

Bahrain Tourism Brand Development Strategy



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1. Bahrain Country Brand Development Strategy

The purpose of this document is to ensure the new Bahrain Country Brand is deployed as far and wide as possible. While acknowledging that activation and campaigns, that will help advance the cause of tourism for the Kingdom, need to be targeted to be effective, the higher the profile of the tourism brand, the greater the achievement of fame, familiarity and preference for Bahrain.

Our task is to increase the number of inward tourist arrivals into Bahrain, and to encourage these visitors to stay longer and to spend more. At the same time, it is critical that investment in Bahrain's tourism industry increases. Primarily the Kingdom needs to attract larger flows of foreign direct investment (FDI). But it's also important to encourage local investment and to raise the profile and relevance of the country to increase airlift and visitor numbers through growing areas such as the cruise market and in business tourism, including the MICE sector.

These objectives must be achieved within an over-arching strategy focused on immediate results, but one that also lays the foundations for future activity across an increasing number of countries, market segments and audiences.

In addition, Bahrain requires a tourism brand strategy that makes the most of a limited budget and plays to the strength of the brand idea - that Bahrain makes a trip more personal and that it is a place you don't just visit, you feel.

2. The Bahrain Country Brand Mark

Although developed as an identity for tourism purposes, "Our. Yours. Bahrain" has the potential to be seen as a public-facing country brand for the Kingdom as a whole, used in a wide variety of circumstances.

It is in the interest of Bahrain that this occurs.

The new Bahrain Country Brand humanises what Bahrain stands for. It will help associate every message that comes from Bahrain with the generosity and openness of Bahrainis. It will differentiate Bahrain from other nations in the GCC while underscoring the friendly and welcoming experience that Bahrain offers every visitor.

The Bahrain Country Brand Mark should therefore be used as much as possible.

When it is relevant or useful to brand or co-brand a message, platform or setting, "Our. Yours. Bahrain" would ideally always appear.

In fact, the logo lock-up of "Our. Yours. Bahrain" is the perfect way to "author" anything that is Bahraini.



The Bahrain Country Brand Mark (cont)

There are detailed usage guidelines as to how to use the Bahrain Country Brand Mark. The principle rule is that as a positioning statement for the entire country, "Our. Yours. Bahrain" should appear last in any logo sequence, literally acting as a final signature on all that proceeds it.

The only exception is when it is used with the Bahrain EDB logo for FDI purposes, where the economic development of the Kingdom and the agency behind it are to the fore.

3. Consumer and FDI Usage: Making the Brand Mean More

The Bahrain Country Brand is flexible enough to be used in both consumer and business communications. In all cases, the new brand has the ability to reinforce and expand knowledge of the Kingdom, to attract both visitors and investors.

The following pages explain how it should be done.

Consumers

"Ours. Yours. Bahrain" acts as an invitation. More than just a welcome, it seeks to encapsulate a sense of belonging and the relaxed, social vibe of Bahrain.

It also allows us to frame everything that Bahrain offers in a mutual manner. It reveals what matters to Bahrainis and therefore the positive intent and generosity that lie behind what is being offered to visitors. When this is immediately coupled with the rational or emotional end-benefit that visitors experience, what is unique about Bahrain is made clear.

This approach should ideally be applied to whatever is being communicated within the tourism sector. Whether it be the cultural and heritage highlights of the Kingdom (The Fort, Dilmun Burial Mounds), events (The Formula One Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix, Shop Bahrain, Spring of Culture), or specific components of the hospitality sector (hotels, restaurants, tour operators, retail).

The "Ours. Yours. Bahrain" formula is also sufficiently adaptable to be part of the consumer-facing communications of other high-profile travel and tourism-related entities such as Bahrain Duty Free, Bahrain Airport Company, Marhaba and Bahrain Airport Services. In these cases, the manner in which customer satisfaction stems from the delivery of services in a particular Bahraini way (often by Bahrainis themselves) is what needs to be communicated.

Investors (FDI)

The Bahrain Tourism brand provides a "reason to believe" - additional evidence that the word "friendly" in "Business Friendly Bahrain" is based on a truth that underpins why Bahrain behaves and feels different.

At a macro level, therefore, "Ours. Yours. Bahrain" speaks to a deeper level of personal and bespoke service that FDI decision-makers can expect to receive when dealing with the EDB and other authorities in the Kingdom. The desire to have an on-going, supportive and mutually rewarding relationship is something that Bahrain offers foreign direct investors. The country's tourism brand, though developed in a different context, says as much.

Specifically when it comes to attracting investment into Bahrain's tourism sector, "Ours. Yours. Bahrain" is a powerful way to highlight the commercial advantages that the country offers. It helps to make every benefit that an investor gains in Bahrain (from reduced recruitment and training costs and 100% foreign ownership that is not free-zone dependent, through access to existing large and growing markets in close proximity to Bahrain (KSA, Kuwait, UAE and Qatar) and brand new infrastructure) part of the bigger promise that the Kingdom makes. The duality of the brand line, and the creative idea that's been developed to convey any number of messages, makes a connection between what Bahrain does and how investors prosper as a result. And it can do this at the most granular level.

