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Sales Promotion in Hotels: A British Perspective

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Sales Promotion in Hotels: A British Perspective

Abstract

In their article - Sales Promotion In Hotels: A British Perspective - by Francis Buttle, Lecturer, Department of Hotel, Restaurant, and Travel Administration, University of Massachusetts and Ini Akpabio, Property Manager, Trusthouse Forte, Britain, Buttle and Akpabio initially state: "Sales promotion in hotels is in its infancy. Other industries, particularly consumer goods manufacturing, have long recognized the contribution that sales promotion can make to the cost-effective achievement of marketing objectives. Sales promotion activities in hotels have remained largely uncharted. The authors define, identify and classify these hotel sales promotion activities to understand their function and form, and to highlight any scope for improvement."

The authors begin their discussion by attempting to define what the phrase sales promotion [SP] actually means.

"The Institute of Sales Promotion regards sales promotions as "adding value, usually of a temporary nature, to a product or service in order to persuade the end user to purchase that particular brand as opposed to a competitive brand," the authors offer. Williams, however, describes sales promotions more broadly as "short term tactical marketing tools which are used to achieve specific marketing objectives during a defined time period," Buttle and Akpabio present with attribution. "The most significant difference between these two viewpoints is that

Williams does not limit his definition to activities which are targeted at the consumer," is their educated view.

A lot of the discussion is centered on the differences in the collective marketing-promotional mix. "...it is not always easy to definitively categorize promotional activity," Buttle and Akpabio say. "For example, in personal selling, a sales promotion such as a special bonus offer may be used to close the sale; an advertisement may be sales promotional in character in that it offers discounts."

Are promotion and marketing distinguishable as two separate entities? "...not only may there be conceptual confusion between components of the promotional mix, but there is sometimes a blurring of the boundaries between the elements of the marketing mix," the authors suggest.

"There are several reasons why SP is particularly suitable for use in hotels: seasonality, increasing competitiveness, asset characteristics, cost characteristics, increased use of channel intermediaries, new product launches, and deal proneness." Buttle and Akpabio offer their insight on each of these segments. The authors also want you to know that SP customer applications are not the only game in town, SP trade applications are just as essential. Bonuses, enhanced commission rates, and vouchers are but a few examples of trade SP.

The research for the article was compiled from several sources including, mail surveys, telephone surveys, personal interviews, trade magazines and newspapers; essentially in the U.K.

Keywords

Francis Buttle, Ini Akpabio, Sales Promotion In Hotels: A British Perspective, Marketing, Channel intermediaries

Sales Promotion In Hotels: A British Perspective

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Sales promotion in hotels is in its infancy. Other industries, particularly consumer goods manufacturing, have long recognized the contribution that sales promotion can make to the cost-effective achievement of marketing objectives. Sales promotion activities in hotels have remained largely uncharted. The authors define, identify and classify these hotel sales promotion activities to understand their function and form and to highlight any scope for improvement.

The Institute of Sales Promotion regards sales promotions as “adding value, usually of a temporary nature, to a product or service in order to persuade the end user to purchase that particular brand as opposed to a competitive brand.”

Williams, however, describes sales promotions more broadly as “short term tactical marketing tools which are used to achieve specific marketing objectives during a defined time period.”¹

The most significant difference between these two viewpoints is that Williams does not limit his definition to activities which are targeted at the consumer. Some sales promotions target other groups, for example, the sales force or members of the channel of distribution.

The key characteristics identifying sales promotion (SP) are, therefore:

- SP has a tactical role in the marketing mix
- SPs are short-term in perspective
- SPs are used to achieve specific marketing objectives which are generally expressed as behavioral (e.g. purchase) rather than cognitive or affective outcomes

SPs can be defined as any temporary behavior-triggering incentive aimed at customers, channel members, or sales personnel. British texts on hotel marketing have tended to use the term “sales promotion” to embrace all the promotional activities used by hoteliers to stimulate demand for their products – advertising, selling, public relations, publici-

ty, direct mail, etc. Taylor's book, *Hotel and Catering Sales Promotion*, is typical of the genre,² not distinguishing conceptually between the various components of the marketing communications, or promotional, mix.

However, it is not always easy to definitively categorize promotional activity. For example, in personal selling, a sales promotion such as a special bonus offer may be used to close the sale; an advertisement may be sales promotional in character in that it offers discounts.

