Organization Overview



Organization Overview:

1. Introduction:

For over 10 years working in the travel and internet market our team has identified that accommodation providers in emerging economies are facing big challenges. At the same time they are getting more opportunities with a constant growing travel market, they are falling behind in terms of the uses of technology to benefit from it.

Tourism today represents about 9% of global GDP, and an estimate of 80% of travelers use the internet to plan a trip. While accommodation providers in the most advanced markets are already reaping the benefits of the internet, many in the emerging economies are struggling to keep the pace.

Accommodation providers of today need to have a solid web presence. Gone are the days when relying on travel agents printed marketing material or word of mouth was enough. The doors to market a website are much wider with the internet, and even a simple promotional website is not enough for the inquisitive traveler of today. Due to limited exposure and rudimentary understanding of the importance of online marketing, many accommodation providers do not take full advantage of technology solutions to optimize their business potential.

Hotel Link Solutions is not simply a technology provider; it has been set up to partner with accommodations on their digital marketing journey and to empower them to take full control of their future. Hotel Link Solutions has a comprehensive suite of solutions from mobile website to channel manager to fit the needs of any size accommodation, from the largest 5-star resort to a one-bedroom home stay.

2. History:

Hotel Link Solutions is a joint venture between the WHL Group and ResOnline. WHL Group Started in 2002 as a project of the IFC (part of the World Bank Group) developing tools to assist accommodation providers in the developing world to get online and selling. Worldhotel-link or WHL is an online travel-services (accommodation and tour) booking network. The company sub

Incorporated in Hong Kong and has offices in Ho Chi Minh City, Prague, Cape Town, Belo Horizonte, Sydney, Manila and Seattle.

Today there are 7 businesses, whl.travel, Urban Adventures, Green Path Transfers, Lime & Tonic, Gunyah (TLS), Your Holiday Promotions and Hotel Link Solutions. Key assets include technology solutions tailored for emerging economies and a global network of travel industry partners in over 100 countries. In late 2011 Hotel Link Solutions started operating as a subsidiary of the WHL Group providing digital marketing solutions for the accommodation industry.

ResOnline is a partner of the Tourism Holdings Group (THG) of Companies whose first business, BookEasy, also started operations in 2002. The THG business specialises in travel and technology solutions for consumers and businesses. ResOnline was established in November 2005 and was the first two-way channel manager in Australia. Its leading technology offers accommodations a complete platform to manage and distribute the inventory on a global scale.

Businesses in the wider partnership include Resonline, BookEasy, Room Manager, Tour Manager, and RoamFree plus management of hotels (such as the Q1 Resort). Collectively this group is one of the largest travel technology companies in Australia.

3. In details:

Hotel Link Solutions Limited was incorporated in Hong Kong on October 7th, 2011 (Incorporation No. 1,670,096) as a wholly owned Subsidiary of World Hotel link.com Limited (WHL Group). In fact whl.travel started working two Develop technology two support online sales and distribution for accommodation providers when it was still a project of the International Finance Corporation (part of the World Bank Group) in 2002 and was based in Vietnam. whl.travel was spun off from the IFC in March 2006 as a private company.

The early whl.travel technology focused on web based systems two e-enable local distributors (OTAs) support two small hotels (some 8,500 hotels use this platform), and progressively the capabilities of the system were enhanced two enable individual hotels two have their own websites with content management systems and the ability to load allotment (live inventory) two allow instant bookings. This was in early 2009. Over the following two years this first hotel system was rolled out to around 1,000 small hotels and the technology was upgraded two Continuously Provide multilingual websites; two include Google maps; Provide two improved back-end functionality; two allow for Easier updating of room and rate information etc.

By mid-2011 whl.travel could see the potential to add channel management capabilities to what whl.travel was doing. Provide a complete online solution for accommodation providers. whl.travel at this point approached ResOnline Limited (a leader in channel management services in Australia) to see if they would be interested in joining forces in a new company where we could combine the best of the whl.travel technology and the better of the ResOnline technologies. Provide a complete digital marketing services for accommodation providers. A verbal agreement was reached with ResOnline in September 2011 to form a JV with WHL Group. Provide this new package of services globally. WHL Group then proceeded to setting up the company, Hotel Link Solutions Limited, in October 2011 and in the interim a formal JV has been agreed and signed with ResOnline Limited and the process started to equity transfer to ResOnline. Hotel Link Solutions Limited is hence the global operating company now supplying the new comprehensive digital marketing and booking packages to accommodation providers around the world.

Hotel Link Solutions in turn has now started rolling out this new package of services in a number of countries (Vietnam, Philippines, Brazil, Fiji, Sri Lanka, Seychelles, Cook Islands, Tonga, etc.), in each case looking for strong local partners who contribute local industry knowledge and connections plus working capital.

4. Business Partners:

Both WHL Group and ResOnline have extensive experience as providers of technology solutions to the travel and leisure industries.

Companies in which WHL Group has built and supports the technology platforms include whl.travel (providing branded and non-branded DMO portals selling accommodations, tours and transfers in over 250 destinations in 100 countries and marketing some 8500 hotels and 2200 tours); Urban Adventures (a joint venture with Intrepid Travel Limited) operating in around 100 cities; Green Path Transfers (a JV with World Overseas Ventures) offering airport transfers in over 350 destinations; and Gunyah which offers multi-day packages in 55 countries. In addition to these companies which are all sitting on WHL Group systems, we are also an investor in Lime & Tonic which operates destination guides for up market restaurants and activities in a number of cities globally (see Prague and Sydney). The technology team for Lime & Tonic is based in

Prague and the WHL Group IT team has supported the Lime & Tonic team with developing modules for online payment, and online distribution.

ResOnline has operated since 2005 and currently has over 1000 hotels using the channel management system in Australia and New Zealand. The ResOnline system connects via a two way interface to over 40 OTAs and the GDS network and processes many thousands of transaction daily. They also have integration with many of the major PMS systems in the market in addition to having hundreds of small hotels using their own PMS system, Room Manager. Within the ResOnline company they also have a DMO platform solution (sold under the BookEasy brand) which powers over 150 of the major DMO sites in Australia (examples are the Hunter Valley, Bendigo, South Coast NSW).

5. IN Bangladesh:

Hotel Link Solutions came to Bangladesh through Holiday Tour & Package which is a sister concern of Spellbound Communications. Hotel link solutions Bangladesh has been operation for over a year.

Spellbound Advertisement ltd. is one of the leading communications and marketing solutions firm in Bangladesh. Being relatively new player in the fiercely competitive market, spellbound has been able to establish its name amongst the leading firms of its kind within a very short period of time. This has been possible due to its strong commitment to deliver the best solution to its client's needs at the most competitive price. Composed of a group of young and enthusiastic marketer's spellbound ltd has always been innovative and effective in its field of work.

6. Objectives:

Goals and objectives for the Hotel Link Solutions Bangladesh are:

- Increase in revenue from hotels and resorts using the Hotel Link Solutions system
- Develop strategic alliances with the local tourism boards and councils
- Provide enterprise level sales and technical support to its clients
- Dominate the local market as the premier hotel technology solutions provider

In order to achieve these goals, Hotel Link Solutions Bangladesh needs to concentrate on 4 key areas:

- Effective segmentation and targeting of hotels and resorts within the country.
- Successfully position Hotel Link Solutions Bangladesh as the premier hotel technology solutions provider.
- Communicate the differentiation and quality of our offering through personal interaction, media, and regional marketing.
- Develop an effective after sales support and a following of loyal hotel clients in order to create sufficient sales

7. Services & Solutions:

The services that are provided by Hotel Link Solutions are described below.



Booking Engine: provides instant bookings to accommodation providers.



Booking Widget: the code which embeds the Hotel Link Solutions booking engine into any website.



Website: template based website solution for property managers looking for their first or a new website.



Mobile: a simpler version of the full website that loads automatically when a traveler opens the website from a smartphone.



Channel Manager: shared database where all OTAs pull from one database of allotment.



Social Media: Facebook and TripAdvisor setup up and basic assistance.



Additional Solutions: tailored solutions developed by local partners.

1. Booking Engine:

The booking engine is our core solution, which provides instant bookings to accommodation providers. Along the way you will find a lot of accommodation providers that claim to have 'online bookings'. Many of them will have no idea of what online bookings are. A contact form is not the same as online bookings. The solution we offer allows accommodation providers to receive instant bookings from travelers, something a contact form can't do. Many recent studies show that travelers prefer to book online instantly, and won't do a booking if the process involves email exchanges and a belated confirmation process. Google Think Insights reported that 2 in 3 travelers book hotels online, 2x the offline booking rate.

The Hotel Link Solutions booking engine includes the booking management module, which allows accommodation providers to control rates, allotment, specials, promos, etc. to effectively yield manage and maximize profits.

