



# Management strategy in improving the performance of Legian Beach Hotel, Kuta in the new normal era

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## ABSTRACT

After collapsing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, hotel management is trying to improve and develop strategies to improve the company's performance. This article aims to discuss the management strategy of the Legian Beach Hotel, Kuta in increasing performance after the Covid-19 pandemic. This paper is the result of qualitative research. Data collection was carried out through document studies, observations, and in-depth interviews with the hotel manager at Legian Beach Hotel, Kuta. The collected data were analyzed descriptively-qualitatively. The results of the study show that in improving the performance of Legian Beach Hotel, the management has carried out several strategies, namely: intensifying promotion and marketing, collaborating with stakeholders, implementing dynamic pricing, implementing human resource efficiency, and providing special services to hotel guests. In line with the rise of the Bali tourism market, the occupancy of Legian Beach Hotel has shown an increase from 15% during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 to 40% by the end of 2022.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bali has become the destination of choice for tourists, both domestic and foreign tourists. The pulse of Balinese tourism life, among others, is reflected in the availability of tourist accommodation facilities in the form of hotels or villas in tourism centers which are filled with visiting tourists. The pulse of Bali's tourism life has suddenly become sluggish due to the Covid-19 pandemic that emerged from Wuhan, China since 2019.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on various aspects and structures of human life globally, including having a real impact on social, economic, educational life, as well as the sluggish tourism industry. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the tourism industry. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, a lock down was implemented so that tourism travel mobility from one place to another has decreased drastically. During the 2017-2019 period or before the Covid-19 pandemic, the average number of foreign tourists visiting Indonesia reached 15.3 million people per year, but during the Covid-19 pandemic (2020) the number of foreign tourists visiting was only around 4 million people foreign tourists or around 26% from conditions before the Covid-19 pandemic (Paludi, 2022). This is directly or indirectly for the sluggish tourism accommodation business. The occupancy rate of star hotels in Bali has dropped dramatically. If before the 2018 Covid pandemic, the occupancy rate of star-rated hotels in Bali reached 60-65% for 5-stars and 70-

75% for 3- and 4-stars, then after the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 period dropped again to 16%, and in 2021 it will be 10%(Legian Beach Hotel, 2022).

There are various forms of the tourist accommodation business, including villas, condos and hotels. The hotel business is basically a business related to human travel activities from their original place of residence to other places with various purposes, including business activities, travel, enjoying other exotic cultures, religious activities, meetings, and so on.(Anom, 2010).

According to Sulastiyono (2011) A hotel is a company that is managed by the owner by providing food, drink and room facilities for sleeping to people who travel and are able to pay a reasonable amount according to the services received without any special agreement. But over time, apart from being a place to stay, the hotel was also used as a ballroom which was used for weddings, meetings, or even for exhibitions.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the hotel accommodation service business in various places in the tourism center in Indonesia is experiencing a sluggishness. They have a crisis and are just trying to survive. As experienced by the Legian Beach hotel, in Kuta, at the peak of the Covid 19 pandemic in 2019, the average accumulator was only 10%. Therefore, after the Covid-19 pandemic has been handled, the Legian Beach management continues to try to rise from its downturn due to Covid-19. There are three strategies implemented in dealing with the pandemic, namely: (1) comprehensive cost leadership to increase profits. Hotels can reduce operational costs without reducing salaries and employee welfare benefits. (2) differentiation, namely the development of a unique product, second to none.(Puspita, et al., 2021).

In the Covid-19 pandemic situation, Legian Beach Hotel Management focuses on implementing strict health protocol standards for employees and guests staying overnight, so that guests who will stay at the hotel feel safer and according to their needs and expectations. Implementing high hygiene standards, lowering room prices, implementing strict health protocols for employees, and implementing digital marketing are the strategies implemented to be able to survive in the new normal life period (Kristiutami& Raharjo, 2021). Legian Beach Hotel management seeks to increase the occupancy of the hotels it manages. Efforts to increase occupancy are one indicator of the success of hotel adaptation in providing clean and safe services so that hotel guests feel comfortable while staying at the hotel. What is the Legian Bach Hotel management strategy in an effort to increase occupancy in the new normal life era?

