

# Analysis of Strategies to Improve the Effectiveness and Productivity of Promotions in Supporting Service Quality at Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya

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## Abstract

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This study examines the integrative relationship between promotional strategies and service quality within the hospitality industry by emphasizing the role of expectation formation and service delivery alignment. Drawing on Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), and expectation-disconfirmation theory, the study proposes a process-based framework linking promotion, customer expectations, and perceived service quality. A qualitative case study was conducted at Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya, a regional hotel operating in a competitive and under-researched context. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis, and analyzed using thematic coding (open, axial, and selective coding). The findings reveal that promotional strategies function as expectation builders, shaping customer perceptions prior to service encounters. Promotional effectiveness influences perceived service quality by determining the accuracy of communicated value, while promotional productivity affects the consistency of service delivery through operational readiness. Importantly, alignment between promotional promises and actual service delivery emerges as a critical mechanism driving customer satisfaction and loyalty. This study contributes to the literature by offering an integrative and process-oriented perspective that bridges marketing and service operations, moving beyond fragmented approaches that treat promotion and service quality separately. Practically, the findings provide actionable insights for hotel managers, particularly in regional contexts, to synchronize promotional activities with operational capabilities in order to enhance customer experience and competitive performance.

## INTRODUCTION

The tourism and hospitality sector plays a strategic role in driving economic growth across global, national, and regional contexts, particularly through its contribution to employment generation and regional competitiveness (El Archi et al., 2023). In recent years, the hospitality industry has undergone rapid transformation driven by the digitalization of marketing, including the extensive use of Online Travel Agents (OTAs), social media platforms, and artificial intelligence to enhance customer engagement and decision-making processes (Buhalis & Volchek, 2021; Xu et al., 2024). This transformation has intensified market competition, requiring hotels not only to attract customers but also to deliver superior and consistent customer experiences as a key source of competitive advantage (Liu & Park, 2024). In this context, promotion plays a critical role as a strategic communication tool to convey service value, especially given the intangible nature of hospitality services, where customer expectations are largely shaped before the actual service encounter (Buhalis & Volchek, 2021). At the regional level, the hotel industry in Tasikmalaya reflects these dynamics through fluctuating occupancy rates and increasing local competition, indicating challenges in aligning promotional strategies with service delivery. Therefore, Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya represents a relevant case to examine how promotional effectiveness and productivity can be integrated with service quality to maintain customer satisfaction and loyalty in a competitive regional hospitality market.

Promotion in the hospitality industry can be understood through the lens of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), which emphasizes the consistency of messages across multiple channels to build coherent customer perceptions and expectations (Porcu et al., 2020). In parallel, the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) highlights that value is co-created through interactions between service providers and customers, where communication—particularly promotion—plays a crucial role in shaping perceived value before service delivery (Vargo & Lusch, 2017; rather extended in recent hospitality contexts by Rather et al., 2022). Given the intangible nature of hospitality services, promotional activities function as a primary mechanism to reduce uncertainty by forming customer expectations prior to the service encounter (Buhalis & Volchek, 2021). This aligns with the SERVQUAL framework, which conceptualizes service quality as the gap between expected service and perceived service performance, making expectation management a critical determinant of customer satisfaction (Ladhari et al., 2020). In this regard, promotion does not merely serve as a persuasive tool but also as a pre-experience signal that directly influences how customers evaluate service quality. Therefore, the conceptual relationship underlying this study positions promotion as an antecedent of customer expectations, which in turn shapes perceived service quality, particularly in the context of hotel services such as those offered by Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya.

Recent empirical studies in the hospitality sector consistently show that digital promotion strategies significantly contribute to increased occupancy rates and sales performance, particularly through data-driven targeting and platform integration (Buhalis & Volchek, 2021; Law et al., 2022). Social media marketing has also been found to play

a crucial role in strengthening brand image and enhancing customer engagement, which subsequently influences booking intentions and customer relationships (Rather et al., 2022). In addition, the growing reliance on Online Travel Agents (OTAs) has demonstrated a substantial contribution to hotel sales by improving visibility and accessibility in highly competitive markets (Yoo et al., 2021). Beyond direct performance outcomes, prior research highlights a strong interrelationship between promotion, service quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty, indicating that marketing communication not only attracts customers but also shapes their evaluative perceptions of service experiences (Liu & Park, 2024). Importantly, these studies emphasize that promotional effectiveness depends on the consistency between communicated value and actual service delivery, as discrepancies may lead to negative disconfirmation and reduced satisfaction (Xu et al., 2024). Therefore, aligning promotional strategies with service quality becomes essential, particularly for hotels such as Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya, where maintaining credibility and customer trust is critical in a competitive regional market.

