

# Meet Mr Holland



Entry for:

**ICCA Best Marketing Award 2012**

## Contents

|                                                    |    |
|----------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Netherlands Board of Tourism & Conventions..... | 2  |
| 2. The Entry.....                                  | 2  |
| 3. Situation Analysis.....                         | 2  |
| Strengths.....                                     | 2  |
| Weaknesses .....                                   | 2  |
| Opportunities.....                                 | 3  |
| Threats .....                                      | 3  |
| 4. Marketing Challenges .....                      | 3  |
| 5. Objectives for 2012.....                        | 3  |
| 6. Target Audience.....                            | 3  |
| International Meeting Planners.....                | 4  |
| 7. Strategy.....                                   | 4  |
| 8. Creative Concept .....                          | 5  |
| 9. Marketing-communication Mix .....               | 6  |
| 10. Execution .....                                | 6  |
| Introducing Mr Holland .....                       | 6  |
| Refining Database .....                            | 7  |
| Add Some Orange.....                               | 7  |
| IMEX 2012.....                                     | 8  |
| Telemarketing.....                                 | 8  |
| 11. Budget.....                                    | 9  |
| 12. Results.....                                   | 9  |
| 13. Evaluation .....                               | 9  |
| 14. Key Learnings .....                            | 10 |

## 1. Netherlands Board of Tourism & Conventions

The Netherlands Board of Tourism & Conventions (NBTC) is responsible for branding and marketing Holland nationally and internationally. Using the 'Holland' brand, NBTC puts the country on the map as an attractive destination for holidays, business meetings and conventions.

To market 'Holland' NBTC uses a cooperation model that unites partners from the public and private sectors. NBTC receives government funding from the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation and cooperates closely with relevant parties within and outside the hospitality sector. Together, we attract visitors who spend money in Holland. This partnering is logical because we are all pursuing the same goal. At the same time, we can use this approach to give Holland a higher profile.

Effectiveness is the main driver of the NBTC's market cultivation efforts. Using solid market research, we set a course for our marketing strategy and direct joint activities in the various countries towards specific target groups. Effect measurements are another fixed part of our major marketing programs because they reveal whether our efforts produced the right effect. These measurements enable us to make adjustments where necessary.

## 2. The Entry

This entry for the ICCA Best Marketing Award covers the introduction, concept development and initial results for the campaign: 'Meet Mr Holland'. This campaign, focused on the international meeting market, has a projected lifespan of 3 years. The entry covers the introduction of the 'Meet Mr Holland' campaign as well as the sub campaign 'Add Some Orange' from October 2011 up to and including June 2012. In addition to this document we would like to refer to the 'Meet Mr Holland' [Case Study video](#).

## 3. Situation Analysis

### Strengths

- Strong Holland brand.
- Accessibility of the Netherlands.
- Compactness of the Netherlands.
- Professionalism and loyalty of the Dutch meeting sector.
- Quality of meeting facilities in the Netherlands.
- Diversity of the Netherlands.

### Weaknesses

- Mid 2011 the NBTC was confronted with a 50% reduction of government funding.
- End 2011 reorganisation resulted in a worldwide 50% reduction of staff.

- The Meetings and Conventions department was forced to centralise our approach to the entire meeting market, where previously we did this from our offices in Europe and North America.

### Opportunities

- Use of social media.
- The significant economic impact of the international meeting and convention market in the Netherlands was € 546 million (781,000 arrivals) in 2011.

### Threats

- Destination Holland is encountering significant and increasing international competition.
- Euro crisis.

## 4. Marketing Challenges

- The challenge was to pull off a successful marketing campaign for international meeting planners in the middle of a reorganisation.
- Continue distinguishing ourselves as a meeting destination from our competitors with limited (financial and human) resources.
- Create an effective campaign for the international meeting planner with which the Dutch meeting sector can identify and in which the sector would like to invest.

