



DISCOVER

Puerto Rico

BRAND HISTORY OVERVIEW

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INTRODUCTION

BUILDING A BRAND

A destination's brand is a perception and belief that lives in the hearts and minds of travelers. A brand is a promise. When you deliver on that promise, you build trust. Do it time and time again, and you gain loyalty. Loyal travelers become evangelists and influencers, generating new business and giving you the opportunity to further reinforce your promise. A great brand is a promise kept.

The approach to re-defining and re-positioning Puerto Rico's brand was a research-driven, results-focused process that began with an extensive "discovery" phase and continues today through a never-ending process of review—dissecting and refining the brand based on market feedback and results.



This thoughtful, methodical process has allowed us to achieve the following:

- Understand the perception of the brand prior to the formation of the DMO
- Understand visitor sentiment and the primary motivators for selecting a destination
- Define the target traveler segments most likely to respond to our brand proposition and identify source markets that offer immediate and long-term growth potential
- Understand how to speak to each of our audiences in a way that resonates through all stages of the travel planning process in order to turn “dreaming” into “action”
- Understand the competitive landscape to develop strategies to differentiate Puerto Rico through our unique brand promise
- Deliver a cohesive, meaningful brand strategy that is both specific to the distinctive qualities of the destination and sufficiently broad to be effective when translated across countries and cultures around the world
- Build diverse, individual campaigns that respond to the challenges and opportunities of the moment while remaining rooted in a consistent brand position
- Measure how sentiment changes over time as the brand gains equity



A brand is not a campaign or a tagline. A campaign is one reflection, or expression, of a brand. Coca-Cola has deployed hundreds of campaigns and dozens of taglines over the past century, but its brand promise has remained consistent. Iconic destination brands like Visit California and Pure Michigan have done the same. Creative executions and calls to action can – and must – change to reflect the times, but they must stay rooted in that unique brand promise.

In the following pages, Discover Puerto Rico outlines the story of “how” (and, more importantly, “why”) we developed the current brand strategy for the Island of Puerto Rico and how that strategy has come to life through award-winning campaigns driving awareness, consideration and visitation to the Island.



DISCOVER PUERTO RICO'S

BRAND OBJECTIVES

Rebuilding Puerto Rico's brand following the public health challenge of Zika, a financial crisis, and two deadly and destructive hurricanes came with unique challenges. Discover Puerto Rico (then the Puerto Rico DMO) was officially created July 1, 2018, and was born working against the clock. The visitor economy was bottoming out, hotels were reopening with fractional occupancy, the meetings and convention pipeline was completely dry, and media coverage of the Island focused on disaster instead of recovery. On top of all that, initial research showed minimal awareness of Puerto Rico as a destination and a neutral consumer sentiment on the brand.

Consumers in our traditional advertising markets were more likely to associate Hawaii to the tagline "Island of Enchantment" than Puerto Rico.

There was a need to reclaim the Island's narrative and differentiate it from the "sea of sameness" in the Caribbean.

IMPROVE AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF THE ISLAND'S POST-HURRICANE READINESS FOR LEISURE AND GROUP TRAVEL.

COMBAT MISINFORMATION.

DRIVE INCREASED ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW BRAND MESSAGING/CONTENT.

CREATE A BRAND POSITION THAT WAS PROVEN TO DIFFERENTIATE PUERTO RICO FROM ITS COMPETITORS.

INCREASE VISITATION AND SPEND AND BUILD THE PIPELINE FOR MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS.

BRANDING STARTS WITH RESEARCH

CREATING A COMMON UNDERSTANDING

With the consumer brand changing with political administrations every four years for more than four decades, we needed a base understanding of where Puerto Rico stood in the minds of consumers and stakeholders. We embraced an exhaustive qualitative and quantitative process that began immediately upon formation of Discover Puerto Rico, aimed at achieving the following:

- Benchmark awareness, familiarity, appeal and likelihood to visit among domestic and global leisure and business audiences.
- Explore and identify Puerto Rico's brand associations, perceptions and most valued attributes.
- Gauge Puerto Rico's competitive landscape and identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Determine the traveler personas, segments and markets that represent the most potential for Puerto Rico.
- Understand desired travel experiences—both physical and emotional—in Puerto Rico and the drivers that generate traveler interest.

LEVERAGING EXISTING INTELLIGENCE

We began by reviewing past marketing plans and the limited Puerto Rico-specific research reports that were available, which dated back to well before Hurricane Maria. We also reviewed existing media plans (including target audiences and key markets, creative and marketing materials, geographic analyses and social media performance).

