

Strategic Marketing Management Practices of Resorts in the Province of Rizal

Ma. Jaqueline Esguerra, MBA

Graduate Student, University of Rizal System Binangonan Campus, Binangonan, Rizal Philippines

Email of Corresponding Author: majaqueline.esguerra@urs.edu.ph

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Abstract

This study assessed the strategic marketing management practices of resorts in the Province of Rizal, with emphasis on the seven elements of the marketing mix (7Ps): Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence. It specifically examined the profile of the respondents and participating resorts, the availability of resort facilities, amenities, products, and services, the implementation of strategic marketing practices during peak and lean seasons, and whether significant differences existed in the respondents' assessments when grouped according to selected profile and business characteristics. The study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design using a structured survey questionnaire administered to 158 respondents, consisting of 32 owners/managers and 126 customers from selected corporate-owned resorts in Rizal. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Findings revealed that strategic marketing management practices were highly implemented during both peak and lean seasons, with overall composite means of 3.59 and 3.51, respectively, both interpreted as Strongly Agree. Physical Evidence obtained the highest mean during both seasons, while Product received the lowest mean during the lean season, indicating a need for greater attention to product development, innovation, and diversification during periods of lower demand. The findings further showed that respondents generally had consistent assessments of the 7Ps. However, significant differences were identified in selected dimensions, particularly Product among owner/manager respondents according to civil status and Place among customer respondents according to sex. The study concludes that resorts in Rizal demonstrate strong and consistent strategic marketing management practices, particularly in maintaining physical facilities, service processes, pricing, promotion, and personnel. Based on the findings, a strategic marketing plan anchored on the 7Ps was proposed to strengthen customer satisfaction, loyalty, competitiveness, and long-term resort growth..

Keywords: Strategic Marketing Management, 7Ps Marketing Mix, Resorts, Tourism, Rizal Province, Marketing Practices, Strategic Marketing Plan

1. Introduction

The resort and hospitality industry continues to operate in an increasingly competitive tourism environment where customer expectations, digital technologies, service quality, and changing travel preferences influence business performance. In this environment, strategic marketing management is important because resorts must not only attract customers but also provide consistent value, maintain service quality, and establish a competitive position. The marketing mix or 7Ps—Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence provides a useful framework for examining how service-oriented businesses develop and deliver value to their target markets. Recent hospitality research supports the continuing relevance of the marketing mix in improving organizational performance, although its effectiveness depends on how individual elements are integrated with service quality, market orientation, and organizational capabilities (Lim & Ok, 2024).

In the Philippine tourism industry, resorts are particularly important because they provide accommodation, recreation, food and beverage services, events, and other experiences that contribute to local tourism and economic activity. However, competition among resorts has made it increasingly necessary for establishments to develop marketing strategies that respond to customer expectations and changing market conditions. Pabelona and Alcantara (2023), in their study of tourism and hospitality programs in Negros Occidental, demonstrated the applicability of the 7Ps framework in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of service-oriented tourism establishments. Their findings emphasized the need to improve marketing mix elements and develop appropriate strategies based on identified gaps.

Recent studies further demonstrate the importance of strategic marketing in resort operations. Hermoso et al. (2023) examined beach resorts in Laiya, Batangas and highlighted the role of the marketing mix in relation to electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), crowd preference, and tourists' visiting intentions. The study reflects the growing importance of digital information and online consumer communication in tourism decision-making. This growing reliance on digital channels is consistent with broader Philippine research emphasizing the role of digital marketing in shaping attitudes and market responses (Santos, 2024) and the importance of digital transformation in improving organizational competitiveness and responsiveness to changing customer requirements (Binaluyo et al., 2024). The increasing use of mobile technologies as channels for accessing information further reinforces the importance of digitally enabled communication in contemporary business environments (Tuliao et al., 2024). Similarly, Kenept and Manzano (2024) assessed tourism marketing in Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro using the 7Ps framework and found that People, Process, and Place were particularly influential in shaping tourist experiences and destination appeal. Their findings emphasize that effective marketing extends beyond promotion and includes service delivery, accessibility, and customer interaction.