4. Key Target Audiences and Messaging

There are seven audiences that Bahrain must address:

- Consumer (Leisure)
- Consumer (Business)
- The MICE Industry
- The travel Trade
- Potential Investors
- Bahrainis
- Media/Commentators

Consumer (Leisure)

(A) GCC Nationals

In the short term, the main task Bahrain faces is to protect and grow tourism arrivals amongst GCC Nationals, particularly from KSA and Kuwait.

In order to encourage longer stays and higher per capita expenditure, a key focus should be families, with woman being key-influencers and decision makers.

For this audience Bahrain's main messages are:

- Family-friendly
- Relaxed, accessible, effortless and easy
- A unique atmosphere and personal touch (in contrast to other destinations) e.g. cafe culture, friendly, more intimate events and attractions
- Everything delivered at a more human scale
- A calendar of activities and events (to encourage lengthened and additional visits)
- Value for money

Consumer (Leisure)

(B) GCC Ex-pats

For the ex-pat community, Bahrain represents a truer taste of Arabia and an easy-to-access, almost instant, place to relax on their doorstep, in contrast to the work-focused pressure cooker of life in KSA, Kuwait, the UAE or Qatar.

For this audience Bahrain's main messages are:

- Relaxed, accessible and effortless
- Another dimension to your time in the GCC (culture, more personal and authentic)
- The easiest way to take a break
- Special offers and packages

Consumer (Leisure)

(C) Leisure travellers already passing through the region from outside the GCC

The easiest way to expand Bahrain's footprint to target visitors from outside the GCC is via the millions of people who travel through Bahrain to connect to other destinations, specifically on Gulf Air but as a way to protect airlift from KL and CX as well.

For this audience Bahrain's main messages are:

- Stop-over in Bahrain for an exceptional value break
- Add another dimension to your trip
- Make your journey more relaxing in the most relaxed destination in the Gulf

Consumer (Business)

The task here is to encourage business travellers (almost certainly non-GCC) to stay on longer after a business trip ("bleisure") as well as create understanding and preference for potential participants in MICE activity in Bahrain (consumer pull):

For this audience Bahrain's main messages are:

- Bahrain makes it easy to relax and reward yourself
- The allure of island life
- Lots to do in a compact, accessible, uncrowded country

MICE

For MICE organisers, Bahrain represents a new destination, with the promise of less-jaded, more enthused participants whose experience in Bahrain will feel less corporate and more authentic.

For this audience Bahrain's main messages are:

- A destination that will exceed expectations (yours and your clients)
- Infrastructure, facilities and support at a more human scale
- An enthusiasm to work with organisers in a more personalised and bespoke way
- Happier clients

The Travel Trade

The travel trade want ways in which they can add value to what they offer their clients. They seek assistance in being able to sell a destination and are also looking for incentives to make the advocacy of one option over another worthwhile to them financially.

For this audience Bahrain's main messages are:

- A different tourism offer, delivered at a more human scale, that your clients will love
- Bahrain keeps on getting better (the ability to help those in the GCC continually view Bahrain afresh)
- A commitment to the trade and an incentive scheme (be it free fam trips, loyalty rewards or cash-back) which says if you look out for us, we'll look out for you

Investors

ROI and ease of doing business are key.

For this audience Bahrain's main messages are:

- New momentum (airport modernisation; other infrastructure and promotional commitments) and the unique ability to tap into tourism growth from KSA/into Qatar given Bahrain's location
- A support structure in place which means lower cost of doing business (recruitment and training; set-up assistance)
- Examples of successful investments to date. Case studies and advocates from the sector to re-assure and de-risk

Bahrainis

We need to bring the people of Bahrain on side and keep them enthusiastic about the prospects of the country's tourism industry.

For this audience Bahrain's main messages are:

- Bahrain is unique and you make it so
- Celebrate the best of Bahrain and make visitors feel they're part of our family
- Help us make Bahrain even more visitor-friendly

Media/Commentators

We want, as a minimum, to receive a neutral hearing from industry commentators and journalists. At best, Bahrain would be seen as an up and coming destination that you should visit now.

For this audience Bahrain's main messages are:

- Bahrain is a gem that's worth visiting
- A trip to the Gulf is incomplete if it doesn't include Bahrain
- There's new energy and determination in Bahrain's tourism industry and it deserves to go from strength to strength

5. Using the brand to drive messaging

In all cases, the "Ours. Yours" couplet should be the entry point for conveying the messages listed previously. They provide a headline from which more detailed messaging can flow. They also establish the tone of communication from Bahrain. This needs to feel personal and conversational. It also places the end-benefit that Bahrain gives the people we're targeting up-front.

For consumer communications, "Ours. Yours" would reference the Bahrain attribute followed by the experience the visitor gained, be it comfort, relaxation, bliss, bargains, awe or exhilaration.

In business to business communications, the commercial advantage would be highlighted, for example, profitability, lower costs, better market access etc.

6. Partnerships and Amplification

One of the strengths of "Ours. Yours. Bahrain" is that it naturally speaks in the first person. It therefore lends itself to being the voice of any tourism stakeholder within the Kingdom. It can become their way to talk with customers they need to engage and sustain. From the outset, it sets up the basis of an on-going relationship.

