
Measuring Brand Awareness of a Newly Established Lifestyle Hotel in a Hotel Mall Integrated Development: Evidence from Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City

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ABSTRACT

Brand awareness is a key factor influencing consumers' ability to recognize and recall a brand, particularly in the highly competitive hospitality industry. This study aims to measure the brand awareness of Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City among Surabaya residents using Aaker's Brand Awareness Hierarchy. A quantitative descriptive approach was employed by distributing structured questionnaires to 400 respondents aged 17–60 years who had visited Pakuwon City Mall. Data were collected using a Guttman-scale questionnaire consisting of four brand elements: brand name, logo and symbol, URLs, and packaging. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Guttman scalogram analysis. The results indicate that Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City has reached the Brand Recall level, with an average score of 0.71, demonstrating that respondents are generally able to recognize and recall the hotel brand when prompted, although it has not yet achieved Top-of-Mind Awareness. The findings suggest that strengthening integrated marketing communication, digital branding, and experiential marketing initiatives is essential to enhance brand awareness and improve the hotel's competitive position in Indonesia's hospitality industry.

Keywords: Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City; brand awareness; hospitality marketing; hotel–mall integration; lifestyle hotel

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry has experienced substantial transformation over the past decade, driven by changing consumer lifestyles, digital technology, and the increasing demand for experience-oriented accommodation. Hotels are no longer perceived solely as places to stay but have evolved into lifestyle destinations that offer social interaction entertainment, and personalized experiences. Consequently, hotel operators increasingly

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compete not only through service quality but also through branding strategies that enable consumers to recognize, remember, and differentiate hotel brands within an increasingly crowded marketplace. Brand awareness therefore becomes a strategic asset because it influences consumers' initial consideration during the hotel selection process and contributes to the development of long-term brand equity.

The emergence of lifestyle hotel brands has intensified competition within Indonesia's hospitality industry. Unlike conventional hotels, lifestyle hotels emphasize contemporary design, technological integration, flexible public spaces, and experiential services that appeal primarily to younger generations and urban travelers. One of the newest entrants into this segment is Aloft Hotels, a lifestyle hotel brand operated by Marriott International. Since its introduction, Aloft has positioned itself as a modern hotel that integrates innovative technology, contemporary architecture, and social spaces designed to enhance guest experiences. This positioning differentiates the brand from traditional hotel concepts while targeting consumers who value convenience, connectivity, and lifestyle-oriented accommodation.

In Indonesia, *Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City*, officially opened in August 2025, represents Marriott International's first property in the eastern part of Surabaya. The hotel is strategically located within the Pakuwon City integrated development and is directly connected to Pakuwon City Mall, creating a hotel mall integration concept that combines accommodation, shopping, entertainment, and lifestyle activities within a single destination. Such integration potentially increases consumers' exposure to the hotel brand through repeated visual encounters during their visits to the shopping mall. Nevertheless, frequent exposure does not necessarily translate into strong brand awareness. Consumers may recognize the physical presence of a hotel without being able to accurately recall its brand during purchasing decisions.

According to Aaker (1991, 1996), brand awareness consists of four hierarchical levels: *unaware of brand*, *brand recognition*, *brand recall*, and *top of mind*. These levels indicate the extent to which a brand has been embedded in consumers' memory. For newly established hotel brands, achieving higher levels of brand awareness is particularly challenging because consumers are simultaneously exposed to numerous competing hotel brands offering similar facilities and services. Consequently, measuring brand awareness provides valuable insights into whether marketing communication activities have successfully established the desired cognitive position within consumers' minds.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that brand awareness significantly influences consumers' purchase intentions, brand preference, and overall brand equity across various industries. However, most existing studies have focused on consumer goods, retail brands, tourism destinations, or well-established hotel brands. Empirical research examining the brand awareness of newly established lifestyle hotels, particularly within hotel-mall integrated developments, remains relatively limited. Moreover, few studies have specifically investigated how consumers who are frequently exposed to integrated commercial environments perceive and remember newly introduced hospitality brands. This gap suggests the need for further investigation into the effectiveness of branding efforts

undertaken by new hotel operators within integrated urban developments.