Furthermore, not only may there be conceptual confusion between components of the promotional mix, but there is sometimes a blurring of the boundaries between the elements of the marketing mix. Are weekend break packages sales promotions or new products? If a London hotel offers free theater tickets to weekend guests, is this product augmentation or sales promotion? If the weekend break is offered as a regular component of the hotel's product mix, then it is not sales promotion; if the theater tickets are only available for a short period, then this is sales promotion.

Interpretations of Sales Promotion Vary

Hoteliers investigated in this research had widely different interpretations of the concept of sales promotion. Examples follow:

- an activity which is designed to create greater awareness of a product
- a specially designed activity to increase levels of profitability and business in a particular market segment or outlet
- selling a product to someone
- below-the-line marketing, advertisements, sales promotions, displays, mailshots, and editorials in magazines

Before investigating the function and form of hotel sales promotion, it was necessary to clarify with respondents the scope of the investigation and, in particular, the meaning of the term "sales promotion."

Hotel sales promotions are targeted at three groups of prospects: the buyer or user of the hotel product, the intermediary and the hotel's own sales force. Some sales promotion experts believe that the most effective sales promotions are those which offer incentives to all three groups. The sales force has to be motivated to sell to the middleman or direct to customers, the customer to buy from the middleman, and the middleman to sell to the customer.

Hotels, of course, offer a number of core products – rooms, food and beverage, conference facilities, sports amenities, etc. This paper is primarily concerned with sales promotions for rooms, although occasional reference is made to the other products.

There is no single source of information about SP in the hotel industry. Consequently, this research investigated a variety of sources using several data collection methods:

- **Literature search.** A thorough investigation of magazines such

as *Marketing, Hospitality, Caterer and Hotelkeeper, Travel Trade Gazette* and *Travel Weekly* and newspapers such as the *Times* and *Financial Times* was undertaken.

- **Mail surveys of hotels and sales promotion agencies.** A quota sample of hotels, using location, ownership (group or independent), standard, and size as quota controls was employed. A usable response rate of 48 percent was obtained. Random sampling of hotels is not possible because there is not a compulsory hotel registration system in operation throughout Great Britain, and therefore there is no appropriate sampling frame. A systematic random sample of the corporate membership list of the Institute of Sales Promotion yielded a 60 percent usable response rate from sales promotion agencies.

- **Telephone surveys.** Preliminary or follow-up telephone interviews were completed with hotel and sales promotion agency management.

- **Personal interviews.** With a sub-sample of those who had previously agreed, during a telephone interview, to provide further information.

Sales Promotion Is Suitable for Hotels

There are several reasons why SP is particularly suitable for use in hotels: seasonality, increasing competitiveness, asset characteristics, cost characteristics, increased use of channel intermediaries, new product launches, and deal proneness.

- **Seasonality** Hotels experience seasonal demand for their products, which may fluctuate on a daily, weekly, annual, or other periodic basis. Data released by the English Tourist Board show that in 1984 average bed space occupancy between November and April fell below 40 percent, whereas throughout the rest of the year, over 60 percent was achieved. Taking the business hotel sector alone, demand is very slack for the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday period. The opposite is true of hotels in resort locations. Patterns of demand for food service products offered by hotels may vary dramatically throughout the day, depending upon location. An edge of town location for business travelers could expect to experience higher demand for breakfast and dinner than lunchtime meals.

SP offers a number of techniques for diverting over-demand to slack periods, developing room sales in shoulder months, and maintaining awareness during the low season. Hotel business cycles are largely predictable, so that SPs can be designed and budgeted during the annual planning process.

- **Increasing competitiveness.** The supply of hotel products is concentrated in the hands of ever fewer and larger organizations. The 20 largest UK hotel groups operate 650 hotels (estimated at 3 percent of the total), comprising some 77,000 rooms (estimated at 23 percent of the total).³ Mergers and takeovers annually contract the number of major operators. Competition between the major suppliers is focused very often not on price but on product augmentation and promotion. Multi-site operators find sales promotion particularly useful to draw repeat

patronage from business travelers whose demand is patterned on frequent trips of short duration to urban locations.