At a macro level, Discover Puerto Rico tapped into the industry research available through the top research firms in travel and tourism, combing through reports from Destination Analysts, Strategic Marketing & Research Insights, Longwoods International and Tourism Economics to understand how current consumer sentiment, interests and motivators mapped to Puerto Rico's existing tourism product.

ROBUST INDEPENDENT BRAND RESEARCH

While historical reports and general consumer research provided a level of context and understanding, to develop a data-driven brand strategy we had to embark on custom research to get a thorough understanding of awareness, sentiment and opportunity around the brand and the destination, as well as how the brand stacked up against competitors.

Discover Puerto Rico partnered with two of the industry's leading research firms to understand consumer sentiment around Puerto Rico as a travel destination as well as local stakeholders. Both qualitative and quantitative research with Strategic Marketing & Research Insights, as well as Destination Analysts provided a wealth of data about the existing image of the destination, its position within the competitive set, as well as the best messages for brand development.

Destination  Analysts

 insights
Strategic Marketing and Research

DETERMINING EXISTING PERCEPTIONS

The quantitative survey of consumers in potential target markets in the U.S. clearly showed that there was little familiarity with the Island as a tourism destination. Only 26% of travelers indicated that they knew “a lot or a fair amount about the destination.” In the initial evaluation of Puerto Rico’s position, only 15% of consumers in these target markets were likely to visit the Island in the next 12 months.

Consumer testing included both an exploration of product and personality attributes for Puerto Rico. It was clear that consumer perceptions of the Island’s product was strong, with more than half of the attributes tested garnering strong ratings. The strongest product ratings centered around scenic beauty, beaches, music, outdoor recreation and cultural experiences. There were far fewer personality attributes that were considered strong for Puerto Rico. However, those garnering the highest ratings from consumers included beautiful, colorful, lively and authentic.

LIVELY
COLORFUL **BEACHES** **MUSIC**
OUTDOOR RECREATION
CULTURAL EXPERIENCES **AUTHENTIC**
BEAUTIFUL **SCENIC BEAUTY**

POSITION WITHIN COMPETITIVE SET

Across all metrics, Puerto Rico’s position within the competitive set was average. This included familiarity, likelihood to visit, and image. For nearly 50 product and personality attributes, Puerto Rico’s competitive position was middle of the road, with the only discernible advantage being affordability. Many competitors, including the Caribbean, generally outperformed Puerto Rico, even for those product and personality attributes on which the Island garnered strong ratings. In addition to an undefined position within the competitive set, there was no equity in existing messages. Only 16% of consumers in the target markets were able to correctly identify branding used in past Puerto Rico marketing efforts.

		 STRENGTHS	 WEAKNESSES	 OPPORTUNITIES	 THREATS
MEXICO <i>"A World of Its Own"</i>		Vibrant Choices Culturally Significant Different	Fragmented Communication	Safety	Wealth of choices: Historically, culturally, cuisines, activities, Less expensive
HAWAII <i>#1 in Hawaii</i>		Inviting, Adventurous, Lots of Choice: Adventurer, hedonistic, cultural Strong, long-running campaign.	No Aloha connection. Commercial fails to connect ala previous campaign	Spontaneity Long flight Significant planning necessary. Less expensive.	Strong Brand awareness: cultural, spiritual connection. Big advertising budgets Nice weather Year-round travel
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC <i>"Dominican Republic Has It All"</i>		Many choices for every type of guest Multiple water activities Multiple cultural choices	Fragmented Communication No emotional connection.	Opportunity to make emotional connection with the traveler. Make some memories with your friends, family. No passport necessary for U.S. citizens.	Same travel time as Puerto Rico Bigger island = More activities
BAHAMAS <i>"It's Better in the Bahamas"</i>		Unsurpassed natural beauty Abundance of activities Exclusivity, High production value, Eco-friendly	Lacks historical/cultural references. Lacks depth/emotional connection.	Authenticity and rich history.	700 islands/700 choices All-inclusive resorts
JAMAICA <i>"Get It Right"</i>		Authentic, gritty, inviting, Colorful personalities, Laid-back hedonistic attitude, Beautiful beaches.	Lacks family appeal.	Safety Family focus Less congested	All-inclusive resorts Big Advertising budgets
MIAMI BEACHES <i>"South of Heaven"</i>		Fun, Exciting, Modern, Beautiful people Beautiful beaches	Lacks family appeal	Family, Less Crowded, Historic/Cultural, Authenticity, Emotional Connection True Adventure	Adult-oriented entertainment Expensive Modern Amenities Latin Party Vibe

“IN PUERTO RICO, THE LOUDER IT IS, THE MORE FUN YOU’RE HAVING.”

