

CASE STUDY

DEISS
CONSULTING AND
TRAINING GROUP

HOTEL EMPOWERS ZAMBIAN ARTISTS

INTRODUCTION

The Hotel & Resorts chain is a leading global hospitality enterprise comprised of three hotel companies and boasts approximately 4,300 hotels in over 100 countries and territories worldwide. With 19 unique brands across every chain scale segment, from economy to luxury, the hotels suits the needs of developers and guests in every market, as each brand offers its personality and style.

OVERVIEW

The hotel is in the heart of the bustling city and is one of Lusaka's preferred hotels. It is a magnificent structure with its elegant architecture. However, when the hotel was finally opened to the public, something seemed amiss. Despite its grandeur, the hotel lacked local charm and character.

The hotel manager is a shrewd businessman with a keen eye for detail. He realised that for the hotel to truly thrive, it needed to embrace the spirit of the city. Determined to rectify this oversight, the hotel manager embarked on a quest to infuse the building's interior design with the local features it so desperately lacked.

He sought the help of local artisans and craftsmen, inviting them to share their expertise and ideas. Together, they brainstormed ways to incorporate the city's unique heritage into the hotel's design.

Intricate murals depicting local features adorned the interior design, while local flora was carefully planted in the hotel's garden.

The restaurant and lobby became exquisite with artwork created by talented local painters and decorated with locally crafted curtains, exuding an air of elegance and rustic charm.

As word spread about the hotel's transformation, tourists and locals alike flocked to experience its newfound charm. While ensuring branding identity and compliance with its headquarters, the hotel became a hub of cultural exchange where visitors could immerse themselves in the country's traditions.

THE PROJECT (SOLUTION)

Though the hotel had "very good" guest reviews, there was still massive competition.

Since the hotel manager constantly sought to innovate the interior design and identify ways to sustain growth and remain competitive, he took advantage of DCT's (Deiss Consulting and Training) hospitality business advisory and project management service, which helped shape the idea of an art exhibition that became part of their larger strategic growth plan.

Project management in the hotel industry is a well-known and systematic approach to hospitality that involves organising tasks, meeting deadlines, and creating an environment that attracts and retains guests.

In their discussions about cultural tourism entertainment and their tremendous passion for art and people, the hotel manager and DCT managing director Marcus Deiss became pioneers in the Zambian CCI (Creative and Cultural Industry) by assembling young, talented Zambian contemporary artists to yield an irreplaceable experience for visitors and guests through a Cultural Heritage Art Exhibition held at the hotel premises.

DCT selected four artists to exhibit their artworks, thus inspiring innovation in preserving, promoting, and protecting cultural heritage while enhancing the hotel's business performance and ultimately, the local tourism economy.

Through the Cultural Heritage Art Exhibition, the hotel and DCT provided a platform for youth to nurture their artistic abilities, foster self-expression, and foster personal growth while helping artists earn an additional income with their artworks sold at the exhibition.

The objective of the Cultural Heritage Art Exhibition was not only to support and uplift young Zambian artists who were marginalised in the CCI but also to create more traffic to the hotel while entertaining and retaining hotel guests.

BACKGROUND

"Tourists travel to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present." It was with this vision in their minds that the hotel manager and Marcus initiated the Cultural Heritage Art Exhibition to showcase young individuals' artistic expressions and raise awareness of the importance of cultural heritage.

Art plays not only a vital role in the creation of jobs, but it likewise encourages tourism and boosts revenue for local businesses.

Research conducted by Tabetando in 2020 showed that in 2019, Zambia's tourism industry contributed 7% of GDP (USD 1,7 million) and 7.2% of total employment (469,000 jobs), whereas international visitors spent USD 849 million, representing 10% of Zambia's total exports.

Cultural heritage is a part of the solution to the challenges in the CCI and a powerful asset that requires urgent awareness. The UN estimates that the creative economy generates an annual revenue of over \$2 trillion and accounts for nearly 50 million jobs worldwide. Moreover, a 2019 UN report estimated that 8.8% of Zambians worked in the CCI, versus 2.5% in 2010.

Art is also crucial in preserving, promoting, and protecting cultural heritage when we can see how people today in some regions have continued to strive, cultivate, and consume what the rest of us have forgotten or didn't even know existed.

THE BIG IDEAS

- To explore how the Zambian hospitality industry can achieve sustainability through the development of holistic cultural tourism frameworks focused on cultural heritage initiatives.
- To create a platform that gives the hospitality industry across Lusaka a single, personalised access point and database of artists and artisans needed for customised interior artistic work.
- Make collaborating on projects with the CCI more efficient, effective, and enjoyable by being intuitive and easy to hire.
- Drive cultural heritage value, engagement, and learning in the hospitality industry.

- Make it easy for the hospitality industry to receive timeless insights and best practice methods in the Zambian cultural tourism industry.

RESULTS AND BENEFITS

One of the promising outcomes of the exhibition was the ability for hotel guests to be entertained during their short stay and for visitors to connect with local artists.

Beyond the display of Zambian artistic talent, the exhibition allowed artists to deliver a message to inspire innovative ideas focused on cultural heritage.

Through the exhibition project, an artist network was established to share best practice methods and act as a pioneer and catalyst in the hospitality industry that fosters Zambia's cultural heritage through art exhibitions.

With this project for the regional call focused on artwork dedicated to this theme, it was not only a decent concept but a symbol of hope and renewal for other hospitality organisations to contribute to the acceleration of cultural tourism business growth via an improved understanding and implementation of youth art exhibitions, as it can also facilitate the exchange of knowledge between tourism businesses and tourism-focused academics.

This case study is a practical example of how local hotels can differentiate themselves while contributing to further developing and retaining cultural tourism.

ABOUT DEISS CONSULTING AND TRAINING

As a social impact consulting firm, Deiss Consulting and Training (DCT) provides consulting and training services for organisations to ensure financial sustainability while creating long-lasting and sustainable change that positively impacts society.

DCT is a movement for excellence that broadly addresses business growth while finding solutions to social, economic, and environmental challenges.

With over 30 years of combined background associated with social economics, including expertise in business development, business models, and training design, we collaborate to innovate, design, create, and implement optimisation initiatives for organisations.

The DCT management and partnership team consists of strategists, professors, business developers, project managers, executives, and other skilled professionals with extensive years in the IT and ICT industry, including the hospitality industry, special education and human capital teaching.