



## Welk Resorts' Innovative Guest Experience Program Wins Awards and Customer Satisfaction

Welk Resort Group is a developer and operator of luxury resorts and timeshares in the United States and Mexico.

### CHALLENGE:

Upon hiring a new Chief Fun Officer, Welk Resorts wanted to increase guest satisfaction through innovative experience and engagement programs. They also wanted to analyze and track guest survey feedback in order to prioritize efforts and design new guest experience initiatives.

### SOLUTION:

Using Clarabridge Survey, Welk has put in place a structure that effectively challenges the business to deliver a consistently higher level of service to its guests. As part of their Chief Fun Officer's newly launched INSPIRED FOR YOU campaign, Welk uses the Clarabridge solution to analyze guest survey feedback, make proactive decisions about guest experience programs, and to guide employee engagement and interaction with guests.

### RESULTS:

Welk Resorts has responded to the voice of their customers by delivering an innovative guest experience program and fine-tuning its hospitality offerings. As a result, all Welk resorts have maintained a 4 to 5 star rating on TripAdvisor throughout 2015. Its INSPIRED FOR YOU guest experience campaign is currently nominated for two ARDA timeshare industry awards as well.



## CASE STUDY: WELK RESORTS

Customer experience has always been a strong focus at Welk Resorts, but the paradigm shift occurred in December 2014, when Welk Resorts hired a corporate Chief Fun Officer, Patrick Dolan, charged with the development of guest experience at all Welk Resorts. The CFO focused on increasing guest satisfaction through innovative guest experience and engagement programs unique to the resort and timeshare industry.

In 2015, Dolan spearheaded the rebranding of all experience departments under the newly-created INSPIRED FOR YOU campaign. This campaign included a complete design overhaul of on-property activities, uniforms, social media campaigns, on-property marketing material, and multi-media programs.

### **Focusing on Employee and Guest Engagement**

The INSPIRED campaign has introduced a structured approach to customer experience management based on staff education, experience tracking, and results-driven refinement. Welk Resorts uses the Clarabridge solution to analyze guest survey feedback and to guide employee engagement and interaction with guests. Every INSPIRED team member at five Welk properties receives a seven-step "INSPIRED Engagement" card as part of their training. One of the seven steps includes learning how to ask for feedback about a guest's stay while the guest is at the hotel. This helps the team to better understand and act on the guest's needs and challenges, rather than hear about them after the fact. This also gives their staff the tools to proactively solve problems while the guests were still on property, leading to an increase in customer satisfaction scores.

Welk also introduced uniform team member goals across all properties. These goals are tied to employee bonuses and are based on insights derived from customer feedback analysis. Welk hopes this will help to increase employee engagement with guests, driving an increase in customer satisfaction and an increase in employee retention.



## CASE STUDY: WELK RESORTS

### Putting the Voice of the Guest to Work

Using the Clarabridge solution has helped Welk to deliver a consistently high level of guest service. All of Welk's guest surveys are analyzed and tracked within Clarabridge. This provides a quantitative approach so that the team can focus their efforts on where they are needed the most. The team also uses Clarabridge to pull in historical data so that they can make proactive strategic decisions around seasonal and demographic changes.

### Delivering Innovative Experiences

The biggest impact for Welk came in the powerful new experiences delivered to guests. In 2015, over 25 unique programs, activities, and experiences were implemented for guests of Welk Resorts across five unique properties. For example:

- **Game of Drones:** Guests attend drone flight school, learning piloting skills and safety standards as they compete in an outdoor flight obstacle course and receive drone pilot certification.
- **Cupcake Wars:** This is a group/family competition in which teams compete in three categories, where they create an elaborate cupcake frosting design; design a brand and slogan for their cupcake company, ultimately designing their own cupcake box; and film a one-minute commercial at the INSPIRED studios, advertising their cupcake company. All families receive a copy of the video to take home with them as well.
- **Spy Camp:** Kids learn a variety of "spy" techniques, include building their own pinhole camera, audio surveillance, how to write and decode secret messages, drone flight, the art of disguise, and more.
- **Wellness programs** including rock climbing, Tai Chi, Yoga, Introduction to Jiu Jitsu, Fitness Boot Camp, and more are now available at Welk's newly-opened fitness facility at the Welk Resort in San Diego, USA.



## CASE STUDY: WELK RESORTS

**Improving guest satisfaction and online ratings**

The INSPIRED FOR YOU campaign has been incredibly successful for Welk Resorts. All Welk resorts maintained a 4-5 star rating on TripAdvisor throughout 2015. The INSPIRED FOR YOU campaign was featured on local FOX and CBS news in San Diego on 6 separate segments, reaching over 124,000 viewers promoting events such as Game of Drones, Cupcake Wars, and INSPIRED Studios.

The INSPIRED FOR YOU guest experience campaign is currently nominated for two American Resort Development Association (ARDA) timeshare industry awards — Best Activities Program for the Welk portfolio and Best Activities Program Manager for Sirena del Mar by Welk Resorts in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Using Clarabridge Survey, Welk has put in place a structure that effectively challenges the business to deliver a consistently higher level of service to its guests.

By introducing and challenging their staff to promote and facilitate these innovative experiences, the Welk team has created a workplace that celebrates imagination and contemporary trends, and is exciting for their staff to come to work to. Clarabridge has allowed Welk to hear the voice of their customers and they have responded by giving them innovative experiences and fine tuning their hospitality offerings.