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

There are a number of publications that discuss the covid-19 pandemic and its impact on tourism life. Among them are publications that discuss hotel occupancy rates during the Covid-19 pandemic, strategic management practices for hotels in facing the new normal era, as well as business strategies during times of crisis. Salman Paludi(2022) analyzed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Indonesian tourism industry. It was stated that Corona Virus Disease-2019 (Covid-19) is a new epidemic that has successfully terrorized humanity throughout the world. The government responded by taking social distancing and physical distancing policies and Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) for the people of Indonesia. As a result, the number of foreign tourists visiting Indonesia has decreased sharply. The temporary suspension of tourism activities directly caused the Indonesian tourism industry to experience a significant decline. By analyzing statistical tourism data sourced from the Central Statistics Agency, it is known that the number of foreign tourist arrivals and the occupancy rate of star hotels in Bali has fallen sharply, and tens of millions of tourism workers are at risk of losing their jobs.

The room occupancy rate, which has decreased during this pandemic, needs to be addressed by implementing an innovative marketing strategy. in this regard, Astini and Suyuthie(2021), shows the innovative marketing strategy of Hotel Four Points by Sheraton Jakarta which applies innovative concierge robots. This innovative marketing strategy is easy to apply, in accordance with the signature of the Four Points Hotel and has a database related to information on something to do, see and buy facilities and implements digital marketing through the TikTok application so that this creative promotion step becomes interesting.

Dimitrios,et al. (2020), recommends four strategic management practices for hotels in facing this new normal era, namely: (1) efforts to promote safety umbrellas; (2) technology

application and innovation; (3) see the satisfaction of audience needs, and (4) financial pillow. The business strategy in the hotel industry needs to realize a strategy that is able to create a reputation that can be accepted by consumers, maintain a position against hotel competitors, and be able to build consumer confidence in the quality of service they have.

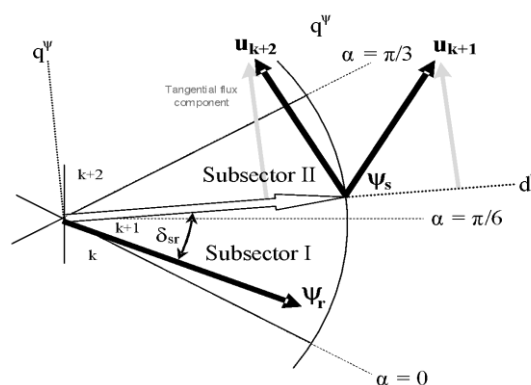
During the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019 and 2020, the accommodation services business experienced a crisis situation that required a specific strategy to deal with it. In this regard, Sarah and Elisabeth (2020) offers strategies that can be implemented so that a company can survive in certain situations. There are a number of strategies that can be implemented within a company to survive during the Covid-19 pandemic: (1) providing an opportunity for the public to review the products produced by hotels; (2) as a preventive measure, paying attention to cash flow management during the Covid-19 pandemic; (3) for cost efficiency, limiting daily operational activities; (4) implementing a business diversification strategy; and (5) implementing inventory management to save on production costs, as well as ensure the smooth process of entering and leaving a product.

The several publications related to tourism and the Covid-19 pandemic above have become valuable references in the preparation of this article. Specifically, this article discusses the Legian Beach Hotel's management strategy in increasing its hotel occupancy after it slumped due to the co-19 pandemic.