- **Asset characteristics.** Hotels are characterized by an extremely high investment in fixed assets such as land, buildings, plant, fixtures and fittings; typically 90 percent of hotel capital is fixed. This brings about high debt servicing and depreciation charges, which in turn are partly responsible for an exceptionally high proportion of fixed costs. Although modern hotel developments tend to have flexibility designed into their architecture, most properties are unsuitable for any other purpose than accommodating guests. This specificity of use, together with the inability to shift location as demand changes, places greater importance upon techniques of demand stimulation such as sales promotion.

- **Cost characteristics.** In hotels there is an unusually high proportion of fixed costs relative to variable costs. This is in part due to the characteristics of hotel assets, but also because properties have to be staffed, heated, and lit, even if there are no advance bookings. Provision must be made for walk-in trade. These costs have two main implications for marketers. Firstly, high fixed costs lead to a high break-even point, and, secondly, once break-even has been achieved, a very high proportion of revenue is contributed to profit. Not surprisingly, the application of profit sensitivity analysis to hotels shows that demand stimulation has a much greater impact than cost control upon hotel profitability.⁴

- **Increased use of channel intermediaries.** Recently, and particularly as hotel groups have grown in size, hoteliers have come to rely on intermediaries to distribute their products. Intermediaries such as tour operators, travel agents, independent hotel representatives, incentive travel planners, tourist boards, airlines, and car hire firms play an important role in making the hotel product more accessible and available. SPs are sometimes used to provide incentives to the middleman.

- **New product launches.** As hoteliers acquire a more sensitive marketing orientation, and come to terms with the oversupply of accommodation, they are turning to new products to generate additional sources of revenue. There has been an industry-wide effort to encourage the British to take short-break holidays. The concept of the weekend break was pioneered in 1964 when Grand Metropolitan sold 130 packages comprising discounted rail fare and two nights accommodation minimum with full breakfast. By 1983 the market was worth an additional 625 million pounds in revenue to British hoteliers. SPs are widely used to attract trial customers to these new products and to motivate repurchase. As the number of new product launches escalates, travel agents are finding that there is excessive demand on limited display space. Many sales promotions are targeted at the trade with the aim, first, of obtaining listings in multiple retail travel agencies and, second, display space. Very few new products are accorded display space upon launch.⁵

- **Deal proneness.** There is some evidence that hotel users are becoming more deal prone. In part, this is due to recession and inflation but, increasingly, the heavier user of hotel accommodation, generally the na-

tional or international company, is being courted by travel agencies who promise to reduce the cost of their business travel. Customers are being made aware that they can obtain better value for money and the hotel groups are responding by putting together packages which provide additional guest benefits.

Customer Sales Promotions Are Numerous

SPs are currently being offered as inducements to existing and prospective buyers or users of hotel accommodation; included are competitions and lotteries, price discounts, free accommodation, premiums, discount vouchers/coupons, additional customer benefits, and privileged customer service.

• **Competitions and lotteries.** The Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Act (1963) and the Lotteries and Amusements Act (1971) distinguish between competitions and lotteries. Competitions involve participants exercising skill when striving against each other; where skill is absent and the result is determined by chance, the SP becomes a lottery. A well-constructed competition can add considerable excitement and distinction to a product; some commentators claim that customers tend to perceive hotels as commodities rather than well differentiated brands. If this is the case, then competitions are a highly suitable form of SP. Ladbroke Hotels 1986 SP "Stay to Win" awarded prizes to qualifying participants who have "correctly answered the questions and in the opinion of the judges (one of whom will normally be independent of the promoters) completed the tie breaker in the most apt and original way." The prize is a trip for two to the USA by Concorde for two weeks, including return flight, two weeks' car hire, and full board accommodation. To enter, participants must surrender 20 proofs of purchase.

In 1985, Thistle Hotels ran a lottery promotion. Having invested 30 million pounds in refurbishing properties to appeal to the business traveler, they needed a promotion to encourage prospects to visit their hotels and sample the improvements. The solution was a promotion which involved mailing a key to 150,000 top management prospects. The key opened a special "World of Thistle" safe which had been installed in every Thistle property. Inside were a number of sealed envelopes containing details of prizes. The prize list comprised hundreds of Highlife weekend breaks, six pairs of Concorde tickets to the USA with a week's accommodation, three Austin Mini Mayfairs and a Jaguar XJS 5, three HE Coupes worth over 23,000 pounds.

