

Keen

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VELASSARU

Maldives for the next generation. How Keen's brand strategy pushes a Universal Resort above the crowd.



Overview

Universal Resorts pioneered tourism in the Maldives and over the past thirty years have played a pivotal role in transforming the nation from a little known sprinkling of fishing villages to one of the world's most famed luxury travel destinations. Today their resorts are renowned across the travel trade industry and amongst many travellers as experiences defined by elegance and beauty.

Following the immense success of the brand identities Keen developed for Universal Resort's sister company Per Aquum, Keen began to work in close partnership with Universal on many of their hospitality projects, helping to forge brand identities that reflect the unique character of each, including revising existing identities and working on new-build properties. With a longstanding partnership in hand, Universal approached Keen for strategizing the brand identity of their latest Maldivian resort, Velassaru.

The Challenge

As one of the world's most saturated resort markets, creating points of difference and standing out from the crowd is a major challenge for every Maldivian resort.

The Velassaru identity would need to compete with dozens of islands and would also need to have its own niche within the Universal Resorts portfolio. According to the brief, the Velassaru identity would also need to aim toward a younger or younger-in-spirit market than the existing Universal properties.

The Solution

Maldives undressed.

Keen created a contemporary minimalist identity that showcased the natural beauty and young, serene vibe of the island while also complementing the resort's architectural aesthetic.

Through its concept strategy sessions, Keen established four major character traits to drive the Brand DNA. Youthful – laid back and unpretentious. Undressed – minimalist, simple and organic. Fresh – the pure colours of the Maldives. Romance 2.0 – An updated, personalized take on romance to replace the clichéd storybook fairytale model.

Each of these four character traits, in combination with each other, were translated into the visual identity and tone of voice. The logo stands strong with thin sans serif type – clean and modern. Photography showcases the Maldives' pure colours and pristine setting, while the graphic colour scheme – a slightly darker palette of magenta, leaf green, sky blue and slate grey – adds a contemporary edge. The brand's tone of voice carries out the same personality through its contemporary and evocative writing style – powered by poetic collages of sensual imagery.

With a strong brand identity in hand, Velassaru is empowered with a valuable asset to support its 2009 launch. Travel trade feedback on initial pre-launch marketing collateral has been extremely positive, and both Keen and Universal expect high bookings

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