The resort industry in the CALABARZON region likewise faces challenges associated with digital marketing and guest experience. Atienza and Ylagan (2025) found that resorts in CALABARZON encounter difficulties in effectively utilizing digital marketing strategies and providing exceptional guest experiences. Their study further established relationships among digital marketing, guest experience, and behavioral intention, suggesting that resorts need to strengthen their digital capabilities and develop more targeted marketing approaches to reach potential customers. Complementary Philippine marketing research demonstrates that understanding consumer preferences, accessibility, affordability, and market acceptance is essential in designing strategies responsive to target customers (De Leon & Santos, 2025). Likewise, buying behavior and market influence remain important considerations in understanding how consumers evaluate products and services and arrive at purchasing decisions (Santos, 2020). These findings are particularly relevant because resorts increasingly depend on online platforms, social media, digital reservations, reviews, and electronic word-of-mouth to influence customer decisions.

The strategic use of digital platforms, however, requires more than simply maintaining an online presence. Organizations must align technological adoption with internal systems, customer requirements, and operational capabilities. Research on Philippine organizations has shown that digital transformation may generate significant opportunities while simultaneously presenting organizational and implementation challenges (Binaluyo et al., 2024). Gamit et al. (2025) similarly demonstrated how digital and documentation issues can affect organizational processes and collaborative initiatives, underscoring the importance of appropriate systems, coordination, and information management. From a quality-management perspective, effective organizational systems and standardized processes can also contribute to stronger organizational performance and sustained service quality (Gamit et al., 2024). These considerations are applicable to resort management, where customer-facing marketing strategies must be supported by efficient reservation systems, responsive personnel, consistent service procedures, and reliable physical and digital service environments.

Within Rizal Province, tourism and resort development presents both economic opportunities and management challenges. Rellamas (2023) examined sustainable resort-related tourism growth in Montalban, Rizal and found that resorts were commercially viable but faced concerns involving environmental and social sustainability. The study demonstrates that resort development in Rizal cannot be examined solely in terms of profitability because long-term competitiveness also requires responsible management and sustainable development. Comparable research on local enterprise development has emphasized the need to balance economic opportunities with sustainable livelihood creation and long-term community benefits (Galano & Santos, 2024). Similarly, community-based development initiatives have demonstrated that economic outcomes become more sustainable when organizational activities contribute to empowerment, participation, and wider local development (Santos et al., 2025). Research on sustainability-oriented enterprises likewise highlights the importance of addressing operational challenges and strengthening institutional and stakeholder mechanisms to maintain long-term viability (Santos & Santos, 2025).

Meanwhile, recent research on resorts in Davao further indicates that marketing strategy and organizational culture are positively associated with organizational performance, reinforcing the importance of integrating external marketing activities with internal organizational practices (Arado, 2025). This perspective is supported by broader business research showing that successful organizational transformation requires strategic responses to changing market conditions and the development of appropriate strategies for future competitiveness (Santos, 2023a). Furthermore, organizational and business development can be influenced by multiple contextual factors involving safety, operating environments, stakeholder conditions, and local institutional support, demonstrating that competitiveness cannot be explained by marketing activities alone (Santos, 2023b).

The reviewed studies establish that the 7Ps marketing mix remains a relevant framework for understanding marketing practices in tourism and hospitality. Existing research has examined marketing mix strategies in different Philippine destinations, including Negros Occidental, Batangas, Occidental Mindoro, and CALABARZON. These studies have generally focused on customer satisfaction, destination appeal, digital marketing, visiting intention, and specific marketing strategies. Broader Philippine studies on consumer behavior, digital marketing, business transformation, quality management, and sustainability further indicate that market performance is shaped by interconnected considerations involving customer preferences, technological capabilities, internal processes, organizational systems, and long-term strategic positioning (De Leon & Santos, 2025; Gamit et al., 2024; Santos, 2023a, 2024).

However, a geographical and contextual gap remains in the literature. While recent studies have investigated tourism and resort marketing in various Philippine destinations, limited recent research has comprehensively assessed the strategic marketing management practices of resorts throughout the Province of Rizal using all seven dimensions of the 7Ps. Existing Rizal-based research has concentrated more on sustainable resort development in Montalban or individual resort experiences rather than providing a broader assessment of Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence across resorts in the province. Furthermore, considering evidence that digital transformation, consumer responsiveness, organizational systems, and sustainability can affect organizational competitiveness and performance (Binaluyo et al., 2024; Gamit et al., 2025; Santos et al., 2025), a comprehensive examination of the 7Ps may provide a more integrated understanding of how resorts in Rizal strategically manage their marketing practices. Addressing this gap may therefore provide empirical evidence that can guide resort owners and managers in strengthening market positioning, customer experience, operational effectiveness, and sustainable competitiveness within the province.