BUILDING MOTIVATING MESSAGES

Three consumer-led processes were used to establish messaging – perceptual mapping, motivating images and motivating issue-based messaging. Through this process, it was clear a position that was built on the culture and authenticity the Island was already known for with beaches and natural attractions was one that would drive increased interest in leisure visitation.



Mirem Ubarri
Director of Sales & Marketing,
Fairmont El San Juan Hotel



Wesley Elizabeth Cullen
General Manager,
Casa BACARDI



Wiló Benet
Lead Designer,
Wiló Eatery & Bar



HEARING DIRECTLY FROM STAKEHOLDERS

While visitors are our target customer, it was critically important to interview representatives from key stakeholder groups in Puerto Rico, including members of Discover Puerto Rico’s staff, key members of the board of directors and standing committees; elected officials; local business groups and associations. These interviews took the form of guided question and answer sessions. There were a variety of reasons to conduct these sessions:

- Identifying priority areas of interest and understand expectations
- Understand perspectives on where previous marketing efforts had worked or fallen short
- Understand residents’ perception of the Island’s brand versus target consumers
- Defining success and creating specific key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor and report progress on a periodic basis
- Giving stakeholders a voice throughout the process to build alignment and confidence in the strategic approach

THE BRANDING PROCESS - THE PLATFORM & IDENTITY

DEVELOPING STRATEGIC PLATFORM / POSITIONING

Through this discovery and research phase, we gathered and analyzed an immense amount of quantitative and qualitative information. However, developing a solid brand position is ultimately based on being able to effectively consolidate and crystallize that data into an authentic, strategic platform that differentiates Discover Puerto Rico from the competitive set.

As part of that process, we performed workshops to understand the “brand archetype” that best defined the Island of Puerto Rico. This brand archetype exercise, a proven technique for effective long-term brand positioning development, provided an emotionally driven, first-person perspective on the brand to help differentiate the Island from other Caribbean destinations that might be perceived to have similar product offerings.

Archetypes are a concept developed by noted psychiatrist Carl Jung, defining 12 primary categories that represent a timeless and recognizable range of human motivations. In branding, this framework helps build a meaningful brand persona that connects authentically with the target audience. Many brands use the archetype spectrum as part of their brand positioning process, from Harley-Davidson embracing The Rebel archetype to Google aligning itself with The Sage.

Through exploration and research, Discover Puerto Rico’s brand archetype was identified as

“THE LOVER.”

12 BRAND ARCHETYPES



The end result was an actionable brand platform that identified the “Why” (the shared personal value) and combined it with the “What” (things to experience) and the “How” (brand ethos/character). Together, these elements delivered a differentiated, value-based brand platform that Discover Puerto Rico can occupy, own and defend.

The goal is to create a positioning that:

- is relevant (personally meaningful) to visitors and potential visitors
- is credible to prospects when delivered from the brand/destination
- is ownable (with little/limited competitive overlap)
- is a good fit with stakeholder interests

This brand platform included brand position, a brand description and a brand voice. Each of these foundational brand elements serve as an internal “North Star” from which all campaigns are developed. While campaigns evolve to stay relevant with changing consumer sentiments and market conditions, the core brand position maintains consistent and is at the heart of all messaging.

BRAND POSITION:

One Word: **Passionate.**

BRAND DESCRIPTION

(a first-person statement of “who”
Puerto Rico was to the potential visitor):

Puerto Rico – a vibrant, colorful celebration infused with a fiery passion, dancing to a beat unlike anywhere else in the world. Sophisticated, yet sexy, rooted in authenticity. Its soul is infectious. Un abrazo (a hug) – enveloped with pride and unapologetically its own, welcoming everyone to share. In Puerto Rico, you’re not just invited to the party – we want you to dance.

BRAND VOICE:

Authentic, Welcoming, Festive, Bold,
Sexy, Courageous, Playful, Louder

DEVELOPING VISUAL BRAND IDENTITY

With the brand platform solidified, we moved on to the development of the brand's visual identity. While a logo is not in itself "the brand," it is one of the core elements meant to embody and reflect the brand position. With that in mind, we armed more than a dozen of world-class creative designers with the brand platform and asked them to translate it into a visual identity.

Through this process, we generated more than 100 versions of logos, typography concepts and creative interpretations. Based on an internal evaluation of the options, combined with a review against competing destinations' existing brand identities, we narrowed the pool to eight options that would go to consumer testing.