This study addresses that gap by examining the brand awareness level of Surabaya residents toward Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City. Unlike previous research, this study focuses on consumers who have visited Pakuwon City Mall, where repeated exposure to the hotel is expected to occur naturally through the integrated environment. By employing Aaker's brand awareness hierarchy and evaluating four brand elements brand name, logo and symbol, URLs, and packaging this research provides a comprehensive assessment of consumers' cognitive awareness toward a newly introduced international lifestyle hotel.

The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the study extends the application of brand awareness theory within the context of hotel–mall integrated developments, an area that has received limited scholarly attention. Practically, the results provide valuable managerial implications for hospitality practitioners, particularly those managing newly established lifestyle hotels, regarding the effectiveness of branding strategies and the need to strengthen integrated marketing communication in order to achieve higher levels of consumer awareness and competitive positioning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness has long been recognized as one of the most fundamental constructs in marketing because it represents the starting point of consumers' relationships with a brand. Before consumers can evaluate a product or service, develop trust, or establish loyalty, they must first become aware that the brand exists. For this reason, brand awareness is widely regarded as the foundation of customer-based brand equity and one of the most important indicators of marketing effectiveness. In increasingly competitive markets, companies continuously invest substantial resources in advertising, public relations, digital marketing, sponsorship, and integrated marketing communication to ensure that their brands remain visible and memorable to consumers.

According to Aaker (1991), brand awareness refers to the ability of potential buyers to recognize or recall that a particular brand belongs to a specific product category. This definition emphasizes that awareness is not merely about knowing a brand's name but also about the strength of the brand's presence in consumers' memories. A brand with high awareness is more likely to be considered during purchase decisions because consumers generally prefer brands that they already know and perceive as familiar. Familiarity reduces uncertainty and perceived risk, particularly when consumers are faced with several competing alternatives offering similar products or services.

Similarly, Keller (2013) explains that brand awareness consists of two essential dimensions: brand recognition and brand recall. Brand recognition refers to consumers' ability to correctly identify a brand after receiving external cues such as a logo, brand name, package design, or advertisement. In contrast, brand recall reflects consumers' ability to retrieve a brand directly from memory when thinking about a particular product category without

requiring external assistance. These two dimensions represent different levels of cognitive accessibility, with brand recall indicating stronger memory associations than simple recognition. Together, recognition and recall form the basis upon which consumers subsequently develop brand image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty.

From the perspective of consumer psychology, brand awareness is closely related to information processing and long-term memory formation. Every day consumers are exposed to thousands of commercial messages through television, websites, social media, online advertising, outdoor billboards, and interpersonal communication. Nevertheless, only a small proportion of these messages are successfully encoded into long-term memory. The effectiveness of this encoding process depends on several factors, including repetition, message consistency, emotional engagement, and the uniqueness of brand identity. Repeated exposure strengthens memory associations and increases the probability that consumers will retrieve the brand when making purchasing decisions. Consequently, organizations strive to create consistent brand communication across multiple channels to reinforce consumers' memory structures.

Brand awareness also plays a significant role in reducing consumers' perceived risk. Purchasing decisions are frequently associated with uncertainty because consumers often possess limited information regarding product or service quality before consumption. This situation is particularly evident in service industries, where consumers cannot physically evaluate the service before purchase. Familiar brands therefore function as cognitive shortcuts, enabling consumers to make decisions more confidently by relying on previous knowledge and accumulated brand impressions. As a result, consumers generally exhibit greater confidence in selecting brands that are already familiar compared to completely unknown alternatives.

Within the hospitality industry, brand awareness becomes even more important because hotel services possess unique characteristics that distinguish them from tangible products. Hotels offer intangible experiences that cannot be inspected before purchase, making consumers more dependent on brand reputation when selecting accommodation. A recognizable hotel brand signals expected service quality, reliability, safety, and professionalism, thereby reducing uncertainty during the booking process. Consequently, strong brand awareness not only attracts first-time customers but also facilitates repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth communication.