Despite the growing body of literature on hospitality marketing, most existing studies predominantly adopt quantitative approaches that emphasize generalizable findings, particularly focusing on digital marketing performance metrics or service quality as isolated constructs (Law et al., 2022; Hollebeek et al., 2024). While these studies provide valuable insights, they tend to overlook the integrative mechanisms through which promotional effectiveness and productivity interact with the actual delivery of service quality in real operational contexts. Existing studies largely treat promotion and service quality as separate constructs, with limited attention to their integrative and processual relationship, particularly in the context of regional hospitality industries. Furthermore, prior research is heavily concentrated on large-scale hotels and major tourist destinations, resulting in a lack of empirical evidence from smaller or regionally based hotels where resource constraints and market dynamics differ significantly (Sigala et al., 2024). This limitation leads to insufficient understanding of how promotional strategies are translated into real service experiences, particularly in terms of cross-functional coordination and service execution at the operational level. Therefore, this study addresses these gaps by exploring the integrative relationship between promotional effectiveness, promotional productivity, and service quality within the specific context of a regional hotel, namely Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya, using a qualitative and process-oriented approach.

This study offers a novel contribution by adopting an integrative perspective that conceptualizes promotion not merely as a communication tool, but as a mechanism for shaping customer expectations that directly influence perceived service quality in hospitality contexts. Unlike prior studies that tend to examine promotional effectiveness or service quality in isolation, this research explicitly links promotional effectiveness, promotional productivity, and service quality within a unified analytical framework. By doing so, the study advances existing literature that has largely emphasized outcome-based performance metrics, by uncovering the underlying mechanisms through which promotional activities are translated into actual service experiences (Hollebeek et al.,

2024). Furthermore, this research is situated within the underexplored context of regional hospitality, addressing the empirical gap where most prior studies focus on large-scale hotels or major tourism destinations (Sigala et al., 2024). Methodologically, the use of a qualitative case study approach enables an in-depth exploration of process-based interactions between marketing communication and service delivery, which are often overlooked in quantitative research designs. Therefore, this study contributes not only by integrating key constructs, but also by providing contextualized and process-oriented insights into how promotional strategies are operationalized to support service quality at Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya.

This study aims to analyze promotional strategies and their relationship with service quality within the context of a regional hospitality setting, with a specific focus on Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya. More specifically, the study seeks to identify how promotional strategies are implemented, evaluate their effectiveness and productivity, and examine how these dimensions influence perceived service quality through an integrative and process-oriented lens (Foroudi et al., 2024). Accordingly, this research is guided by three key questions: how promotional strategies are implemented, how promotional effectiveness and productivity influence perceived service quality, and how alignment between promotion and service delivery is achieved in practice. Theoretically, this study contributes to the advancement of service marketing and Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) literature by offering an integrative framework that links promotion with service quality in a hospitality context (Hollebeek et al., 2024). Practically, the findings provide actionable insights for hotel management in aligning marketing communication with operational service delivery to enhance customer experience and satisfaction, particularly in emerging regional destinations. The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: the literature review outlines the theoretical foundations, followed by the methodology, results and discussion, and concluding with key findings and implications.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review in this study was compiled to establish a strong theoretical and empirical foundation regarding the relationship between promotional strategies, promotional effectiveness and productivity, and service quality in the hospitality industry. Understanding these concepts is important because promotion in the context of hospitality services cannot be separated from the characteristics of services that are intangible and experience-based. Therefore, the discussion of the literature review begins with an examination of promotional strategies in the hospitality industry as the main basis for understanding how promotional activities are designed, implemented, and integrated with efforts to improve service quality.