There is also a seasonal management gap. Many studies examine marketing practices or customer perceptions in general, but fewer studies explicitly compare how the 7Ps are implemented during peak and lean seasons. This distinction is important for resorts because demand, customer volume, pricing conditions, promotional requirements, staffing needs, and facility utilization can vary considerably across seasons. The present study therefore addresses this gap by examining strategic marketing management practices during both periods.

Moreover, there is a stakeholder perspective gap. Existing studies frequently focus either on tourists/customers or on managers. The present study considers the perspectives of both resort owners/managers and customers, allowing the assessment of marketing practices from both the provider and consumer perspectives. This approach provides a more comprehensive basis for identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas requiring strategic improvement.

Finally, there is a strategic application gap. Although previous studies have identified marketing practices and their effects on tourism outcomes, there remains a need to translate empirical findings into a practical strategic marketing plan specifically suited to resorts in Rizal Province. Thus, the present study seeks not only to assess existing marketing management practices but also to use the findings as a basis for developing a strategic marketing plan that can enhance customer satisfaction, competitiveness, operational effectiveness, and long-term resort growth.

Accordingly, this study aims to determine the Strategic Marketing Management Practices of Resorts in the Province of Rizal in terms of Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence. By examining these dimensions across peak and lean seasons and considering the perspectives of owners/managers and customers, the study intends to provide evidence-based insights that may assist resort operators in improving their marketing strategies and sustaining competitiveness in the tourism industry.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design to determine and assess the strategic marketing management practices of resorts in the Province of Rizal. The descriptive approach was used to present the profile of the participating resorts and respondents and to describe the extent to which the seven elements of the marketing mix—Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence (7Ps)—were practiced during peak and lean seasons. The quantitative approach was used because the study gathered numerical data through a structured questionnaire and subjected the responses to appropriate statistical treatments. This design enabled the researchers to objectively determine existing marketing practices, compare assessments between respondent groups, and identify significant differences based on selected respondent and business profiles

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in selected resorts located in the Province of Rizal, which is an emerging tourism area characterized by the presence of various private resorts and tourism establishments. The province was selected as the locale because resorts play an important role in its tourism development, particularly in municipalities such as Tanay, Rodriguez (Montalban), and Antipolo. The study focused on corporate-owned resorts included in the research to provide an assessment of their existing strategic marketing management practices and to determine areas that may be strengthened through a strategic marketing plan. The selection of Rizal as the study locale was also relevant because previous research has identified challenges involving fragmented tourism development, sustainability, and strategic planning within the province.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study consisted of 158 participants, specifically 32 resort owners/managers and 126 customers from the selected resorts in the Province of Rizal. The owner/manager respondents provided information based on their managerial and operational experiences concerning the implementation of the 7Ps, while the customer respondents provided their perceptions based on their actual experiences with the products, services, facilities, personnel, processes, and other marketing-related activities of the resorts. The inclusion of both groups allowed the study to obtain perspectives from both the service providers and the consumers, providing a more comprehensive assessment of strategic marketing management practices

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study included 32 resort owners/managers and 126 customers, for a total of 158 respondents. The respondents were selected from the resorts covered by the study and were considered appropriate sources of information because owners and managers were directly involved in the planning and implementation of resort marketing practices, while customers had direct experience with the services and facilities being offered. The selection of these two respondent groups enabled the researchers to compare managerial and customer perceptions and to identify possible similarities or differences in the assessment of the 7Ps marketing mix

2.5 Research Instrument

The primary research instrument used in the study was a structured survey questionnaire developed to gather quantitative data regarding the strategic marketing management practices of resorts. The questionnaire covered the seven dimensions of the marketing mix, namely Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence, and included statements that assessed the practices implemented during both peak and lean seasons. The instrument was administered to both owner/manager and customer respondents to determine their respective perceptions of the resorts' marketing practices. The use of a standardized questionnaire allowed the researchers to obtain uniform responses that could be quantified, compared, and subjected to statistical analysis. The questionnaire was also aligned with the study's research questions concerning resort profiles, marketing practices, differences in assessments, and the development of a proposed strategic marketing plan

