

Historical Building Turned 5-Star Hotel: A Case of The Murray Hong Kong



Source: Unsplash (2022)

Background

As part of the Hong Kong government's revitalization plan in 2010, the 50-year-old Murray Building was transformed into The Murray Hotel to preserve the historical and architectural significance of the former government building (Development Bureau, 2018). Towering 26 floors above the prime location in Central, the renowned 5-star hotel offers 336 guestrooms that provide sophisticated setting for luxury accommodation, alongside unique culinary presentations, wellness and celebrated events (The Murray Hong Kong, n.d.).

While the interior was renovated to accommodate a contemporary and luxurious hospitality experience, key architectural elements, such as the iconic grid façade of recessed windows, together with the signature arches at the tower base, and the elevated driveway from Cotton Tree Drive which intricately wraps around the building have been carefully preserved (Wong & Ouyang, 2018). Additionally, the revitalization project retained the century-old Pink and White Shower tree located just outside the hotel lobby. At 17 meters tall, this tree is the only one of its kind listed in the government's Register of Old and Valuable Trees, holding significant cultural, historical, and important commemorative value (Yang, 2020).

Looking out from the recessed grid façade windows, guests will find urban cityscape complimented by the lush surroundings of Hong Kong Park, providing a relaxing atmosphere and a peaceful getaway from the busy city lifestyle (The Murray Hong Kong, n.d.). To further enriched guest experience, the hotel provides "The Murray Historic Tour", an on-site guided experience that highlights the property's architectural legacy and commitment to sustainable conservation (The Murray Hong Kong, n.d.).

Challenges

Despite having such a remarkable historical background and architectural features of the hotel building, The Murray Hotel has yet to fully capitalize on these features as a core element of its brand positioning. While the Murray Historic Tour is offered to guests as a complimentary value-added service, the hotel's marketing efforts, particularly its website and promotional materials, do not effectively highlight its heritage identity. For international visitors unfamiliar with Hong Kong's urban development history, these unique aspects may go unnoticed, limiting their potential impact on booking decisions.

Discussion Questions:

1. How effective is The Murray Hotel's business model in establishing a competitive advantage through heritage positioning?
2. How can The Murray Hotel better leverage its historical and architectural significance into its marketing strategies to drive bookings?
3. What additional services or experiences could The Murray Hotel offer to educate guests about its rich cultural and architectural legacy?
4. What potential opportunities and threats exist in positioning The Murray Hotel as a heritage luxury hotel in a highly competitive market?

References

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Keywords

- Architectural Conservation
- Brand Positioning
- Competitive Advantage
- Experiential Marketing
- Heritage
- Hotel

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