

## **Mapping the Employee Layoff of Star Hotels in Denpasar City: An Effort to Reduce the Impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted various business sectors, including the tourism sector. The hotel industry in Denpasar City has closed its business operations, laid off its employees and terminated its employees. This study was conducted to map employees' layoff distribution at star hotels in Denpasar City and formulate strategies for star hotels to reduce employee layoff rate due to the Covid-19 pandemic. All star hotels in Denpasar city that terminated their employees based on the data released by Bali Province Manpower and Energy Office in 2020 were selected as the sample in this study. There were 8 hotels in total. Questionnaires were distributed to collect data from October to December 2020. This study employed qualitative and quantitative methods in qualitative descriptive analysis, SWOT analysis, and QSPM. The results showed that the largest number of layoffs occurred in the 3-star hotel cluster with an average layoff of 32 per cent, followed by a 2-star hotel cluster with an average layoff of 28.57 per cent. 4-star hotels had the lowest employees termination rate, approximately 15.5 per cent. Market penetration through the optimisation of information technology-based promotion tools (IT) is proposed as the primary strategy to overcome the problem. Organising event or festival for the public, offering day pass and activities packages, and providing a reward for travel agents or online accommodation booking sites with the highest sales are other strategies that the hotels can carry out. This study's results are expected to provide overviews and recommendations for hotel management in applying this strategy more effectively through professional communication and resource management to avoid employee layoffs and increase business continuity.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The global covid-19 pandemic has encouraged governments worldwide to implement work from home (WFH), lockdown and stay at home policies. These policies have changed the behaviour and culture as the society used to do frequent social activities through tourism had to stay at home. The Covid-19 pandemic requires society to keep a safe distance, and the stay-at-home is a new trend to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus, including in Indonesia. These changes caused chaos, especially in the economic sector. Many companies had to close their business temporarily, and they lay off some of their employees. Some even have to terminate a number of their employees. The Fiscal Policy Agency of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia (2020) shows that the Covid-19 pandemic impacts almost all strategic sectors of the economy. The impacts can be felt in the tourism sector, where culinary and tourism activities have stopped operating, affecting 12.7 million workers. The trade sector experienced a decline in output by 30 per cent, impacting 19.9 million workers. The manufacturing sector faced a slumping demand for exports and luxury goods, threatening more than 8 million workers. The agricultural sector has also been affected by restrictions on social activities. It brought about impacts to the food supply, threatened 29.5 per cent of the total national workforce.

Bali Province's gross regional income had been dominated by regional income from the tourism sector by 60 per cent. The tourism sector has been dreary due to the Covid-19 pandemic that started in early March 2020. An integral part of the tourism industry is also affected as many hotels closed their business during the Covid-19 pandemic to reduce operational costs (Diayudha, 2020). This closure had the hotels reduce their workers' number through layoff and employment termination for efficiency purposes. Termination of employment cannot be carried out arbitrarily by employers as regulated in articles 150-172 of the Manpower Act (Yusa, 2013). However, both employers and employees expected a win-win solution as stated in the Circular Letter (SE) of the Minister of Manpower No.M / 3 / HK.04 / III / 2020 concerning the protection of workers/labour and business continuity in the context of Prevention and handling of Covid-19. The circular states employee layoffs is an option, as long as all obligations are fulfilled in terms of the amount and the payment system, which can be adjusted as agreed (Indonesia Ministry of Manpower, 2020).

The closure of hotel services was followed up with a policy concerning human resource management at the hotel by imposing an unpaid leave for 2 weeks and a 50% salary policy to reduce operational costs (Anwar, 2020). These strategies could not prevent hotels from laying off their workers, as shown by many productive workers losing their jobs. The Manpower and Energy and Mineral Resources Office of Bali Province stated that by August 27, 2020. 72,328 workers in the formal sector have been laid off, and 2,667 workers were terminated from work. Badung District had the highest number of laid-off employees of 1,254 people, followed by Denpasar with 858 people. The unemployment rate is predicted to continue to increase as the covid-19 active cases in Indonesia keeps increasing.