This article is the result of descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research is defined by Taylor and Bogdan as a study of spoken or written words and behavior that produces descriptive data and can be observed by the person being studied. (Sutinah, 2011). This research was carried out by collecting primary data through field observations, studying documents related to the research topic, and interviewing the managers of Legian Beach Hotel Kuta, Badung Regency, Bali. Data obtained from the field, analyzed descriptively. In discussing the results of this study, a constructivism paradigm is applied which tries to make sense of the efforts made by the management of Legian Beach Hotel, Kuta in improving the performance of its companies in the new normal life era.

**Table 1.** The performance of ...

| Variable | Speed (rpm) | Power (kW) |
|----------|-------------|------------|
| x        | 10          | 8.6        |
| y        | 15          | 12.4       |
| z        | 20          | 15.3       |



**Figure 1.** Effects of selecting different switching under dynamic condition

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Legian Beach Hotel which was founded in 1974 is located in front of Legian beach, the center of tourism, Kuta-Badung Regency, Bali. This IV star hotel has 236 rooms consisting of Room, Bungalow and Pool Villa and provides 5 choices of restaurants and 4 bars, 2 swimming pools, fitness, Spa, VIP Lounge, Kids Club, 7 fish ponds and a Squirrel Garden prepared for guests. the

family feeds the fish and squirrels directly so that they unite with nature, a tennis court and a large parking area. To manage all that, Legian Beach Hotel has 276 staff/employees.

After carrying out strict PPKM, and a mass vaccination program, the Covid-19 outbreak since 2020 has been under control. Tourists, both domestic and foreign tourists, have begun to flock to Bali. In an effort to revive the tourism accommodation services business which had slumped due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the management of Legian Beach Hotel made innovations or strategic steps to improve the company's performance. Innovation is a way to prevent obstacles from occurring when trying to win the competition. Without innovation, a company or organization will not be able to compete properly, and will not have added value to achieve greater profits. Consumer demand can certainly change at any time according to trends, therefore a company or organization must be able to innovate to make new things or innovate things that already exist. The management of Legian beach Hotel, Kuta is trying to take several strategic steps, in order to increase the hotel's accuracy. Among them is by intensifying promotion and marketing, collaborating with stakeholders, implementing dynamic pricing, and making human resource efficiency, and providing special services to hotel guests.

### **Intensifying promotion and marketing**

Promotion and marketing is an important step in improving the performance of a company. Legian Beach Hotel promotion and marketing efforts are carried out online and offline. The use of online media is a business strategy in today's digital era to get a wider market, implemented by all businesses, both for marketing Food and Beverage products to marketing hotel accommodation services by applying Instagram and celebrity endorsements. (Ayu *et al.*, 2022).

Promotions are carried out online and offline to the main market for hotels and new targeted markets in the form of brochures, social media and direct visits to major travel agents, both travel agents who handle domestic tourists, as well as foreign tourist travel agents. According to Arif Bilah, general manager of Legian Beach Hotel, Kuta, during the new normal life period, since 2020 his party has developed a superior service package offered to consumers. These superior packages include giving special prices to consumers who hold VIP cards. They get special prices, including VIP Lounge services, services that are more private, as well as special amenities and special discounts at F&B and Spa. In addition, a special service package has also been developed for disabled tourists. They are entitled to occupy a special room with international standards. Legian Beach hotel consumers are also provided with villas with private pools.

Efforts to develop special packages in the new normal life era, since 2020 have received positive responses from consumers. Overall, Legian Beach Hotel guests made online bookings as much as 51%, and as many as 49% off line. In the period 2019 – 2022 the majority of guests staying at Legian Beach Hotel are 98% foreign tourists, and only 2% domestic tourists (Legian Beach Hotel, 2022).

### **Collaborating with Stakeholders**

To maintain the hotel business in the new normal era, Legian Beach Hotel management also collaborates with stakeholders to increase hotel occupancy. Management of Legian Beach Hotel collaborating with all the leading Wholesalers in Australia and Europe (especially Germany and the Netherlands), and collaborating with some of the leading Wholesalers in Indonesia. In addition, it also collaborates with the world's potential Online Travel Agents (OTA) and all major Online Travel Agents (OTA) in Indonesia. This is done to attract consumers to stay at Legian Beach Hotel, Kuta.