### Promotion Strategies in the Hospitality Industry

Promotion in the hospitality industry can be effectively explained through the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) framework, which emphasizes the consistency of messages across multiple channels such as Online Travel Agents (OTAs), social media,

and direct marketing to shape coherent brand meaning and customer expectations (Porcu et al., 2020; Buhalis & Volchek, 2021). IMC enables firms to deliver unified value propositions that reduce information asymmetry and strengthen pre-purchase perceptions in highly competitive service environments. Complementing this perspective, Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) posits that value is co-created through interactions between firms and customers, where promotion functions as a key mechanism for communicating value propositions rather than merely transmitting information (Vargo & Lusch, 2017; Rather et al., 2022). In hospitality contexts, this is particularly relevant as digital interactions increasingly represent the initial touchpoints through which customers form impressions prior to actual service encounters. These pre-service experiences, mediated through digital platforms, play a critical role in shaping expectations that later influence perceived service quality evaluations. Therefore, promotion can be conceptualized not only as a communication tool but as an expectation builder and value signal that directly affects how customers interpret and assess service performance in hotel settings such as Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya

### **Characteristics of Hospitality Services and the Role of Promotion**

The unique characteristics of hospitality services—intangibility, inseparability, and variability—make it difficult for customers to evaluate service quality prior to consumption, thereby increasing uncertainty in the decision-making process (Ladhari et al., 2020; Rather et al., 2022). Due to this intangibility, customers rely heavily on external information cues to form expectations before engaging in a service encounter. In this context, promotion plays a critical role in reducing perceived risk by providing signals about service quality, brand reliability, and expected experience (Buhalis & Volchek, 2021). Digital platforms such as Online Travel Agents (OTAs) further amplify this role by offering user-generated reviews and ratings that serve as credible sources of information influencing customer expectations and booking intentions (Yoo et al., 2021). Additionally, visual branding and social proof disseminated through social media channels reinforce perceived authenticity and trust, shaping how customers anticipate service performance. Therefore, promotion functions not only as an informational tool but also as a mechanism for expectation formation, which ultimately influences how service quality is perceived in hospitality settings such as Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya.

### **Service Quality in Hospitality Context**

Service quality in the hospitality industry is commonly conceptualized using the SERVQUAL framework, which defines quality as the gap between expected service and perceived service performance during the service encounter (Ladhari, 2015; Rather, 2018). This perspective highlights that customer evaluations are inherently comparative, making expectation management a critical component in shaping perceived outcomes. The SERVQUAL model encompasses five key dimensions—reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles—which collectively capture the multidimensional nature of service delivery in hotel settings. In practice, these dimensions are reflected in operational areas such as front office services, housekeeping performance, and overall

customer interactions, all of which directly influence guests' perceptions of quality (Ali et al., 2021). Importantly, while promotional activities may shape expectations prior to service consumption, actual service quality is ultimately determined by the effectiveness and consistency of service delivery processes. Therefore, in line with this study's perspective, service quality should be understood not as a function of communicated promises, but as the realized outcome of service execution, which may confirm or disconfirm customer expectations in hospitality contexts such as Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya.

### **Promotional Effectiveness and Promotional Productivity**

Promotional effectiveness and promotional productivity represent two distinct yet complementary dimensions of marketing performance that are increasingly relevant in the hospitality industry. Promotional effectiveness refers to the extent to which promotional activities achieve intended objectives such as increasing brand awareness, customer engagement, and booking intentions, particularly through digital channels (Dwivedi et al., 2020). In contrast, promotional productivity emphasizes the efficiency of resource utilization, commonly measured through return on investment (ROI), conversion rates, and cost-effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Importantly, an effective promotion does not necessarily imply productivity, as high engagement or visibility may not always translate into efficient resource outcomes. In hospitality contexts, these dimensions are reflected in metrics such as OTA performance, social media engagement, and campaign conversion rates, which collectively indicate both the reach and efficiency of promotional strategies (Buhalis et al., 2022). Despite their importance, prior studies rarely examine promotional effectiveness and productivity simultaneously or link them explicitly to service quality, thereby overlooking how promotional performance translates into actual service delivery outcomes—an issue that this study seeks to address within the context of Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya.