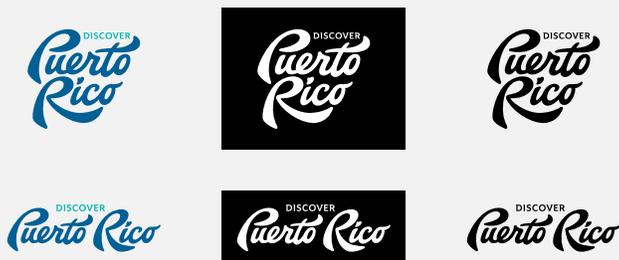
TESTING OUR CONCLUSIONS

The depth of research and analysis behind the brand platform gave us confidence that the brand identity was on the right path. However, Discover Puerto Rico still believed it to be critical to go back for one final round of

testing with target consumers. Through this consumer testing, we validated our assumptions and identified any opportunities for refinement before bringing the newly repositioned brand to market through Discover Puerto Rico's first holistic marketing campaign.

Through in-depth interviews and focus groups with relevant consumers in target markets, we tested the brand platform to ensure it not only resonated with consumers, but clearly differentiated Puerto Rico from the competitive set. It did. Using the brand positioning we had validated with these consumers - including both individuals familiar with the Island and those who had never visited - we also tested the top logos to identify which best reflected the promise of Puerto Rico.

All told, interviews were conducted in seven key markets: Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas, Atlanta, Toronto, New York City and Washington, D.C. Over 130 travelers were interviewed and provided more than 30 hours of insights that led to the adoption of the final brand platform and brand identity.



CREATIVE CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT

Now it was time to bring the new brand platform and identity to market through our first campaign. This campaign had to introduce – and celebrate – the new brand positioning, while at the same time acknowledge that our core audiences had a surprisingly low level of familiarity with the Island.

Multiple campaign concepts were developed, which were narrowed to three options. Once again, Discover Puerto Rico took to the road, executing in-person focus groups in a number of key source markets and adding a diaspora group to the testing to better understand potential on-island sentiment for the new campaign. Island residents were also included in the testing to ensure that the position resonated with the people of Puerto Rico.

CREATIVE CONCEPT TESTING

Over 125 consumers in six mainland markets and in San Juan provided feedback on three fully developed creative concepts for the first campaign of the Discover Puerto Rico brand. Ever present in the discussions were consumers' top-of-mind perceptions of Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. Even 18 months after the hurricane, "devastation" continued to be the prevailing image of the Island.

Consumers continually referenced Puerto Rico's key points of differentiation:

- Physical assets
- Ease of access
- Culture of the Island
- People of Puerto Rico



It was clear during the conversations with the target audience, diaspora, as well as residents that one campaign was able to not only capture these key points, but would also have the greatest potential for generating visitation. One campaign concept was an opportunity to offer an invitation – a nod that the Island was ready for business.

In the end, Discover Puerto Rico landed on a campaign that reflected the Island’s resilient spirit, passionate brand position and unique, welcoming culture. The “Have We Met Yet” campaign, launched in spring 2019 alongside an all-new, state-of-the-art website, became the first execution of the newly positioned brand for Puerto Rico.

In January 2020, Discover Puerto Rico’s work was recognized with a Platinum Adrian award, the highest honor a destination can receive in the industry for Complete Campaign Development, including brand positioning. More importantly, the campaign would prove instrumental in driving a rapid growth in visitation in its first 12 months, accelerating recovery for the Island’s tourism economy.

Since spring 2019, Discover Puerto Rico has continued to evolve campaign messaging in order to take advantage of the opportunities – and confront the challenges – of the moment. All the while, the core brand has and will continue to, remain rooted in the positioning developed through this robust process.

“HAVE WE MET YET”

BRAND CAMPAIGN



TV SPOT



PRINT ADS

2018-2019

DISCOVER PUERTO RICO'S BRANDING EXECUTION



2020-2021

DISCOVER PUERTO RICO'S
CREATIVE CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT EXECUTION

JAN. – FEB. 2020

Continuation of campaign,
"Have We Met Yet?"

Paused in February due to earthquakes



FEB. – MAR. 2020

Launch of "Go for Puerto Rico"
Earthquake Recovery Campaign



APR. – DEC. 2020

Launch of COVID-19 Response campaign

Phase 1 "All in Good Time"

Phase 2 "It's Time to Plan"

Campaign included different
messaging/calls to action, depending on
travel restrictions to Island.



JAN. 2021 – PRESENT

Continue "It's Time to Plan" campaign

