

Club Med's Laura Hendel on finding focus in pandemic recovery

By [Emily Stander](#)

10 Aug 2022

We are in the process of moving back to normal after Covid-19 - but it is undeniably still around, demanding a new way of life. Laura Hendel, marketing manager at hotel company Club Med, moved to South Africa in 2018 - grabbing an opportunity she believed she couldn't let go of.



Image supplied: Laura Hendel, marketing manager for Club Med in Southern Africa

“French born and bred; I seized every opportunity to live abroad from a young age. Experiencing and understanding various lifestyles, challenges and habits of people around the world is incredibly enriching,” she said. “Being marketing lead for an iconic brand such as Club Med in a fast-growing market like South Africa is captivating.”

However, she joined Club Med as Covid hit - and because it demanded border closure, the hotel and tourism industry had to adapt.

“Aside from the emotional roller-coaster of borders openings and closures as waves and variants fluctuated, keeping in touch with our clients’ pulse with limited means was a challenge,” Hendel said. “However, that encouraged us to be more creative, refocus on our strengths and take the time to adjust where we could do even better.”



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This means that hotel companies like Club Med had to find new ways to connect with their customers. Even though Covid has been around for a while now, we are still dealing with the aftermath of the hits the tourism economy took - and Hendel used her marketing expertise to make their adaptation successful.

Marketing in times of trouble

The #Parentsfriendly campaign was one solution that Hendel found could make a difference.

“Our daily lives are demanding, and we are all trying to be at the top of our game without compromising any aspect of our lives: whether it's being a great parent, a fun-loving partner and friend, as well as a reliable team player for our team and peers at work. The mental load is real,” she said.

Going on leave and having a relaxed holiday time is essential to the mental health of anybody who has responsibilities to look after on a day-to-day basis. However, this also applies to kids in the family.

“Being a mom of a 16-month-old, I cannot express enough the need for everyone in the family to have a relaxed holiday when going on leave. We should not have to choose who will be the happiest today, kids or parents? Or maybe one parent only, while the other entertains the kids?” Hendel expressed.

#Parentsfriendly looks at the stresses of being a parent and aims to help parents let go of those stresses while on family vacations. Parents are able to have their holiday the way they want to, without feeling guilty about leaving their kids to do things that enrich their lives.



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“We are flooded with parenting advice and we all do our best daily. Holidays are for reconnecting and creating privileged

moments out of the ordinary. Every day, while on holiday, kids, parents, grandparents and friends can all live their best lives on their own and regroup to create memories together whenever they wish to," Hendel said.

As such, #Parentsfriendly takes a new look at what family holidays mean - especially in a time where we have found a new appreciation for family and spending time together.

Marketing as connection

At the end of the day, the campaign is another example of how marketing and branding can find a way to help people connect.

The key to fresh and meaningful messaging for brands lies in speaking to the needs of your audience. Especially now, effective marketing means making way for opportunities that consumers can grab that help enrich their lives - whether it be helping parents better understand their relationship with their children or understanding the toll of not taking time to rejuvenate your mental health.

At the end of the day, we are all looking for some positivity, and sometimes guidance, and this is where marketing campaigns that make a meaningful change can truly achieve success.

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

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