All Rate Plans
Single Rate Plans

Show Items

Availability
 Rates
 Min Nights
 Stop Sell
 Month Oct-2013

Selectable Days Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun

Clear dates
 Change to:

Rate Plan	02 Wed	03 Thu	04 Fri	05 Sat	06 Sun	07 Mon	08 Tue	09 Wed	10 Thu	11 Fri	12 Sat	13 Sun	14 Mon	15 Tue	16 Wed	17 Thu	18 Fri	19 Sat	20 Sun	21 Mon	22 Tue	23 Wed	24 Thu	25 Fri	26 Sat	27 Sun	28 Mon	29 Tue	30 Wed	31 Thu	01 Fri
Executive Suite - 4 to 6 Guests	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Jacuzzi Garden Suite - Double	0	3	3	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	
Jacuzzi Suite	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Figure: Booking Engine

Main Features

- **Payment Solution:** An important part of the booking engine is the payment solution. Accommodations using our system will need to receive payments from travelers, and by using our system they can opt between collecting the traveler credit card details for manual processing or use one of the payment gateways available.
- **Specials:** The specials interface allows accommodations to create specials around their existing rates. They can create several types of specials such as: pay stay deals, advanced purchase, last minute, fixed amount and percentage discounts. Any specials created are available on the accommodation own website or booking widget, but not on OTAs.
- **Promotions:** The promotional code interface allows accommodations to set up a discount to offer to guests that are only activated by a code. A promotional code can be valid for all rates and specials or just the ones the accommodations chooses. Once a guest enters in a valid promotional code, the discount is applied and the particular rate plans highlighted. This can be useful in cases such as when the accommodation wants to give a special discount for a group of clients, such as a corporate group, past guests or travel agents.
- **Booking Questions:** The booking questions feature allows accommodation providers to add particular questions to their booking process that guests can answer at the check-out page. This tool helps hoteliers to learn more about the travelers, their preferences and their needs before they arrive. Questions like 'Would you like a non-smoking room?' or 'How did you hear about us?' can be created.
- **Reports:** The booking reports show all the traveler information, including credit card information

2. Booking Widget:

If an accommodation provider already has a professional-looking website, you should never push a new website. You are going to waste your time and lose a sale. In this case the booking widget is the solution we recommend.

The booking widget is the code which embeds the Hotel Link Solutions booking engine into any website, enabling it to receive instant bookings. The booking widget from Hotel Link Solutions gives two options to provide booking functionality in a website: the embedded and the stand-alone booking widget.

Main Features

- **Formats**
 - Embedded booking widget: Can be completely integrated into a website with a streamlined user experience
 - Stand-alone widget: Can be easily implemented, as it only requires a simple link directing to the booking page from the website.
- **Customization:** The booking widget is highly customizable to fit in the current accommodation's website, providing a great user experience for travelers booking on the website. The accommodation can choose the colors and features they want to be displayed.

3. Website:

This is the solution for property managers looking for their first website, and also for hoteliers who want to switch their current website for a more attractive and easy-to-use solution. The template based website solution we offer is simple, but yet includes the most important features any hotelier will need. We have multiple templates to select, and all of them include friendly navigation, rotating banners, customizable menus, social media widgets and several other functions that are essential.

However, the templates have limitations and don't allow too much specific customization. We can't change the placement of items on the website, or do any special edits to single websites on a request basis. If an accommodation needs an advanced website you will need to create an additional service of website development using some other external platform, such as WordPress, Joomla or Drupal.

Main Features

- **Templates:** Multiple styles and formats are available. The accommodation provider can easily change the look and feel of their website within seconds.
- **User Friendly:** The websites offer clean navigation following industry best practices. We make it easy for travelers to find the information they are looking for.

- **Search Engine Friendly:** Optimized for search with fully customizable meta tags, H1 tags URL extensions. Our websites can easily rank well on Google for the accommodation main keywords.
- **Bookable:** Travelers can make an instant booking using the booking widget
- **Extra Tools:** The websites come with Google Maps, a live weather feed and Social Media buttons for liking and sharing (not all templates have all the tools).
- **Gallery:** Ability to load as many photos and videos (from YouTube, Vimeo and Dailymotion) as wanted.
- **Extra Pages:** Ability to add as many extra pages as necessary (e.g. to feature a restaurant or bar, airport transfer service, local tours offered, etc.).
- **Multi-language:** Allow the websites to use as many languages as needed. Currently there are 12 languages available including French, Spanish, German, Portuguese and more.
- **Custom Domain and Email:** A custom domain with the accommodation name and email accounts using the website domain name.
- **Hosting:** Reliable hosting on a secure server with full backup.
- **CMS:** Access to a Content Management System (CMS) to update content on the website whenever desired. That means accommodation providers will never have to depend on a webmaster and their outrageous fees for every single website update.
- **Reports:** Management reports available to help accommodations providers learn more about user behavior and web metrics. This service is provided by Google Analytics.

4. Mobile:

A report from Google showed that in the last quarter of 2012 approximately 25% of search clicks were coming from non-PC devices. By 2017, it is expected that 50% of online direct bookings will be made on mobile devices – with even more ancillary purchases made through mobile, given the devices' portability and ease of use.

If the mobile solution is activated, when a traveler access the accommodation website from a smartphone he is redirected to the mobile version automatically. The mobile is a simpler version of the full website, with less content. The mobile version still allows travelers to make a booking the same way they would on the full website. We take this approach to make the mobile more

like a booking tool than a marketing or research tool. When travelers access a website from their smartphone the chances they are going to make a booking are higher.

Main Features

- **Customization:** We offer tools to make the mobile website look just like the full website. This includes customization of the colors of the website, buttons and links.
- **Platforms:** The mobile solution works for accommodations with our template based website or with a non-Hotel Link Solutions website.
- **Bookable:** The mobile website can only have the Hotel Link Solutions booking widget or a booking form, which means the mobile, can never have a booking widget from an external provider.

5. Channel Manager:

If you've heard about the day-to-day operations of an hotelier, you know much work is involved with distribution management. Let's say a hotel works with 10 different OTAs (such as Booking.com, Agoda, Expedia, etc.). If they have 10 rooms to sell online, they have to manually distribute these rooms between each OTA - 2 for Expedia, 3 for Agoda, 2 for Booking.com and so on. If one of these OTAs sell all their rooms for one day, the hotel has to login to each OTA extranet to redistribute the rooms to ensure a maximum occupancy.

All of this requires a lot of work, patience and attention to avoid mistakes. It is common to hear about hoteliers that have to login to some 20 OTAs on a daily basis to update inventory. You can imagine the amount of work it can be! The channel management system is a shared database where all OTAs pull from one database of allotment. When a property has 10 rooms available for example, all 10 of these rooms would be input into the channel manager. All of the OTAs with which the property has established contracts can then pull allotment from this pooled database. This means that all channels have access to the same 10 rooms, and the rooms will be booked on a first come, first serve basis.

This is a huge advantage since there is no worry that all rooms get booked out of one OTA, while other rooms are sitting unbooked in another. Channel management saves time for reservation

managers since all distribution websites (Agoda, Booking.com, Expedia etc.) and the own property website are managed from one location. Our system helps accommodation providers improve their room occupancy and reduce the chances of overbook.

Main Features

- **Distribution Partners Available:** 40+ OTAs are available but also OTAs not in the list can be added by request (subject to analysis).
- **Information Updated:** When an accommodation provider is connected to an OTA, the Hotel Link Solutions channel manager is capable of updating inventory. However, each connection has different set-ups (constantly changing). Some OTAs are not updated for Rates for example, while other are not updated for Inclusions. Look on the Connection Information tab under the Channel Manager page within our backend for exact info for each specific channel. The following information is what we can update for most OTAs: rates, availability, min nights, stop sell, inclusions.

6. Social Media:

Social Media is in vogue nowadays, but not many people know how to use all of the social media networks that are out there. The value of social media is enormous: according to TripAdvisor 93% of travellers worldwide say online reviews have an impact on their booking decisions.

Local partners are free to explore all the possibilities, either with setting up accounts for accommodations or providing management services in all of the social media networks available. However, we've identified Facebook and TripAdvisor as the basic solutions every accommodation provider should have.

Facebook Main Features

- **Set up:** Set up a Facebook page for the accommodation (in case they don't have one).
- **Bookable:** Insert the booking widget into the accommodation Facebook page, allowing for added booking functionality.

TripAdvisor Main Features

- **Set up:** Set up a TripAdvisor listing for the accommodation (in case they don't have one).
- **Management Rights:** Ensure the accommodation have management rights over the listing.

7. Additional Support:

Some value added solutions and support can be given locally. Local solution can be further developed and offered in a global level the Hotel Link Solutions.

- **Premium Websites:** Custom made websites with additional features not available in the template based websites. These websites are usually developed using WordPress, Joomla or Drupal. Accommodation providers can virtually have any design they want with any specification they need.
- **Google Awards:** Management of paid search campaigns for accommodations.
- **Social Media Setup/Management:** Creation and daily management of social media accounts for accommodations using all sorts of networks such as Instagram, Flickr, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, TripAdvisor, Google+ and so on.
- **Payment Processing:** Manage payments for accommodations using a PayPal or credit card for an additional fee. In this case the local partner receives the whole payment from the traveler and transfers the money locally to the accommodation.
- **Set up Training & Support:** Each accommodation provider will have an HLS account manager that will guide and help with the setting up of accommodation unit's profile, current channels that are already hired and setting up of website or booking widget.
- **Professional Digital Content:** Since the success of a hotel whether via OTA or own website can be determined by the quality of photographs and descriptions appealing to the customer. HLS Bangladesh provides hoteliers with the following services:
 - Guides for taking photographs in accommodation facilities and Set up professional photo shoot when requested
 - Guides for professional written descriptions of hotels, facilities, services and rooms.
 - Set up for translation service when required

8. The Global Team

We have a large team globally distributed. Below we list the contact details of the ones you are most likely to get in touch during your journey as a Hotel Link Solutions partner.

