

GENERATE REVENUE & AWARENESS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

CHALLENGE

Food and beverage is a major competitive advantage for the AAA Five Diamond Grand Velas Riviera Maya in Mexico, a point of differentiation from other luxury all-inclusive and European Plan resorts in the destination including the Mandarin Oriental, Banyan Tree and Rosewood Mayakoba. The challenge for KWE Partners was to jump start social media buzz among influencers in the culinary world, following a New York lunch for culinary and travel media, as well as create a new revenue stream for a usually low period after the New Year holiday.

OBJECTIVES

- Create social media buzz about the Grand Velas Riviera Maya's cuisine
- Devise an event that would pay for itself and generate sales in a low occupancy period following the Christmas/New Year holiday.
- Communicate more with user-generated food and beverage images/ videos for promotional use and conversation starters
- Develop new relationships with prominent food bloggers for ongoing food and beverage promotion

TACTICS

- Created a Bloggers Camp for active, influential food bloggers that combined professional development with fun, a mix that would appeal to food lovers, social media leaders and the media - a 5 day/4 night event that included sessions on the business of blogging, food photography and food styling, finding one's niche, building traffic for your blog, cooking demonstrations and wine tastings
- Enlisted social media influencers in food and beverage communities to give the event a pedigree and a compelling reason for followers to attend
- Made the event as economically accessible as possible, without compromising the resort's rate by:
 - Contacting food and equipment brands to grant partial scholarships to select attendees
 - Offering a slightly lower priced package for working bloggers
 - Offering a package at the rack rate for "foodies" and followers
- Created a dedicated Food Bloggers Camp blog and landing page for seminar leaders to promote the event to their followers
- Created a "Holiday Gift for Foodies" PR angle to generate additional awareness of the event with consumers
- Built pre- and live event buzz on Twitter with seminar leaders (who have large followings)
- Shared videos and images during the camp on Facebook and Twitter to keep the buzz going throughout the event week
- Developed a post-camp video contest for bloggers, a tactic to create continued sharing of their Grand Velas Riviera Maya experience with blog followers

RESULTS

- Sold over 46 packages, generating nearly \$60,000 in sales
- Generated more than 25 articles on the Camp to over 2.5 million unique visitors per month
- Event coverage received over 5.1 million impressions on Twitter to over 354,000 unique users
- Event coverage received 3.497 million views on Facebook
- Over 775 user generated photos of the event, resort and its food and beverage offerings were circulated
- Exceptional reviews of the resorts restaurants were received from seminar leaders, authorities
- The success generated new events for other Velas Resorts for the coming year (e.g. family cooking and crafting week, Chocolate Festival, TV appearances, recipe releases, etc.)