• **Price discounts.** Hotels have a great deal of price discretion. Any price between the direct variable costs of providing a room and the established rack rate could conceivably be charged. Discounts tend to be segment-specific, and the depth of cut can range between 10 percent and 60 percent off rack rate. For example, many resort hotels offer half-price accommodation to children during the shoulder months or low season, providing that they share an adult room. When the Edinburgh Sheraton opened, it offered half-price rooms to guests booking in during the first two weeks of operation as a trial. Meridian Hotels offered 40 percent off rack rate to American Express Gold Card holders. The

offer was made in an insert in Amex's Gold Card magazine *Expression*. Of the 50,000 inserts, fewer than 200 were redeemed.

Price cuts are much less demanding in terms of management expertise than any other form of SP, since there is no call for any substantial creativity. Furthermore, they can be implemented at very short notice and, providing that the deal is not made available to guests who would have paid a higher rate anyway, will contribute to net profit, although having a deleterious effect on average room rate. From the buyer's viewpoint, price cuts offer an immediate and obvious benefit; they are only effective when they result in increased occupancies. Failing this, price cuts merely reduce profits. For example, in order to maintain total room revenue, a hotel currently achieving 60 percent occupancy would need to lift occupancy to 75 percent if all guests were paying a tariff reduced by 20 percent.⁶

- **Free accommodation.** This SP makes available free accommodation to one or more members of the guest's party – normally the spouse or children. There are three main variants of this form of SP: twin room occupancy for the price of a single room, free accommodation for children, and the bonus accommodation offer.

- The twin-for-single is where two adults are accommodated in a twin room for the price of a single. Forum Hotels ran this SP for its weekend break product, calling it a two-for-one break.

- Free accommodation for children is offered by many hotels. The main benefit is that it stimulates demand for rooms in a more price-sensitive segment – families with children. Additionally, in-hotel spending on food and beverage by this segment can be exceptionally high. Trusthouse Forte has conducted research into the specific needs of family guests in hotels, and have augmented their basic product in a number of ways to appeal to this market segment – provision of funcases containing various games; cots, divans, and baby-care kits; high chairs and eating utensils; and special menus. The free accommodation offer was used to attract trial purchasers in this market segment.

- With bonus accommodation, the guest pays for a certain number of nights but stays for an additional number of nights without charge. The Bournemouth Moat House Hotel, for example, encourages guests to pay for 12 nights during the months of July and August but stay for 14. The, tour operator, Kuoni, has offered two weeks' accommodation for the price of one in participating Swiss resort hotels.

- **Premiums.** A premium is a free gift. It may be a bottle of table wine or champagne, a meal, theater tickets, travel concessions, food packs, games for children, flowers or confectionery, a bathrobe, or club membership. Research has shown that consumers respond more favorably to SPs which offer something free, instant gratification, convenience, and no long term commitment.⁷ Premiums can satisfy all these requirements.

Grand Metropolitan Hotels ran a successful joint promotion with American Express in 1981. An exclusive Nina Ricci scarf valued at 16 pounds was given to any person settling an account for lunch or dinner for two using the Amex card at any of four named London restaurants.

The promoters claimed that this particular premium was so attractive that it generated over 70,000 pounds of incremental sales. To qualify for the premium it was necessary to complete an application form giving name and address. This is a major variant of this class of SP, the free mail-in premium.

Another more dominant type is the free premium with purchase. The Savoy, for example, offered a personally monogrammed bathrobe to guests complying with certain qualifications.

Some free premiums are offered only when the guest has accumulated a certain number of proofs of purchase; this is known as a free continuous premium. Most hotel groups targeting the business traveler operate a scheme of this sort. However, unless the scheme is of short-term duration, it cannot be classified as SP; instead it becomes an augmentation of the basic product. Trusthouse Forte's Premier Club was recently launched with the help of this form of free premium. Eighty thousand Premier Club passports were mailed out to business travellers. Every time a passport holder stayed in a THF hotel paying full overnight tariff or special corporate rate, the passport was stamped. Fifteen stamps entitled the holder to two free nights in a THF hotel, 30 stamps to a weekend break for a couple, and 60 stamps to a five-night touring holiday for two. The collector of the largest number of stamps won a Panther Kallista sports car. This type of SP is used to generate repeat purchase. The THF example is particularly well constructed since the premiums encouraged sampling of other THF units or products.

