

HKLM completes strategic rebrand for Mauritius Union Group

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Strategic branding and communication agency, HKLM, recently wrapped up a significant brand rejuvenation project for Mauritius Union Group - an insurance and financial services business traditionally rooted in the Indian Ocean Island region that recently expanded into East Africa.

The group has a strong, 70-year heritage in the region. It augmented this four years ago with the strategic acquisition of Phoenix Transafrica Holdings, which has a controlling interest in Phoenix East Africa Assurance. This provided the group with excellent growth prospects, given the saturated Indian Ocean Island market, opening up a presence for the company in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda through regional Phoenix subsidiaries.



However, this new strategic direction brought with it several operational and reputational challenges, necessitating a significant overhaul of the company's branding strategy to bring it in line with the objectives of the organisation's broader strategic framework.

HKLM was appointed in February 2018 to tackle this mammoth exercise, which included aligning all the entities within the group behind a united strategy and a unified brand; enabling the Mauritian business culture to permeate through the business to all the new markets within which it now had a presence; and aligning the group identity with Africa while ensuring increased international visibility.

Using the existing Mauritian business with its well-developed culture and systems as the foundation, HKLM undertook an extensive process of consultation, insight gathering and analysis to deliver on these strategic imperatives.

"The entire process took eight months, and turned out to be a delicate balancing act across country-specific cultures, merging two distinctly disparate brands and managing business and reputational complexities in these diverse East African countries," explains HKLM founder and executive, Dr Sean McCoy.

This project resulted in the consolidation of various naming options and the adoption of a new, non-geographic name anchored in the acronym MUA; the full alignment of all entities across the group subsidiaries and in each country to adopt a monolithic brand architecture; the articulation of a clearly-defined brand positioning and platform in support of the strategic framework; the development, adoption and implementation of a new brand identity; the delivery of an integrated communication and activation strategy; a complete change management and internal brand engagement process; and the launch of the new brand to all stakeholders, staggered across the various markets over a 10-day period.



“The new MUA identity is highly symbolic and visually striking,” says Bertrand Casteres, MUA CEO. “The revised logo incorporates four arrows coming together to a point of commonality and unity, representing the group’s different entities, its strategic pillars and its focus on serving its clients and stakeholders. MUA’s colours have also been reworked to include the former colours of both Mauritius Union and Phoenix Assurance. This successfully reflects our new aspiration – to unite Mauritius and East Africa in balance and harmony.”

McCoy adds that the project mirrors HKLM’s own strategic growth as it continues to expand into, and successfully build brands in, diverse new markets across Africa. Since its establishment 15 years ago, HKLM has grown to become Africa’s leading brand agency, with representation in South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Botswana and Swaziland.

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