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CLIENT: Hard Rock Cafe Intl.
INDUSTRY: Restaurant
BUSINESS MODEL: B2C
WEBSITE: www.HardRock.com

CASE STUDY

THE CLIENT: Hard Rock Cafe International, Inc. is a chain of theme restaurants founded in London, England in 1971. Hard Rock initially had an eclectic decor but it later started to display memorabilia. Hard Rock has amassed one of the largest collections of rock and roll memorabilia in the world. The chain began to expand worldwide in 1982 with locations in (among others) Toronto, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Paris and Berlin. Currently, there are 191 Hard Rock locations in 59 countries including 145 cafes, 21 hotels and 10 casinos. Hard Rock International Inc. is currently owned by the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

THE CLIENT'S OBJECTIVES: Each year the 400+ management team of the global café division meet to compare best practices. A summit was held at the Hard Rock Hotel in Cancun, Mexico to discuss how to best serve their strong legacy customers along with the emerging Millennial generation. Since promotional items (featuring the famous Hard Rock logo) drive such a significant portion of their overall revenue, the company was looking for Ross to provide relevant ideas to help them “rock the shop,” (the shop being the important merchandise area at the front of each restaurant).

“I received so many fantastic comments about your presentation. Many managers told me that you were by far the best we have ever booked. I truly appreciate your talent to deliver a message!”

Spencer Novak - Director of Operations Hard Rock International, Inc.



ROSS'S DELIVERABLES: Ross Shafer was selected to give the 75 min. opening keynote presentation as part of a 3-day conference in Cancun, Mexico. Since Ross had already customized and delivered a highly successful keynote speech for the Hard Rock Casino Group in Hollywood, Florida, the 145-unit café division was eager to have Ross dive further into “Becoming Even More Relevant.”

COACHING TOOLS: Ross's background in TV broadcasting and concert promotion gave him an edge in understanding how Hard Rock's brand is both “Show” and “Business.” This client also wanted Ross to make humor a consistent element of the event. In his keynote, Ross kept the energy high and was eager to show proof that each location (from Gdansk, Poland to Las Vegas, Nevada) needed to be sensitive to each community and different constituent needs. The Hard Rock brand has remained consistent (great food in a rock-n-roll atmosphere). To be even more relevant, Ross reinforced that each team and store personality must be in sync with the geography and location's demographics. With a global footprint, there is not a one-size-fits-all Hard Rock Café. Ross provided insight into how Millennials communicate with each other and how best to engage them with the Hard Rock legacy brand. Recognizing that Hard Rock wants to “rock the shop,” Ross compared the merchandising success of Harley Davidson's logo when H.D. loosened the reins on their rigid logo design. Ross encouraged Hard Rock to involve their customers in creating new logo designs – generating an ongoing viral contest a la *Jones Soda* and *Threadless T-Shirts*. Ross also discussed the opportunities that could be leveraged by Hard Rock through a new mobile APP with digital “push” elements to drive new and existing traffic.

