

Case Study: Brand Creation for Heritance



The Heritance strategy

STING Consultants associate company &Brand was behind the creation of the Heritance brand. &Brand is the only brand consulting company that is operating in this country

The company was retained by Aitken Spence and developed the Heritance brand which was launched in May 2006. Heritance Ahungalla replaced what was originally known as Triton Hotel.

"Whilst other hotel rebranding projects were done by international brand consultants we were able to use our local resources to develop what we believe is an extremely powerful brand" said Gunewardene.

When asked what was so unique about the new brand which they created Gunewardene explained that this was a fully integrated brand. " We approached this in a manner that would enable us to create a living brand that would be able to carry through into the future. To do so, we had to leverage on the current strengths of the hotel properties. So, our brand encompasses all aspects of the hotel from the hotel hardware (such as the hotel architecture) to the software (services) to the name, the visual identity and finally to the brand promise.

Therefore we went about developing a brand based on the strengths of the Aitken Spence hotels and what could be delivered to the customers. Having studied the portfolio of hotels, we identified common elements in the hotels which could be used to create a platform for a fully integrated brand.

Our objective at the outset was to create a brand with a relevant meaning which can then be translated into a unique proposition, and not just develop a name with little relevance. This way, we would be able to differentiate Heritance from the competition and stand out by offering a hospitality service that is truly unique.

The unique features of the hotels were the ability to integrate the hotel infrastructure into the physical environment where they were located as well as the ability to absorb the local culture that pervades around the hotel and bring it in to the hospitality that are offered to guests.

The naming process

When the architecture (or the hardware of the brand) is examined you will notice that it blends with the environment, Kandalama is virtually wrapped around the rock on which it is built and as for Triton, from the outside there is a stunning view where different elements of water are merged together - the pond, the pool and the sea to provide a seamless view to the horizon.

Then, when you looked at the service, this too has been absorbed from the local culture from each hotel location, and skillfully integrated into the hospitality that is on offer. This is the software of the brand. The welcome at each hotel mirrors the local customs, so does the dress, and the produce that is grown from the surrounding areas.

So, the way we see it, the hotel brand has inherited the culture and the environment of the location. Now in addition to that, you could add the long heritage of service that Aitken Spence Hotels have provided their guests.

So, the two key words that emerge from this thinking is HERITAGE and INHERITANCE.

The idea for the brand is therefore to merge heritage and inheritance to develop a unique name which captures the true essence of the brand : HERITANCE.

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The Heritance brand essence

Heritage is something that is passed down from preceding generation to another which is a custom, tradition or an attribute which is an immaterial possession.

The relevance of heritage to the hotel brand is that it denotes the standards that have been established based on the knowledge and experience that have been passed down. The Company has learnt from the past and intend to use this to build for the future. There is a proud past of distinguished service capability that can be linked back (through the parent company) to 140 years.

Inheritance is the material counter part of heritage. This is the bequeathing of the estates and assets which would then be passed down from one generation to another. It is a process of transmission of assets.

The relevance of inheritance to the brand is that, hotels have inherited the locality and environment in which they operate within. It is something that has been bequeathed. And it is up to the hotel to look after it, before passing it on to the next generation.

The brand also recognizes the individuality of the properties, based on the locality. This gives great flexibility of adapting the hotel to each location, whilst still linking them all together to form a consistent brand.

All the hotels which will carry the Heritance name will follow through on this important brand essence.

The brand proposition

Heritance encapsulates the service excellence that Aitken Spence and its hotels have inherited with its 140 year heritage of trust and reliability. It expresses the local flavour and warmth which only Aitken Spence can offer.

It is through this unique combination that Heritance Hotels offers a unique hospitality experience : "Where Tradition is Alive".

A living brand

"Where Tradition is Alive" is an active, vibrant, dynamic brand proposition. It enables the brand to be kept alive though all the things that we do, and it is a brand that can define the type of hotels that we should be building in the future.

Whilst Heritance captures the essence of all the qualities, it also calls for active involvement from everyone in the hotel to live and deliver the Heritance experience to guests, everyday.

