



Tourism & Hospitality

Cluster performance,
Outlook and Strategies

“Our value proposition has long been centred on sustainability and wellness. These concepts have taken on greater meaning since the pandemic: we have been designing F&B offerings, wellness programmes and digital interactions that meet the modern traveller’s need for authenticity and meaningful connections, while also honouring the local culture and heritage.”

Pascal Bertand,
General Manager of Anantara Iko Mauritius Resort & Villas

“The pandemic has solidified several ongoing trends over the past year, with home owners considering sustainability, flexibility and personalisation in their purchasing decisions. Our villas and residences not only cater to these needs, but are also the perfect combination of home-like comfort and privacy, with access to all the hotel’s amenities and five-star service.”

Jimmy Lan,
General Manager of IKO (Mauritius) Resort Village Ltd

Anantara IKO

What we do

IKO Mauritius is a mixed-use real estate project designed to be a world-class coastal resort village. Spread over 101 acres of land near the pristine Le Chaland beach, Mahebourg village and Blue Bay Marine Park, the project is being developed to harmoniously blend with the southeast region’s natural elements and historical heritage. Sustainability and wellness permeate every aspect of the projects being developed, right from conception.

The project includes the five-star Anantara Iko Mauritius Resort & Villas and eight luxury villas. Once completed, the project will also feature a mix of villas, residences, apartments and land parcels targeted to various local and international clients—making it an ideal destination for modern travellers seeking an authentic cultural journey and a unique tropical coastal lifestyle.

Our brands



MUR 88M

Turnover
66% ↑

MUR 134M

Operating loss
23% ↓

Anantara Iko Mauritius Resort

The tourism and hospitality industries worldwide continued to bear the brunt of the pandemic, and Mauritius is no exception. The compounded effects of closed borders, suspended flights, Mauritius being placed on France's Scarlet Red list and tourists' unwillingness to travel have continued to devastate the local economy. Because Anantara Iko opened a few months before the pandemic hit, the resort was denied the time to carry out its marketing and communication activities to make the brand known. At the time of writing, flights from Asia—where Anantara is widely known and successful—are still suspended. In contrast, our competitors Seychelles and Maldives opened their borders as early as March 2021.

Operating in a difficult context for two years has provided us with an opportunity to rethink our strategies and be more agile in the new market.

Boosting the Anantara brand

The opening of our hotel coincided with the arrival of the pandemic, giving us no time to work on the brand positioning in Mauritius. Our strategy was to direct our communication efforts towards markets where the brand is already well established, such as Western Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Knowing that flights to India were about to resume, we also increased our communication to attract Indian tourists.

One of our biggest achievements this year was to sign a two-year contract with Emirates for their crew accommodation. Anantara Iko's ideal location next to the airport made it the perfect choice, and we believe the airline crew could serve as valuable brand ambassadors.

Tour operators have long played a key role in promoting hotels. However, being a new player in a fiercely competitive hospitality market, coupled with the fact that many hospitality brands have built close partnerships with tour operators over decades, we faced challenges leveraging them as a point of entry to reach tourists. Alongside penetrating other markets and customer segments, we worked on reinforcing our unique value proposition, which is centred on sustainability, wellness and authentic experiences.

Reinforcing our value proposition

Our efforts were geared towards strengthening our value proposition to distinguish ourselves in a cut-throat market. The closure of gyms and movement restrictions have nudged people to support their physical and mental health. With this in mind, we created an Active Wellbeing programme, offering 70 activities per week, accessible to all hotel guests at no additional charge. These include yoga, tai qi, meditation, nature walks, treks, wine tasting and cooking classes, amongst others. We have also added an osteopath to our team at the spa to complete our holistic wellness offering.

Through this programme, we saw the opportunity to create group activities and prompt guests to reconnect with one another. Our Active Wellbeing programme is displayed on TV screens in all the rooms and across the hotel to encourage guests to sign up together and explore common interests.

All our efforts in providing a world-class wellbeing experience were corroborated in 2021. Our spa was awarded Mauritius' Best Resort Spa at the prestigious 2021 World Spa Awards, which recognises excellence in spa tourism.