## 5. Objectives for 2012

- Develop a marketing campaign that contributes towards the CRM strategy. Before the end of 2012, 30% of the centralised database has to be requalified.
- Develop a marketing campaign that creates awareness of Holland as a meeting destination. By the end of 2012, 50% of the defined high potential meeting planners will be familiar with Mr Holland and what he represents.
- Develop an effective marketing campaign to stimulate the number of international business events in the Netherlands by generating 300 RFIs/RFPs in 2012.

## 6. Target Audience

The NBTC's Meetings and Conventions department has two target groups:

- International meeting planners.
- International associations.

Because of the differences in the decision making process between the two target groups, the NBTC has chosen to apply different communication strategies toward these two groups. The 'Meet Mr Holland' campaign is, therefore, specifically aimed toward International meeting planners.

## International Meeting Planners

We use the collective term 'international meeting planners' for decision makers (planning, organising, recommending or making financial decisions) of corporate meetings, incentives and other international corporate events outside their home country.

International meeting planners are executives within companies involved with meetings, conferences and incentive travel programs. Alternatively, they may be working for an agency/intermediary such as: event organisation companies, incentive travel agencies, venue finding and live marketing agencies which plan business events outside their own country.

The most valuable countries and regions of origin, for international meeting planners with potential for the Netherlands, are North America, United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, France and Scandinavia.

International meeting planners comprise predominantly of women who want to arrange everything perfectly, professionally, reliably and hassle free for their management or client. The target audience first selects the meeting destination, followed by the city and finally the meeting venue. The decision regarding the destination is based on accessibility, facilities (location and capacity), price/quality ratio and availability.

Time is valuable to the target audience. Campaigns must be succinct and not weighed down by unnecessary content. The target audience does not have the time to consume too much information. The target audience likes to be inspired by campaigns, but primarily wants to see the business relevance and core values of a business destination. First, the information must be relevant, the creation of an experience makes the destination even more interesting: first the facts, then 'the feeling'.

## 7. Strategy

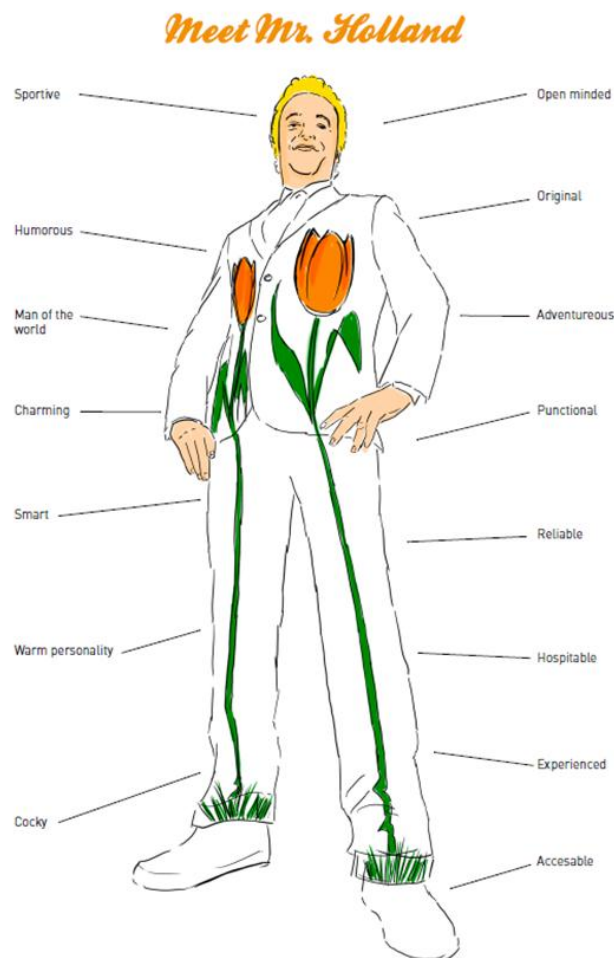
The meeting industry is a people's business. Due to the centralisation of our marketing approach we lost our local Holland ambassadors who were in touch with the target audience in different focus countries. All of the databases were merged into one global database in Holland. To compensate for the local market knowledge and personal relationships of our colleagues we had to come up with a clever solution. There was a need to refine and requalify our global database and create an extra dimension in the communication about Holland. We had to make the communication more personal and intense.