Hidayat (2020) predicted increases of active cases and total cases of Covid-19 transmission in Indonesia per week, which will make Indonesia the country with the 4th largest total covid-19

cases in Asia. This prediction is used as a direction for the government in determining policies to handle the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. If the current condition persists, the recovery from the impact of Covid-19 will take longer, during which the number of employee layoffs will keep increasing. Hotel employees seem to be impacted the most during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Data showed that hotel employees experienced a high rate of employee layoff. It is imperative to map the hotel employees laid-off to gauge the severity of the Covid-19 pandemic impact. This kind of data will assist in formulating priority strategies to reduce employee layoff during the Covid-19 pandemic. Denpasar city was selected as the study location since Denpasar is the capital city and centre of Bali Province's economic activity. Denpasar city also has 32.17 per cent of the total layoffs that occur in Bali Province, recorded as the second-highest employee layoff in Bali (Bali Province Manpower and Energy Office, 2020)

## **METHODS**

This study employed a mixed-method that combined qualitative and quantitative designs. Descriptive qualitative mapping of the distribution of employee layoffs for star hotel employees was performed, while the determination of internal and external strategies to set priority strategies was administered quantitatively. The research population in this study is star hotels in Denpasar city that laid off their employees based on the data released by Bali Province Manpower and Energy Office for the period March 2020 to August 2020. There were 8 hotels in total. Samples were Human Resources Managers (HRM) or the head of these star hotel's personnel department. A set of questionnaires was used to collect data regarding the hotel's location, hotel management, business diversification, promotional strategies, and government policies.

The data analysis was performed using a qualitative descriptive approach to analyse laid-off employees' conditions and distribution based on the hotels' star level. Besides, Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat (SWOT) and Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM) analysis were also administered to formulate priority strategies that consider both internal and external environments to reduce the rate of employee layoffs due to the covid-19 pandemic.

### **Validity and Reliability Tests**

A validity test was run to determine the feasibility of the questions or statements in defining a variable. The validity test involved 5 respondents, resulting in coefficient  $r_{\text{count}}$  (corrected item to total correlation) of each statement, as shown in Table 1.

Factor	Question	R <sub>COUNT</sub>	R <sub>TABLE</sub> (5%)	INTERPRETATION
<b>Internal Factors</b>				
Strength	1	0.966	> 0.878	VALID
	2	0.901	> 0.878	VALID
	3	0.953	> 0.878	VALID
	4	0.895	> 0.878	VALID
Weaknesses	5	0.950	> 0.878	VALID
	6	0.894	> 0.878	VALID
	7	0.895	> 0.878	VALID
<b>External Factors</b>				
Opportunities	8	0.905	> 0.878	VALID
	9	0.899	> 0.878	VALID
	10	0.950	> 0.878	VALID
	11	0.966	> 0.878	VALID
Threats	12	0.965	> 0.878	VALID
	13	0.899	> 0.878	VALID
	14	0.945	> 0.878	VALID

Table 1: Corrected item to total correlation value and  $r_{table}$  of each statement  
Primary Data, 2020 [source]

Table 1 shows that if  $r_{count}$  (corrected item to total correlation) is compared with the  $r_{table}$  of 0.875, the  $r_{count}$  of each statement is greater than 0.875. Thus, each statement in the questionnaire is declared valid.

The reliability test measures respondents' consistency in answering the questions or statements as dimensions of a variable in a questionnaire. The reliability of a questionnaire is considered good if the Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.6. The reliability test using the SPSS application showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.984, indicating that the questionnaire has met the reliability requirement.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The secondary data analysis results retrieved from Bali Province Manpower and ESDM Office (2020) and primary data showed that the highest layoffs occurred at Hotel Neo Denpasar, a 3-star hotel with 61.54 per cent Samata Sanur Bali at 47.62 per cent. 4-star hotels have laid off less than 20 per cent of their total employees. The data of the employee layoff at star hotels in Denpasar City are presented in Table 2.

