

Public Relations Strategy in Improving Reputation of Crystal Hotel

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ABSTRACT

The hospitality industry, including Crystal Hotel, faced significant challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Public Relations (PR) strategies play a crucial role in maintaining and improving the reputation of businesses in such adverse conditions. This study explores the PR strategies applied by Crystal Hotel to enhance its reputation in the highly competitive South Jakarta market. The study utilized qualitative methods, including interviews and observations, focusing on key informants such as the hotel's Public Relations team, front office management, and loyal guests. The results highlight the significance of implementing a SWOT analysis and using the POAC framework (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling) to guide the hotel's public relations activities. This approach has contributed to the hotel's increased visibility and customer loyalty, ultimately improving its reputation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2019, the world economy, including Indonesia, experienced a downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many large, medium and small businesses, including those in the hospitality sector, were forced out of business [1], [2]. This has been a nightmare for businesses, who have had to figure out how to maintain and improve their businesses while coexisting with COVID-19 [3]. The issue of travel restrictions, health concerns, as well as security issues such as terrorism, crime, or political instability, have also discouraged tourists from visiting, reducing the number of visitors who want to enjoy the services of the hospitality industry. Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) shows a decline in

hotel room occupancy in Indonesia in 2021-2022. Based on this data, the role of Public Relations is very important in the success of the company. Public Relations can provide efficient communication strategies to build good interactions between stakeholders through systematic planning. By developing the right Public Relations strategy, they can create favourable public opinion and encourage the sustainability of the company. In this context, Public Relations must be able to implement persuasive communication through organised programs and evaluate the activities that have been carried out so that everything runs optimally [4], [5].

South Jakarta is often referred to as a strategic location in Jakarta because it is a major business centre, including the SCBD

(Sudirman Central Business District) and Mega Kuningan areas, making it a favourite area of interest for many. Good accessibility to various cities through major roads and transportation infrastructure, such as toll roads and major arterial roads Jalan Jenderal Sudirman, Jalan Gatot Subroto, as well as Jalan T.B. Simatupang, connect the region to the city centre and other areas. The rapid development of the hospitality industry in South Jakarta creates mushrooming business opportunities, but competition between hotels is also getting tougher from year to year, with many new and old accommodations continuing to innovate. Therefore, hotel companies must be able to compete by providing good facilities, satisfying services, competitive prices, and most importantly

building and improving a qualified reputation.

Based on data from Agoda.com, a comparison of Hotel Kristal room prices with other hotels shows that although not much different, Hotel Kristal, which is included in the 4.5-star hotel category, can outperform its competitors in terms of price. By offering competitive prices, it is hoped that Hotel Kristal can improve its reputation, not only as a hotel with affordable prices, but also as a hotel that is able to fulfil consumer desires, thus creating customer loyalty which ultimately has a positive impact on Hotel Kristal. Along with the recovery of the economy, the occupancy rate of Hotel Kristal is also slowly starting to increase, as seen from the available data.

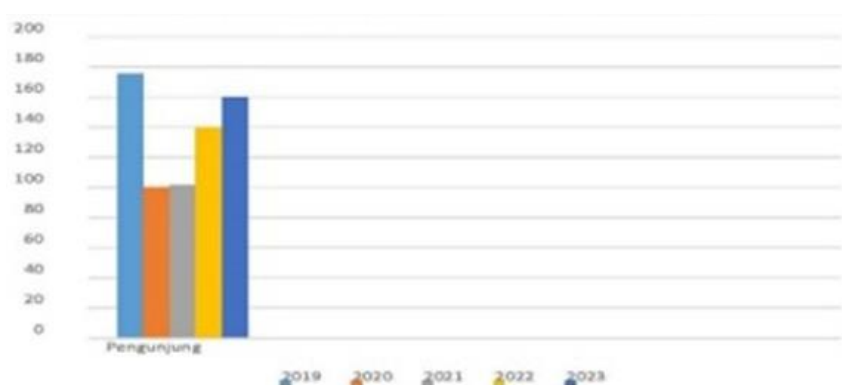


Figure 1. Kristal Hotel Visitor Data from 2019-2023

Hotel Kristal experienced a significant drop in visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2021 but saw an increase from 2022 to 2023. Visitor numbers dropped from 175,395 in 2019 to 100,085 in 2020 and 101,582 in 2021, then rose to 140,000 in 2022 and 160,000 in 2023. This growth reflects the competitive nature of the hospitality industry in South Jakarta. To thrive, hotels like Kristal need to offer excellent facilities, services, competitive prices, and maintain a strong reputation. Established in 1995, Hotel Kristal is known for its affordable prices and unique service blend of local wisdom and modern technology, including self-check-in processes.