Our location in the wild South, set a few feet back from the beach, is also a unique differentiating factor. The hotel is surrounded by untouched nature, authentic villages and protected sites such as Blue Bay Marine Park and Ile aux Aigrettes. To encourage guests to explore the region, and help uplift the surrounding communities impacted by Covid-19 and the Wakashio spill, we partnered with activity operators in the region to promote the local culture: street food tours, visits to tea plantations, golfing. We also chose to work with local artists and photographers to promote our Active Wellbeing programme on social media.

Honouring Mauritians

In many ways, Mauritian guests saved the hospitality industry from crumbling as they stepped in for international tourists when borders were closed. At Anantara Iko, we are grateful for their support and wish to continue honouring them, even after international travel is back to normal. We designed packages especially for Mauritians to encourage them to continue visiting the resort.

Revamping the hotel

We also seized the opportunity to upgrade our existing facilities and services. We began by planting a five-acre garden, located between the hotel and the beach. This is allowing us to provide additional natural relaxing areas for our guests, who feel immersed in nature even on resort premises.

Food and beverages form an essential part of our value proposition. We appointed a new chef from India, set to join us in 2022, to meet the needs of our growing English and Indian guest base.

In parallel, keeping in mind the disruptions in global supply chains, which have hiked up the price of imported products, we are moving towards food self-sufficiency to combat the challenge of food shortages. We are in the process of building an organic vegetable garden, with ambitions to obtain the Bio certification.

Digital touchpoints have come to become a necessity in the post-pandemic world. During the year, we implemented QR codes for guests to access our menus and activities. We are almost ready to implement the Anantara App throughout the resort, which will allow our guests to digitally reserve activities, restaurants or spa treatments. At the same time, we believe digitalisation should enhance, and not replace, the human touch that hospitality is known for. We spent the year educating and training our staff on the importance of interacting meaningfully with guests, and on developing a culture where our employees have a heart for service. This will invariably translate into the five-star service we work hard to provide.

Hospitality Real Estate

During the year, we began operating the eight Anantara-branded luxury villas, which form part of the hotel's rental pool. Though we were not able to engage with prospective buyers and adequately promote the villas due to sanitary restrictions, we seized the opportunity to review our masterplan and value proposition. We enhanced owners' benefits by creating an exchange programme through which villa owners will have exclusive access to a global network of Anantara-branded accommodations, and the ability to choose from some of the most iconic destinations in the world. This is not only a more flexible alternative to a hotel or a vacation home, but owners will also be given all the benefits of a full-service hotel, including access to all amenities, the ongoing maintenance of the villa (repairs, housekeeping...) and five-star service levels.

Innovation

Rose to meet the demand of today's clientele by creating an Active Wellbeing programme; integration of digital touchpoints across the hotel; creation of organic vegetable garden in response to international product shortages and rising prices.

People-centred culture

Continuous training and education on service excellence and the art of sincere hospitality; in-house team members welfare activities and recognition programme, which are key in succeeding in a demanding industry.

We Care

Promotion of the Mauritian culture through partnerships with neighbouring communities and encouraging guests to explore the region; employment of locals as much as possible; integration of sustainable elements in the design of the hotel (solar water heater, water reuse, organic vegetable garden); coral farming; transformation of used coffee capsules into cups.



Anantara Iko Mauritius Resort

In 2022, we will begin construction for the addition of a second pool to better accommodate our vacationing guests. Anantara Iko has all the elements to be successful. We are now working on positioning the resort to be more visible in our key markets, especially in the UK, France, Germany, South Africa India and the Middle East. Our communication efforts will be geared towards generating more bookings from these markets.

We intend to achieve this by building on our current value proposition and continuing to develop sustainability initiatives: coral farming, recycling, composting... To further strengthen this value proposition, we are working toward achieving the Green Growth certification, which moves beyond the current one-dimensional certifications and takes into account social, cultural and environmental factors.

One of the challenges facing the island is the shortage of labour in hospitality, with scores of employees moving to competing destinations for work. As a member of AHRIM (Association des Hôteliers et Restaurateurs de l'île Maurice), we are collaborating with stakeholders in the industry to make Anantara Iko an attractive place to work and tourism and hospitality industry.

Hospitality Real Estate

The sale of our villas is our biggest priority in 2022. Knowing that buying patterns have been increasingly influenced by convenience since the pandemic, we are confident that our villas remain as relevant as ever to the needs of today's buyers: they are ready-built, making them easily viewed and readily available for occupancy.