No	Name	Type	Number of Laid Off Employees	% Layoff (%)
1	Hotel Praja	2-star	8	28.57
2	Hotel Sanur Agung	3-star	4	26.67
3	Hotel Neo Denpasar	3-star	24	61.54
4	Mars City Hotel	3-star	5	16.13
5	Mahagiri Villas Sanur	3-star	5	7.46
6	The Samata Sanur Bali	3-star	28	47.62

7	Mercure Resort Sanur	4-star	10	16.77
8	Inna Grand Bali Beach	4-star	60	14.12

Table 2: Classification of star hotels based on the types of the hotel and the number of laid-off employees  
Primary Data, 2020 [source]

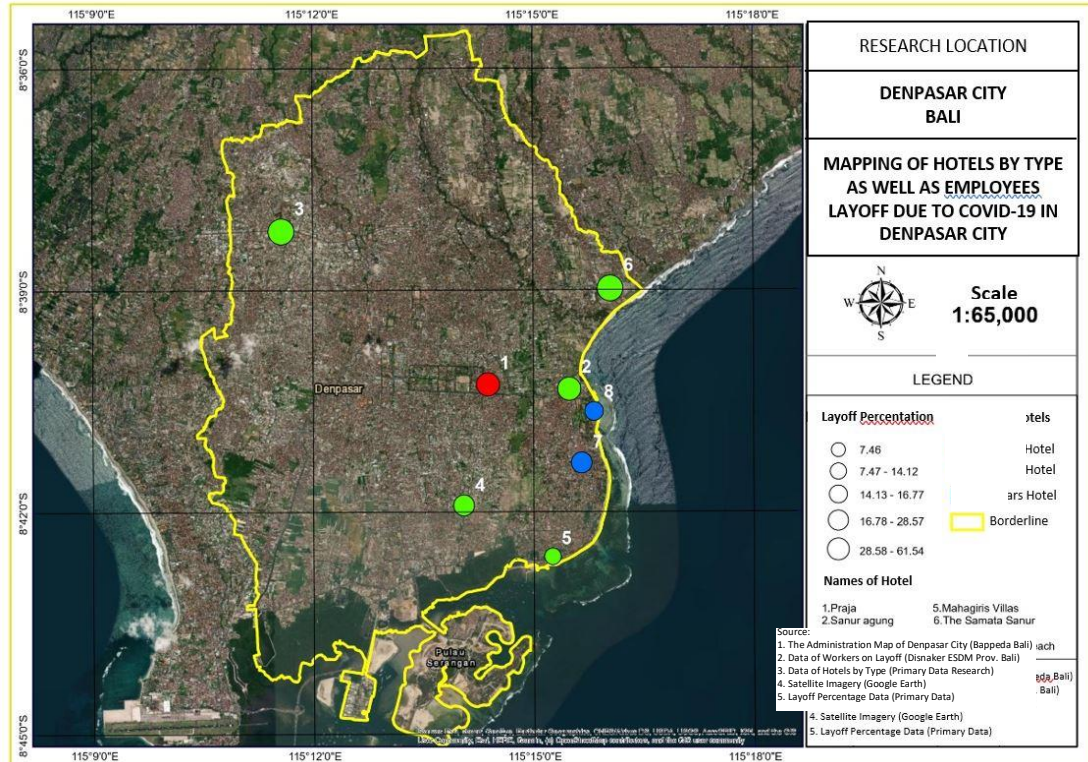


Figure 1: Map of Layoff Distribution and Types of Hotels in Denpasar City  
Primary Data, 2020 [source]

The distribution map shows an overview of the layoff rate based level of the star hotel. The map shows that the 3-star hotel cluster consisting of 5 hotels has the highest layoff rate and the highest average layoff percentage of around 32 per cent. The 2-star hotel cluster has a layoff rate of 28.57 per cent, while the lowest layoff percentage is found in the 4-star hotel cluster with an average layoff percentage of 15.5 per cent. Since the Indonesian government applied for the pandemic status in March 2020, layoffs have started to occur in Indonesia for company efficiency. Between April - May 2020, 15.6 per cent of employee layoffs occurred (Ngadi et al., 2020). The number of layoffs continues to increase in almost all Indonesian regions as the number of confirmed covid-19 cases increases.