Several reviews from visitors to Hotel Kristal expressed positive experiences, such

as frequent guests who appreciated the cleanliness and comfort of the rooms, as well as the good management. Others praised the friendly service from the mostly experienced staff, although regretted the removal of the stove facilities in the studio rooms. The hotel's well-equipped facilities, including smart TVs, refrigerators, and washing machines, are also a plus, although some guests feel that the interiors of the superior rooms look old and prefer the renovated deluxe rooms. Overall, the reviews on Google indicate that despite many positive aspects, Hotel Kristal still needs to raise the bar to meet customer expectations. Therefore, an effective Public Relations (PR) strategy is essential to improve the hotel's reputation. With an approach that builds brand awareness and public trust, and

focuses on long-term relationships with customers, hotels can attract more guests and create loyalty [6]. Companies need to design a strategy that includes planning, organising, actuating, and controlling, with the main goal of improving good relations with the public while increasing company profits. The right PR strategy will increase the company's effectiveness in achieving the desired success and reputation.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher wishes to examine how 'Public Relations Strategy in Improving the Reputation of Kristal Hotel.' This research is formulated in the question 'How is the Public Relations Strategy in Improving the Reputation of Kristal Hotel?' The purpose of this research is to find out the Public Relations strategy applied in an effort to improve the reputation of Kristal Hotel.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Definition of Public Relations and Reputation Strategy*

Public Relations (PR) is vital in maintaining and enhancing a company's reputation, especially in the hospitality industry. According to [7], PR aims to build and maintain beneficial relationships between an organization and its public to foster trust and a positive image. In hospitality, PR strategies shape public opinion and boost customer loyalty, as reputation heavily influences consumer choices. [8] highlights reputation as stakeholders' collective perception, involving trust, service quality, and image management. Thus, effective PR must align these aspects to build and sustain a positive company image.

2.2 *The Role of Public Relations in the Hospitality Industry*

The hospitality industry is significantly shaped by public perception and image, with Public Relations playing a crucial role in areas like crisis management, media relations, and direct guest interaction. As noted by [9], customer trust and loyalty are vital in this sector, built through positive

interactions between hotels and their guests. Research [10] highlights that effective PR in hospitality involves persuasive communication through organized programmes and ongoing evaluation of activities aimed at enhancing the hotel's image, promoting services, and fostering long-term customer relationships. For example, Kristal Hotel's PR strategy leverages modern technology, such as digital media platforms and innovations like self-check-in, to cater to evolving customer needs.

2.3 *SWOT Analysis in Public Relations Strategy*

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is a valuable tool for formulating PR strategies, as it helps companies identify internal and external factors influencing their reputation [11]. By analyzing strengths and weaknesses, along with opportunities and threats, companies can create more targeted strategies to enhance their image. In the hospitality industry, applying SWOT analysis to PR allows hotels to capitalize on strengths like strategic location, comprehensive facilities, and excellent customer service, while addressing weaknesses such as ineffective promotions and outdated amenities. This approach enables PR to plan programmes that boost customer satisfaction and positively impact the hotel's reputation.

2.4 *Use of POAC in Public Relations Strategy*

POAC (Planning, Organising, Actuating, Controlling) is a management approach used to design and implement public relations strategies effectively. According to Stoner and Freeman (1992), POAC is a framework that includes planning, organising, implementing, and controlling as stages in managing PR activities.

- a. Planning: In the context of hospitality, PR planning involves identifying long-term goals, such as improving the hotel's image

and attracting more guests. Strategic planning at Hotel Kristal includes the implementation of programmes such as seasonal events, improved digital services, as well as the development of a children's programme called 'Splashcation'.