### **Linking Promotion to Service Quality**

The relationship between promotion and service quality can be theoretically explained through the expectation-disconfirmation framework, which posits that customer satisfaction is determined by the comparison between prior expectations and actual service performance (Rather, 2018; Ali et al., 2021). In this context, promotional activities play a critical role in shaping customer expectations before the service encounter by communicating value propositions and anticipated experiences. These expectations subsequently function as evaluative standards against which the actual service delivery experienced during the service encounter is assessed. When the delivered service aligns with or exceeds the expectations formed through promotion, positive disconfirmation occurs, leading to higher customer satisfaction and increased loyalty intentions. Conversely, when there is a mismatch between promoted promises and actual service performance, negative disconfirmation emerges, resulting in dissatisfaction and potential reputational damage. Therefore, this study conceptualizes promotion as a key antecedent of expectation formation that indirectly influences perceived service quality through the

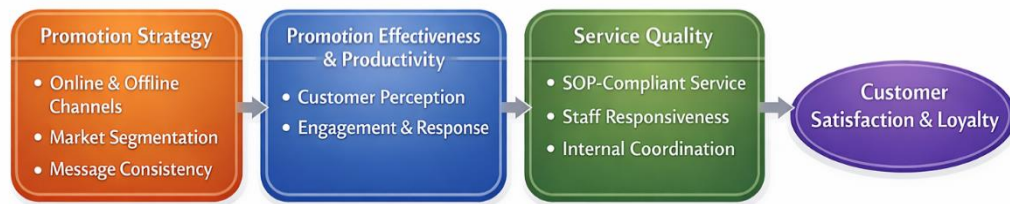
alignment between communicated value and service delivery, particularly in the context of Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya.

### **Empirical Studies on Promotion, Service Quality, and Customer Outcomes**

Recent empirical studies demonstrate that digital promotion plays a significant role in increasing hotel occupancy rates and sales performance, particularly through data-driven targeting and multi-channel integration (Buhalis & Volchek, 2021; Law et al., 2022). Social media marketing has been widely recognized for its ability to enhance customer engagement and strengthen brand image, which subsequently influences booking intentions and long-term customer relationships (Rather et al., 2022). Additionally, Online Travel Agents (OTAs) contribute substantially to hotel visibility and revenue generation by improving accessibility and facilitating customer decision-making processes in competitive markets (Yoo et al., 2021). Beyond these direct effects, prior research also highlights a sequential relationship in which promotion influences perceived service quality, which in turn affects customer satisfaction and ultimately drives loyalty (Ali et al., 2021). However, despite these advancements, existing studies tend to adopt partial perspectives by examining these constructs separately and relying heavily on quantitative approaches that prioritize generalizable outcomes. Consequently, limited attention has been given to understanding the underlying processes through which promotional activities are translated into actual service experiences, particularly in regional hospitality contexts such as Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya.

### **Research Gap and Research Conceptual Framework**

Building on the preceding discussion, a critical gap remains in the literature regarding the lack of an integrative understanding that simultaneously connects promotional effectiveness, promotional productivity, and service quality within a unified framework. Existing studies largely examine these constructs in isolation, with limited attention to how promotional performance is operationally translated into service delivery outcomes, particularly through process-based mechanisms (Hollebeek et al., 2024; Law et al., 2022). Moreover, prior research is predominantly situated in large-scale hospitality settings or major tourist destinations, leaving regional hotel contexts underexplored despite their distinct operational and market dynamics (Sigala et al., 2024). This limitation is further compounded by the dominance of quantitative approaches, which often overlook the underlying processes that link marketing communication with actual service encounters. In response, this study adopts an integrative model that conceptualizes promotion as an antecedent of customer expectations, which subsequently shape perceived service quality through the alignment between communicated value and service delivery. Accordingly, the proposed conceptual framework positions promotion—operationalized through effectiveness and productivity dimensions—as a key driver of expectation formation, which in turn influences service quality in the regional context of Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya.



**Figure 1. Research conceptual framework**

### Research Proposition

In this qualitative study, the research proposition is formulated as a guide for analysis to understand promotional strategy practices and their relationship to service quality based on the experiences of actors and the reality on the ground at the Cordela Suite Hotel in Tasikmalaya. The proposition is not intended to test statistical cause-and-effect relationships, but rather to interpret patterns and meanings that emerge from the results of observations and interviews.

Based on literature review and research focus, the research propositions are formulated as follows:

P1: Promotional strategies as drivers of expectation formation

Promotional strategies are posited to shape customer expectations by communicating value propositions and anticipated service experiences across multiple touchpoints, particularly within digitally mediated environments. In line with Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) and Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), promotion functions not only as an informational tool but as an expectation-building mechanism that influences how customers cognitively construct service standards prior to the service encounter. This proposition emphasizes that expectation formation is not passive but actively constructed through consistent and persuasive promotional messaging.