- **Discount vouchers or coupons.** This is an alternative to the price cut. Vouchers and coupons are usually distributed to selected market segments. For example, shareholders may receive vouchers as a form of additional shareholder benefit or holidaymakers sometimes receive a book of vouchers redeemable in local stores, restaurants, and clubs. The vouchers/coupons may be redeemed against purchase of either hotel products or those of other businesses with whom the hotelier has struck a deal. A recent annual report from Grand Metropolitan Hotels contained vouchers entitling shareholders to 10 percent off Stardust and Camelot Country Mini Holidays.

- **Customer benefits.** Hoteliers sometimes enhance the basic hotel product by designing additional customer benefits. Unless the enhancements are offered for a short period, they should be regarded as product augmentations. Enhancements include the following: professional sports coaching, provision of sports equipment, guided tours, mystery coach trips, fashion shows, etc.

- **Privileged customer service (PCS).** Many hotels offer particular classes of customers privileged and higher than normal standard of service. Examples are the Vista Club of Hilton International, Trumpcard of Thistle Hotels, Club Europe of Commonwealth Holiday Inns of Canada, and Gold Passport of Hyatt Hotels. These privileges are usually extended to business travelers or other frequent users of the hotel's products. Clearly, therefore, some PCS schemes are simply novel reformula-

tions of the standard hotel product targeted at identified customer groups.

PCS may also be used as a sales promotion. Vista Club, for example, offers its members preferential handling of reservations, expedited check-in, extended check-out time, automatic upgrade to a superior standard of room, a welcome gift, special cheque-cashing facilities, and access to members-only special offers made available through a closed circulation newsletter. Admission to the club, and renewal of membership, is subject to a minimum of six visits to a Hilton Hotel within a one-year period.

Sales Promotions Have Trade Applications

Trade sales promotions include premiums, discounts, bonus accommodation, coupons/vouchers, competitions, sampling/entertainment, and points incentive schemes. Clearly, several of the customer sales promotions also have trade applications.

- **Premiums.** Frequently offered to intermediaries, these include diaries, paperweights, leather goods; for example, Crest Hotels have given travel agents a Marks and Spencer voucher for each booking made. Some companies, however, have banned their employees from accepting these gifts; others will only accept gifts of nominal value. A bottle of champagne is acceptable; a case is not.

- **Discounts.** Normal room rate discounts have been offered to a coach operator as an inducement to include the promoted hotel in a package tour; the effect of this was to improve the tour operator's profit margin.

- **A bonus accommodation.** Embassy Hotels offered for every 20 sales of its Hushaway Breaks product made by a travel agent, a free additional break to sell; the agent kept the entire revenue from the last sale.

- **Coupons/vouchers.** The bearer receives free accommodation. Inter-Continental Hotels once mailed an offer to 9,000 American travel agents who had collectively generated \$1 million of annual business. Each of the agent's staff had mailed to his home address a voucher entitling him to a free stay in any American Inter-Continental for two nights, providing space was available and an advance booking was made.

- **Bonus commissions.** The standard rate is 10 percent for agents. However, when launching a new product or moving into indirect distribution for the first time with a particular product, hoteliers will often make short-term adjustments to the commission structure. The Breakaways' short-break program, for example, offered a 12.5 percent commission upon launch. Where a hotelier is especially reliant upon intermediaries to generate sales, trade SPs become more commonplace. Thistle Hotels sell 80 percent of its Highlife Breaks through retailers; Crest Hotels sell 75 percent of its Welcome Breaks this way. Bonus commissions are often offered in conjunction with some other SP.

- **Competitions.** Hyatt Hotels' 1985 trade competition tested agents on their knowledge of the location of the group's hotels, clues having ap-

peared in three issues of *Travel Trade Gazette*. The winner was the entrant who correctly answered all the clues, confirmed the most reservations for Hyatt during a defined time period, and completed a tie-breaker sentence in the most apt manner. The prize? A world tour to seven of the group's hotels. Such promotions can generate awareness, excitement and, in this case, a lift in reservations.