### **Implementing Dynamic Pricing**

In line with today's advances in internet technology, more than half of consumers (51%) book Legian Beach Hotel rooms via online booking. In this regard, the Legian Beach hotel's marketing department applies a dynamic pricing strategy in determining the price of hotel rooms. The direct booking price for hotel rooms in Legian Beach ranges from USD 120 to USD 410. The application of this rate still requires an additional USD 20 during high seasons from 15 June to 15 October and USD 30 during peak seasons from 24 December 2022 – January 05, 2023.

The implementation of the dynamic pricing strategy is carried out as part of efforts to maintain and improve hotel performance amidst increasingly fierce competition among star accommodation service providers in Bali. As part of a star-rated hotel accommodation service provider, Legian Beach Hotel management is faced with challenges in an effort to provide quality service to its customers. Here every staff or employee of a 4-star hotel located on Kuta beach is required to have adequate communication skills, so that the services provided to hotel guests are not optimal. Therefore, the management of Legian Beach Hotel continues to strive to increase the capacity of its workers so that they are able to hone their communication skills and are willing to listen to expectations and pay attention to hotel guest input to improve service. In addition, it is hoped that every hotel worker must act as a salesperson. "Every body is sales", said the marketing staff of Legian Beach Hotel, Kuta, Badung.

### **Efficiency of Human Resources (HR)**

The human resource (HR) factor is an important factor in a business, especially the hospitality business. Hospitality is a business that sells services, both tangible and intangible. Tangible products in the hospitality business are in the form of rooms, restaurants, lobby areas, food and beverages, meeting rooms and other facilities that are visible to the eye, then intangible products in the hospitality business are services provided by hotel staff or employees. (Ayu *et al.*, 2022).

During the new normal life era, after the Covid 19 pandemic, every hotel management updated their human resource management, so that the accommodation services business could continue to exist, even though it was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. Each hotel management has taken steps to anticipate in order to remain competitive in these very tight conditions. In this regard, the management of five-star hotels in Bali continues to maintain the existing divisions, namely the Room Division which consists of the front office (FO) and housekeeping (HK), food & beverage (FB), sales-marketing (SM) division, accounting & financial division, and human resource division (HRD). In accordance with the current hospitality management, In order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the company, most star hotels still maintain 1 division, namely room division, while the others are in the form of departments. In addition, adjustments were also made to the organizational structure of the hotel in accordance with the challenges of the globalization era marked by advances in information technology (internet/web-sites). In accordance with advances in information technology in the current global era, in general, five-star hotels in Bali add sections to their organizational structure, namely adding e-commerce staff and revenue managers. The addition of revenue manager staff and special staff who operate room booking services by on-line booking is part of an effort to improve the quality of service to hotel guests. adjustments were also made to the organizational structure of the hotel in accordance with the challenges of the globalization era marked by advances in information technology (internet/web-sites). In accordance with advances in information technology in the current global era, in general, five-star hotels in Bali add sections to their organizational structure, namely adding e-commerce staff and revenue managers. The addition of revenue manager staff and special staff who operate room booking services by on-line booking is part of an effort to improve the quality of service to hotel guests. adjustments were also made to the organizational structure of the hotel in accordance with the challenges of the globalization era marked by advances in information technology (internet/web-sites). In accordance with advances in information technology in the current global era, in general, five-star hotels in Bali add sections to their organizational structure, namely adding e-commerce staff and revenue managers. The addition of revenue manager staff and special staff who operate room booking services by on-line booking is part of an effort to improve the quality of service to hotel guests. In general, five-star hotels in Bali add sections to their organizational structure, namely adding e-commerce staff and revenue managers. The addition of revenue manager staff and special staff who operate room booking services by on-line booking is part of an effort to improve the quality of service to hotel guests. In general, five-star hotels in Bali add sections to their organizational structure, namely adding e-commerce staff and revenue managers. The addition of revenue manager staff and special staff who operate room booking services by on-line booking is part of an effort to improve the quality of service to hotel guests. (Sutawa, 2015).