The 3-star hotel cluster has the highest number of hotels laid-off employees and the highest employee layoff rate of around 32 per cent. Most 3-star hotels stopped their operational activities during the pandemic, resulting in excess workforce and expenses. Therefore, the hotel management decided to reduce the number of employees by laying off employees and employment termination. Terminating the hotel operational activities is considered a proper solution in dealing with this difficult situation because there were no many guests, and the occupancy rate dropped dramatically. Currently, the occupancy rate of 3-star hotels is mainly dominated by domestic tourists who are on business travel. These guests prefer staying in 3-

star hotels since the hotels are usually located in urban areas, close to the city centre and offices with adequate hotel facilities and relatively affordable prices. Unfortunately, during the Covid-19 pandemic, most business activities stopped due to social restrictions to prevent the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

The high rate of layoff of 28.57 per cent also occurred in a 2-star hotel cluster in Denpasar City, which in this study is represented by 1 hotel, namely Hotel Praja. This hotel has been closed during the Covid-19 pandemic, even when this report was written in November 2020. Efficiency reason has been the undebatable reason for hotels to layoff their employees, even though it violates workers' legal protection regulated in the Manpower Act. Such action is a violation of Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower (Alfina, 2019). The government has made efforts to protect workers' rights, but the government could not do much in this difficult situation.

The 4-star hotel cluster occupies the lowest position in the rate of employee layoffs, with an average percentage of layoffs of 15.5 per cent. 4-star hotels also experience a hard time. Fortunately, a more stable financial condition allows 4-star hotels to continue their business operations even though the number of room services and working hours was reduced and they have to open their facilities for the public such as swimming pools, gyms and spa. 4-star hotels have better facilities than 2-star or 3-star hotels that they could attract both domestic and foreign who were on vacation in Denpasar City. Besides, this 4-star hotel is located close to Sanur Beach, one of the favourite tourist destinations in Denpasar City. However, the hotel's travel restriction lowered the room rate by 50 per cent, expecting sustainable operational activities, even if only domestic tourists occupied the rooms. The Christmas and New Year 2021 holidays appeared to be a positive outlook since hotel room bookings are expected to increase in this period. Unfortunately, after the issuance of Regulation from the Governor of Bali Number 2021 of 2020 concerning Social Activities During Christmas Holidays and New Year 2021 in the New Era Life Order in Bali Province, requiring travellers coming to Bali to have negative PCR test or negative rapid antigen test within 7 days before departure made the expectation unreal (Governor of Bali, 2020). This policy certainly disappointed Bali's tourism actors as their guests cancelled their bookings, and hotels had to refund the payment by 10 per cent - 15 per cent. Some hotels tried to assure visitors to reschedule their visits to avoid cancellations. Despite the polemic that arose due to this policy, the Bali Provincial Government continued to apply this policy to prevent a significant increase in the confirmed covid-19 cases after the holiday. This policy is expected to accelerate the tourism recovery to allow Bali's tourism activities to reopen for international soon in 2021 (Wiratmini, 2020).

#### **Determining the Priority Strategies for Star Hotels to Reduce the Employee Layoff Rate**

The SWOT matrix is a qualitative approach that describes the opportunities and threats and the strengths and weaknesses of star hotels in Denpasar City to the employee layoff rate. All internal and external factors that have been identified in the IFE and EFE matrices were plotted into the IE matrix to obtain cell regions to propose alternative strategies. Details of the identification of the EFE IFE matrix are presented in Table 3.

No	Internal Factors	Weight (B)	Rating (R)	Score (BxR)
<b>STRENGTH</b>				
1.	The hotel has a broad market	0.19	3.25	0.62
2.	Variety of hotel services	0.18	3.25	0.59
3.	Good promotional media (printed and digital)	0.19	3.25	0.62
4.	Implementation of health protocols	0.20	3.00	0.60
<b>WEAKNESSES</b>				
1.	The hotel applies non-performance-based payroll.	0.07	1.38	0.10
2.	Hotel applies non-transparent employee recruitment	0.08	1.88	0.15
3.	The hotel has low internal and external audit reports	0.09	1.63	0.15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1.00</b>		<b>2.81</b>

Table 3: Matrix for the Evaluation of Internal Factors (IFE) of the Employee Layoff Rate Management at Star Hotels in Denpasar City  
Primary Data, 2020 [source]

Table 3 presents the evaluation of internal factors in the form of strengths and weaknesses based on the questionnaires' results. Based on the analysis, these star hotels' strength outweighed the weaknesses—the multiplication result between each internal factor's weight and rating results in a total value of 2.81. The evaluation of external factors is presented in Table 4.