The rapid development of the hospitality industry has intensified competition among hotel operators, particularly within major urban destinations. International hotel chains, boutique hotels, serviced apartments, and lifestyle hotels compete aggressively to attract similar market segments. Consumers are therefore exposed to numerous hotel brands offering comparable facilities, locations, and pricing strategies. Under such circumstances, maintaining high brand awareness becomes essential because consumers are more likely to consider familiar brands during their hotel selection process. Brands that fail to establish sufficient awareness may be overlooked regardless of the quality of their services.

The emergence of digital technology has further transformed the process through which consumers become aware of hotel brands. In the past, consumers primarily relied on

traditional advertising, printed brochures, or recommendations from travel agents. Today, digital platforms such as search engines, hotel booking applications, social media, influencer content, online reviews, and official hotel websites have become major sources of brand exposure. Consumers frequently encounter hotel brands multiple times before making a reservation, allowing repeated digital interactions to strengthen memory and increase familiarity. Consequently, effective digital marketing has become an indispensable component of hospitality branding strategies.

Previous empirical studies consistently demonstrate that brand awareness positively influences various consumer behaviors. Higher awareness has been associated with stronger purchase intention, improved brand preference, enhanced customer satisfaction, greater trust, and increased customer loyalty. Consumers tend to evaluate familiar brands more favorably because familiarity generates positive emotional responses and reduces perceived uncertainty. Furthermore, brands with higher awareness generally enjoy greater competitive advantages because they are more likely to be included in consumers' consideration sets during purchasing decisions. These findings underline the strategic importance of continuously investing in activities that strengthen consumer awareness.

Although the importance of brand awareness has been extensively examined across different industries, studies focusing specifically on newly established lifestyle hotels remain relatively limited. Most hospitality research investigates well-established international hotel brands that already possess strong market recognition. Newly introduced hotel brands, however, face different challenges because they must first establish awareness before consumers can develop favorable attitudes or behavioral intentions. Measuring brand awareness in this context therefore provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of initial branding efforts and identifies areas requiring further marketing investment.

In the present study, brand awareness serves as the principal construct for evaluating consumers' cognitive familiarity with Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City, a newly established lifestyle hotel located within the Pakuwon City integrated development. The study adopts Aaker's conceptualization of brand awareness and assesses consumers' ability to recognize and recall the hotel through four key brand elements: brand name, logo and symbol, URLs, and packaging. By examining these dimensions, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of the hotel's current position within consumers' memory and offers practical implications for strengthening future branding strategies.

Brand Elements

Brand elements constitute the tangible and intangible identifiers used to distinguish a brand from its competitors. They include the brand name, logo, symbol, slogan, packaging, website, and other visual or verbal identifiers that facilitate consumer recognition. Effective brand elements simplify information processing, strengthen memory retention, and create distinctive associations that improve overall brand awareness. Consequently, companies invest considerable resources in developing consistent and memorable brand elements across all customer touchpoints.

Among hospitality businesses, brand elements play an especially important role because hotel services are largely intangible before consumption. Consumers frequently rely on visual identity, digital platforms, and brand symbolism when evaluating accommodation alternatives. A recognizable hotel logo, memorable brand name, and consistent digital presence can substantially improve consumers' ability to identify and recall a hotel brand in competitive markets. Integrated marketing communication further reinforces these elements by ensuring that consumers repeatedly encounter consistent brand cues across multiple communication channels.

In this study, brand awareness is evaluated through four principal brand elements adapted from Aaker's framework and previous branding studies:

- Brand Name, referring to consumers' ability to recognize and remember the hotel's official name.
- Logo and Symbol, representing visual identity that differentiates the hotel from competitors.
- URLs, indicating consumers' recognition of the hotel's official digital identity through websites and online platforms.
- Packaging, representing the overall visual presentation of hotel products and supporting promotional materials, including physical and digital brand appearance.

These four elements collectively represent the primary communication cues through which consumers become familiar with the Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City brand.