Simultaneously with the restructuring of the hotel's organization, the management of Legian Beach Hotel also carried out HR efficiency. The proportion of staff or employees of Legian Beach Hotel is adjusted according to the occupancy achieved. The HR ratio level follows occupancy where the number of Daily Workers and Trainees is also adjusted. Legian Beach Hotel staff or employees are required to have multi-skills, for example the front office staff are expected to also act as cashiers. The development of the capacity of the multi-skilled hotel workforce also aims to optimize efforts to provide special star hotel accommodation services in the tourism center of Kuta-Bali. With quality service it is hoped that tourist satisfaction and loyalty can be increased.(Solichin, 2012).

### Providing Special Services (Best Services) to Tourists.

Like other five-star hotels, Legian Beach Hotel strives to improve its services according to the character of its guests. In general, this special service is expected to be able to realize the principles of sapta charm, namely conditions that are safe, orderly, clean, cool, beautiful, hospitality, and beautiful memories.(Sunarti & Hakim, 2017).Special services for guests of star hotels and villas in Kuta, including: pre-arrival services, services while at the inn (from check-in to check-out, tour package services, as well as services when the guest returns (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Special guest services at Legian Beach Hotel, Kuta

**First**, pre-arrival service, before tourists enter the hotel or villa. In this case, the accommodation service provider provides online booking services to prospective guests. With online booking, potential hotel and villa consumers can make room reservations anytime and anywhere according to advances in today's digital technology era (Sutawa, 2015). In this online booking process, the hotel or villa marketing staff (via phone or email) also provides the necessary information for the guests before they arrive in Bali. In addition, special pre-arrival services are also carried out when picking up guests at the airport with great hospitality, complete with giving flower garlands. Picking up guests at the airport is usually treated for guests who stay at least three nights.

**Second**, special service at the reception. Special service in receiving guests at the reception with welcome drinks for guests who have just arrived. They are welcomed in a special way. The service process at the reception is carried out quickly (about 10 minutes), so that tourists who have traveled long distances do not have to wait too long in the reservation section. The service quality of hotel front office staff in Bali received a "good" rating(Kusumarini, 2021).

**Third**, excellent housekeeping service. Hotel or villa staff strive to serve their guests in a professional manner, act quickly, develop the best communication system with hotel relations and guests, and carry out activities according to a clear service time frame so that hotel guests feel comfortable as if they were staying at home (guest feel home). As long as tourists stay in hotels or villas (housekeeping services), Legian Beach Hotel managers try to provide the best service. Legian Beach hotel management provides special service packages for guest couples who are on their honeymoon or honeymooners. Special services for honeymooners include: a) rooms decorated with ornaments for honeymooners; b) where to eat according to those who are not honey; c) swimming pool, the Spa room is all decorated to match the honeymoon feel; d) a romantic tour package was deliberately set up, including a tour to Nusa Lembongan which was prepared for couples on their honeymoon.

The staff/employees of Legian Beach Hotel strive to provide special services to their guests. Special services for tourists are a necessity for star hotels and villas in the Kuta area. This special service is manifested in the form of services that provide a personal touch (personal service approach) that aims to satisfy consumers

**Fourth,** food & beverage services. In addition to special services at reception and housekeeping, guests of five-star hotels and villas in Kuta also provide food & beverage services that tourists want. Hotel guests or Legian Beach villas are welcome to order food according to their taste.