P2: Promotional effectiveness and perceived service quality

Promotional effectiveness is proposed to influence perceived service quality by determining the extent to which communicated messages accurately reflect actual service performance. When promotional activities effectively align with the delivered service, they facilitate expectation confirmation, leading to more favorable quality perceptions. Conversely, ineffective promotion—characterized by overpromising or inconsistent messaging—may distort expectations and result in negative disconfirmation during service encounters.

P3: Promotional productivity and service delivery consistency

Promotional productivity is argued to affect the consistency of service delivery by reflecting how efficiently marketing resources are translated into operational readiness and service execution. High promotional productivity implies not only efficient resource utilization but also better coordination between marketing and operational functions, which is essential for maintaining consistent service standards. This proposition highlights that productivity is not merely a financial metric but also an operational enabler influencing service quality realization.

P4: Alignment between promotion and service delivery as a determinant of customer satisfaction

The alignment between promotional communication and actual service delivery is proposed as a critical determinant of customer satisfaction, grounded in expectation-disconfirmation theory. When there is congruence between promised and delivered service, customers are more likely to experience positive disconfirmation, leading to higher satisfaction and potential loyalty. In contrast, misalignment generates dissatisfaction and undermines trust, particularly in hospitality contexts where experiential evaluation is central to customer judgment

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using a single case study design to explore the processual relationship between promotional strategies, expectation formation, and service delivery within a real-world hospitality setting. A qualitative case study is appropriate for examining “how” and “why” mechanisms, particularly when investigating complex, context-dependent phenomena such as the alignment between marketing communication and service execution (Yin, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research was conducted at Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya, a regional hotel characterized by dynamic competition and fluctuating occupancy, providing a relevant context for addressing the identified gap in under-researched, non-metropolitan hospitality environments (Law et al., 2022; Sigala et al., 2024). The unit of analysis focuses on the process linking promotion, customer expectations, and perceived service quality, consistent with the study’s conceptual framework. Informants were selected through purposive sampling, including marketing managers, front office staff, and operational personnel, with additional customer perspectives incorporated for triangulation. The final sample consisted of participants who had direct involvement in promotional activities and service delivery, with data collection continuing until thematic saturation was achieved (Guest et al., 2020).

Data were collected through multiple qualitative methods to ensure depth and rigor, including semi-structured in-depth interviews guided by the study’s analytical propositions (P1–P4), direct observation of service encounters, and document analysis of promotional materials such as OTA listings, social media content, and internal reports. This triangulated approach enhances the credibility and robustness of the findings by capturing both communicated and enacted aspects of service (Patton, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017). Data analysis followed a thematic coding process involving open, axial, and selective coding to identify patterns related to expectation formation, promotional performance (effectiveness and productivity), and alignment mechanisms between promotion and service delivery. Qualitative analysis software (e.g., NVivo) was used to support systematic data organization and coding. To ensure trustworthiness, the study applied criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability through techniques such as triangulation, member checking, and audit trails (Lincoln & Guba, 1985;

Nowell et al., 2017). Ethical considerations were strictly observed, including informed consent, participant anonymity, and confidentiality, while the conceptual framework served as a guiding structure for both data collection and analysis to maintain alignment between theoretical constructs and empirical insights.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### RESEARCH RESULTS

The analysis of data collected from interviews, observations, and promotional materials revealed significant insights into the processes linking promotional strategies, customer expectations, and service delivery at Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya. These insights were structured according to the four key themes derived from the research propositions: (1) Promotional Strategies and Expectation Formation, (2) Promotional Effectiveness and Perceived Service Quality, (3) Promotional Productivity and Service Delivery Consistency, and (4) Alignment between Promotion and Service Delivery. The findings indicate that promotional strategies have a significant impact on shaping customer expectations, and when promotional efforts are aligned with service delivery, it enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty.

