

# **Booking.com** **ICC Men's Cricket World Cup** **2023 Campaign Case Study**

July 2023 - November 2023

**Booking.com**

**Howzat for Your Perfect Stay!**

**Booking.com**

# Campaign Overview

Booking.com launched the campaign 'Howzat for your perfect stay' ahead of the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in September 2023. The ask was to support its global ICC sponsorship and drive a compelling integrated communications campaign to bolster its brand in India as a preferred travel partner to millions of travellers and cricket fans. We used a mix of earned media, social media, on-ground activations and sports marketing to deliver on a campaign spanning close to four months.. Adding star power to 'Howzat for your perfect stay' were brand ambassadors Rohit Sharma (India captain), Jos Butler (England's skipper) and Glen Maxwell (Australian all rounder).



# Campaign Overview Continued

## Howzat for Your Perfect Stay!

- The campaign's idea was premised on coalescing the worlds of cricket, sports, and travel with travel being the resonant theme between all three. The underlying campaign objective of 'Howzat for Your Perfect Stay!' lay in highlighting the end-to-end ease of travel Booking.com offers to sports enthusiasts and travellers alike as well as in making travel 'friction free' and seamless especially to India's rising traveller base.
- The campaign effectively showcased how Booking.com makes it effortless for travellers to have cricket-inspired and 'connected' travel experiences as they travelled around India to watch their favourite matches to ICC venues and beyond by offering flights, rental cars, taxis, attractions, and of course all kinds of unique places to stay all in one place!
- Ultimately, the campaign successfully conveyed Booking.com's commitment to providing enhanced and connected travel experiences for customers, a core tenet for Booking.com and as an essential travel platform.

## Campaign Insight – Rise of Sports Tourism+ Experiences

Our campaign capitalized on the increasing trend of sports tourism, targeting the contemporary traveler's preference for immersive sports experiences, especially evident during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023. As sports tourism continues to surge and is projected to reach USD 1.8 billion by 2030 ([Allied Market Research](#)) - our campaign tapped increasingly into the rise of this phenomenon with travelers looking for unique experiences more than anything else. To resonate with domestic and international audiences alike, the 'Howzat for your perfect stay!' campaign messaging was designed to ignite the shared passion for cricket and travel amongst audiences through a meticulous four-month strategy integrating PR and digital approaches. Selecting brand ambassadors who authentically embraced travel was pivotal for the campaign appeal to cricket enthusiasts, facilitating significant media coverage cut through the noise around the world cup.



# Campaign Execution

## Leveraging global brand ambassadors

While Booking.com had its global brand ambassadors including Indian captain Rohit Sharma in place, we went beyond just the press release announcement, talking about the travel preferences and quirks of the Indian captain through a series of media blurbs, listicles and feature stories. Needless to say that the global brand ambassador press release was picked up well by media in India given the excitement ahead of the world cup and of course, love for cricket

## 'Catch-a-stay' challenge

For all matches, we organized an in-stadium challenge titled 'Catch a Stay' to engage with fans on-ground. Any fan who took a catch of a sixer struck beyond the boundary line and into the crowds hands, won Booking.com Travel Credits which could be used for future domestic as well as international travel.

# Campaign Execution Continued

## Innovative Press Conference Execution

In Mumbai, we hosted an interactive press event seamlessly merging travel, cricket, and fan excitement. Featuring Zaheer Khan, Varun Dhawan, and Santosh Kumar, it highlighted the joy of travel and finding the perfect stay for major sports events. Zaheer Khan, Varun Dhawan, and Santosh Kumar engaged in a brief yet impactful one-over match on stage, simulating a stadium atmosphere. Journalists participated as well as appreciated and enjoyed this experience, resulting in coverage across multiple stories and social media posts.

## Media Tap-Ins

Contributed to industry stories around sports tourism, host city travel trends during ICC, inbound travel during the matches, etc. Placed authored article on the rise sports tourism in Forbes, listicles and destination guides for match cities in key lifestyle publications, delivering on stand-out earned media outcomes throughout the campaign

# Campaign Execution Continued

## #racetothefinal

Booking.com ran a creative 'Race to the final' campaign featuring a series of quizzes and fun posts asking people to put their best arm-chair commentary and 'expert' analysis to the test by predicting the winning team, best world-cup performers along with guessing games and unique insights around match cities. We collaborated with influencers like Danish Sait, Akash Chowdhary, and Aadar Malik for the 'Race to the Final' Instagram campaign. Teams raced to the finals using Booking.com to book flights, accommodations, and attractions, showcasing Booking.com's range of services authentically and resonating with the audience



# Campaign Execution Continued

## Successfully leveraged sports hospitality

Hosted key journalists and Hindi movie celebrities (Aparshakti Khurana and Sunny Singh) across major cities including Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Ahmedabad to build media relationships, foster goodwill and support, and secured media coverage in the process. We ran a comprehensive hospitality programme across venues, requiring a carefully crafted logistical programme so that top-tier journalists got access to the front seat at the matches

## Travel insights to drive strategic earned media outcomes

Shared accommodations and flight related data to position Booking.com's insights on key travel trends during the ICC Men's World Cup ran its course, correlating its direct impact on travel in India. This effort not only established Booking.com as a reliable source of information but also boosted brand recognition.