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The data-gathering procedure began with the identification of the selected resorts and the appropriate respondents for the study. After securing the necessary permission and coordination with the concerned resort management, the researchers administered the structured questionnaires to the 32 owners/managers and 126 customers. The purpose and instructions of the questionnaire were explained to the respondents to ensure that the items were properly understood and answered based on their actual experiences or managerial responsibilities. After the questionnaires were completed, the researchers collected, checked, organized, and prepared the responses for statistical treatment. The gathered data were then consolidated and interpreted according to the research questions,

particularly the assessment of the 7Ps during peak and lean seasons and the determination of significant differences among respondent groups.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The data gathered from the respondents were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Frequency and percentage were used to summarize the profile of the respondents and resorts, while the weighted mean was used to determine the level of assessment of the strategic marketing management practices across the seven marketing dimensions. The standard deviation was used to determine the variability or consistency of the respondents' responses. To determine whether significant differences existed in the respondents' assessments when grouped according to their profile and business characteristics, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed at the 0.05 level of significance. The statistical results served as the basis for interpreting the existing marketing practices and developing the proposed strategic marketing plan. The study specifically tested the hypothesis that there was no significant difference in the assessment of the strategic marketing management practices when respondents were grouped according to their profiles.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical principles in conducting research involving human participants. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the respondents were informed about the purpose of the research before answering the questionnaire. The information gathered from the respondents was used solely for academic purposes and was treated with confidentiality. The researcher ensured that the respondents' identities and personal information were protected throughout the research process. The collected data were analyzed and reported objectively to maintain the integrity and credibility of the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Profile of the Respondents

The study involved 158 respondents, consisting of 32 owners/managers and 126 customers of selected resorts in the Province of Rizal. The owner/manager respondents were generally within the working and managerial age groups, with most having college-level educational attainment and considerable experience in the resort industry. The customer respondents were predominantly adults, with females comprising the larger proportion, and most were married or single. A substantial portion of the customers came from within Rizal Province, indicating that the resorts primarily attract guests from nearby areas. Most customers visited the resorts for leisure, vacation, and family gatherings, while a considerable number were first-time or occasional visitors. Overall, the respondent profile indicates that the study obtained information from both experienced resort personnel and actual customers, providing appropriate perspectives for assessing strategic marketing management practices..

3.2 Profile of the Resorts and Availability of Facilities, Amenities, Products, and Services

The participating resorts were located in different municipalities of Rizal, with a considerable number situated in Rodriguez, Antipolo, San Mateo, and Tanay. Most resorts had been operating for several years and employed more than 20 personnel, indicating that the establishments were relatively established and capable of providing a range of tourism and recreational services. Most resorts offered between 11 and 20 rooms and villas or cottages, while guest rooms were the most commonly available facility. Basic amenities such as Wi-Fi, towels and toiletries, room service, and security facilities were also widely available. The resorts generally catered to families, tourists, groups, and corporate or team-building clients. All participating resorts reported having online booking systems and strategic marketing plans for both peak and off-peak seasons. However, some facilities and amenities, including restaurants or cafés, poolside snack bars, game or entertainment areas, and selected comfort amenities, were not available in all resorts. The findings suggest that although the participating resorts have established facilities and marketing systems, there remain opportunities to improve facility diversification and enhance the overall guest experience.

3.3 Strategic Marketing Management Practices During Peak and Lean Seasons

The findings revealed that the strategic marketing management practices of the resorts were generally strongly implemented during both peak and lean seasons. The overall composite mean was 3.59 during peak season and 3.51 during lean season, both interpreted as Strongly Agree. Among the seven marketing dimensions, Physical Evidence obtained the highest overall assessment during both seasons, demonstrating that respondents strongly recognized the resorts' efforts in maintaining cleanliness, facility readiness, appearance, and overall physical presentation. People, Process, Promotion, Price, and Place were likewise positively assessed, indicating that the resorts generally maintained consistent marketing and service practices regardless of season. However, Product obtained the comparatively lowest assessment during the lean season, suggesting that product diversification,

innovation, and seasonal offerings require greater attention during periods of lower demand. Another notable area for improvement was Place, particularly the availability of convenient transportation options and coordination with local transport providers. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the resorts have established strong marketing management practices, but improvements in product innovation, accessibility, transportation connectivity, and lean-season strategies could further strengthen their competitiveness.