Andre Franchini | Chief Executive Officer | andre@hotellinksolutions.com | [andrefranchini](#)

:: For business strategy, discussions, ideas, development

Len Cordiner | Director | len@whl-group.com | [lencordiner](#)

:: For partnership deals, business strategy, ideas

Rob Shortland | Sales Director | rob@hotellinksolutions.com | [r.shortland1](#)

:: For sales strategies, performance tracking

Maureen Valentine | Operations Director | maureen@hotellinksolutions.com | [motownvalentine](#)

:: For business strategy, solutions development

Heather Linton | Project Manager | heather@hotellinksolutions.com | [heather.linton](#)

:: For training, assistance with the system, solutions development

Wallace Faria | Project Manager | wallace@hotellinksolutions.com | [w.faria](#)

:: For training, assistance with the system, solutions development

Sophie Marra | Project Manager | sophie@hotellinksolutions.com | [sophie.marra.hls](#)

:: For training, assistance with the system, solutions development

Nguyen Thanh Nga | Accounting Manager | nga@hotellinksolutions.com | [nguyenthanhnga08](#)

:: For billing, accounting, reporting

9. Local Team (BANGLADESH):

Yousuf Ali CEO

Mohammad Iftekharul Islam Director

Hilton Dash Manager Sales & marketing

Shakir Hasnain Senior Executive Marketing

Miskat Ali Technical Executive

Synthia Afreen Client Service Executive

Background of the Study



Background of the Study

Job Description:

1. Report to supervisor by 9.45 regular basis to check status on current projects and follow up new projects as per requirement.
2. Check ResOnline software regularly and report any discrepancy if found. The software must be checked regardless of holidays/vacation/illness.
3. Call hotels as per ResOnline outcome whether guests have checked in or not. If yes send a sms to the guest via sms software.
4. Make ready the bill with assistance of supervisor and send these to clients on or before 30 of every month. Follow up call must be done with the clients whatever they have received it or not. Moreover if there is any discrepancy it must be shared and solved immediately.
5. Follow up calls with clients when payment will be made against any bill those are being provided. Make sure the any payment is not due.
6. Arrange follow up meeting schedule for the sales team so that they can attend and get more time to focus on new sales.
7. Check websites of the clients regularly for discrepancy. If found notified to supervisor.
8. Make sure the monthly letter is being forwarded to clients by 2nd of each month. As per the priority set by supervisor, letters must be distributed in English.
9. Attend sales meeting with supervisor
10. Determine a clients business requirement and whether the products and services are

Why I choose the topic:

Marketing is the process of communicating the value of a product or service to customers, for the purpose of selling that product or service. I did my major in Marketing so I was given the task of a marketing promotion officer as an intern. As I have been working in this company for more than three month, so now I have a clear understanding about how things work.

I got introduced to modern trends and practices in digital marketing. Hotel link solutions exposed me to their digital marketing strategy and execution of the strategy. It is near the end of my internship period and now I am able to think critically about the development, implementation and effects of certain digital marketing strategies in business.

So I choose “Marketing Strategy of Hotel Link Solutions: Digital marketing for Hotels and Resorts in Bangladesh” as my report topic. In my report, I will analyze the marketing strategies and activities Hotel Link Solutions in respect to the Bangladeshi scenario. To evaluate I will do different analysis and collect information from the ResOnline then use those information to show the comparison using drafts and charts etc. it was truly a new experience to work in a global company.

Methodology of the report



Introduction

In this chapter I have tried to describe the research design, population, sampling, data collection procedure, and survey approaches and data analysis.

Research design:

A research design is a set of advance decisions that help us to makes up the master plan

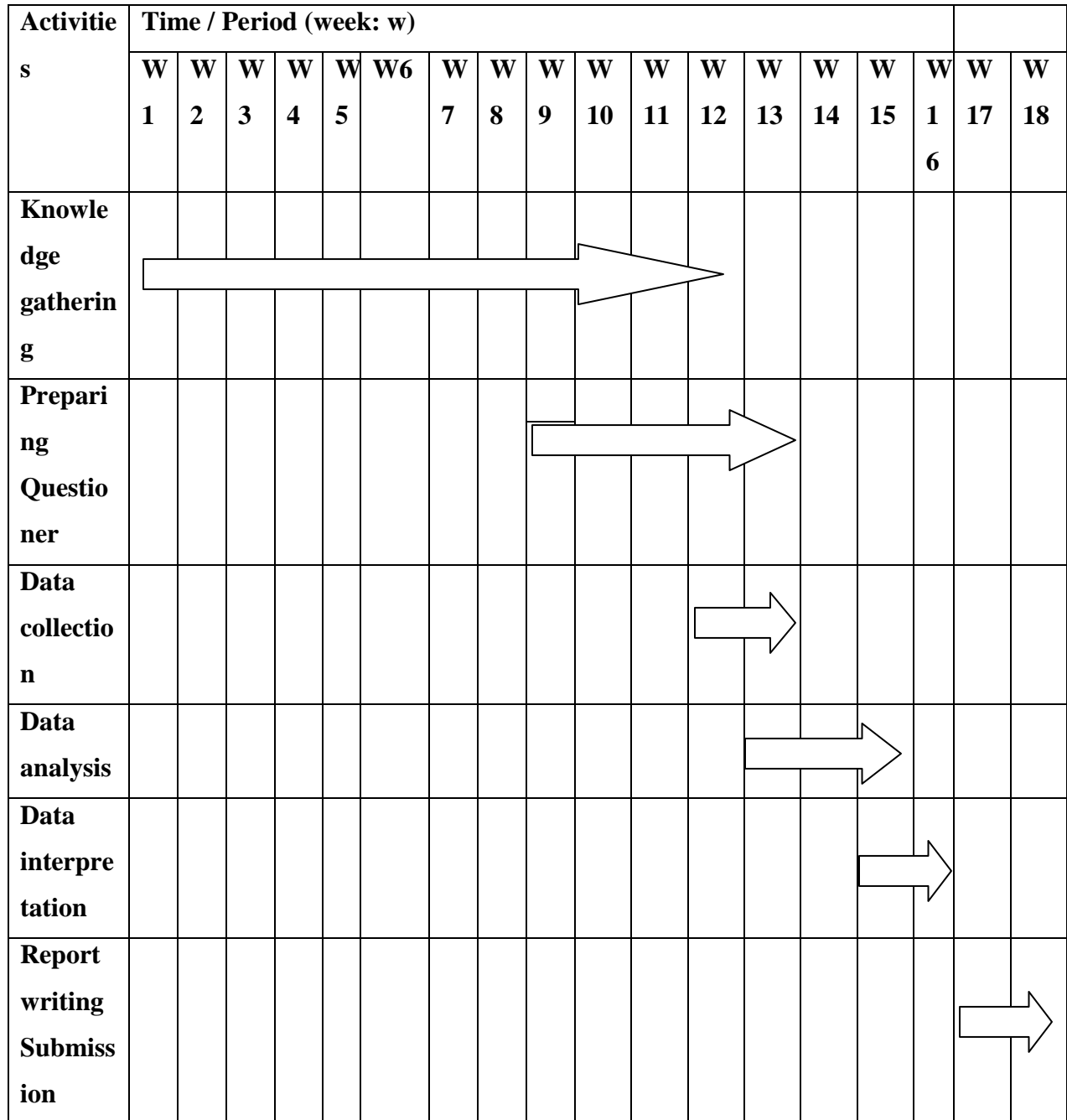


Figure: Gantt chart

Procedure:

In the week-1 to week-12 I have gathered practical knowledge about the Digital Marketing strategies of Hotel Link Solutions. After that in week-9 to week-13 I gained access to the Health Check survey generator where a structured questionnaire was there and approved by our course instructor. Then I determined the sample size for the requirement of our survey.

In week-12 to week-13 we collect the data from our respondent and also analyze the data from week-14 to week-15. After analyzing the data we started to interpret the data from week-15 to week-16. Then we started to write our research report and we submit within week-17 to week-18.

Measurement of reliability

In my report paper the questions I have used with the help of Health Check Generator are mainly close-ended. Close-ended questions provide a set of answers from amongst which the respondent must choose. In close-ended questions there are two types and they are-

1. Dichotomous &
2. Multiple responses.

Dichotomous: it has only two response options, such as “yes” - “no” “listed” “not listed” “have” “Do not have”

Advantages: Simple to administer

Disadvantages: May oversimplify response options

Multiple responses: has more than two answer choices; must have “mutually exclusive” and “collectively exhaustive” answer set

Advantages: Allows for broad range of possible responses and Simple to administer, code, and analyze

Disadvantages: May be in researcher frame of reference and May not have all appropriate respondent answer options

Population: population means the entire group under study as defined by research objectives.

In my report those people are our population are the 20 prospective Hotel Clients of Hotel Link Solutions.

Sample: Sample is a subset of the population that should represent the entire group. In my report 20 respondents are the samples.

Sample unit: Sample unit is the basic level of investigation. In my report each and every respondent is my sample unit.

Data collection procedure

I have collected all data with the help of Hotel Link Solutions “Accommodation Health Check” generator.

Data Analysis

For data analysis of my report I have used Microsoft excel sheet. I also use Microsoft word document and Microsoft power point.

Findings & Analysis



MARKETING ANALYSIS AND SALES TACTICS SECTION

Introduction:

The success of Hotel Link Solutions relies heavily on delighting their clients by ensuring that all their needs and desires are met in every way. Hence, Hotel Link Solutions gives strong importance to their marketing efforts to ensure that. The first task is to understand the business environment and the prospective clients from every aspect.

In this regard, Hotel Link Solutions has tried to gain a thorough understanding of their competitive environment and continuously strive to develop unique business ideas to make their business a success. Hotel Link Solutions assists accommodations on their digital marketing journey and to empower them to take control of their future. By their digital services such as booking engine, booking widget, mobile website, channel management system, social media program etc.

Property management systems are the core of an accommodation's operations. These systems can be used to coordinate front end operations, process reservations, Payroll and day-to-day accommodation operations. The Link Hotel Solutions system is seamlessly integrated to the property management systems shown below to make your property administration that much easier!

Online media marketing programs usually center on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks. A corporate message spreads from user to user and presumably resonates because it appears to come from a trusted, third-party source, as opposed to the brand or company itself. Hence, this form of marketing is driven by word-of-mouth, meaning it results in earned media rather than paid Media.