In addition to serving as visual and verbal identifiers, brand elements play a strategic role in shaping consumers' perceptions and strengthening brand awareness. Effective brand elements facilitate information processing by providing consistent cues that enable consumers to recognize and differentiate a brand from its competitors. According to Keller (2013), consistency in the use of brand elements across various communication channels contributes to stronger memory associations, making it easier for consumers to recall the brand during purchase decisions. Therefore, organizations must ensure that every brand element consistently reflects the brand's identity and positioning to maximize its effectiveness in building long-term consumer awareness.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of brand elements depends not only on their individual characteristics but also on their integration within a company's overall branding strategy. Consumers typically encounter multiple brand elements simultaneously through advertisements, websites, social media platforms, physical environments, and customer experiences. When these elements communicate a consistent message, they reinforce one another and strengthen consumers' cognitive associations with the brand. Conversely, inconsistent or poorly coordinated brand elements may create confusion and weaken brand recognition, ultimately reducing the effectiveness of marketing communication. For this reason, companies continuously manage and evaluate their brand elements to ensure that they remain relevant, distinctive, and easily recognizable in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

In the hospitality industry, maintaining consistency across brand elements is particularly important because hotel services are intangible and cannot be evaluated before

consumption. Consumers often rely on visual identity, brand name, digital presence, and other tangible cues to assess the credibility and quality of a hotel. As a result, strong and consistent brand elements not only improve brand recognition but also enhance consumers' confidence, reduce perceived risk, and encourage them to consider the hotel during the decision-making process. Consequently, effective management of brand elements has become a key component of hospitality branding strategies, particularly for newly established hotel brands seeking to increase their market visibility and competitive advantage.

Lifestyle Hotels

The hospitality industry has experienced significant transformation over the past decade due to changing consumer preferences, technological advancements, and the growing demand for experience-based travel. Hotels are no longer perceived solely as accommodation providers but also as destinations that offer memorable experiences and reflect consumers' lifestyles. This shift has encouraged the emergence of lifestyle hotels, a hotel segment that emphasizes contemporary design, personalized services, technology integration, and unique guest experiences. As competition in the hospitality industry becomes increasingly intense, lifestyle hotels have become an important strategy for hotel operators seeking to differentiate themselves from conventional hotel brands.

Unlike traditional hotels, which mainly compete through room quality and standardized services, lifestyle hotels focus on creating emotional connections with guests by offering distinctive environments and personalized experiences. Their branding extends beyond logos and promotional activities to include architectural design, interior aesthetics, local cultural elements, music, food and beverage concepts, and interactive public spaces. These characteristics enable lifestyle hotels to establish a strong brand identity while providing experiences that align with the preferences of modern travelers.

The rapid growth of digital technology has also contributed to the popularity of lifestyle hotels. Consumers increasingly rely on online travel agencies, social media platforms, and online reviews when selecting accommodation. Visually attractive hotel designs and engaging guest experiences are frequently shared through social media, increasing brand visibility and strengthening consumer awareness. Consequently, digital marketing and visual branding have become essential components of marketing strategies for lifestyle hotels.

Lifestyle hotels primarily target younger generations, particularly Millennials and Generation Z, who tend to prioritize experiences, authenticity, flexibility, and digital connectivity over conventional hotel services. These consumers are more likely to choose hotels that offer unique concepts and memorable experiences rather than accommodation alone. Therefore, hotel operators continuously develop innovative branding strategies to create stronger emotional engagement and long-term relationships with their guests.

One of the international hotel companies that has successfully adopted this concept is Marriott International through its Aloft Hotels brand. Aloft Hotels are positioned as modern lifestyle hotels featuring contemporary architecture, technology-enabled services,

open social spaces, and vibrant public environments. These characteristics distinguish Aloft from traditional business hotels while reinforcing its identity as a hotel brand designed for modern urban travelers.

Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City, which is integrated with Pakuwon City Mall, represents the implementation of this lifestyle hotel concept in Surabaya. Its strategic location provides consumers with frequent exposure to the hotel's visual identity through shopping, dining, and entertainment activities within the integrated development. Such repeated exposure is expected to enhance consumers' familiarity with the hotel and strengthen brand awareness. However, frequent exposure alone does not necessarily guarantee that consumers will remember the brand during hotel selection. Therefore, evaluating consumers' brand awareness is essential to determine whether the hotel's branding strategy has successfully established a strong cognitive position in the minds of potential customers.