# Challenges

- Considering high-decibel marketing campaigns by numerous international and Indian brands across categories in the run-up, and during, the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup, the foremost challenge was crafting something genuinely unique to resonate with our target audiences while distinguishing Booking.com from the slew of brands running campaigns during the cricket world cup. We tied the unique proposition for the campaign centered around how travel and cricket are synonymous to each other and how audiences in India particularly love the sport and travel.
- Crafting a campaign that remained customer-centric, ensuring a clear and genuine connection with the audience was important for Booking.com.
- During the event phase, we encountered challenges such as scheduling events during holidays or peak vacation periods, which could potentially reduce audience engagement. The availability of the campaign's brand ambassadors with their demanding playing commitments and personal schedules, occasionally disrupted planned activities, necessitating timeline adjustments and event participation. Proper planning and preparation ahead of time helped us create maximum noise.
- By aligning our strategy with audience interests and leveraging innovative avenues, Booking.com successfully carved its niche amidst the competition.

# Outcomes

**467**

Secured over **467** pieces of coverage in India across leading media outlets through amplified press tactics and opportunities. We received 100% positive coverage across print, online, broadcast, regional and social.

**131**

Secured **131** pieces of coverage across print, regional, TV and online for the press conference.

**74**

Secured **74** social media coverage for the press conference which was attended by 70+ media and leading paparazzi.

# Outcomes Continued

**64**

Secured **64** pieces of coverage to announce Rohit Sharma as our global brand ambassador 82 brand features and mentions in key stories around ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023

**69**

Secured **69** pieces of coverage based on exclusive executive interviews and mentions in industry stories around the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023

**36**

Top tier journalist and celebrities who attended the live matches

# Coverage highlights: Global brand ambassador announcement



THE ECONOMIC TIMES BRAND EQUITY



FINANCIAL EXPRESS



IANS LIVE



AFAQS



HOTELIER INDIA



NEWS18

# Coverage highlights: Press conference



ET TRAVELWORLD



BW HOTELIER



EXCHANGE4MEDIA



ADGULLY



ABP LIVE



TRAVEL TRENDS TODAY

# Campaign Showcase



CREATIVE PRESS CONFERENCE EXECUTION, ON STAGE BATTING AND BOWLING BY  
ZAHEER KHAN

# Campaign Showcase: Executive Visibility



CNBC TV18



THE ECONOMIC TIMES



BUSINESS STANDARD



MINT



FORBES INDIA



THE HINDU BUSINESSLINE



# Campaign showcase: Brand features



THE HINDU BUSINESSLINE



STORYBOARD18




BUSINESS TODAY

# Campaign showcase: News engine stories

## What to see in Ahmedabad?

History and cuisine of a place matter to 79% of travellers

The winner of ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 will be decided in the final on November 19 in city. As India's first UNESCO World Heritage City, the rich tapestry of Ahmedabad's history in textiles and its spiritual roots is sure to bowl over cricket fans and travellers alike when they visit – great for the 79% of Indian travellers who said historic areas are a key factor in their decision to select a destination for vacation, according to Booking.com, the Official Accommodation Partner for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023.



Sabarmati Ashram. Gandhi spear-headed the Independence movement from the Ashram between 1917 and 1930. It is now home to an informative museum dedicated to his life and teachings. A great example of Indo-Islamic architecture, the Jama Masjid is an unmissable sight – as well as the **Sidi Saiyyed Mosque** which is celebrated for its beautiful marble screens. For a peek into the city's ancient history, travellers can take a Rani Ki Vav and Modhava Sun Temple tour, which gets lit up by the first rays of sun on the summer solstice every year.

### What to Eat

Popular street foods of Ahmedabad include Pani Puri and Faldra. For a local guide, consider booking a Manek Chowk Bazaar and Jamma Masjid Private Tour, which combines the must-taste and must-sees in one excursion. **AM**

AHMEDABAD MIRROR

## Discover the Best of Cricket and Culture in the Host Cities of ICC Cricket World Cup 2023

Curated by [LifestyleWeek](#) [news18](#) • Last updated: October 14, 2023, 09:48:07 [View this article](#)



From watching a match in the world's largest cricket stadium to visiting mesmerizing ancient palaces and enjoying sensational food everywhere you go, here are 10 unmissable cities in India for cricket fans.

Follow us: [@lifestyleweek](#) [#lifestyleweek](#) [@news18](#) [#news18](#)

With the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023 round the corner, it's the perfect time to combine the excitement and thrill of cricket with the love for travel. To inspire the traveling cricket fans, Booking.com, the Official Accommodations Partner for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 has curated a destination guide of the 10 host cities of the tournament. From watching a match in the world's largest cricket stadium to visiting mesmerizing ancient palaces and enjoying sensational food everywhere you go, here are 10 unmissable cities in India for cricket fans.

NEWS18

## Your Best Chance To Explore India And Enjoy Cricket: Check 10 Host Cities You Must Visit

This October brings the ICC World Cup, where cricket enthusiasts unite in the vibrant cities of India. Explore the unique fusion of cricket passion and cultural richness in these host cities.

10 Must Cities of ICC World Cup 2023 You Must Explore





The anticipation for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023 is building, presenting a prime opportunity to blend the enthusiasm of cricket with a passion for travel. If you're planning to prolong your stay and discover more of the amazing cities, consider these top 10 Indian host cities recommended by Booking.com that promise a picturesque escape filled with history, culture, and natural beauty.

ZEE NEWS

## Travelling To Watch Team India Play? Here Are Nearby Places You Can Explore

Written by [Kelwynne Rathod](#)  
Posted on Nov 10, 2023, 21:12 IST

FOLLOW ON 



FEMINA

**Thank you**

**Booking.com**