"Ours. Yours. Bahrain" is an "open source" idea in that anyone should be permitted to use it as a branding device and as a guide to how to communicate - personalised, engaging and never only about what Bahrain wants to say about itself. It should leave room for the visitor to get involved and play their part.

There are three immediate areas where "Ours. Yours. Bahrain" could be used to involve partners as a group.

An "Ours. Yours. Bahrain" Steering Committee

Workshops conducted in Bahrain revealed that there was both commitment and enthusiasm from key stakeholders to be involved in an on-going dialogue with the Tourism Ministry. Formalising a system whereby vocal and influential players in the Bahrain tourism sector are invited to help spread the use of "Ours. Yours. Bahrain" and the thinking and messages that underpin it would be invaluable.

It is important to put in place ways to make the community feel they have an involvement in the campaign, and that their actions are crucial to its success.

A Luxury Initiative

"Ours. Yours. Bahrain" could come to stand for something particularly relevant in the GCC and wider Middle East. "Ours. Yours." could be used to signify an extra level of personal attention and pampering that appeals to the premium traveller. Helping to position Bahrain as a place where a visitor receives a higher level of service, tailored to their needs, at every stage of their trip, could further help Bahrain to stand out.

Gulf Air are already the only airline to provide a private chef in Business Class on all long-haul flights. It was also the first airline to place nannies on board its planes. Similarly, the thirty minute touch-down to taxi BAH capability (and the norm of a ten minute curbside to gate experience when leaving the Kingdom) already show what Bahrain offers the more discerning and time-poor traveller - one who is in fact happy to pay a premium for exceptional service.

As part of a partnership/amplification initiative, there might be value in bringing together the best of Bahrain's offer (Falcon Gold, The Four Seasons, Marhaba, leading restaurants) to highlight the elite experiences offered by the Kingdom.

Nationwide CRM and Loyalty

The promise of "Ours. Yours. Bahrain" is a strong basis on which to build a long-term, data-driven reward and incentive programme for visitors to the Kingdom. It's equally a powerful mechanism to secure partners and amplify our message. Even if initially just a trial scheme for selected partner participants and invitation-only customers (the likely targets of a luxury "Elite Bahrain" club, maybe) it could prove an ideal way to bring partners on board while handing them a practical resource to target with a broader, more relevant 'visit Bahrain' message.

6. Channel Strategy

Ours. Yours - a brand idea as a channel strategy.

"Ours. Yours" is about dialogue, not monologue. It suggests Bahrain communicates in a style that is mutual and interactive. It's therefore perfectly positioned to come alive in digital and social media channels where people can contribute, share and feed back.

Wherever possible, these channels should be our starting point. Bahrain is seeking a relationship with actual and potential visitors to the Kingdom. The ideal is to activate the involvement of people being targeted from the moment they encounter the brand.

That said, there will be cases and circumstances that require more traditional means of communications. Messages, and the channels through which they are seen and heard, will be "broadcast" at a more mass level, often in a static or less dynamic and reciprocal manner. Even here, we would ideally find ways to draw in our audience, via a call to action, a means to find out more, or by making an immediate link with Bahrain's "owned" digital and social media platforms.

In terms of the specific roles and responsibilities of different channels, "Ours. Your. Bahrain" would make best use of them as described on the following pages.

Traditional 'Above-the-Line' TV, Radio, Out-of-Home and Print

As a means of generating mass awareness and reach. To gain stature and fame and to be seen to be seen - creating a sense of momentum, feeling contemporary and "of the moment". Even here, Bahrain needs to use imagery and language that will make the country feel human and accessible

Digital Display

Though highly targeted and measurable from a media perspective, and able to be personalised to some degree, messaging is still at a more general level given the cost of generating multiple pieces of creative. Nevertheless, the dynamic and editorial-aligned nature of digital should allow Bahrain to connect with audiences' mind-sets and drive them to our owned channels using techniques popularised, for example, by Outbrain and Taboola.

Social Media

The critical media channel for "Ours. Yours". Whether through Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest or any number of emerging platforms, this is where Bahrain should naturally be encouraging people to place videos, pictures, posts and questions, to tag them appropriately, and create an ever-expanding group of fans, followers and advocates.

"Ours. Yours" must encourage user-generated content. The communication idea will be that much more authentic if the truth that lies behind our message is revealed by actual visitor experience and their enthusiasm to record and share it. Bahrain's use of Social Media needs to celebrate and incentivise its creation.

Exhibitions and Collateral

Bahrain should aim to live the promise of "Ours. Yours" by making how it appears at trade and consumer events, and presents its case in brochures and other documents, engaging and interactive. If the message is "Ours. Yours", the delivery cannot be just about "our Bahrain". Though this might represent a challenge, it requires Bahrain possibly to embrace technology and innovative communication methods which have the potential to become another hallmark for the brand.

It is worth always asking how we are helping the audiences that are being targeted engage with Bahrain. If the answer is that this is not happening, another platform through which to communicate might be warranted.

OURS. YOURS.
بحرين Bahrain