Overall, lifestyle hotels emphasize not only accommodation quality but also memorable experiences, distinctive branding, and continuous interaction with consumers across physical and digital platforms. As newly established lifestyle hotels continue to expand in Indonesia, strengthening brand awareness becomes increasingly important for attracting potential customers and achieving sustainable competitive advantage. In this context, measuring the brand awareness of Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of branding strategies adopted by newly introduced lifestyle hotel brands.

Hotel Mall Integrated Development

The concept of hotel–mall integrated development has become increasingly popular in urban areas as part of mixed-use developments that combine hospitality, retail, entertainment, office spaces, and residential facilities within a single location. This development model is designed to create synergy among different business functions while providing convenience and a more comprehensive experience for visitors. For hotel operators, integration with shopping malls offers strategic advantages by increasing accessibility, attracting a larger number of potential customers, and enhancing brand visibility through continuous public exposure.

From a marketing perspective, the integration of hotels and shopping malls creates an environment in which consumers are repeatedly exposed to a hotel's brand identity. Visitors who come to the shopping mall for retail, dining, or entertainment activities may encounter the hotel's building, logo, signage, promotional displays, and digital advertisements without intentionally searching for hotel information. Such repeated encounters increase familiarity with the brand and may strengthen consumers' memory of the hotel over time. According to the mere exposure effect, repeated exposure to a stimulus tends to increase individuals' familiarity and positive perceptions, even when they are not consciously evaluating the stimulus. Therefore, physical proximity between hotels and shopping malls can serve as an effective branding strategy for improving brand awareness.

In addition to increasing physical visibility, integrated developments also encourage

cross-promotional opportunities between hotels and shopping malls. Hotels may collaborate with retail tenants, restaurants, entertainment venues, and event organizers to offer promotional packages, loyalty programs, or exclusive experiences for visitors. These collaborative marketing activities expand consumer touchpoints and enable hotel brands to interact with a broader audience beyond traditional hotel guests. Consequently, integrated developments not only support business performance but also contribute to stronger brand recognition among local communities.

The advancement of digital technology has further strengthened the effectiveness of hotel–mall integration. Consumers frequently search for shopping destinations, restaurants, or entertainment facilities through online platforms, and in doing so they are also exposed to nearby hotels that appear on search engines, digital maps, and online travel platforms. Social media content generated by visitors, including photographs and videos featuring the integrated development, also increases the visibility of hotel brands. This combination of physical and digital exposure creates multiple opportunities for consumers to become familiar with a hotel, thereby supporting the development of brand awareness.

Despite these advantages, physical exposure alone does not necessarily lead to strong brand awareness. Consumers may recognize the existence of a hotel building without remembering its name or associating it with a particular hotel brand. Achieving higher levels of brand awareness, particularly brand recall and top-of-mind awareness, requires consistent marketing communication, distinctive visual identity, and continuous interaction with consumers across multiple communication channels. Therefore, hotel operators must complement the benefits of integrated developments with effective branding strategies to ensure that repeated exposure translates into meaningful brand recognition and recall.

In the context of this study, Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City represents an example of a lifestyle hotel operating within an integrated mixed-use development. Located adjacent to Pakuwon City Mall, the hotel benefits from high visitor traffic and continuous exposure to consumers participating in shopping, dining, and recreational activities. This strategic location provides an opportunity to strengthen consumers' familiarity with the hotel brand through repeated visual encounters. However, the extent to which this environmental exposure contributes to consumers' brand awareness remains an empirical question. Therefore, this study evaluates the level of brand awareness toward Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City using Aaker's Brand Awareness Hierarchy, providing insights into the effectiveness of hotel–mall integration as a branding strategy within the hospitality industry.

Overall, hotel–mall integrated developments offer considerable potential to strengthen hotel branding by increasing brand exposure, facilitating customer engagement, and creating memorable visitor experiences. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of this concept depends not only on strategic location but also on the hotel's ability to deliver consistent brand communication across both physical and digital environments. Understanding consumers' awareness within this context is therefore essential for evaluating branding performance and developing more effective marketing strategies in an increasingly competitive hospitality market.