THE GROWING TRENDS

As the use of social media has spread, online marketing has become something no marketer can afford to ignore. People are using social media at home, on the move and at work, to do everything Researching purchases from these planning visits to industry events. Social has edged its way into every aspect of your customers' lives. Marketers have no choice but to follow. Some

have eagerly embraced online marketing, while others have been reluctant Deeply Converts. But almost all marketers now know what social media can to:

- Listen to customers' wants, needs, enthusiasms and gripes
- Engage with customers and prospects in a genuine two-way communications environment
- Respond to questions, compliments and complaints Personally and in near-real-time
- Generate leads by Integrating social actions into lead generation and buyer analysis

The Hotel Link Solutions Pathway or core strategy:

The social interaction is often the first step of the customer journey. And makes it hurt Hard to DETERMINE the social channels working hard to drum up business and sales leads. In Hotel Link Solutions, we are ready to formulate the customized strategy for you by driving through our determined pathway. It is divided into 5 steps:

1. Get visible
2. Get social
3. Get engaged
4. Get in touch
5. Get converted

Get visible

The matter How Great the Service or Business is, if the prospective customer cannot Find it on the web, it's doesn't exist. Maximize your Business visibility and drive more clients competing in a Space that generates half of the Internet's online conversation. On this phase of Social Media Campaign roll out and will be establishing the Basic platforms as a Foundation of Digital media campaign.

Organic Search

Optimizing the online contents with proper keywords for better organic search results.

Paid Search

Investing on SEO & Paid Google Search for preferred result of the business.

Social Platform

Making the entire social platform ready to use on the campaign. Starting the race on all wheels always better than including the last one later.

Mobile Presence

Introducing a mobile application for future integration with the social media activations & engagement.

Get social

This phase is all about increasing the interaction between the business and the stakeholder. For that the organization needs to be proactive and come forward to interact. Here come the social stunt points. May be irrelevant to the product or business, but few topics will definitely increase the traffic of your social platforms. And that is the core aim of Being Social to make an impact on the upcoming stages. This phase is all about increasing the interaction between the business and the stakeholder. For that the organization needs to be proactive and come forward to interact. Here come the social stunt points. May be irrelevant to the product or business, but few topics will definitely increase the traffic of your social platforms. And that is the core aim of Being Social to make an impact on the upcoming stages.

Rating & Review

Be it a movie or a restaurant, book or a rock music, a review or feature will surely catch someone's eye; such as movie lover, musician or a foodie.

Blog & Poll

Now when we get some enthusiastic users of our social platform by our actions, we can roll out some activity to involve them. Such as creating a poll about a recent incident, general opinion on a hot topic.

Extending Interaction

The bottom line of this phase and the overall social media campaign is to extend the interaction. An up-to-date content research & dedicated maintenance of the platforms will materialize this objective.

Get Engaged:

Once a significant member base has been created on different platforms, now it is the time to keep them engaged with the business brand to get the best ROI. On this phase of campaign design we will be using the most effective tools to generate a harmonious buzz around the platform with rich content followed by a behavioral study.

Rich Media

Great social media campaigns rely on great content that's tailored to the audience you want to reach and the platform you want to reach them on. But finding, organizing and segmenting your content can be a huge challenge. And we are going to take that hassle for you.

Context Driven

Getting a little behavioral study before publishing a content online, always gives a better edge on the effectively. Before pushing content relevant to a recent incident always needs to be checked & verified with the business background.

Getting in Touch:

100 visitors with a 20% conversion rate is a better return than 1500 visitors with a 1% conversion rate. Thus a little customization / personalization will create an amazing experience to the visitors that will generate significant positive reactions towards the brand & the business. This phase is dedicated to getting in touch with all those visitors who are worth getting some extra attention.

Email

A personalized email from your brand will always mean something to a visitor. With the social platform application & activation we shall be having a database of the visitors who can be targeted for personalized communication.

Social

This is the phase where we take online media to a live medium. Getting the social platform users to a live experience through an event or activation will take the campaign to a new stage.

Personalize

No matter what we do, in the end this phase is all about personalization. And to get a hold on it we will be doing our homework beforehand to create database marketing.

Get converted

This is the phase of transformation & the ultimate shift to the next generation customer service. When you have a consistent customer base of your online media platforms & who are actively participating on your discussion topic, you can gradually roll this digital service out to the

customers. Announcing your yearend notice, solving a customer's problem with your product/service or giving them a bonus or reward, nothing is actually impossible in this phase.

Rather gradual implementation of this ELECTRONIC SERVICES through social media channel will start spreading the core service aesthetics of your business. A lot of innovative services can be introduced in this phase like-

Online Registration

Online Transaction

Loyalty Membership

24/7 Customer Care etc.

In a nutshell this phase does the conversion of typical business to social/digital business.

Bangladesh and its Market Analysis:

Tourism has become a dynamic sector both in the world economy and particularly in the developing countries. Tourism is already an important sector in some developing countries. Based on tourism revenue those countries are becoming developed. Bangladesh is a very beautiful country. It has become an attractive tourist destination in South Asia and Bangladesh government has given top priority to develop the tourism sector. Bangladesh has a lot to offer great tourist; natural beauty, rich traditions, beaches, lakes, hills, forests wild lives, archaeological attractions, monuments, handicrafts, sanctuaries, religious festivals, cultural heritage, tribal culture and architecture, incredible greenery, mighty rivers and attractive river cruises, colorful tribal life and attractive cultural. Many international chain hotels are still under construction in Dhaka and Coxsbazar. According to tourism Bangladesh maximum development is done by private sector and some by government. Travel agencies also play important roles in the promotion and development of tourism in a country. There are 235 travel agencies in Bangladesh; most of them are members of the Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh (ATAB) (Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, 2006).

Under the new Bangladeshi tourism law, accommodation providers are considered establishments which provide accommodation services for a fee, offering an appropriate set of structures, equipment and corresponding services.

The accommodation establishments can be:

- Hotels

- Hotel-Apartments
- Cottage & Resorts- Tourist Inn
- Holiday Villas
- Self-catering Apartments
- Others(camping, rural tourism, guest house)

Size of Market:

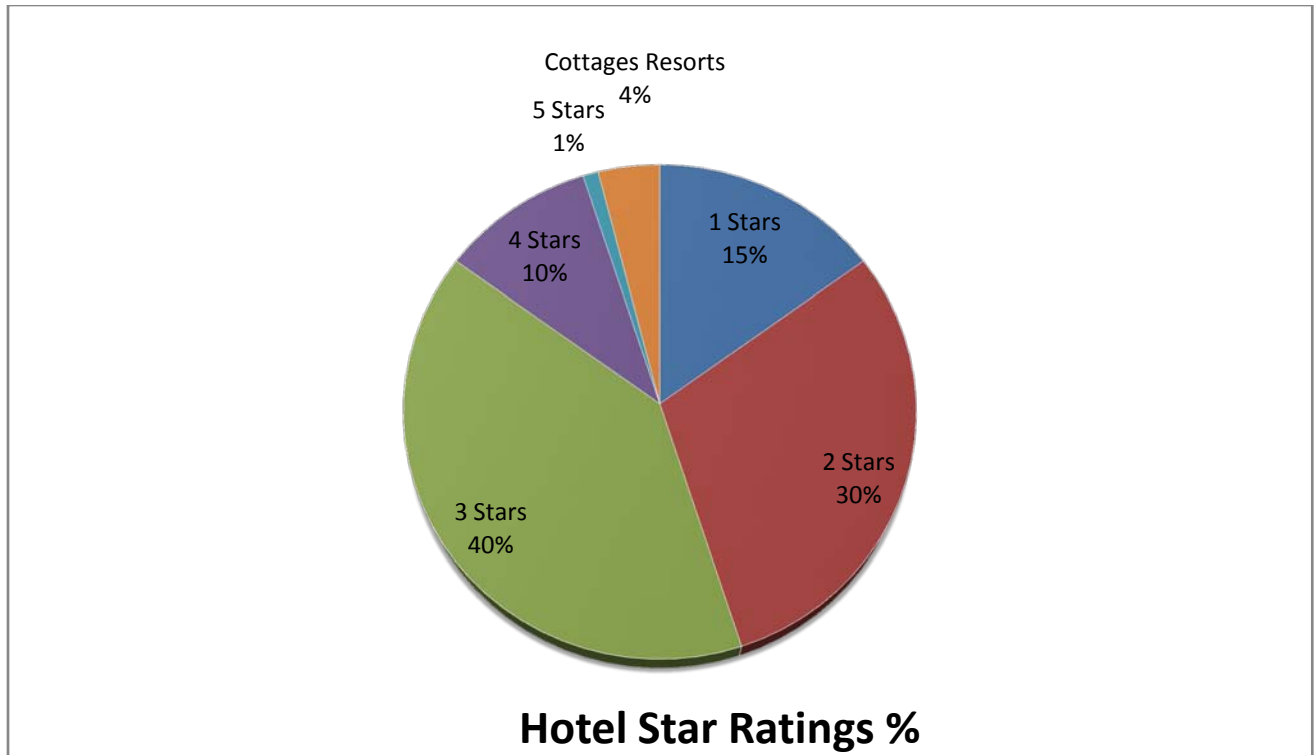
In Bangladesh there are appropriately 3000 accommodation establishments. In Dhaka and Chittagong Ten more five-star hotels are going to be built as demand for accommodation. Number of international hotel chains and local conglomerates will jointly establish the hotels likely by next 2-3 years. some upcoming hotels include Marriott International, Sheraton, Westin, Novotel, Le Meridien and Hilton, among others. Bangladesh presently has four five-star hotels with a total of nearly 1,000 luxury rooms. The annual occupancy rate on an average is 55-60%, said the industry insiders.

The top end hotels in Dhaka are: ‘Radisson Water Garden Hotel Dhaka’, ‘Sheraton Hotel’, ‘Sarina Hotel Dhaka’, ‘Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel’, ‘The Westin Hotel Dhaka’ and ‘Hotel Swiss Park Bangladesh’ Examples of popular private tourist accommodation outside the two main cities include in Sylhet Division ‘Nazimgarh Resort’, in Dhaka Division ‘Royal Resort’, in Rajshahi Division ‘Hotel Naz Garden’, ‘Elenga Resort’ and ‘Jamuna Resort’, in Chittagong Division ‘Esmeralda Resort’, ‘Hillside Resort’ and ‘Seagull Hotel’.