#### Promotional Strategies and Expectation Formation (P1)

Analysis of interview data and document review reveals that promotional strategies at Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya are intentionally structured to shape customer expectations prior to service consumption. Informants described a coordinated use of multiple communication channels: official website, OTA platforms (e.g., *Traveloka*, *Booking.com*), and social media (Instagram and TikTok). For example, the Marketing Manager stated:

*"Kami selalu menampilkan foto fasilitas terbaru, review terbaik, dan promo musiman agar calon tamu tahu apa yang akan mereka dapatkan—itu membantu mereka membentuk ekspektasi sebelum tiba."* (MM, Cordela Suite Hotel)

This finding aligns with prior research that highlights the role of consistent promotional messaging in expectation formation (*Integrated Marketing Communication*), especially in service environments where intangibility heightens information reliance (Porcu et al., 2020; Buhalis & Volchek, 2021; Rather et al., 2022). Observations confirm that promotional content on OTA and social media often includes visually rich representations of rooms and amenities, strategically employed to minimize *perceived risk* (Ladhari, 2015; Yoo et al., 2021). Guests routinely referenced promotional materials in their decision process, as one customer explained:

*"Saya lihat review dan foto kamar itu sebelum pesan. Itu yang buat saya yakin untuk menginap di sini."* (Guest 7)

These results support the notion that promotion functions as an *expectation builder* and *value signal*, in accordance with Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2017) and expectation-disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1980; Ali et al., 2021), suggesting that promotional strategies play an active role in shaping standards used to evaluate subsequent service experiences.

### Promotional Effectiveness and Perceived Service Quality (P2)

Thematic analysis indicates that promotional effectiveness influences perceived service quality by shaping initial expectations that frame later evaluations of performance. Informants noted that successful promotions are those that translate into measurable outcomes such as increased bookings and positive feedback. As a Front Office Manager remarked:

*“Promo paket weekend kami biasanya cepat habis terjual dan langsung membawa tamu baru yang puas dengan pengalaman mereka.”* (FOM, Cordela Suite Hotel)

This finding is consistent with research demonstrating that well-designed digital promotion increases customer engagement and subsequent satisfaction (Rather et al., 2022; Law et al., 2022). Data from OTA conversion rates corroborate informants' perceptions of effectiveness; peak conversion periods aligned with targeted promotions, supporting the link between promotion and performance (Dwivedi et al., 2020). However, informants also highlighted misalignment instances where promotions overstated service features, leading to *negative disconfirmation* during service encounters, as evidenced by guest comments about housekeeping turnaround time and amenity availability.

These results resonate with expectation-disconfirmation frameworks, which posit that the accuracy of initial expectations influences service quality perception (Oliver, 1980; Ladhari, 2015; Ali et al., 2021). When promotions closely mirror actual service delivery, guests perceive higher service quality; when not, perceived quality declines, validating the theorized P2 proposition.

### Promotional Productivity and Service Delivery Consistency (P3)

Informants highlighted how promotional productivity (efficiency of resource use and operational readiness) intersects with service delivery. Promotional productivity at Cordela Suite Hotel is tracked through ROI indicators and conversion metrics from OTA and social platforms (e.g., engagement rates, cost per booking). The Marketing Manager told us:

*“Kami selalu evaluasi biaya per pemesanan, karena itu menentukan bagaimana kami menata ulang konten dan budget untuk mencapai hasil optimal dengan sumber daya yang kami miliki.”* (MM, Cordela Suite Hotel)

This focus on productivity aligns with marketing performance literature that distinguishes *effectiveness* (outcome achievement) from *productivity* (resource efficiency) (Dwivedi et al., 2020; Buhalis et al., 2022). Observation of operations revealed that high promotional productivity often coincided with better coordination between marketing and operations, supporting more consistent service delivery. For example, consistent communication about breakfast service hours on OTA and restaurant signages reduced guest inquiries and improved responsiveness—a key service quality dimension (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Ladhari et al., 2017).

However, bottlenecks occurred when marketing campaigns generated booking spikes without parallel operational alignment, leading to longer check-in times or service delays. These findings echo literature indicating that operational readiness influences the

translation of promotional achievements into quality outcomes (Hollebeek et al., 2024; Sigala et al., 2024). Thus, P3 is supported: promotional productivity affects how well the organization delivers consistent service.