3.4 Significant Differences in the Assessment of Strategic Marketing Management Practices

The results showed that the assessments of strategic marketing management practices were generally consistent when the respondents were grouped according to their respective profiles and the resorts according to selected business characteristics. For the owners/managers, most of the marketing dimensions did not show statistically significant differences. However, a significant difference was identified in Product when owners/managers were grouped according to civil status, indicating that respondents with different civil statuses differed in their assessment of product-related practices. Among customers, a significant difference was found in Place when grouped according to sex, suggesting that male and female customers differed in their perceptions of accessibility, distribution channels, and related place strategies. These findings indicate that while the resorts generally implement standardized marketing practices, certain aspects may be perceived differently depending on the characteristics of the stakeholders. Thus, marketing strategies may benefit from considering specific respondent characteristics when designing improvements.

3.5 Proposed Strategic Marketing Management Plan

Based on the findings of the study, a Strategic Marketing Management Plan was proposed to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of resorts in the Province of Rizal. The plan focuses on the seven elements of the marketing mix and prioritizes the areas requiring improvement while sustaining existing strengths. Product strategies emphasize the development of seasonal packages, wellness and staycation offerings, and diversified recreational and food services, particularly during lean seasons. Price strategies focus on flexible pricing, off-season discounts, advance-booking incentives, and group packages. Place strategies emphasize improving transportation accessibility, online booking, directions, and partnerships with local transport providers. Promotion strategies focus on social media, customer reviews, influencer marketing, and stronger sustainability and community-based promotional activities. People strategies emphasize continuous staff development and customer-service training, while Process strategies focus on improving reservations, check-in and check-out procedures, and standardized service delivery. Finally, Physical Evidence strategies emphasize maintaining cleanliness and facility readiness while strengthening preventive maintenance and facility improvements. The proposed plan is therefore designed to sustain the resorts' existing strengths while addressing identified gaps in product development, accessibility, promotion, and operational efficiency.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the selected resorts in the Province of Rizal generally demonstrate strong strategic marketing management practices across the seven elements of the marketing mix—Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence. The overall assessment remained Strongly Agree during both peak and lean seasons, indicating that the resorts have established marketing and operational practices that support customer satisfaction and business competitiveness. Physical Evidence emerged as the strongest dimension, reflecting effective maintenance of cleanliness, facilities, and overall resort presentation, while Product received comparatively lower assessment during the lean season, indicating a need for greater product innovation and diversification. Transportation accessibility under Place was likewise identified as an area requiring improvement. The statistical findings further showed that assessments were generally consistent across respondent and business profiles, although significant differences were identified in selected areas, particularly Product among owner/manager respondents according to civil status and Place among customers according to sex. These findings support the development of a strategic marketing management plan based on the identified strengths and areas for improvement.

Based on the conclusions, the researcher recommends that resort owners and managers sustain the strong implementation of the 7Ps while giving priority to the areas with comparatively lower assessments. Resorts should develop more diversified and seasonal products, particularly during lean periods, such as family packages, wellness and staycation activities, themed experiences, and improved food and beverage offerings. They should also strengthen transportation accessibility by establishing partnerships with local transport providers and improving information on routes and booking options. Flexible pricing, off-season promotions, advance-booking incentives, digital marketing, customer reviews, influencer partnerships, and community- and sustainability-oriented promotions should be continuously enhanced. Furthermore, resort personnel should undergo regular

customer-service and skills training, while operational processes and preventive facility maintenance should be continuously improved. Finally, resort management should use the proposed Strategic Marketing Management Plan as a guide for maintaining existing strengths and addressing identified gaps, while future researchers may conduct similar studies involving a wider range of resorts, additional respondent groups, or other tourism destinations to further validate and expand the findings.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

The author affirms that no conflicts of interest exist in relation to this study. The research was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical principles for human-participant research, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation, allowing participants to withdraw at any stage without consequence, and protecting participant confidentiality through anonymous, secure, and aggregated data management. Because the study examined psychological well-being, all research procedures were non-invasive and implemented with appropriate measures to reduce the risk of discomfort. Participants were informed of available support services should the need arise. Furthermore, the necessary institutional approvals were obtained for the administration of the research instruments and access to relevant academic records.

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