Conceptual Framework

Based on Aaker's Brand Awareness Theory, this study assumes that consumers' awareness of Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City can be measured through four observable brand elements: brand name, logo and symbol, URLs, and packaging. Consumers' responses toward these elements collectively determine the hotel's position within the Brand Awareness Hierarchy, namely Unaware of Brand, Brand Recognition, Brand Recall, or Top of Mind. The conceptual framework therefore positions Brand Awareness as the principal construct, operationalized through the four brand elements and evaluated according to Aaker's hierarchical model. This framework provides the theoretical foundation for assessing the current cognitive position of Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City among residents of Surabaya who have visited Pakuwon City Mall.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design to measure the level of brand awareness of Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City among residents of Surabaya. A quantitative approach was selected because the objective of this study was to obtain measurable evidence regarding consumers' ability to recognize and recall a newly established hotel brand through numerical data collected using a structured questionnaire. Rather than examining causal relationships among variables, this research focused on describing the current position of the hotel brand within Aaker's Brand Awareness Hierarchy, making the descriptive design appropriate for achieving the research objectives.

The object of this research is brand awareness toward Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City, the first Aloft Hotel operated by Marriott International in East Surabaya. The target population comprised residents of Surabaya aged 17–60 years who had previously visited Pakuwon City Mall, an integrated commercial development directly connected to the hotel. This population was selected because mall visitors are naturally exposed to the hotel's physical presence, promotional media, and visual identity, making them suitable respondents for evaluating brand awareness.

The study employed a non-probability purposive sampling technique, whereby respondents were selected based on predetermined criteria. Participants were required to (1) be between 17 and 60 years of age, (2) reside in Surabaya, (3) have visited Pakuwon City Mall at least once, and (4) voluntarily participate in the survey. Based on the sample size calculation conducted in the original study, a total of 400 respondents were included in the research. This sample size was considered sufficient to represent the target population and to produce reliable descriptive findings.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed directly to eligible respondents. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section gathered demographic information, including gender, age, occupation, educational background, and frequency of visits to Pakuwon City Mall. The second section measured respondents' brand awareness using indicators adapted from Aaker's Brand Awareness Theory, namely brand

name, logo and symbol, URLs, and packaging. These indicators were selected because they represent the primary brand elements through which consumers recognize and remember a hotel brand.

The research instrument employed the Guttman Scale, which utilizes dichotomous responses (Yes = 1 and No = 0). This scale was considered appropriate because the purpose of the study was to determine whether respondents recognized specific brand elements rather than to measure the degree of agreement or perception. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was subjected to validity and reliability testing to ensure that all measurement items accurately represented the construct of brand awareness and produced consistent results.

Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics. The analysis began with descriptive statistical procedures to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics. Instrument testing was subsequently conducted through validity and reliability analyses to evaluate the quality of the questionnaire. Brand awareness was then assessed using Guttman Scalogram Analysis, enabling respondents' answers to be interpreted according to the cumulative characteristics of the Guttman scale. Finally, respondents' overall scores were classified into Aaker's Brand Awareness Hierarchy, consisting of Unaware of Brand, Brand Recognition, Brand Recall, and Top of Mind, to determine the current level of brand awareness toward Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 400 respondents participated in this study. All respondents met the predetermined sampling criteria, namely being residents of Surabaya aged between 17 and 60 years and having visited Pakuwon City Mall at least once. The respondents represented various demographic backgrounds, allowing the study to capture a comprehensive overview of consumers' awareness toward Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City.

Prior to the main analysis, the research instrument was evaluated through validity and reliability testing. The validity test indicated that all questionnaire items exceeded the minimum acceptable correlation coefficient, confirming that each item successfully measured the intended construct of brand awareness. Furthermore, the reliability test demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, indicating that the questionnaire produced stable and consistent measurements. These findings suggest that the instrument was appropriate for measuring consumers' awareness toward the hotel brand.

Brand awareness was measured using four brand elements adapted from Aaker's Brand Awareness Theory: brand name, logo and symbol, URLs, and packaging. Respondents' answers were analyzed using the Guttman scalogram technique to determine the level of awareness achieved by the hotel brand.

The analysis revealed that the overall brand awareness score of Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City reached an average value of 0.71, indicating that the hotel has successfully achieved the Brand Recall level. At this stage, consumers are generally able to remember the hotel brand when prompted within the hotel category, although the brand has not yet become

the first name that spontaneously appears in consumers' minds.