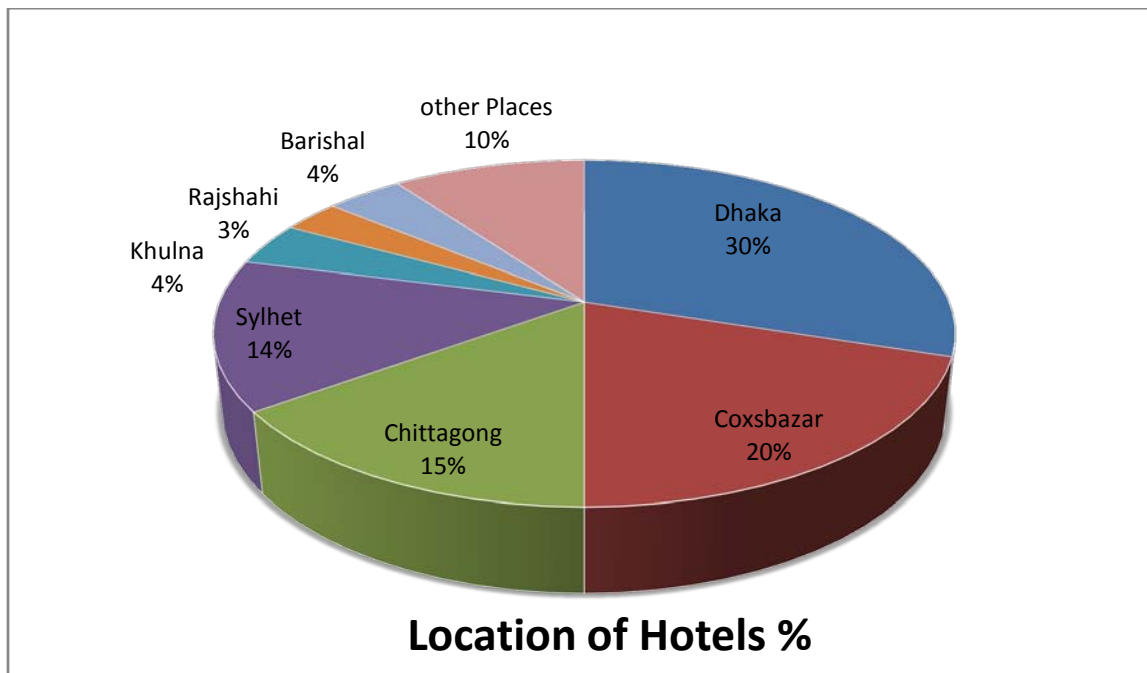
According to Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) officials, roughly 500,000 foreigners arrived in Bangladesh in 2012 with above 80% of them on business and official tours and the remaining as tourists.

Segmentations:

Bangladesh accommodation market is growing with the growth of tourism. So according to the reports Bangladesh tourism board the marketing segmentation is given below.



Establishments with three and two stars represent more than half of the total market, respectively with 40 and 30 percent. The one star category is in third place embodying 15% of the market. Rest 5% belongs to the cottage, inns and resorts. The least percentage goes to five star hotels which is 1%.



Majority of accommodation establishments are in Dhaka where we find 30 percent of accommodation providers in Bangladesh (1200 units), followed by Coxbazar with 20 percent corresponding to units (800 units), with Chittagong 15(600 units) percent Sylhet region with 12 percent (350 units).

Target Market

Hotel Link Solutions Bangladesh targets the whole hotel industry but the major hotel groups and big hotels are the primary who is currently working with the channel management providers. According to the segmentation we developed earlier we estimate potential target market is 2500 units or the 80% share of the total market of accommodation providers in Bangladesh. Initially we will target the Dhaka's accommodations and later we will focus the other cities. Because the for marketing we need a big work force and gradually they will join in our team. Dhaka and the Coss bazaar travel market is the largest of such markets in Bangladesh.

Direct Sales:

Once the awareness campaigns is ongoing and the curiosity of the market regarding this new service is being aroused the hls Bangladesh's sales team will begin work on a larger data base of contacts, scheduling meetings and preparing proposals with decision makers. Of each accommodations of the target market, in order to enhance the benefits of HLS channel manager in relation with the compilation and to sign contacts.

Initially the tam will consist of three persons, who will be responsible for the region of Dhaka. Expanding later to coxs bazaar, Chittagong and Sylhet. The team can grow gradually until it meets a dimension of up until 6 persons. The sales team distribution with their respective accommodation units to higher is as follows:

According to the tourism Bangladesh statistics for last year, the most strategic tourism regions in Bangladesh is Coss Bazar, Shundarban Khula, Sylhet tea garden, Kuakata Borishal as they are the ones with RevPar(revenue per available room) and room occupancy rates. Kuakata borishal and Rajhshahi have shown a slow but study growth in sales and relevance in the tourism market. But the highest revenue from the tourism is coming from Dhaka, Coss Bazar and Khulna.

Marketing Mix:

PRODUCT MIX:

In planning its market offering, the marketer needs to think through five levels of Product. Each level adds to the customer value, and the five constitute a customer value hierarchy. The levels of the product that the travel and tourism industry offers to its customers are as follows:

1) Core product

The core product is the services offered by HLS which is the Booking engine, Booking Widget

2) Basic product

The basic products offered by HLS are the web page development.

2) Expected product

Clients wants 24 hours service for any queries, direct customer recommendation etc are expected products.

3) Augmented product

Premium Websites design, Google Awards, Social Media Setup, Set up Training & Support are the perfect example of augmented products.

4) Potential products

The potential product of HLS Bangladesh will be the National web portal which will be launched soon.

PRICE MIX:

Now HLS Bangladesh has adopted a fixed policy for pricing. Which is 1-20 rooms 10 dollar per month and 21+ rooms per room 0.50 dollar.

PROMOTION:

As a new company in Bangladesh HLS needs brand recognition. To create awareness in the market. They should advertise, attend trade fair, tourism fair, digital fair, and use word-of-mouth, telemarketing and exhibitions.

PLACE:

The place is not any issue for HLS Bangladesh because we go anywhere to present our business ideas.

Market Compactors:

There is currently no direct competitor in Bangladesh for Hotel Link Solution Bangladesh but many top hotels are connected with the channel management service providers.

There are hundreds of digital marketing service providers for hotels in different countries. Now not all of them can compete against Hotel Link Solutions. Because Hotel link Solutions is a complete packages and contains all the service need for digital marketing.

Five top hotel digital marketer age given below:

1. **EZ Yield by TravelClick:** TravelClick provides innovative solutions for hotels around the globe that increase revenue, reduce cost, and improve performance. Our suite of solutions supports our clients with travel marketing and reservations management tools, as well as comprehensive business intelligence. TravelClick has a world-wide on-the-ground presence that enables us to maintain a deep understanding of local markets in the context of the global hospitality industry. (www.travelclick.com)
2. **Omnibeas By VisualForma:** Our company has over 16 years experience in management, consultancy and development of information technology products. In the future, we aim to be the most important software company for small/medium sized hotels in the global market. To achieve this, we have a team who are extremely knowledgeable about the most important technologies, and a highly proactive R&D department whose passion is to deliver scalable end-to-end products, that are custom designed to meet each client's needs. (www.omnibeas.com)
3. **BIRD by Enhisoft:** Enginyeria de software S.A. is a manufacturer of management software which has been developing specific business solutions for the hospitality industry since 1990. Our main goal is to provide high quality services and offer a commitment of constant development with the innovation of our products. (<http://www.engisoft.com/Web/Hotels.htm>)
4. **Wide Discovery:** Established in 2004, WD has built a solid reputation and developed a unique range of comprehensive software platforms for more than 200 medium- to high-end clients, predominantly independent hotels, to help them boost profits and gain brand loyalty with entire digital solutions comprising direct online booking platforms and strategic digital marketing solutions. WD platforms are quickly replacing online travel agents as more profitable alternatives that take a personal approach to interacting with the general public and prospective hotel guests.

(www.widediscovery.com)

5. **In1Solutions:** In1 Solutions was established in 1989 with a focus on technology integration and E-commerce applications. The company specializes in online marketing solutions and reservations systems for the hotel sector and the hospitality industry as a whole. We are a privately owned and profitable Irish company with our head office in Dublin. Additional markets include Spain, Holland, France, South Africa, New Zealand and Romania.

(www.in1solutions.com)

Tools\Service Provider	EZ Yield by TravelClick	Omnibees By VisualForma	BIRD by Enhisoft	Wide Discovery	In1Solutions
Web Development & Customization	√	√	√	√	√
Channel manager	√	√	√	√	√
Booking Engine	√	√	×	√	√
Mobile App	√	×	×	×	×
Social media Booking	×	√	×	√	×
CRM & SEO	√	×	×	√	×

How to Make Sales:

In any business organization, sales are the department that generates revenue. No matter how cutting-edge our solutions and technology are, we must still have a sales mechanism in place, or everything else is useless. After extensively selling Hotel Link Solutions around the world we have created a sales process that increases the chances of converting a lead into a sale.

Rob is the Sales Director for Hotel Link Solutions and will help get your team started with sales activities. He will set up each sales person in the email list and on Pipedrive, which is the sales software Hotel Link Solutions uses to help local partners get the sales activities organized.

The Sales Process:

1. Using Pipedrive

Pipedrive is a CRM type system which help manages all of the sales and reporting activities of each sales person. Pipedrive was selected by the team because it is easy to use and best suits our needs, with the added benefit of a mobile version that can be accessed in the field via a smartphone. The beauty of this tool is that it is all done online, so information only needs to be entered once and the sales managers can access it to evaluate the team performance. It is important to make sure organization details are completed in full as this forms the basis of your research and that Health Checks are attached for each client. So whatever progress is going on everything needs to be updated in pipedrive.

