



MICE AMBASSADOR PROJECT 2023 #MARISKAJOURNEY COTEDAZUR

Presentation
Best Marketing Award 2023
ICCA

Beyond the obvious



SUMMARY

In an ultra-competitive European MICE market, the French Riviera embarked on a bold strategy to stand out from its competitors.

The goal: ***shatter persistent prejudices about this destination by presenting it as accessible, authentic, and brimming with charm.*** To achieve this objective, an innovative communication campaign was devised, challenging industry norms.

Instead of the typical impersonal fam trips, the Cote d'Azur opted for an immersive experience spanning a month, immersing participants in the heart of local culture. ***It was more than just a visit; it was an adventure to be lived and shared.***

This common initiative, supported by Atout France, Provence Cote d'Azur Convention Bureau and the passionate Mariska, demonstrated the economic viability of this groundbreaking approach.

The results were spectacular. ***The French Riviera is now perceived as a unique MICE destination, combining authenticity, accessibility, and a memorable experience.***

This campaign also serves as a model for other French destinations seeking to differentiate themselves in a competitive market while enhancing France's overall image as a hub for exceptional conferences and events.



TEAM



Laetitia Cassuto
Head of Business
LinkeUs



Lucie Bottero
Project Manager
France Convention Bureau



Mariska Kesteloo
Founder
Word of MICE

WHY ?

Together with our partners we researched how we as a destination are perceived by international customers.

In particular for the following cities :

Cannes
Mandelieu
Nice

We came to the conclusion, after collecting the results that we need a different approach, a disruptive change.

*Our mission is
to be an example
for other
MICE destinations
in France and abroad
by implementing this
new and
disrupting
approach.*

THE DESIGN

We decided to work with Mariska, founder of Word of MICE. Creating a long term collaboration including online and offline elements. Including the personality of Mariska. And pushing the boundaries of a classic famtrip, looking beyond the classical model including a local, authentic and experienced approach.

*The success of a B2B
influencer marketing is
a mix of online and
offline activities
during a longer period
of time,
spreading the message
through different
channels*

THE IDEAS

Creating the collaboration with Mariska called the MICE ambassador with the **#mariskajourneycotedazur** she embraced an ethical, local and sustainable approach that defied the conventional norms. Opting for an immersive experience in her camper for almost 2 months, she delved deep into the region, going beyond the typical perception of Cote d'Azur. Moreover, Mariska personally pursued a profound path which we wholeheartedly embraced.

The reason to choose for Mariska was based on her 20 years experience in the tourism and MICE industry. Next, she was the President of the MPI Belgium chapter for 2 years and an active board member for 6 years in total. Mariska understood our strategy, our approach and including her personality, we found the right match. Not only a professional approach. Her personal mission is to support people in their grieving process and organising walks during her journey with her camper and her cat.

THE CAMPAIGN

CM on the Beach

One of the activities during the campaign was the event

CM on the Beach.

It's the only event in France dealing specifically with Content Marketing in the Tourism sector.

This event brings together destinations, accommodation providers, activity providers, visitor sites and anyone interested in content marketing applied to tourism and MICE.

We spoke on stage together with all partners. We had chosen for a panel discussion so that every partner was involved in the conversation, using their own words and expression.

Partners

Cannes : Nina Bellal

Mandelieu : Sophie Brugerolles

Nice: Bertrand Puisségur

Moderator : Heliena (LinkeUs)

After our conversation we received questions from the audience.

This was the perfect way to evaluate the interest of the audience.

ACTIVITIES

Heavent Cannes

Mariska attended Heavent in Cannes the largest MICE event in the south of France.

IMEX Frankfurt

Mariska was present during IMEX and created exposure before and during the show.

Press Releases

Press releases were sent out to different magazines and associations to increase the awareness and visibility about the campaign and her journey.

Column MICE Benelux

Presence in online & offline magazine and website in the Benelux via the personal column of Mariska

Social media & website

Mariska posted regularly about her journey, using all the social media channels, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. From every week of her stay Mariska created a blog about the three destinations, Cannes, Mandelieu and Nice which is published on her website.



