

Creative Incentives Overcomes Hardship to Create an Unthinkable South African Experience

Crystal Winner: Geoff Saner, Creative Incentives, Randburg, Gauteng, South Africa

Client: Avroy Shlain Cosmetics

Program: Unthinkable

Avroy Shlain Cosmetics is the largest direct selling beauty house in South Africa. The company already embraced the value of employing a travel incentive reward through its annual Top 200 program but they wanted to design a program one level up — they wanted to reward the best of Avroy Shlain's 34,000 consultants with a new program that was even more elite — they wanted to recognize the efforts of their Top 50 sales recruiters with an *unthinkable* trip — an unforgettable experience that would motivate these elite performers. With this goal in mind they looked to Creative Incentives to design a program that would motivate performance and deliver this once-in-a-lifetime reward.

Avroy Shlain had a few special requirements: the destination had to be a five-star all inclusive stay at an African property; the reward had to fit within the timeframe and budget; and the trip had to be kept a complete mystery until departure. Creative Incentives was up to the challenge.

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After discovering that a full moon eclipse would occur during the trip, Creative Incentives was inspired to develop a theme around this rare event and set out to find the perfect location. The team secured a resort on Bazaruto Island off the coast of Mozambique. The clear skies of Mozambique would provide an ideal setting and a special telescope guaranteed a spectacular view of the lunar eclipse. A charter carrier was hired to whisk the winners to Mozambique in luxury. Winners received instruction to bring only their passports and would learn about the destination once the aircrafts were in flight, at which point organizers would send loved ones contact information.



Once logistics were confirmed, the Creative Incentives team began working on details that would add panache to the all-inclusive event. They developed a logo that used the pansy shell, an integral part of Bazaruto Archipelago, as inspiration. The logo background showed a full moon reflecting in turquoise blue waters — a hint of what was to come. The logo would appear on all materials, and all participants would receive a silver pansy shell necklace. Other enhancements included red carpets and brass stanchions leading

to the aircraft steps, five-star service onboard the private aircraft and themed dinners.

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One week before departure, disaster occurred. The resort was struck by a Category 3 cyclone and was forced to close indefinitely. Because the client was unable to reschedule during peak season, Creative Incentives negotiated to get full refunds and began investigating alternative destinations. They shifted the event to the island of Mauritius, found accommodations at a five-star hotel and secured flights. The event logo was adapted to include the

Mauritian frangipani flower, and all materials were altered and reprinted. The full moon eclipse would remain the central focus upon arrival.

But one more challenge awaited Creative Incentive's diligent team: The airline refused to load the equipment needed to view the eclipse. The group had to depart without the telescope, yet the event was not lost because — against all odds — resourceful Creative Incentives staff managed to secure equipment on the island.

The hotel proved to be exceptional. The rooms were spacious and included personal butler service, and the hotel was able to accommodate the themes initially intended for Mozambique and served delectable meals. The group enjoyed a chartered catamaran with music, food and snorkeling in calm turquoise waters; later, the Gala Awards Dinner featured exotic cocktails on the beach. The trip culminated with a surprise Segga Dance Spectacular on the final night showcasing a seafood extravaganza.

In the end, the Unthinkable theme applied not only the program but also to the dedication of Creative Incentive's staff who brought it all together. The ultimate success was measured in how the program supported Avroy Shlain Cosmetics business objectives. As a result of the six-month program the company realized a 60% growth in recruitment over the prior period. A phenomenal achievement for their organization that would be hard to “eclipse” again in the future. ●