In theory, food and beverage facilities are not included in villa services because food and beverages are part of a hotel service that has a restaurant (Marpaung, 2002). Apart from hotel rooms, Legian Beach Hotel also has 26 villa units consisting of 23 one bed room villas and 3 two bed room villas. Tourists who live in this villa are available in the "Culinary experience" package. Culinary activities have become part of the attractiveness of tourist accommodation services that can attract customers. Tourists who are served are given the freedom to choose the type of food they like. They can choose the raw materials provided by the villa management, then they can cook the food ingredients in the kitchen of each villa with the local villa cook. With this culinary choice activity, it turns out that many users of Legian Beach villa accommodation services are starting to be interested in participating in this activity that is packaged in a kind of culinary cross culture.

**Fifth,** service on return. The travel agency again provides services to escort hotel or villa guests to the airport. The principles of politeness, safety and comfort continue to be upheld, so that the guest gets a positive impression for Bali tourism. Drivers and guides as external stakeholder partners of the Legian Beach Hotel are part of Bali tourism actors who carry out sapta charm. They are expected to be able to provide quality services to tourists, so that the positive image of Bali tourism is maintained.

Each Legian Beach Hotel staff is expected to become an agent or salesperson who establishes direct contact with consumers. Hotel staff/employees are required to understand the cultural character of their guests and be able to provide quality service. Furthermore, this quality service is expected to be able to satisfy customers (hotel guests), resulting in repeat visits and increased occupancy of local hotel rooms. Empowerment of employees (HR) must be oriented towards improving service, improving service so that guests feel satisfied resulting in visits, as well as increasing hotel occupancy (Sutawa, 2015). In an effort to build customer commitment and loyalty, Legian Beach Hotel management has developed a VIP Card program / Loyalty Programs, in which the card level is determined from the number of stays. The higher the card level, the more benefits, including discounted hotel rooms. In addition, the management of Legian Beach Hotel has also issued a "Referral Programs" package, whereby VIP Card holders are encouraged to bring their families and friends to stay at our hotel and enjoy the same prices, facilities and amenities as VIP card holders.

Some of the strategies implemented by Legian Beach management in an effort to increase the occupancy of this five-star hotel in the Kuta Bali area seem to have paid off. Legian beach hotel guests give a positive impression of the service they receive (see figure 2). Figure 2 shows the guest's assessment of their experience staying at Legian Beach Hotel. They stated that the Legian Beach hotel is strategically located, close to the beach (Kuta) and as a comfortable place, has friendly employees, and has comfortable hotel rooms.



**Figure 2.** Guest response to Legian Beach Hotel



The occupancy rate (occupancy) of Legian Becah Hotel can be increased, in line with the increasing number of tourist visits to Bali after the Covid-19 pandemic. If in 2020, the occupancy rate (occupancy) of Legian Beach Hotel is only 15%, then in 2021 it will decrease again to 10%, then at the end of 2022 it will start to increase to 40%. The occupancy rate of this Legian Beach hotel can continue to be increased going forward to 60% - 80% in line with the increase in tourist visits to Bali.

Efforts to rise from the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic require a separate strategy. Besides streamlining promotions and online services with dynamic pricing, Legian Beach hotel management also performs human resource efficiency in providing special (quality) service to its guests. In accordance with the theory of stakeholders (Ghozali and Chariri, 2007), the success of Legian Beach Hotel management in realizing this quality service is the fruit of the services carried out by internal stakeholders (namely staff, employees of the accommodation service provider) and external stakeholders, namely parties outside the organization, including the mass media, travel agents), etc.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the previous discussion, it can be concluded that the Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on decreasing the occupancy of Legian Beach Hotel, Kuta. In an effort to increase the occupancy rate of Legian Beach Hotel, the management has carried out several strategies, namely: intensifying promotion and marketing, collaborating with stakeholders, implementing dynamic pricing, and streamlining human resources, and providing special services to hotel guests. In line with the rise of the Bali tourism market, the occupancy performance of Legian Beach Hotel has shown an increase from 15% during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 to 40% by the end of 2022.

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