#### **Alignment between Promotion and Service Delivery (P4)**

Cross-case analysis revealed that alignment between promotional promises and actual service delivery is a central determinant of customer satisfaction. Informants repeatedly emphasized the importance of *operational coordination* to meet expectations set by promotional campaigns. A staff member observed:

*“Kalau foto di Instagram bilang sarapan jam 7 tapi belum siap jam 7, itu bikin tamu kecewa—penekanan itu penting.”* (Staff 4, Cordela Suite Hotel)

Guest testimonials reinforced this perspective: when promotional messaging accurately reflected the service experience, guests reported satisfaction and loyalty intentions. Guest 3 noted:

*“Saya merasa apa yang dijanjikan di promo benar-benar sesuai dengan kenyataan, jadi saya ingin kembali lagi.”* (Guest 3)

These qualitative insights align with research on *service encounter* and expectation-disconfirmation theory, showing that congruence between communication and experience predicts positive outcomes (Bitner et al., 1990; Oliver, 1980; Ali et al., 2021). Discrepancies, in contrast, led to dissatisfaction and complaints, mirroring findings in hospitality studies that emphasize alignment as a quality driver (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000; Ladhari et al., 2017).

#### **Cross Theme Integration: Promotion → Expectation → Service Quality**

Integrating the themes above, a processual model emerges in which promotions shape customer expectations, which are then used as evaluative standards during service encounters. Service delivery, moderated by both promotional effectiveness and productivity, determines whether expectations are confirmed or disconfirmed, ultimately influencing satisfaction and loyalty. This model extends prior research by embedding *both* marketing and operational constructs into a unified framework (Hollebeek et al., 2024; Rather et al., 2022; Law et al., 2022).

Mapping findings to existing literature, this study contributes substantively to hospitality marketing theory by demonstrating that promotional performance cannot be fully understood in isolation from service delivery processes. When promotions are aligned with operational capability—ensuring both effectiveness and productivity—guests perceive higher quality, consistent with expectation-disconfirmation models (Oliver, 1980; Ladhari, 2015; Ali et al., 2021). Conversely, misalignment creates service gaps that diminish perceived quality and satisfaction, reinforcing the necessity for holistic integration in practice.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Revisiting the Conceptual Framework: Promotion, Expectation, and Service Quality**

The findings from this study provide substantial support for the conceptual framework proposed in the literature review, which positions promotion as a central antecedent in shaping customer expectations and influencing perceived service quality. Promotion, particularly when integrated across multiple channels (OTA, social media, direct marketing), is found to play a critical role in building customer expectations, which then become evaluative standards for assessing service delivery. This is in line with Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) theory, which emphasizes the importance of consistent and cohesive messaging in shaping consumer perceptions and expectations (Porcu et al., 2020). As the Marketing Manager of Cordela Suite Hotel noted, "Our promotions are designed to show what guests can expect, aligning directly with the quality of the service we provide." This statement reinforces the idea that promotional activities are not mere advertisements but crucial elements in the creation of expectations, a concept central to Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), where value is co-created through interactions between the provider and the customer (Vargo & Lusch, 2017).

Furthermore, the study's findings align with Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980), which suggests that customer satisfaction is derived from the comparison of expected service with the perceived service. When promotional messages align closely with actual service delivery, positive disconfirmation occurs, leading to higher satisfaction. Conversely, when promotional promises are overstated or inconsistent with the actual experience, negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction. This dynamic was evident in the case of Cordela Suite Hotel, where successful promotional alignment resulted in high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty, while discrepancies between promised and delivered service created dissatisfaction and complaints from guests.

### **The Role of Promotional Effectiveness in Shaping Service Quality Perceptions (P2)**

The results further substantiate the relationship between promotional effectiveness and service quality perceptions. According to the informants, when promotions successfully meet customer expectations, they foster positive evaluations of service quality. This aligns with Servqual Theory (Parasuraman et al., 1988), which posits that service quality is evaluated based on the gap between customer expectations and the perceived service delivered. One of the key insights from this study is the role of promotions in *managing expectations* before customers even set foot in the hotel. For example, customers often mentioned that the visual and descriptive content of the promotions helped them form a mental image of the service they would receive. The Front Office Manager noted, "We make sure that what we advertise in promotions is exactly what we deliver; any discrepancy can lead to negative experiences."