As a result of the reduction of government funding, the need to cooperate with the Dutch sector became more crucial than ever. We had to create an effective campaign with which the Dutch meeting sector could identify and in which the sector would like to invest. In the middle of the Euro crises we had to forge valuable partnerships with good returns on investment. Besides creating awareness of Holland as a meeting destination, we had to offer our partners visibility and conversion.

We had to make our campaign personal and effective, but we also had to find a versatile theme due to the diversity of meeting planners, their cultural differences and the diversity of the Netherlands as a meeting destination: a theme that uses the power of the existing Holland brand with which the many faces of Holland can be conveyed.

## 8. Creative Concept

The Netherlands and the Dutch people have a very versatile DNA, which is why we created a symbol which stands for the Netherlands and the Dutch people, a personality which is literally the face of Holland, an ambassador of flesh and blood, Meet ... Mr Holland



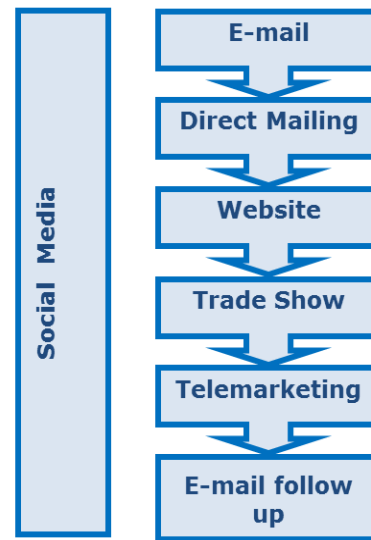
Mr Holland is a living symbol of everything this small but beautiful country stands for. Mr Holland is a living symbol of Holland. He is the personal host who makes Holland tangible and likeable.

Mr Holland introduces the international meeting planner to Holland as a meetings destination. He directs them, in a personal and original manner, to the unique selling points of Holland as a meetings destination and the Dutch people.

## 9. Marketing-communication Mix

'Meet Mr Holland' is a cross media campaign. He informs the international meeting planner, in a personal and original manner, about the characteristics of the Dutch people. Couturier and designer Christian Lagerwaard designed a unique suit, befitting the campaign, which emphasises the role of Mr Holland as the Host of Holland.

The focus of the campaign centres on two of the most important meeting industry trade shows (IMEX and EIBTM). Through direct (e-) mailings and his very own [website](#) Mr Holland points out the different cities, unique venues and meeting services that Holland has to offer. During the trade shows he is the ultimate Holland host and throughout the year he remains in contact with the target audience through his presence on social media. He can be followed on his personal [weblog](#), his [YouTube](#) channel, via [Twitter](#) as well as on his own [Facebook](#) fanpage and [LinkedIn](#) profile.



## 10. Execution

### Introducing Mr Holland

To introduce Mr Holland, we started off with a mailing in 2011. We asked the thought provoking question: Do you believe in love at first sight? Inside the mailing 'Mr H' presents himself as the ideal partner: *Mr Original*, *Mr Charming*, *Mr Punctual*, *Mr Hospitality* and *Mr Organised*. After a few days it became clear who this mysterious 'Mr H' was. 3000 meeting planners received a personal booklet with an introduction to Mr Holland and information about Holland as a meeting destination.



The EIBTM 2011 was the moment for the meeting planners to meet Mr Holland in real life. With his natural charm and due to his great [musical performance](#) during the Holland Happy Hours he made some wonderful friends.

## Refining Database

In 2012, the big question was: How can Mr Holland keep all his friends interested? And even attract new ones? In order to achieve 1 to 1 marketing, we started out by refining our database. We sought data enrichment by sending e-mail to approximately 10,500 prospects. We requested our target audience to update their address details and to indicate their interest in Holland as a meeting destination. As the response was well over 14% we considered it a successful validation. At that point, we knew which meeting planners were 'hot for Holland'.