2. Accommodation Health Check

For each accommodation, we have the online digital marketing Accommodation Health Check, which is a survey done by the marketing people. A report generate for a client using our Health Check generator, which is available in our backend. The Health Check report will give very professional and graphic report to present to the accommodation, which scores them across 5 key areas (website, mobile, booking engine, social media and distribution), giving them scores in each area and a total score (out of 100).

What is the Accommodation Health Check?

Essentially it is a diagnostic tool, an online assessment of the performance (digital health) of the accommodation. The output of the Accommodation Health Check is a report for the accommodation which scores them across 5 key areas (website, mobile, online booking functionality, social media and online distribution), giving those scores in each area and a total score (out of 100).

Accommodations get bookings from many sources, e.g. corporate clients who email the hotel; tour operators/wholesalers; walk-ins; and the Internet. Today the biggest source of bookings globally for accommodation providers is the Internet (via the property website, via social media and via distributors), and it is the accommodation performance in this area which we are assessing. By performing the Accommodation Health Check we and properties can see how well they are doing. This is valuable information both for the accommodation provider and for our sales staff that can see where the accommodation is weak and suggest (Hotel Link Solutions) services and corrective actions the accommodation should take.

Over time, once the accommodation becomes our client, it would be very beneficial to do the Health Check again and combine this report with data we have on sales to show the client how you have helped them build their business.

The reasons health check is mandatory are as follows;

- **Quality of Sales.** We have found very wide variations globally in the quality of research sales staff are doing before visiting clients and wide variations in the conversion of prospects to meetings and meetings to sales. We think that by adopting a uniform high quality approach to research we can improve these outcomes.
- **Sales Training.** Having all sales staff using the Accommodation Health Check allows our sales management team to see where sales staff are struggling and provide targeted support. It is also an excellent training tool we can use to get new sales staff up to speed quickly. Our global reward and recognition program will use the Health Check as a key component in assessing sales staff performance.

3. Making an Appointment

Based on the list of potential clients you have put together, you must call the accommodations one by one to make an appointment, always with the decision maker. Your main purpose is to discuss how you can help them build sales (increase occupancy) and profits. The more appointments you make and face to face meetings you have, the greater your chances of closing more sales!

Try to call the accommodation and arrange an appointment with the relevant person. If this is not possible to begin with, maybe because Hotel Link Solutions is not that well known, you may have to email the relevant person with some background information on the company, along with their Accommodation Health Check. This is bound to get their attention and in most cases, should result in the person agreeing to meet with you when you follow up with a call.

Alternatively, an effective way to get the decision maker is thru walk-in. You can schedule a walk-in per area, and then collect business cards and info on whom to discuss with about Hotel Link Solutions. If the decision maker is available, you can give a preliminary presentation but if not you can take note of the decision maker's name and call them to ask for an appointment.

4. The Meeting

Successfully selling Hotel Link Solutions requires face to face meetings with clients to demonstrate and convince them how we can help them improve their online presence and business with tailor made solutions specific to their needs. There are no short cuts around this and as those sales teams who are succeeding have demonstrated, the more client meetings you have the greater your chances of closing a sale.

When you have your meeting, make it clear from the outset that you are here to help them. Make sure you take a copy of the Accommodation Health Check report to discuss your findings with the prospect and explain a little about Hotel Link Solutions. Ask them some questions to clarify your research and the Health Check report you have prepared. You want them to open up about the problems they are having so that you can empathize and reinforce areas where we can help them. Present them with their Health Check report and explain the rating by taking them through each area. Unless the accommodation is doing really well, you should be able to identify from the Health Check various services we can supply the accommodation to improve their business.

Remember you are here to provide solutions based on real needs of the accommodation, so do not oversell. Nothing will turn a potential client off quicker than trying to sell them a new website for example when they have a great website already, or start talking to them about OTAs they should use when they are already using them.

5. Closing the Sale

In many cases, if you are dealing with the decision maker, you will be able to close the sales on the spot. Be alert for 'Green Lights' (buying signals during the meeting when they are indicating agreement with what you are proposing). Remember to reassure them that there is no obligation and if they are not happy with what we provide them they can stop using Hotel Link Solutions at any time.

When you are comfortable that they are interested with the solutions you have proposed, make sure you **close** i.e. ask if they would like to go ahead. Many sales are lost simply because the sales person does not close the sale, leaving the client totally confused! Also make sure you have your simple Accommodation Agreement with you which they can sign on the spot. In other cases they may say they want to consult with others (e.g. the owner) so arrange a time to call back or visit again to close the sale.

Not all of the hoteliers can decide on the day of your appointment, some of them still have a board of directors, or an owner who will be the one deciding. We should be determined to make a follow-up on these accommodations because they are usually the bigger ones. Some of them really require a lot of following up.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND INTERNAL ANALYSIS:

PEST Analysis:

A number of outside factors can affect a company's performance and In order to determine how big role those external factors play, I have conducted a PEST analysis. PEST is an acronym for political, economic, social and technological.

A PEST analysis looks at how those external factors can affect a business's activities and performance. Later on I have discussed Porter's five forces model and a SWOT analysis, to determine an organization's overall outlook for success.

Political:

- Political issues are very unstable in Bangladesh. Travelers are less likely to travel if the political situation is unstable.
- Tax imposed by the People Republics of Bangladesh is very unjustified. As we are a global joint venture so the revenue has to be divided between two parties. So the double taxation dilemma arises.

Economic:

- The problems with payment getaway because of some strict rules by Bangladesh Bank. Because Hotel Link Solutions uses the credit card to ensure payment.
- The tourism industry is not strong enough to sustain a stable growth so our business will be in threat if this situation does not change.

Social:

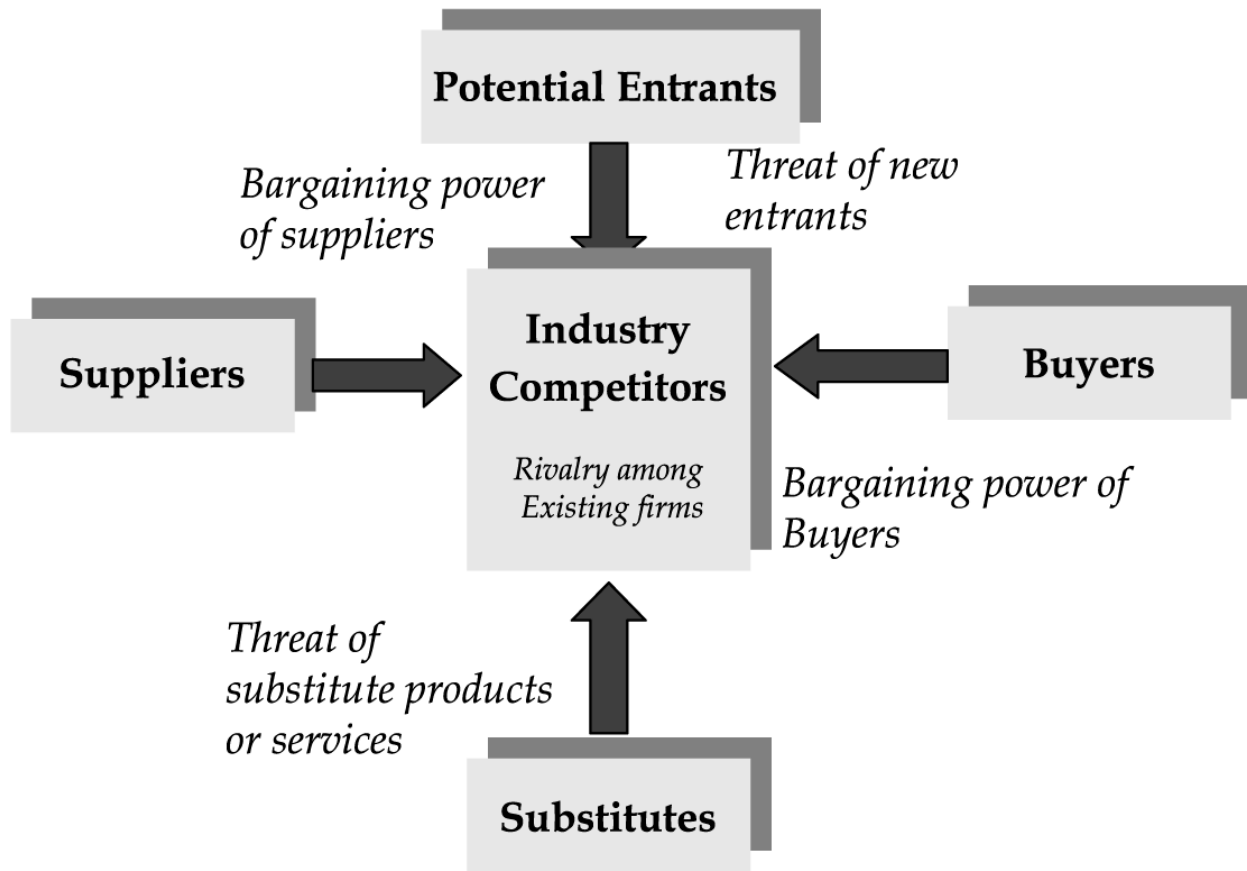
- The attitudes and perception of Bangladeshi people are very out dated. They are not keen to accept changes in technology.
- As hotel Link Solution is a new brand people are not aware of the brand and brand acceptance is very low.

Technological

- Internet access is must for internet business but our internet facility is very poor.
- Due to the lack of knowledge and awareness most of the people of our country are totally unaware about this service. However these patterns will change soon because our new motto of our country is Digitalization of Bangladesh.
- Skilled work force is needed to implement the digitalized services and implement the goals.