- b. **Organising:** Organising involves setting up resources and a PR team to execute the planned programme. At Kristal Hotel, this includes working with the media and external partners to promote the hotel's events and campaigns.
- c. **Actuating:** This stage involves implementing the designed PR programmes, such as social media campaigns, event activities, and innovative services such as self-check-in.
- d. **Controlling:** The final stage is controlling, where the PR evaluates the success of the programmes that have been implemented. This evaluation involves measuring the impact on improving the hotel's reputation, for example through guest feedback and increased customer loyalty.

2.5 *Technology Development in Hospitality PR Strategy*

Technological advancements, especially in digital media, have transformed PR operations in the hospitality industry. As noted by [12], social media and digital platforms enable hotels to engage with guests in real-time, strengthen their online presence, and extend their marketing reach. At Kristal Hotel, digital media is utilized to manage guest interactions, promote services, and gather reviews that are accessible to potential customers. Additionally, innovations like self-check-in technology and the digitization of services support PR strategies by enhancing guest convenience, ultimately improving the hotel's reputation. These innovations not only simplify guest experiences but also

serve as a key factor in maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty amid intense industry competition.

3. METHODS

3.1 *Design*

This research uses qualitative methods to explore social phenomena in depth. According to Bogdan and Taylor, quoted by Lexy J. Moleong, descriptive methods produce data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals and observed behaviour. This method focuses on ongoing events, such as public relations strategies in improving the reputation of Kristal Hotel. In qualitative methods, data is organised through observation, interviews, or document analysis, and analysed narratively. Researchers see individuals and organisations as part of a whole, following the flow of events chronologically and understanding cause-and-effect in a local context. This method aims to provide a deep understanding and meaningful contribution to the phenomenon under study.

The object of this research is Kristal Hotel located in South Jakarta which is located at Jl. Terogong Raya No.17 Rt.2 Rw.10 Cilandak Barat, Kec: Cilandak, South Jakarta City, Special Capital Region of Jakarta 12430.

3.2 *Informant*

This research involved 3 subjects, consisting of 1 key informant and 2 informants. Key informants were chosen because they have a deep understanding and can provide the data needed to answer the main problems related to Public Relations strategies in improving the reputation of Kristal Hotel. Interviews and direct observations were conducted to collect data related to the Public Relations strategy implemented. The first key informant, Naya, is a Public Relations practitioner at Hotel Kristal who is responsible for programme planning. The second informant, Okky Djuandi Sentana, is the Front Office Manager in charge of

overseeing the daily operations of the hotel, including staff management and the implementation of marketing strategies. The third informant, Mr Christopher, is a visitor who has stayed at Hotel Kristal for almost 4 years. Thus, this study obtained data from 3 main sources that helped answer the problems discussed.

3.3 Data Collection

Data collection techniques are an important step in research to obtain standardised data. In this study, data was collected through passive observation, in-depth interviews, interview observation, documentation, and triangulation. According to Andi Mirza Ronda, qualitative data in the form of words is often used in social sciences. The three methods used were interviews, documentation, and passive observation. Interviews combine participatory observation to understand the Public Relations strategy at Hotel Kristal, documentation digs data from company

archives, and passive observation allows researchers to observe without direct interaction.

3.4 Data Analysis

In qualitative research, data processing can be done simultaneously with analysis. According to Suyanto and Sutinah, data is classified based on research themes. The first stage is data reduction, which simplifies the data to make it more focused and easier to analyse. Furthermore, the data that has been reduced is presented in a structured manner in the form of narratives, charts, or diagrams to facilitate concluding. The last stage is conclusion drawing, where researchers look for patterns and meanings from the data analysed interactively, going back and forth between reduction, presentation, and verification until the final conclusion can be formulated.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 History of the Kristal Hotel



Figure 2. Logo Kristal Hotel

Hotel Kristal, formerly rental apartments, is located on Jl. Terogong Raya, Cilandak, South Jakarta, with two towers containing 328 units. Developed by the Metropolitan Linggajaya group, the hotel initially targeted Japanese expatriates, but since 1995 has operated as a four-star business hotel. Completed in 1992 at a cost of 45-billion-rupiah, Hotel Kristal features tropical architecture, five room types, and a range of facilities, including a restaurant, bar, gym, beauty clinic, meeting rooms, and day care. Located in a strategic area, the hotel is popular with business travellers and combines local wisdom with modern technology. Hotel Kristal regularly

organises exciting events such as Kid's Chef competitions and holiday celebrations, continuing to commit to providing a comfortable stay for its guests.