No	Internal Factors	Weight (B)	Rating (R)	Score (BxR)
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>				
1.	Promotional agenda by local government	0.18	3.25	0.59
2.	Reopening of international flight routes	0.19	3.38	0.64
3.	Implementation of new normal status by the government	0.20	3.38	0.68
4.	Cooperation with travel agents and online travel providers	0.19	3.38	0.64
<b>THREATS</b>				
1.	Unstable national stability	0.08	1.38	0.11
2.	Unfair hotel competitions	0.08	1.75	0.14
3.	The reluctance of the community to do outdoor activities	0.07	1.50	0.11
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1.00</b>		<b>2.90</b>

Table 4: Matrix of the External Evaluation on Employee Layoff Rate Management at Star Hotels in Denpasar City  
Primary Data, 2020 [source]

The results of internal factors (IFE) and external factors (EFE) analysis shown in Table 3 and Table 4 show the scores for each strategy factor, namely 2.81 and 2.90. These values can be plotted on the IE matrix to determine an alternative strategy for star-rated hotels in the cell V position to apply hold and maintain strategy.

IFE		Strong	Moderate	Weak	
		4,0	3,0	2,0	1,0
E F E	Strong	I	II	III	
	Moderate	IV	V	VI	
	Weak	VII	VIII	IX	

Figure 2: Determination of Cell on IE Matrix  
Primary Data, 2020 [source]

The proposed strategies are based on the IE matrix's position and the IFE and EFE matrices' recapitulated scores. The alternative strategies in cell V produce strategies are market penetration, market development and horizontal integration (Putri et al., 2014). The alternative strategies proposed based on horizontal growth and integration include:

- Strategy 1 : Market penetration through optimising promotional activities by offering all-in-one accommodation packages at a special price.
- Strategy 2 : Market penetration by organising events or culinary festivals that offer various foods for the public to implement health protocols properly.
- Strategy 3 : Market expansion by opening the facilities for public without requiring the guests to stay overnight, such as swimming+breakfast/luch+spa
- Strategy 4 : Horizontal integration by providing rewards or bonus for travel agents or online travel platforms based on the hotel voucher sales.

### **Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM) Analysis**

QSPM is a technique that objectively indicates which is the best alternative strategy. Evaluate alternative strategies based on external and internal strategic factors that have identified previously. QSPM requires subjective decisions, making decisions throughout the process, increasing the likelihood of the organisation's final strategy decision. QSPM analysis's function is to define the interest of applying different methods comparatively (Walukow and Pangemanan, 2015).

The alternative strategies generated from the SWOT analysis above are then specified with attractive and most feasible priority strategies for star hotels in Denpasar City to maintain their operational activities to reduce the layoff rate. The analysis was carried out using the QSPM matrix, which results are presented in Table 5.



Internal and External Factors	Weight	AS				TAS			
		ST 1	ST 2	ST 3	ST 4	ST 1	ST 2	ST 3	ST 4
<b>Strengths</b>									
The hotel has broad market	0.19	3.63	3.13	3.25	3	0.69	0.59	0.62	0.57
Variety of hotel services	0.18	3.5	2.88	3.38	2.38	0.63	0.52	0.61	0.43
Good promotional media (printed and digital)	0.19	3.63	3.25	3.13	2.88	0.69	0.62	0.59	0.55
Implementation of health protocols	0.20	3.38	3.38	3.25	2.25	0.68	0.68	0.65	0.45
<b>Weaknesses</b>									
The hotel applies non-performance-based payroll.	0.07	2	1.75	1.75	1.63	0.14	0.12	0.12	0.11
Hotel applies non-transparent employee recruitment	0.08	2	1.88	1.63	1.75	0.16	0.15	0.13	0.14
Hotel has poor internal and external audit reports	0.09	2	1.63	1.5	1.38	0.18	0.15	0.14	0.12
<b>Opportunities</b>									
Promotional agenda by local government	0.18	3	3.13	2.75	2.25	0.54	0.56	0.50	0.41
Reopening of international flight routes	0.19	3.5	3.13	2.88	2.88	0.67	0.59	0.55	0.55
Implementation of new normal status by the government	0.20	3.25	3.13	2.75	2.25	0.65	0.63	0.55	0.45
Cooperation with travel agents and online travel providers	0.19	3.63	3	3.13	3	0.69	0.57	0.59	0.57
<b>Threats</b>									
Unstable national stability	0.08	2.75	2.75	2.13	1.75	0.22	0.22	0.17	0.14
Unfair hotel competitions	0.08	2.75	2.13	2.38	2.13	0.22	0.17	0.19	0.17
Reluctance of the community to do outdoor activities	0.07	2.63	2.25	2	1.75	0.18	0.16	0.14	0.12
<b>Total</b>						<b>6,33</b>	<b>5,73</b>	<b>5,55</b>	<b>4,78</b>