Porters Five Forces Model:

In this model there are five forces are here and all of those forces are affecting any kind Business. If we introduce any kind of business then we have to consider this model. They five forces are:



1. **Threats of Potential Entrants:** In hotel link solution presently we are doing monopoly business because no other digital hotel marketer has entered the market. But there are possibility that other bigger better marketer with enter sooner or later.
2. **Bargaining power of Suppliers:** We do not have any direct suppliers for our services. But we are contacted with different OTS (online travel agents) for channel managements; they give our clients the channel management solutions they need. here
3. **Bargaining power of Buyers:** In Hotel link solution buyers are the hotelier are the potential buyers. They play an influential role for this business. Bargaining power of buyer is high however there are no suppliers but the market in not ready for these services.
4. **Threats of industry competitors:** There are no threats of industry competitors.
5. **Threats of Substitute product or services:** They services we are providing can be substituted by developing own digital marketing tools.

SWAT Analysis:

Strengths:

- Dedicated and best service in the market – Creation of a website for the hotel.
- No fixed prices – Competitive variable rates for the accommodation provider.
- Offer of a wide range of additional value-added services, to increase online presence and sales.
- Honesty is the best policy to grow the market.
- Commitment must be fulfilled by sales team by any cost.

Weaknesses:

- HLS has no presence and brand recognition in the Bangladesh market
- Perceptions of people are negative towards services.
- Lack of skilled work force.

Opportunities:

- Many small units do not know the concept of a channel manager and its advantages - opportunity to make educational and awareness building activities.
- Small, focused target market.
- I believe that as a new concept of online marketing in Bangladesh through HLS all the hotel will cordially expect this system.

Threats:

- Resistance to change
- Threat of a bigger better service provider.
- If political Strike run continuously.

THE RESEARCH & DATA ANALYSIS:

Hotel link solutions follow a structured marketing effort. Before any marketing activity every employee has to do health check which is a survey to know about the prospective organization. It is done with the help of resonline which is the partner of hotel link solutions. First of all every

employee needs to select a list of prospective clients to conduct the research. Some of the key areas have to look at and questions that need to be answered. The questions are very specific and give us a clear understand of the client. Depending on the answers an employee can justify the need for solutions to offer. So by this simple and organized research we can identify the necessity and effectiveness of our solutions.

The questions cover some basic areas. They are given below:

1. Do they have a website?
2. is it well designed and have clean navigation?
3. Does it rank well?
4. Does it have a booking engine and instant bookings?
5. Does it have online payment?
6. Do they work with other OTAs?
7. Do they have a mobile app?
8. If so, do they have consistent availability and pricing across all OTAs they work with, including their own site?
9. Do they use channel management?
10. Do they use other Social Media?

Once we have completed this initial research and have answers to these questions, now we are in a more informed position to better understand the prospects needs and offer them some real solutions when you meet with them. This research will provide a full understanding of the prospects position and after meeting asking additional questions to clarify the information we already have. So in my report I will analyze the scenario of Bangladesh Hotels based on this research outcome. Some of the important questions are given below:

1. Do you have any website? If you have then is it functional?

In our health check 20 respondents, which is 100% respondents said yes? Where 17 respondents had a functional website and 3 respondents had lack proper information.

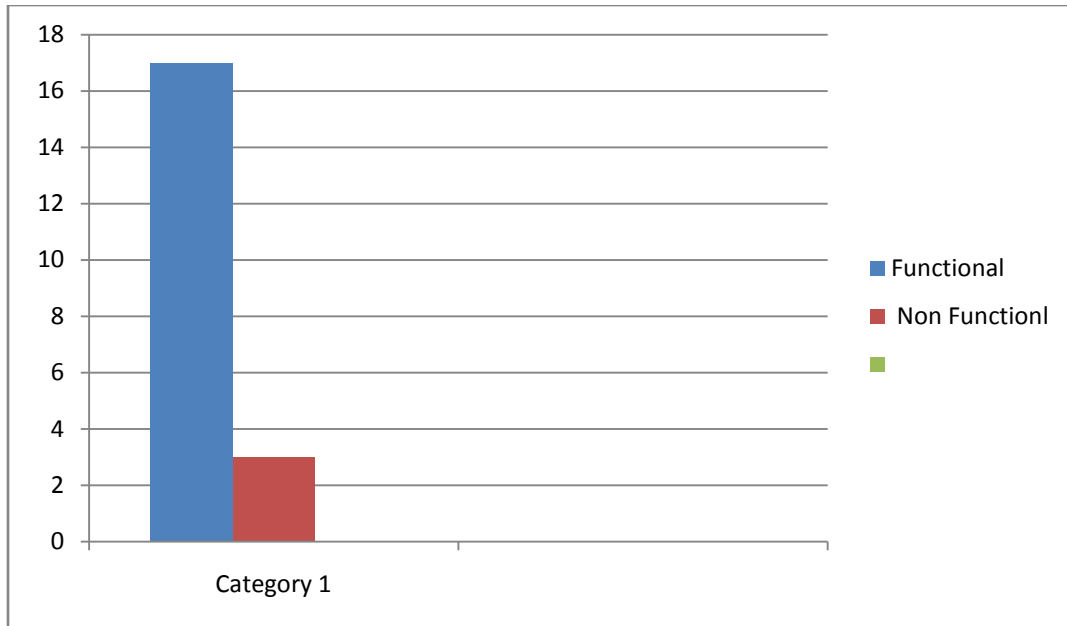
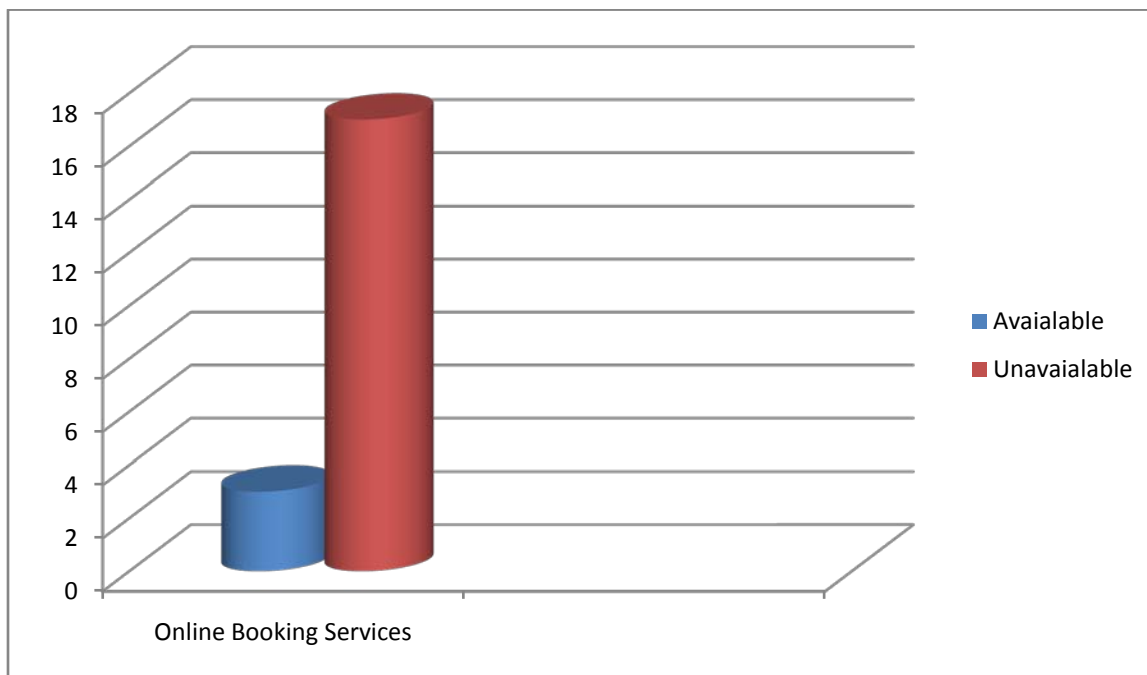


Figure: Bar diagram of Functionality

2. Do you have online booning service? If you have then is it updated and secured?

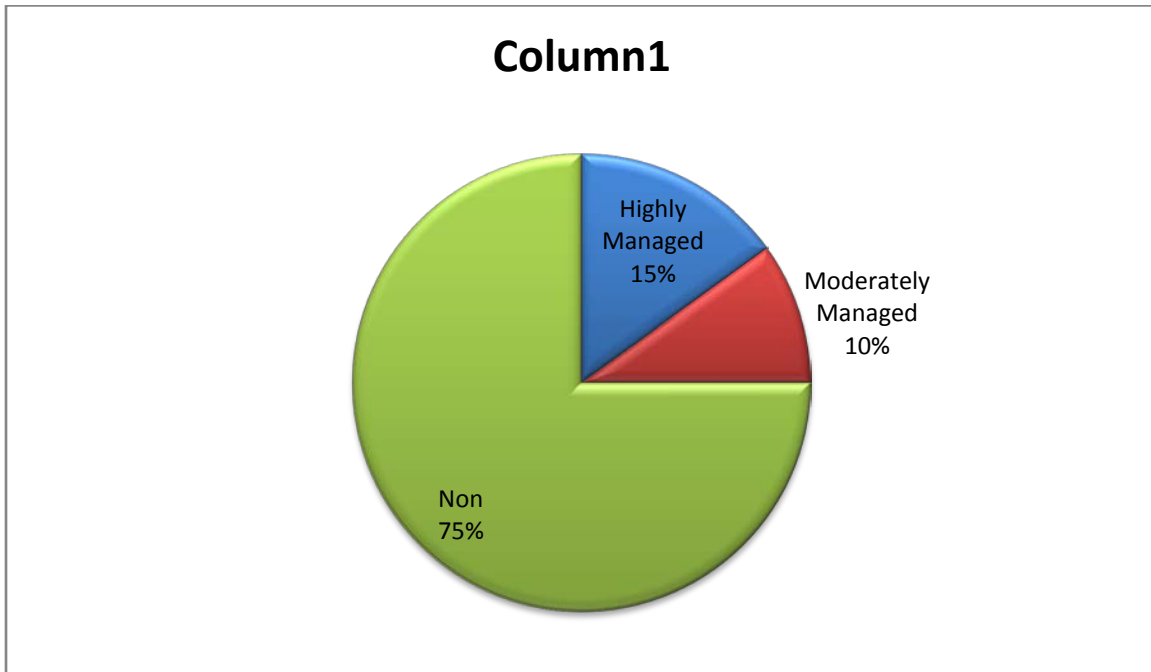
In our survey 3 respondents has online booking services, which is updated and secured.