Vision and Mission

Vision:

"Hotel Kristal Jakarta's vision is to continue to be the first choice for business travellers (local and international) as well as a holiday destination for travellers who are looking for a comfortable and quality accommodation in South Jakarta. Especially in the serviced apartment

category that provides an unforgettable stay experience.”

Mission:

- a. Hotel Kristal's mission in addition to providing quality accommodation with excellent service and positive contribution to employees and the surrounding community, among others:
- b. Delivering high quality service, providing a professional, responsive service to whatever the guest needs, and every other aspect of service.
- c. Providing comfortable and quality accommodation, by maintaining the cleanliness and comfort of the rooms and other Hotel public facilities that support guest comfort.
- d. Focus on guest satisfaction by listening and responding to guest input and feedback in order to improve Kristal Hotel services. As well as providing
- e. Continuous development innovation, by adopting the latest technology and practicing it to improve efficiency and service. And committed to sustainable business practices that are also environmentally friendly.
- f. Develop professional and committed employees, by providing continuous training and development for employees

to gain skills and professionalism. And creating a positive work environment to support employee well-being.

- g. Playing an active role in the local community by supporting and participating in local social and community development activities, as well as contributing to the local economy through partnerships and collaboration with businesses within the local organisation.

Hotel Kristal has a total of 328 units with five room types: Studio Type (40 m²), One Bedroom Type (80 m²), Two Bedroom Type (92 m²), Three Bedroom, and Penthouse. All rooms are equipped with complete facilities such as internet access, toiletries, water dispenser, daily maid service, as well as air conditioning with individual controls. The Studio provides a living room, kitchenette, and private bathroom with rain shower. The One-Bedroom features a fully equipped kitchen, study area, and living room with sofa and dining table. The Two-Bedroom offers a master bedroom with a king-size bed, a second bedroom with a queen-size bed, and a cosy kitchen and dining area. Laundry and dry-cleaning services, ironing, and free Wi-Fi access are available throughout the hotel.

4.2 SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat)

From the description above, the SWOT Analysis Results are obtained as shown in the table below:

Table 1. SWOT Results

SWOT Analysis	Helps Achieve Goals	Hinders Achieve Goals
Internal		
Strengths	Comprehensive and adequate hotel facilities	Ineffective and unsustainable promotion
	Competitive pricing	Family-based employee recruitment system
	Strategic location	The hotel is old, leading to some guest complaints
	Friendly staff	
Weaknesses	-	-
External		
Opportunities	Loyal guests, both personal and corporate	

	Strong collaboration with stakeholders	
	Strategic location attracting tourists	
	Dominantly foreign tourist market	
Threats	Many similar hotels (Competitors) such as Homestays, Inns, Apartments, Guest Houses, etc.	The rise of digital technology and application use
External		
Strengths	Collaboration with several media outlets	New media reliance for attracting customers
	Involving visitors in spreading information	
Opportunities	Few 4-star or 5-star hotels with similar facilities as Kristal	Increased competition from cheaper accommodations
	Family-oriented new concept	Unfocused new media use amidst technological advancements
Threats	Increased competition from new, cheaper accommodations	Natural disasters, health crises, and emergency situations

4.3 POAC (Planning, Organisation, Actuating, Controlling)

After PR does SWOT, the next step is how PR determines the strategy using POAC steps which are preceded by internal research and external research. Where the results of research related to internal and external factors in order to improve hotel reputation can be found as follows:

Internal Strategic Factors:

The hotel offers competitive prices with complete and adequate facilities, supported by a strategic location. In addition, the hotel has professional staff with effective management, as well as friendly and responsive employees in communicating with guests, including in providing solutions to visitors' needs. Service innovation is also seen with the Day Care facility, as well as the ease of making reservations through digital platforms such as Traveloka, Booking.com, Tiket.com, and social media such as Instagram, which makes it easier for guests to access hotel information and services.