## Add Some Orange

Now we had to turn these prospects into fans: time to expand our friendship. For the 2012-campaign, we gave Mr Holland a new slogan: In a world of black, blue and grey... Add some orange

In order to enhance the top-of-mind awareness of Holland among the defined 3000 high potential European meeting planners, they received a surprise direct mailing prominently featuring Mr Holland.



The direct mail contained a call to action to a personal URL (PURL), e.g. to [www.noortje-teurlings.addsomeorange.com](http://www.noortje-teurlings.addsomeorange.com).

Their response would be rewarded with Mr Holland's latest '[Loosen up](#)' video clip which demonstrates the effect our colour orange has on a person. But the ultimate goal was, of course, to stimulate the number of business meetings in Holland. This also gave a chance for meeting planners who applied online for a meeting in Holland to win a unique VANMOOF bike.

## IMEX 2012



In addition to the extensive direct mailing to the entire target audience, we sent out an extra mailing to meeting planners who were confirmed attendees to IMEX 2012. The aim of this mailing was to stimulate the number of appointments during IMEX. Some 750 European meeting planners with potential business for Western Europe received a direct mail sent by regular mail or e-mail with an invitation to meet during IMEX 2012.

To generate traffic to the stand, there were photographers present at the fair to take photos and hand out photo flyers. The photo flyer included a coupon for the promotional orange sunglasses at the Holland stand.



## Telemarketing

After IMEX 2012 we remained in contact with our new friends and gave our new Holland fans a call. We asked about 750 European meeting planners what their impression of Mr Holland was. We asked them for the type of business events they are responsible for and if there is was a specific area with which Mr Holland could assist them with. This telemarketing campaign provided us with new insights about the campaign, 750 qualified contacts and 110 Requests For Information.

## 11. Budget

The 'Meet Mr Holland' campaign is financed by the annual partnership revenues as well as government funding. The budget for the introduction of the campaign in 2011 and the Add Some Orange campaign in 2012 was:

| Expenses            |                 | Income         |                 |     |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----|
| Campaign hours NBTC | €146,500        | Government     | €165,000        | 40% |
| Out of Pocket       | €270,000        | Meeting sector | €251,500        | 60% |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>€416,500</b> | <b>Total</b>   | <b>€416,500</b> |     |

## 12. Results

- In the first six months of 2012 we requalified 24% of the centralised database (goal for end 2012 = 30%).
- Telemarketing revealed that 52% of the defined high potential meeting planners had seen, remembered and appreciated the campaign (goal for end 2012 = 50%).
- In the first six months of 2012 we received 225 Request For Information's (RFIs) and Request For Proposals (goal for end 2012 = 300 RFIs).
- In the first six months of 2012 we reached 3,100 followers on Twitter and 650 LinkedIn and Facebook-fans (goal for end 2012 = 3,000).

## 13. Evaluation

The first year of the 'Meet Mr Holland' campaign has shown very positive results. We are on track to reach all targets that were set for 2012 and the campaign has generated a lot of awareness and free publicity for Holland as a meeting destination. The NBTC received a lot of great feedback on the campaign by the international meeting planners, colleagues from other destinations and our Dutch partners.

Is there room for improvement? Definitely. We realise that Mr Holland is not Holland's only brand ambassador. The colleagues of the NBTC, our Dutch partners and the meeting planners that already book Holland as their meeting destination are fantastic Holland ambassadors as well. Why not make better use of their knowledge and experiences to spread the word?

Additionally, we have to make some adjustments in our social media strategy. In our first year we were mainly sending information in order to build an online community. Now is the time to make better use of the opportunities that social media offers and start interacting more with our online communities.

## 14. Key Learnings

- Social media: the role of social media in today's marketing mix is essential. It's not the question "Do we have to use social media?" The question is: "How to use social media?"
- Story Telling 2.0: Do not only tell the story to get your message across; use a character of flesh and blood, a brand ambassador, to tell the story.
- Know what your strengths are and turn these into an art.
- Know what your limitations and weaknesses are and dare to make choices.
- Dare to be different and make use of "off-the-beaten-track" information for the meetings industry.