EXTRA

Through her personal involvement in rebuilding local communities

Mariska has left a lasting and profound personal legacy in the Provence Cote d'Azur region and beyond. Using unconventional locations during the grieving walks she showed different parts, undiscovered paths and elements of the region. A small part of the many elements to this unique experience. Reminding residents, visitors and professional event organisers of the importance of **empathy, mutual support and resilience.**

*Personalised caps were created
Mariska wore the caps
at every event and
occasion*

Mariska used Eventbrite so participants could subscribe. Next, the event was promoted via different social media channels from Mariska and Tania (certified coach, picture).

Mariska had organised grieving walks in the Netherlands and wanted to continue to support this particular group of people during her journey in Cote d'Azur.

DETAILS

Every step of the campaign was taken consciously.

To show and to prove that the Cote d'Azur is a destination that is

***Accessible for different target**

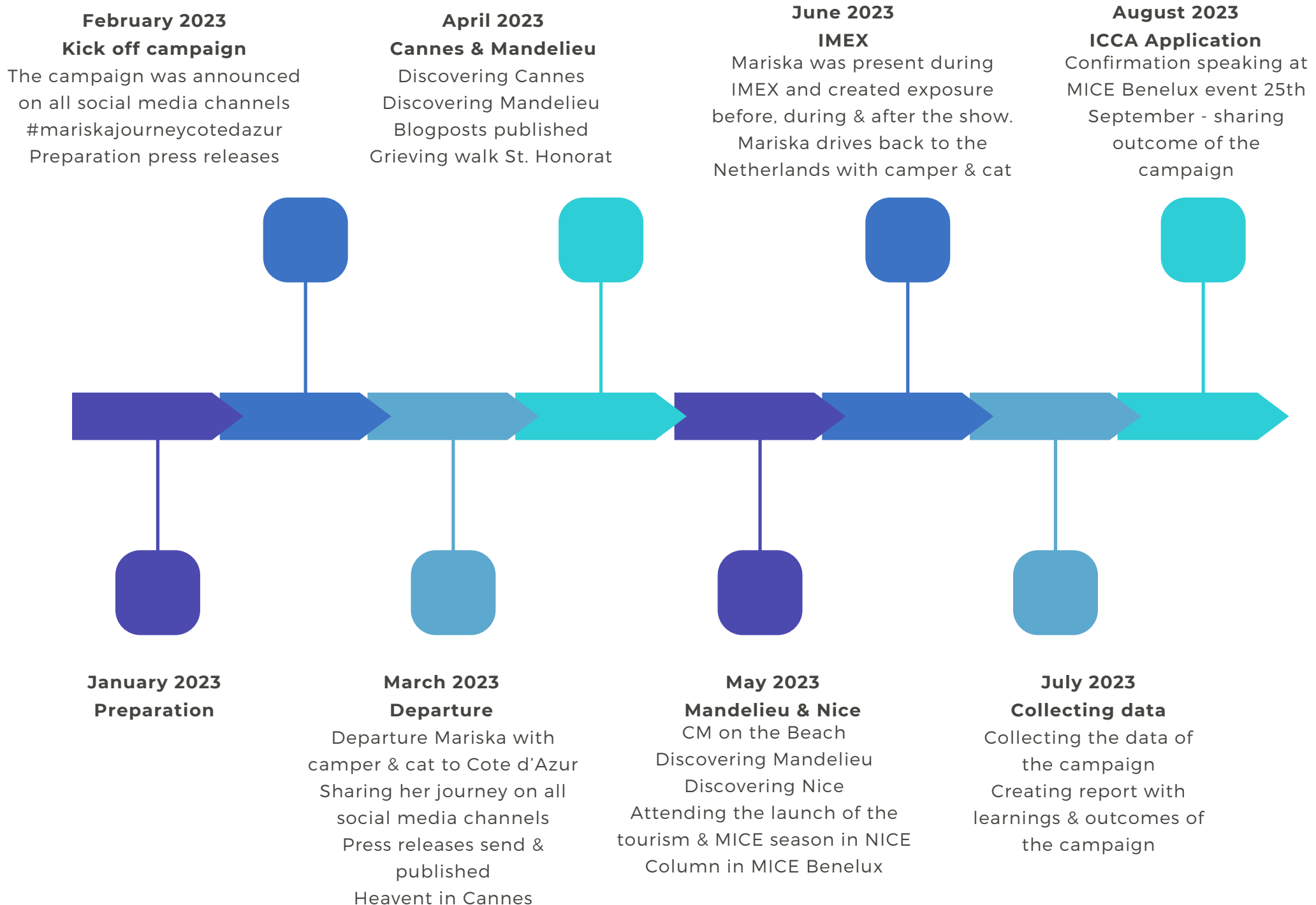
***Audiences and budgets**

***Committed to sustainable development**

***Authentic**



TIMELINE



THE RESULTS

- ✓ 230 posts were published across all networks
- ✓ 310 reactions received online across all networks
- ✓ 9 personal blogs were created and published
- ✓ 6 press releases were pulished in trade magazines & online in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and the UK
- ✓ 2 columns were published in MICE Benelux trade magazine online & offline
- ✓ Main markets are the Benelux, UK, France, Germany and the US
- ✓ In total we reached more than 50.000 people through social media
- ✓ More than 20.000 people were informed weekly about #mariskajourney

Important note

The impact of the campaign is **not captured in only facts and figures**. Important note is that we discovered that people see the content but not always react. For example we noticed this during meetings with people at events, and at other occassions. They were aware of the campaign, so the reach is definitely much higher but a part of the target audience decided not to react.

Next, the exposure during events like IMEX Frankfurt, CM on the Beach, Heavent Cannes, the grieving walk are not included. Next, partners have spread, used and reshared the content of Mariska to create a bigger impact and reach. The data of the above mentioned activities is not captured in the facts above.