As we move on to the second phase of Iko Coastal Village, we are expanding our portfolio to include a collection of residences and apartments, which will also feature all the elements needed to satisfy the needs of the post-Covid-19 traveller.

As we progressively develop our project, we are focusing on ensuring a seamless and consistent experience between the hotel and villas, from the sustainability of the design and wellness offerings, to the quality of F&B options and service that is sincere and authentic. Only then will our vision of an integrated coastal village come to life.

With borders reopened as from October 2021, the industry is surely on the road to recovery. While it may not recover to pre-Covid levels for a few years, we are confident in our strategy and unique selling proposition. Mauritius remains an attractive destination in the eyes of the world. It is important for both the public and private sectors to work together and play their cards right at every level. Should we achieve a high level of coordination, we believe Mauritius can rebound high with brilliance.

“The pandemic has reinforced the role of travel agencies when it comes to providing crucial information amid constant changes in travel regulations and entry requirements. Our customers turned to us for our savvy insider knowledge, flexible terms that take into account all possible scenarios, and for our support in ensuring their long-awaited trips go without a hitch.”

Varsha Ramchurn,
General Manager

Silver Wings Travels

What we do

Strategically located in the travel hub of Port Louis, Silver Wings Travels is a one-stop-shop for leisure and business travel. It offers individuals, families and businesses a wide range of services, from air tickets at competitive rates, to group travel packages and bookings for hotels, excursions and airport transfers worldwide. Silver Wings Travels is also a well-established Destination Management Company (DMC) offering comprehensive services in Mauritius for tourists from all over the world.

Silver Wings Travels distinguishes itself by its commitment to a high level of service, delivered by a team of travel consultants. Their deep knowledge of all destinations and attention to detail enables them to craft an experience that is efficient and unique to each traveller

Our brands



MUR 120M

Sales of Tickets
12% ↑

MUR 1.1M

Operating loss
94% ↓

Performance highlights in 2021

Despite borders being shut between January and October 2021, we began the year on a positive note, driven by a strategy to diversify our customer base and service offerings:

- We targeted local sales as from December 2020. Following successful marketing campaigns, we recorded a growth in bookings for local hotels compared to 2020
- Bookings to Rodrigues made up most of our revenue in the first quarter, which unfortunately came to an abrupt halt after commercial flights between Rodrigues and Mauritius were suspended until June 2021
- With over 20,000 foreign workers in Mauritius, we focused on offering safe travel solutions for this niche market
- We found that high-net-worth individuals were not as hesitant to travel as other customer segments; similarly, business travel carried on almost normally.
- Our activities accelerated significantly from October 2021, after the reopening of borders. We recorded revenues of MUR 40M between October and December 2021 alone, far exceeding our initial targets of MUR 20M for that period. On the downside, Mauritius was placed on France's Scarlet Red List in December 2021, which led to mass cancellations of bookings as travellers were reluctant to fly to Mauritius and risk getting stranded in the country
- Our role as advisors took on greater meaning during the year. As travellers were anxious about navigating the changing sanitary protocols implemented in different countries (visas, quarantine, PCR tests, vaccination), our teams offered solutions to help with flight changes, refunds and travel insurance, and ensured to stay one step ahead of the latest travel regulations.
- We developed and launched a B2B portal, designed to offer a centralised source of information for the overseas travel agencies we collaborate with. This has enabled quicker turnarounds in sales. We also automated our Finance and Accounting processes to enhance operational efficiency.
- One of our biggest priorities during the year was to retain 100% of our workforce and maintain all salaries and allowances, despite facing a few months of little to no activity. We also continued benefitting from the government's Wage Assistance Scheme, which helped us offset at least 60% of our employee-related costs.

Improving our odds at Positive Disruption

Innovation

Diversified into niche markets such as expat workers and corporate travel for HNWI; strengthened our advisory role; deployed a B2B platform for our collaborators.

People-centred culture

Maintained salaries, benefits and 100% of the workforce. Employee engagement score increased to reach 82% .

We Care - inclusive and sustainable Mauritius

Voluntary employee participation in the Currimjee Covid Fund.

Contribution to CJ's strategy



Priorities for 2022

We are extremely optimistic for 2022 and are expecting to generate revenues back to pre-Covid-19 levels. With international travel resuming, people more eager to travel than ever, and a diversified footprint across various market segments, Silver Wings is poised for a year of growth.