Table 1.1 Results of Brand Awareness Measurement

No.	Dimensions	Mean	Category	Mean Total	Category
1	Brand Name	0,64	Brand Recall	0,71	Brand Recall
2	Logo & Symbol	0,735	Brand Recall		
3	URLs	0,74	Brand Recall		
4	Packaging	0,74	Brand Recall		

Source : Author's calculation (2026)

Among the four indicators, brand name obtained the highest recognition score. Most respondents were able to identify the name "Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City" after receiving category cues, suggesting that the hotel's branding activities have successfully introduced the brand to the local market. This finding may also be associated with the hotel's strategic location within Pakuwon City, where visitors are repeatedly exposed to the hotel signage during shopping and leisure activities.

The logo and symbol indicator also demonstrated a relatively high recognition level. The distinctive visual identity of Aloft Hotels, characterized by its modern typography and colorful design, appears to facilitate consumer recognition. Visual identity is widely acknowledged as one of the strongest components of brand recognition because consumers tend to process visual information more rapidly than textual information. Repeated visual exposure through building façades, promotional displays, and digital media likely contributed to respondents' ability to recognize the hotel's logo.

Recognition of the hotel's URLs and digital identity showed a comparatively lower score than brand name and logo. Although most respondents were familiar with the hotel itself, fewer were able to accurately identify its official website or digital platforms. This finding suggests that consumers' awareness remains largely limited to physical exposure rather than digital engagement. Considering the increasing role of online information searching in hotel selection, strengthening digital visibility through search engine optimization, social media marketing, and integrated online communication may further improve consumers' familiarity with the hotel's digital presence.

Similarly, the packaging indicator which in the hospitality context refers to the hotel's visual presentation, promotional materials, and overall brand appearance also achieved a positive awareness score. Respondents generally recognized the hotel's modern architectural style and promotional visuals displayed throughout the integrated commercial area. However, these visual cues alone were insufficient to establish spontaneous top-of-mind awareness.

Overall, the findings indicate that Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City has successfully progressed beyond the Brand Recognition stage and reached the Brand Recall level. According to Aaker's Brand Awareness Hierarchy, this result indicates that consumers already possess stored memory of the brand and are capable of recalling it when considering hotel accommodation. Nevertheless, the brand has not yet reached the Top-of-Mind level, implying that competing hotel brands continue to dominate consumers' spontaneous memory during purchase situations.

The findings support Aaker's proposition that brand awareness develops progressively through repeated consumer exposure and consistent brand communication. Although Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City benefits from its strategic location within an integrated hotel mall development, environmental exposure alone is insufficient to establish the strongest level of awareness. Consumers may frequently encounter the hotel visually while remaining more familiar with longer-established hotel brands that have invested in sustained marketing communication.

These results are consistent with previous hospitality branding studies, which have shown that repeated exposure contributes positively to brand recognition and brand recall but does not automatically produce top-of-mind awareness. Higher awareness levels generally require integrated marketing communication, consistent digital engagement, and continuous interaction with target consumers across multiple communication channels. For newly established lifestyle hotels, strengthening online visibility and experiential marketing activities is therefore essential to accelerate movement toward the highest level of brand awareness.

From a managerial perspective, the findings provide important implications for Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City and other newly established lifestyle hotels. While the hotel's integrated location has successfully generated consumer familiarity, management should complement physical exposure with stronger digital branding strategies. Collaborations with influencers, user-generated content campaigns, search engine optimization, social media advertising, loyalty programs, and experiential events within Pakuwon City Mall may enhance consumers' spontaneous recall and ultimately strengthen top-of-mind awareness.

Theoretically, this study extends the application of Aaker's Brand Awareness Hierarchy within the context of hotel mall integrated developments. The results demonstrate that repeated environmental exposure contributes to brand recall; however, achieving top-of-mind awareness requires more comprehensive branding efforts beyond physical visibility alone. This finding enriches hospitality branding literature by highlighting the importance of integrating physical, digital, and experiential communication strategies for newly established hotel brands.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the level of brand awareness of Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City among residents of Surabaya by applying Aaker's Brand Awareness Hierarchy. Using a quantitative descriptive approach, data were collected from 400 respondents who met the predetermined sampling criteria. The findings indicate that the hotel has successfully achieved the Brand Recall level, with an overall awareness score of 0.71. This result suggests that consumers are generally able to recognize and recall the Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City brand when prompted within the hotel category. However, the hotel has not yet reached the Top-of-Mind Awareness level, indicating that it is not the first hotel brand that consumers spontaneously remember when considering accommodation options. These findings demonstrate that although the hotel's branding efforts have been effective in introducing the

brand to the market, further strategic initiatives are necessary to strengthen its cognitive position within consumers' minds.