On the other hand 17 respondents do not have this service. Among the 3 who have it neither it's neither updated nor secured.



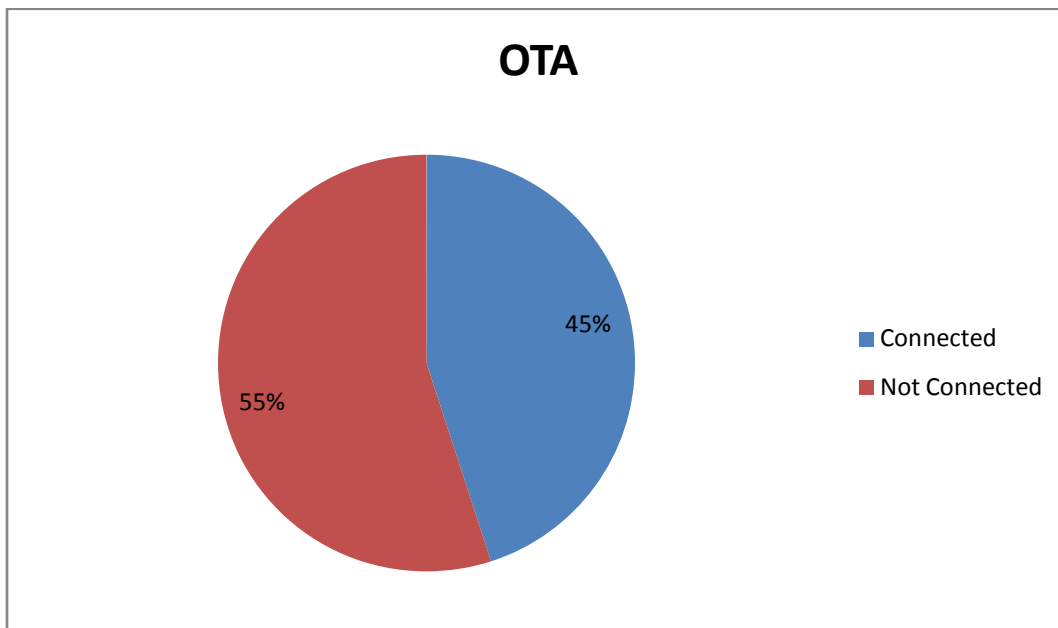
3. Do you social media page? If you have then, do you give proper feedbacks?

In our survey on 5 respondents has social media page, 3 of give proper feedback and 2 of them lack it. 15 respondents do not have any page or profile in social media.



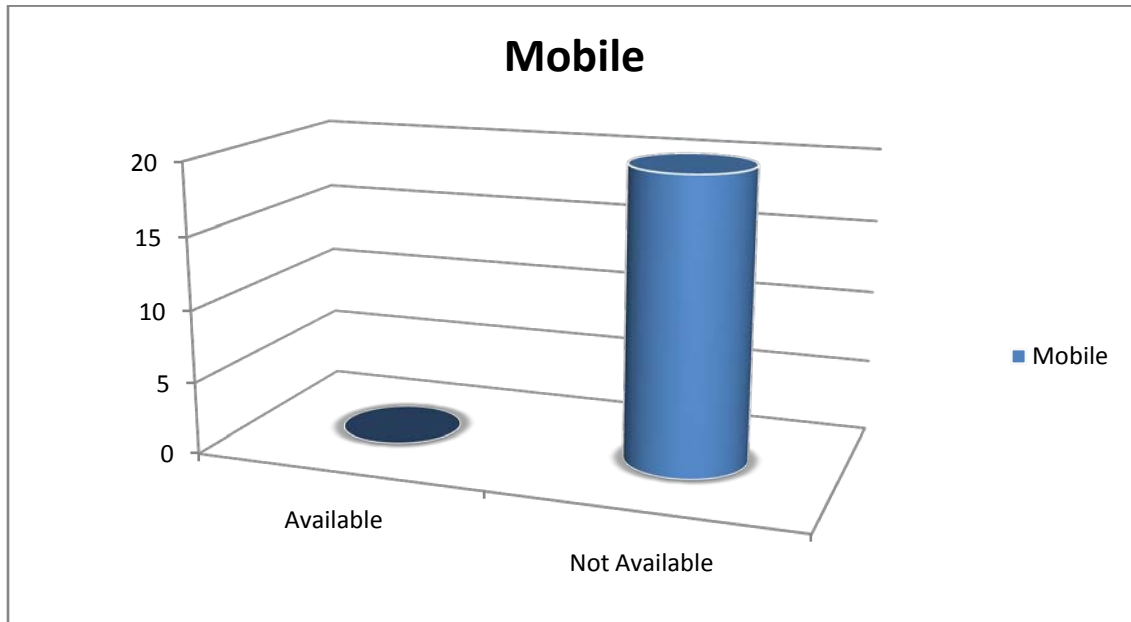
4. Are you connected with OTAs? If so, do you have consistent availability and pricing across all OTAs they work with, including their own site?

Among the respondents 10 were connected with OTAs and other 10 was not connected. Among the 10 the rest were inconsistent and poorly managed.



5. Do they have a mobile app? If so, do you have Contact info and map visible on it?

The respondents we have no one had any mobile app or mobile enable webpage.



Recommendation

There are some recommendation for Hotel link solution and they are-

- As this service is totally new for our industry so we have to make aware people about the possibilities and focus on the brand establishing activity. Example: attending digital fair, advertisement, word of mouth etc
- The lack of payment gateway services in Bangladesh causes a lot of problem, as well as the Bangladesh Banks rules and regulations regarding using a credit\debit card make it more difficult.
- The government has to step up and come forward for the betterment of tourism sector. Because without the help of government we cannot advance alone.
- The price should be kept low by Hotel Link Solutions.
- The HLS follows conceptual thinking for long term with high risk but they can also do analytical thinking.
- Local OTAs should be promoted and encouraged new start up of OTAs.
- As a global company our profit has to be shared in the both parties but the Bangladesh's tax issues are making things harder.

CONCLUSION

Hotel Link Solution has a unique business model for digital marketing. But Bangladeshi market is still not ready for these services. Hotels owners prefer the traditional marketing methods rather than the new ideas. I had a wonderful experience in the office, where I was able to compare my theoretical knowledge with the practical experience.

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APPENDIX

Accommodation Details:

Country:

Destination:

Accommodation Name:

Number of Rooms: 1-10, 11-20, 20+

Website

Website



No



Yes

URL:

Functionality:

Room Information



No room info



Partial information is available



Complete information is available

Facilities Information



No facilities info



Information is incomplete or not nicely displayed



Complete information is available

Map



No map



Static image map



Dynamic map

Gallery



No photos and videos



10 or more good quality images



10 or good quality images and videos

Social Media Links



No links/sharing tools



Visible Facebook and Twitter links to accommodation accounts only or sharing tools only



Visible Facebook and Twitter links to accommodation accounts and sharing tools

SEO/SEM

Organic Ranking
 Ranking
Google Places

- No Google Maps listing
- Google Maps listing without an official Google Places listing
- Google Places listing, with hotel featured on Google Maps

Loading Speed**PageSpeed Insights**
 Speed
Booking Engine**Live Rates & Availability**

- No live rates and availability information
- Good and secure web form (with key booking request information captured like dates, room types, no pax)
- Live rates and availability and instant booking capability

Secure Booking Page

- No secure page
- Secure page but with confusing information or broken layout or not trustworthy
- Secure page

Online Payment

- No Payment facility
- Payment facility available, either a payment gateway or with credit card, but with a complicated process
- Payment facility available, either a payment gateway or with credit card

Mobile

- No mobile website or app
- App available
- Mobile website available

Mobile**Location/Contact**

- No contact info or map
- Contact info visible
- Contact info visible and possible to find the accommodation on a map

Availability and Rates

- No rates and availability
- Rates available
- Availability and Rates available

Bookable

- No booking engine or form
- Booking form
- Booking engine

Social Media**TripAdvisor**

- Not listed
- Listed

Feedback Reply

- No responses to reviews
- Responses to only a few reviews
- Quality responses to every relevant traveller review

Ranking

Ranks on a total of accommodations

Quality of Listing

- Listed
- Incomplete listing
- Complete listing with photos, property information.

Facebook

- No account
- Profile Page
- Facebook Page

Activity

- Monthly post and interaction with users
- Weekly post and interaction with users

- Daily posting and interaction with users

Bookable

- No booking engine app
- Booking engine app available, but with a complicated process
- Booking engine app available

Distribution**Online Travel Agencies****OTAs**

OTAs

Other Channels**Other Channels**

channels

Rate Parity**Rate Parity OTAs**

- Inconsistent rates with variations higher than 2%
- Not the same rate but under 2% variations
- Consistent rate across the board

Rate Parity Official Website

- Rates higher than 2% on the official website compared to other channels
- Accommodation rates higher on the website by 1-2%
- Rates on the website are the same (+/- 1-2%) or lower than all the other channels

Report Generation

Agent Name:

Health Check Language:

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