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Why Hampton by Hilton doesn't want to give its consumers #vacaygoals

Tanya Dua

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- **Hampton by Hilton is embracing the unpleasant realities of travel in its latest marketing campaign**
- **The move is a departure from other hotel brands that highlight picture-perfect, aspirational travel experiences**
- **The positioning isn't just a bid by the brand to differentiate itself from the "sea of sameness" in its category, or to drive more travelers to its hotels, but is based on actual insights**

Travel isn't always about fancy cocktails, aerial airplane shots and glamorous jet-setting. In fact, more often than not, it's quite the opposite: delayed flights, long hours at the airport and weekday work trips to the middle of nowhere.

This is the reality that Hampton by Hilton, Hilton International's moderately-priced hotel chain is embracing in "Real Travel," its latest marketing campaign inspired by the very real travel occasions most travelers experience on the majority of their trips.

"A lot of hotel brands talk about aspirational travel moments in a bid to cater to millennial audiences, but that's probably not what you're doing every summer," Amy Martin-Ziegenfuss, vp of global marketing for focused service marketing at Hilton, told Business Insider. "We want to

embrace the occasions that bring guests to our hotels, like a kid's soccer tournament, client visits or family events."

The positioning isn't just a bid by the brand to differentiate itself from the "sea of sameness" in its category, or to drive more travelers to its 2,300 plus hotels throughout the globe. It is based on the insight and research that 71 percent of travelers prefer advertising that shows people and lifestyles that reflect the life they have versus the life they aspire to have, according to the research firm Kantar Futures 2016 Marketplace Monitor.

The campaign consists of a series of quirky, light-hearted TV and digital spots depicting business, family and other obligation-vacations or "obligations" that bring guests through its doors. The integrated campaign was developed in collaboration with the agencies GSD&M, rbb and OMD.

["Flag Dancing,"](#) for example, is the story of a father driving his teenage daughter 300 miles over the weekend only to subject himself through hours of her dance routine. But the hotel – and his daughter winning – of course, make it all worth it.

The marketing push has a sizeable social and digital media component reaching consumers across multiple channels, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube LinkedIn as well as Hulu, CBS, CNN, Vevo, Sirius and ESPN. The brand is also traveling with relatable travel influencers, such as mom influencers like [Kristen Hewitt](#) and [Elena Ollick](#) using the #RealTravel hashtag.

Hampton by Hilton is also teaming up with improv comedy troupe [Second City Works](#), bringing real travelers' stories to life in a Facebook Live video on Hampton by Hilton's [Facebook page](#) on August 2, 2017 at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. CST. The brand will also create original vignettes with the comedy troupe for its other social channels over the course of the year.

The move may appear odd at a time when publishers and brands are second-guessing Facebook Live, but the brand saw "great results" when it dabbled in it last year. In October 2016, the "Hampton Griddle Iron Masterpiece" saw the brand build build a football mural made entirely of hot waffles and fresh toppings to support its partnership with ESPN college football. The livestream garnered over 1.5 million total impressions and reached over 1.1 million viewers.

"We have more or less the same offerings as other hotel chains in our price point and we can't sugarcoat that," said Martin-Ziegenfuss. "But the aim with this is to help us make us more relevant and hence top-of-mind."