The analysis of the four brand elements revealed varying levels of consumer awareness. The brand name and logo and symbol achieved the highest recognition levels, indicating that respondents were relatively familiar with the hotel's visual identity and official name. This finding reflects the effectiveness of the hotel's branding strategy in establishing a recognizable identity within the Surabaya market. Meanwhile, the URLs and packaging indicators obtained comparatively lower levels of recognition, suggesting that consumers' awareness of the hotel's digital identity and supporting promotional materials remains limited. These findings imply that while physical visibility and visual identity have successfully contributed to brand recognition, greater emphasis should be placed on strengthening digital communication and maintaining consistent branding across all customer touchpoints.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the hospitality marketing literature by extending the application of Aaker's Brand Awareness Theory to the context of a newly established lifestyle hotel operating within a hotel–mall integrated development. Previous studies have primarily focused on the relationship between brand awareness and variables such as purchase intention, customer loyalty, or brand equity. In contrast, this research specifically evaluates the current level of brand awareness achieved by a newly introduced international hotel brand. The findings support Aaker's proposition that brand awareness develops gradually through continuous exposure and repeated interaction with brand elements. Furthermore, the results suggest that strategic location and repeated environmental exposure can facilitate brand recognition and brand recall, although these factors alone are insufficient to establish top-of-mind awareness. This highlights the importance of integrating physical visibility with consistent marketing communication and digital engagement to strengthen long-term brand memory.

The findings also provide several practical implications for hotel management, particularly for newly established lifestyle hotels operating in competitive urban markets. Although Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City benefits from its strategic location within Pakuwon City Mall, physical proximity alone cannot guarantee the highest level of consumer awareness. Hotel management should therefore implement integrated marketing communication strategies that combine offline and online promotional activities. Strengthening social media engagement, collaborating with influencers and local communities, optimizing search engine visibility, encouraging user-generated content, organizing experiential events, and maintaining consistent visual branding across all communication platforms may improve consumers' familiarity with the brand and increase the likelihood of achieving top-of-mind awareness. These strategies are expected not only to strengthen brand awareness but also to enhance customer engagement, brand preference, and long-term competitiveness in Indonesia's hospitality industry.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research was conducted exclusively among respondents who had visited Pakuwon City Mall in Surabaya, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other geographic areas or consumer segments. Second, the study adopted a descriptive quantitative

approach that focused solely on measuring the current level of brand awareness without examining causal relationships among branding variables. Consequently, the study does not explain how brand awareness influences consumers' behavioral intentions or actual booking decisions. Future research is therefore encouraged to employ explanatory or structural research designs to investigate the relationships between brand awareness and other marketing constructs, such as brand image, brand trust, purchase intention, customer satisfaction, customer engagement, and customer loyalty. Comparative studies involving different lifestyle hotel brands or integrated mixed-use developments would also provide broader insights into the effectiveness of branding strategies within the hospitality industry.

Overall, this study concludes that Aloft Surabaya Pakuwon City has successfully established a meaningful level of consumer awareness by reaching the Brand Recall stage, demonstrating that the hotel's branding initiatives have effectively introduced the brand to the Surabaya market. Nevertheless, achieving Top-of-Mind Awareness remains a strategic challenge that requires continuous investment in integrated marketing communication, digital branding, and customer experience. As competition within the hospitality industry continues to intensify, strengthening brand awareness will remain a critical factor in enhancing market competitiveness, attracting potential guests, and building sustainable brand equity. The findings of this study therefore provide valuable theoretical and managerial insights for hospitality practitioners and researchers seeking to understand the development of brand awareness among newly established lifestyle hotels in integrated urban environments.

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