Table 5: Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM)  
Primary Data, 2020 [source]

ST 1 : Optimising the promotional activities by offering all-in-one accommodation packages at a special price.

- ST 2 : Organising events or culinary festivals that offer various foods for the public with proper health protocols implementation.
- ST 3 : Opening up the facilities for public without requiring the guests to stay overnight, such as swimming+breakfast/lunch+spa
- ST 4 : Providing rewards or bonus for travel agents or online travel platforms based on the hotel voucher sales.

The QSPM table shows 4 proposed strategies that can be implemented by star hotels to apply the hold and maintain strategy during the pandemic that can reduce the employee layoff rate. The most prioritised strategy has the highest TAS value of 6.33, namely strategy 1; optimising promotional facilities by offering complete accommodation packages with special prices. The second highest TAS value of 5.73 is found in the 2<sup>nd</sup> strategy; to hold a culinary event or festival with various menus for the public with a good implementation of health protocols. The third strategy is to sell tour packages of the hotel without requiring the guests to stay overnight, such as offering swimming + breakfast/lunch + spa packages with a TAS value of 5.55, while the smallest TAS of 4.78 is on strategy 4; providing rewards or bonuses for travel agents based on the sales of the hotel vouchers.

The TAS values showed that the most appropriate strategy or priority strategy to be implemented by star hotels in Denpasar City is strategy 1, performing market penetration by optimising promotions in the form of a complete accommodation package at a special price. This view supports Maria (2013), who stated that the market penetration strategy is the best strategy in Malang to restore the hotel industry's condition in cell 5. Such a recommendation has also been proposed by Nourlette and Hati (2017). They employed the QSPM method, which showed that market penetration is expected to minimise losses by sustaining the hotel's current condition during the pandemic to be later enhanced through better marketing. Besides, market penetration is also expected to allow consumers to convey information and testimonials; thus, the hotel market share can increase. Those actions are expected to allow faster recovery that the employees' layoff rate can be reduced even eliminated.

## CONCLUSIONS

The mapping results show that the highest layoffs occurred in the 3-star hotel cluster, with an average percentage of layoffs reaching 32 per cent, followed by 2-star and 4-star hotel clusters with 28.57 per cent and 15.5 per cent. The priority strategies formulated using the SWOT and QSPM methods to overcome the impact of layoffs are 1) Market penetration by maximising promotional facilities by offering complete accommodation packages at special prices; 2) Organising a culinary event or festival with a variety of menus in the hotel which for the general public with proper implementation of health protocols; 3) Market development by selling tour packages without requiring the guests to stay overnight, such as swimming packages + breakfast/lunch + spa; and 4) Horizontal integration by providing rewards or bonuses to travel agents that make the most sales of hotel stay vouchers. These proposed priority strategies are expected to give hotel management ideas in dealing with this challenging situation, allowing them to effectively implement them through adequate communication and professional

resource management. Therefore, hotels can attract more visitors, the business slowly return to normal, and employees' layoff can be avoided.

This study has limitations in selecting respondents selected based on the secondary data retrieved from the Office of Manpower and Energy and Mineral Resources of Bali Province. It is possible that other star hotels also performed employee layoff. Future researchers are encouraged to select respondents from other sources, cross-check secondary data, and collect primary data from formulating more specific strategies to meet each hotel's characteristics.

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