- **Sampling/entertainment.** In the competitive hotel market, intermediaries are often called on to sell products of which they have no first-hand experience. This form of SP provides that experience. Its basic premise is that favorable attitudes are better fostered through experience than the provision of printed information. Grand Metropolitan Hotels, for example, regularly ship travel agents into one of their London units, dine and entertain them, and familiarize them with the group's operations - hence the term used to describe this form of SP: familiarization trips. When the intermediary sleeps in the hotel or dines in its restaurant, it becomes sampling. If the sampler is occupying a room or seat which could have been sold to a customer, this becomes an extremely costly form of SP. Most sampling occurs, therefore, during sales trials, although this, in turn, can give the wrong impression about the hotel's popularity.

- **Points incentive schemes.** These are schemes in which channel members are awarded points for reservations or other achievements made during the promotional period. Prizes are awarded for the achievement of a target number of points- the larger the score, the bigger the prize. Some multiple travel agents do not allow their employees to participate in this form of SP; they are concerned that it may direct sales effort away from the most profitable products. A major problem in independent travel agents is that the proprietor, rather than the responsible staff member, often takes the prize.

Sales Force Needs Promotions As Well

Sales force SPs aim to motivate the hotel's own sales force. The main problem faced by SP management is designing a promotion which rewards the appropriate people. Sales cannot always be traced to individuals. A frequent guest may return because of his general satisfaction with the hotel's performance or even because there is nowhere else suitable to stay; many first-time guests may select the hotel at random from a telephone directory. The initial contact for a wedding reception may have been made by the general manager, but the deal finalized by the banqueting manager. Consequently, there are two classes of sales force SP: those which reward all staff and those which are specific to individuals. The research uncovered five forms of sales force promotions: bonuses, enhanced commission rates, points schemes, sales contests, and vouchers.

- **Bonuses** are widely used to reward all hotel staff for achieving a budgeted sales figure. A sliding scale of bonuses can serve to motivate higher standards of performance. The bonus may be in cash or kind.

- **Enhanced commission rates** may be varied to motivate sales of particular products or achieve other specified targets, such as convert-

ing a pre-determined percentage of prospects.

Some hotels operate a points scheme on much the same lines as the trade SP. Participants accumulate points over the promotional period. The points can then be redeemed for a cash or merchandise equivalent. The Amsterdam Hilton's wine-of-the-month was not selling as well in room service as in the restaurant. Management introduced a points scheme; 10 points if the wine was sold 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.; 30 points if sold 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. A bottle of vintage champagne was awarded monthly to the winning member of room service staff.

The sales contest is less common. Participants strive against each other. The winner is the person who is the best performer against criteria established by the promoter; for example, receptionists can compete to trade up the highest percentage of single guests to a twin room. When Best Western launched its Crown Club Card for regular guests, it offered the incentive of a Christmas hamper to the salesman who signed up the highest number of subscribers.

• **Vouchers** are sometimes used to motivate successful selling; for example, meal vouchers redeemable in the hotel's restaurant were given to an American hotel's reception staff when reaching a targeted average room rate.

One-third of the 72 member agencies of the Institute of Sales Promotion were contacted to assess their involvement with hotel clients. Only one-quarter of those contacted had done any work for hotels; just two agencies had produced true SPs of the kind identified here. The bulk of the work was in areas such as the sourcing of premiums, menu design, display or promotional consultancy. Less than 5 percent of agency billings is derived from hotel clients; this is corroborated by the evidence obtained from hoteliers which suggests that only 20 percent have made use of sales promotion agencies, these being the larger units or multi-site groups. Agencies are looking forward to earning a greater percentage of their income from hotels as consumer expenditure on leisure rises.

There is very little use of sales promotion agencies by hoteliers, but the agencies are looking forward to greater SP expenditure by hoteliers as consumer expenditures on leisure rises.

Most of the customer sales promotions investigated were targeted at the business traveler whose pattern of consumption is typified by frequent trips of short duration to a limited number of urban locations.

Hotel SPs appear to lack the creativity and novelty which have been observed to be characteristics of the more successful promotions. Most of the innovative SPs are copied by competitors who are obviously keen not to lose custom; for example, just about every major chain in the business travel segment runs both free continuous premiums and PCS sales promotions.

The fast-moving consumer goods industry is the acknowledged master of sales promotion. Perhaps some techniques yet to be seen in hotels might be transferred out of f.m.c.g. for example, free sampling of accommodation for prospective customers, partial refunds, self liquidating premiums, personality promotions, charity tie-ins, and cross-couponing. Hoteliers have some way to go before they can match the dazzle, excitement, and success of the best f.m.c.g. sales promotions.

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