

Making it Unforgettable with “WOW!” Moments

How We Took an Incentive Experience to the Next Level



About the Client

Our client is a leading multi-brand provider of information technology solutions to business, government, education, and healthcare customers around the world.

The Challenge

Our client hosts an annual incentive program for top sales performers to gather and celebrate their wins from the previous year. The audience includes employees and executive leadership from across the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. A core challenge of this program was to make it the most brand-immersive experience ever, while creating personalized moments and unique surprises throughout.

At least half of the attendees had won this trip before, so delivering wow-sized moments was very important. Our client's incentive program was initially scheduled for April 2023 in Playa Mujeres, Mexico. Unfortunately, it was delayed due to a hotel fire which occurred months before we were due to arrive. While it was a setback, we're accustomed to rolling with the changes and keeping people informed and motivated amidst a delay. (This is why a [sound crisis management plan](#) is vital.)

The Solution

A Brand-Immersive Experience

One pre-trip site visit was planned solely to review the creative needs and opportunities onsite for brand expression. We wanted to create “wow” moments for attendees with strategic branding throughout the hotel to ensure winners felt the impact of their achievements.

Personalized “Surprise and Delight” Experiences

AWE-INSPIRING ARRIVAL: As each winner entered the hotel, they were immediately greeted by a billboard welcoming them in. The large glass sliding door entrances were fully wrapped and branded with the program's theme: “It's Your Time.”



INCREDIBLE HALL OF FAME: Immediately in the lobby, each winner was stunned to see a gallery featuring their headshot along with other winners displayed on the walls of the atrium. This was the first time the hotel had used the wall in this way and the Hall of Fame was a whopping 14.5 x 31 ft. with 70 glass panels each with a photo or program graphic. 252 winners were displayed on this wall, with a separate special gallery for the Crystal winners.

RECOGNITION ALL AROUND: We filled each room with 7' signs and retractable banners. We even had an in-hotel TV channel welcoming guests upon their room arrival. Wherever winners looked, they were reminded that it was all about them!

“...it seemed like there was a greater sense of pride in honoring our top sellers this year than in prior years. The collage of photos and the callouts for 10+ winners (myself included) really filled me with a sense of pride,” one attendee said.



NIGHT SKY SURPRISE: We brought surprise and delight to a whole new level with a nighttime drone show during the welcome reception. Winners were stunned when they looked up to see the drones begin to form fun icons, the company logo, and the theme of the program. It was an electrifying arrival experience — a special treat that set the tone for what was to come.



Splashy Activities

PRIVATE POOL PARTY: For an uber-exclusive experience, we set up a private pool party for our winners to come and go as they pleased. The entire area was fully branded (even the towels!). There was a relaxed pool party vibe with a DJ and beverages sipped from fresh coconuts.

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PLENTY OF ADVENTURES: To provide winners with options, we offered a variety of immersive activities tailored to different interests. They could select from an exciting Mayan jungle tour, relaxing Isla Mujeres beach club, catamaran sail, snorkel, spa, and golf club.

Other interactive elements were featured at the welcome reception, including a Mexican folkloric tradition, “Pajaros de Fortuna” (Birds of Fortune), where birds pulled paper trails with fortunes. Plus, there was an adult-sized branded swing which was a perfect photo opportunity. Winners enjoyed the tie-in to local culture and opportunities to create lasting memories to share later with friends, family, and coworkers (hello, FOMO!)



Engagement Communications

Creating a motivating theme is key to a successful incentive program, and this was no exception. “It’s Your Time” was about celebrating those who have made it happen and giving them their moment to shine. We created this theme to recognize the best of the best. The cream of the crop. The ones who go above and beyond. It’s time for them to feel appreciated, recognized, and rewarded. And that’s what this idea was all about...making them the heroes of this special experience. Each of the communications winners received emphasized this to ensure they felt it.

Unique, Custom Gifts

Each winner received a welcome gift containing brightly-colored alebrijes (sculptures of mythical creatures) with a themed notecard and a personalized message congratulating them for their achievement.

The onsite Nike experience allowed winners to define their style and make it personal. It was a favorite of attendees — it was rated the highest among all gifts they received. People love to customize their footwear and make something truly unique!



Awards with a Personal Touch

Awards for the primary winners were delivered to their hotel rooms, boxed with a card explaining the inaugural award and a personal handwritten note from each division's Vice President.

The esteemed “coworkers of the month” received beautiful canvas-stylized portraits of themselves with flower arrangements as a surprise in their rooms after the reception. These vibrant awards were taken back and displayed in offices so others could recognize their achievements too.



The Outcome

Overall, winners were delighted with the brand immersive experience because it made them feel immediately welcomed and special every day. Many commented that this reward was an experience unlike any other.

The feedback from participants speaks for itself. Post-program evaluations reported that the quality of the program was rated at 99.47% overall. Many repeat winners indicated it was the best incentive they ever won. One said, “Potentially Best President’s Achievement trip in my 24 years and if not #1, definitely the top 3.” Another stated, “This trip absolutely rejuvenated me and motivates me to win this honour again! This was my best experience at the company in my almost 10 years!”

Everyone took selfies by the Wall of Fame and one winner commented, “The picture collage and drone show were really nice touches. Very impressive. It seemed like something out of an episode of the show Billions. Very cool stuff.”

Our client said:

“Words cannot describe how great this President’s trip was for everyone. I can go on for days, but this trip and group was special, and I cannot thank you enough for MAKING IT HAPPEN.”

– J.D., Managing Director

“Your dedication, creativity, and commitment have been the cornerstone of our success... Thank you once again for the outstanding contributions and dedication you and your team bring to our partnership each and every day. I am truly honored to be part of such an exceptional team.”

– J. L., Director- Field Marketing, Events & Experience