

CHIEF AWARDS SALES & MARKETING

Winner

The Aruba Tourism Authority

Going Bold. Going Social. Going Local! As the most tourism dependent island in the world, it is of tantamount importance that we not only increase stay-over visitors to Aruba, but also increase our visitor's Average Daily Expenditure (ADEx), and overall tourism receipts. Our research and trend watching informed us that today's savvy Caribbean traveler is looking for a more "experiential" vacation, one that gets them deeper into the destination and connects with their soul and sense of adventure. The Aruba "Local Shortcut Series" set out to broaden the perception of Aruba, showing that the destination offers so much more than sun, sea and sand...to elevate the island's appeal among younger, more affluent travelers looking for an authentic vacation experience. Demonstrate the depth and breadth of Aruba's offering will prompt exploration and increased island spend as well as reinvigorate our "Happy Returners and widen their perspective of Aruba, bolstering our connection and their continued visitation. So we put the task in the hands of the Aruban people. Who better to give consumers an insider, off-the-beaten-path view of what they do on One happy island?! The Aruba "Local Shortcut Series" launched with nearly 40 different locally guided videos focusing on Local Art & Music, Signature Cuisine and Aruba Adventurous side and included long-format webisodes as well as byte-sized video content for digital and social media. The "Local Shortcut Series" was integrated across YouTube, aruba.com and supported by digital ads, native content, social media, eCRM, and public relations.

What Lessons Have You Learned?

Understand your consumer's desires. Integrate diligently. Execute efficiently. As with all of our major initiatives, before we committed to execution, we lined up as many data points as we could about our consumer's behaviors and desires to make sure our messaging and creative was dialed in. While the teams' collective knowledge and instincts were steering us towards "going local", our research and analysis set the course and filled the sails. One key learning, and one we will absolutely carry forward, is to "leave no integration point unturned." We paid close attention to thinking through all outlets within our digital and partner ecosystem to maximize impact. From sales to eCRM to social to on-premise points of contact, each member of the team was tuned into the timing and purpose of each piece of content. Working closely with the SEO team helped boost our organic reach. Having seamless integration with the production and social teams gave us optimal orchestration and deployment of the videos. Working with relatively small budgets, we have learned that the rigor and intensity of the preproduction process is directly proportion to the quality of content we produced. In the "always-on" video hungry world of social media, having the one two punch of quality and quantity of video content allows for much more consistent and "shareable" video.

How Do You Measure Your Success?

Volume of views. Quality of engagement. Maximized ROI. The Aruba "Local Shortcut Series" was launched to tremendous consumer and trade buzz and has well exceeded all of our pre-determined success metrics...and even a few we weren't counting on! Using a cost effective combination of primarily owned and earned media, the content has had tremendous reach. More specifically: • With only 24

social posts over a 4-month period, we have received over 3.3 million video views, 35 thousand engagements and a total reach of 11.4 million people. • With no paid media support, our YouTube content has organically gathered nearly 50 thousand video views, with an impressive 96% favorability rating. • Our campaign landing page and sweepstakes page on aruba.com has seen over 70k unique visitors and nearly 15 thousand additions to our email database. • Our digital sponsored content featuring “Local Shortcuts” performed 3x higher than industry benchmarks and eCRM engagement performed 20% higher than average. • As an added bonus with significant reach, major hotel and airline partners loved the “Local Shortcuts” content so much, they incorporated it into their in-room, in-lobby and in-flight video screens...at no cost. • From a Press coverage standpoint, the “Local Shortcuts” captured 88 million unique views across 200+ publications including Reuters, Travel Agent Central and Yahoo! Finance.

Finalist

The Crane

1. Target and reach a new audience of travelers the perfect demographic for their property in an authentic and trusted way 2. Earn more revenue by capturing warm leads, and ultimately more direct bookings 3. Amplify other marketing strategies—such as social and the hotel website—with authentic, guest-created content The Crane chose Flip.to to amplify their marketing efforts. They aimed to target and reach an audience of potential future guests, the perfect demographic for their hotel in an authentic and trusted way. In addition to their existing methods of growing email lists, they were looking for an engaged database to market to, who had already been primed by people they know and trust. Since the friends and family of their current guests are often of the same demographic and geographical location and are like-minded, The Crane knew they were reaching the ideal target with Flip.to. In addition, The Crane aimed to boost their efforts on social media and reveal their property’s character from a unique point of view, including everything from its magical sense of seclusion to the famed Crane Beach. Touch points throughout the traveler journey allows guests to share their authentic stories about the hotel for introductions to travelers worldwide. As an added bonus, advocacy provided them with a constant new source of authentic guest-created content and higher levels of engagement with their brand.

What Lessons Have You Learned?

“The value of advocacy is huge—we’ve learned to push beyond the typical offer of the sun, sea, and sand by offering personal and powerful recommendations of friends and family. The authentic perspective of your guests is an incredibly effective add to content strategy and drives actionable results and quality traffic. There’s no better way to learn about a travel experience than from someone you know and trust.” — Eboni Phillips, Marketing and Communications Manager at The Crane

How Do You Measure Your Success?

“Flip.to has offered us the opportunity to track and measure the results of advocacy. In just five short months since launch, our resort has been personally introduced to 300,000 travelers worldwide. Our reach since August of 2016 has well-topped a quarter of a million, in addition to driving more than 29,000 unique site visitors, 2904 warm leads and 34 booked room nights. We have an ever-growing library of curated guest stories that have helped us win over new travelers.” — Eboni Phillips, Marketing and Communications Manager at The Crane

Finalist

Elegant Hotels Group

Repositioning Waves Hotel & Spa, our recently acquired property and newest addition to the Elegant Hotels Group, as a leading all-inclusive resort in Barbados and the Caribbean through dedicated sales and marketing campaigns.

What Lessons Have You Learned?

Thorough research and planning is key in order to reposition, rebrand and differentiate a challenging, underperforming product into a successful resort - successful both financially and brand reputation in the market and by guests. By our Sales & Marketing research and concept development and with the stunning renovations conducted on site, we were able to develop and execute a clear strategy and reposition Waves Hotel & Spa as a leading all-inclusive resort.

How Do You Measure Your Success?

We measure success through our financial growth, which Waves has exceeded our own expectations/budget by 20% for the first 6 months. As the property also had low service scores previously, a measure of success for us is the astounding growth on TripAdvisor as well as the guest satisfaction survey scores, with Waves consistently having the highest ranking scores across our group of hotels. It was also a great measure of success to have received our first accolade as one of the 25 Best All-Inclusive Resorts in the Caribbean for 2017.