External Strategic Factors:

Intense competition in the hospitality industry has an impact on prices, profits, and target markets, demanding business actors to be more competitive. On the other hand, the

country's foreign exchange income generated from visiting tourists opens up opportunities for hotels to attract visitors to stay longer. Government policy regulations related to the hotel industry, such as business licences and hotel certification, are important aspects in hotel operations. In addition, the implementation of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) is also a crucial factor to ensure safety and comfort for both employees and hotel guests.

After knowing the internal and external factors, the researcher formulated planning, organising, implementing and controlling (POAC):

- a. Planning: Realising day care facilities, holding NATARU events, creating splashcation programmes for children every Sunday, developing digital media platforms.
- b. Organisation: Organising internal and external gatherings, collaborating with the media in campaigning events to brand the crystal hotel.
- c. Actuating: Implementation of the NATARU event, implementation of day care room procurement, realisation of the Splashcation programme, availability of digital media platforms.

d. Controlling: The above programmes are carried out through a supervisory mechanism from hotel management.

4.4 Analysis

Research on public relations strategies in improving the reputation of crystal hotels, it was found that based on the above results using SWOT analysis (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat) and developing PR strategies using POAC Steps (Planning, Organization, Actuating, Controlling) can provide positive results in improving the reputation of crystal hotels.

By using Haris-Fombrun's theory of reputation 'Realising, Value from the corporate image' (1996). This research looks at the aspects of reputation conveyed by Fombrun, in line with the results of this study, namely about the competitive advantages possessed by crystal hotels which involve trust, appreciation, quality of product / service services, the ability of leaders to manage / manage an organisation and support from stakeholders. In line with the Reputation Framework 'From Identity to Reputation' which:

Table 2. Results Analysis

Category	Description
Corporate Identity	Hotel Kristal
Name Self Presentation	A hotel with distinct characteristics
Customer Image	Comfort and safety in accommodation
Community Image	A hotel that feels like home, with all available facilities and services
Investor Image	Financial performance that demonstrates profitability
Employee Image	A work culture based on a family system
Corporate Reputation	Family Hotel

In addition, active efforts to shape and improve reputation are carried out by realising public relations work programmes and managing communication and interaction with stakeholders and hotel guests. So in conclusion to answer how the PR Strategy in Improving the Reputation of Kristal Hotel, namely: Using SWOT Analysis supported by using POAC Strategy.

4.5 Discussion

The findings from this study indicate that Crystal Hotel has successfully implemented various PR strategies that align with modern reputation management practices. The SWOT analysis reveals key strengths, such as strategic location, competitive pricing, and comprehensive facilities, that give the hotel a competitive edge [12]–[14]. However, weaknesses like aging infrastructure and ineffective promotion were identified, indicating areas that need improvement. By applying the POAC

framework, Crystal Hotel was able to plan and organize events that cater to both families and business travelers, fostering stronger relationships with guests. The implementation of digital media platforms also allowed the hotel to reach a broader audience, increasing brand awareness.

Additionally, the feedback from regular guests highlights the importance of maintaining a balance between traditional hospitality and modern technological conveniences, such as self-check-in and digital room services. The PR team's ability to involve loyal guests in promotional activities and event participation has also enhanced the hotel's reputation as a family-oriented business [7], [8]. Furthermore, the active engagement with stakeholders through collaborations with local media and event sponsorships has strengthened the hotel's community presence. Overall, these efforts, supported by Fombrun's reputation framework, demonstrate that a

well-executed PR strategy can significantly impact a hotel's reputation in a competitive market.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study illustrates that a well-structured PR strategy, grounded in SWOT analysis and the POAC framework, is vital for enhancing the reputation of hotels in competitive markets like South Jakarta. Crystal Hotel's strategic use of PR has allowed

it to overcome challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and position itself as a reputable business hotel with a family-oriented approach. The active involvement of guests and stakeholders, along with continuous innovation in services and digital engagement, has contributed to the hotel's sustained growth. The findings suggest that other hotels could adopt similar PR strategies to improve their reputation, focusing on building trust and long-term relationships with customers and stakeholders.

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