This finding is consistent with disconfirmation models, where promotional effectiveness is linked to positive service quality perceptions when the promotional content accurately reflects the actual service experience (Ladhari, 2015). Conversely, when the promotional messaging is inconsistent with service delivery, it leads to negative disconfirmation, causing a significant dip in service quality perception and, consequently, customer satisfaction. This highlights the importance of promotional effectiveness as an integral component of service quality management (Buhalis & Volchek, 2021).

### **Promotional Productivity and Service Delivery Consistency (P3)**

The relationship between promotional productivity and service delivery consistency emerged as a crucial factor in ensuring positive service outcomes. Informants explained that high promotional productivity—characterized by efficient use of marketing resources and measurable outcomes (e.g., booking conversion rates, ROI)—allowed the hotel to allocate resources effectively, ensuring that service quality standards were consistently met. As the Housekeeping Manager explained:

*"When we have promotions that generate a high number of bookings, we make sure that we are ready in terms of staffing and resources. This way, the service consistency remains high."*

This is aligned with the growing body of research that emphasizes the role of operational readiness in translating marketing outcomes into tangible service experiences (Sigala et al., 2024; Hollebeek et al., 2024).

Promotional productivity also indirectly affects operational performance by aligning marketing efforts with hotel capabilities. When resources are efficiently allocated (i.e., the productivity of promotional strategies is high), the hotel is better prepared to manage customer expectations, as reflected in positive service quality outcomes. This finding is consistent with the broader literature on marketing operations integration, which underscores the importance of aligning promotional activities with operational realities to achieve optimal service quality (Rather et al., 2022; Hollebeek et al., 2024).

### **The Role of Alignment between Promotion and Service Delivery (P4)**

Perhaps the most important finding from this study is the critical role of alignment between promotion and service delivery in determining customer satisfaction and loyalty. Informants consistently emphasized that when there is alignment between the promises made through promotional content and the actual service experience, customer satisfaction is significantly higher. The service encounter (Bitner et al., 1990) is a pivotal moment where customers assess the truthfulness of promotional claims. As the Front Office Manager noted:

*"Guests know that if they see something advertised, they expect it to be true. When it matches their actual experience, they are satisfied and more likely to return."* In contrast, when there is a misalignment between advertised services and the actual experience, negative disconfirmation occurs, leading to dissatisfaction and a potential decrease in customer loyalty (Oliver, 1980).

This observation supports the findings of previous research that emphasizes the role of alignment as a key factor in service quality outcomes, where promotional congruence with actual service delivery enhances customer loyalty (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000; Ladhari et al., 2017). Furthermore, this study builds upon the concept of service quality as a process, where promotion functions not only as a communication tool but as a mechanism for expectation formation that directly affects satisfaction (Vargo & Lusch, 2017).

## Theoretical Contributions and Practical Implications

The theoretical contributions of this study are multifold. First, it extends Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) theory by linking promotional strategies with the formation of customer expectations and subsequent service quality perceptions in a regional hospitality context (Porcu et al., 2020; Buhalis & Volchek, 2021). Second, the study contributes to Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) by conceptualizing promotion as a value-creating mechanism that co-produces customer expectations (Vargo & Lusch, 2017). The study also highlights the importance of operational readiness in translating promotional effectiveness into consistent service delivery, a crucial gap identified in prior research (Rather et al., 2022).

From a practical standpoint, this research provides valuable insights for hotel managers on how to align promotional activities with operational capabilities to improve customer satisfaction. By integrating marketing and operational functions, hotels can better meet customer expectations and improve service quality, leading to increased loyalty. Moreover, hotels in regional destinations like Cordela Suite Hotel Tasikmalaya can leverage efficient promotional strategies to increase occupancy while ensuring that the service quality remains consistent with the promotional promises.

## CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on hospitality marketing by offering an integrative model that links promotional strategies, customer expectations, and service quality within a regional hotel context. The findings highlight the critical role of promotional effectiveness and productivity in shaping customer expectations, which in turn influence perceived service quality and customer satisfaction. Moreover, this research underscores the importance of aligning promotional promises with actual service delivery, emphasizing the need for operational readiness in translating marketing outcomes into tangible service experiences. The study also provides practical insights for hotel managers, particularly in emerging destinations, on how to synchronize marketing efforts with service operations to enhance customer experience and loyalty. Future research could extend this framework by exploring other regional contexts and incorporating a longitudinal approach to examine the long-term impact of promotional alignment on customer behavior.

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