Conclusion ; the reach, the impact and awareness is much higher than the outcome mentioned above in the official data

HIGHLIGHTS

Request

One **RFP** came already after 3 months of the campaign, for an exhibition for 2025 in Mandelieu, called Gite Expo.

Gite EXPO is an initiative to support people who are interested to buy and to maintain a gite/house in France. The RFP came from the UK which was not our original target audience.

*How more
authentic and personal
the content was,
how higher
the reach
and impact*

LESSONS LEARNED

From the start our aim was that this campaign would serve as a model for other (French) destinations.

The choice of partners is key

Not every partner is a fit for this type of campaign, be selective

The involvement of the partners

The success of this campaign is not only due to the industry expert but also due to the support of the partners involved.

Output

Partners got more out of the campaign than they initially thought (content, posts & offline exposure).

Professional

The choice of the industry expert is key. A thorough research if the expert is the right fit for your destination.

Generation

Education is crucial.

A younger generation is entering the workforce, and this particular group is doing their research for an upcoming destination in a different way than the previous generations.

We as a destination, we need adapt and adjust.

Information, inspiration, trust, sustainability and authenticity are key for this generation

Atout France

Atout France took a risk to embrace an innovative and disruptive approach. Atout France wants to show and improve their image as a professional and innovative convention bureau and destination ***being an inspiring role model for the entire country and beyond.*** ***It's important to educate event planners and meeting organisers about the role and image of the convention bureau. And to provide them with the information they really need.***

LinkeUs

LinkeUs decided during the campaign that their presence on social media was not matching the needs of the target audience. They changed their strategy and hired a professional agency to set up a professional online strategy. To increase their awareness and visibility.

*Team work makes
the dream work*



CONTACT US

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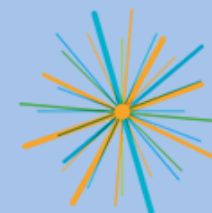
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PARTNERS



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