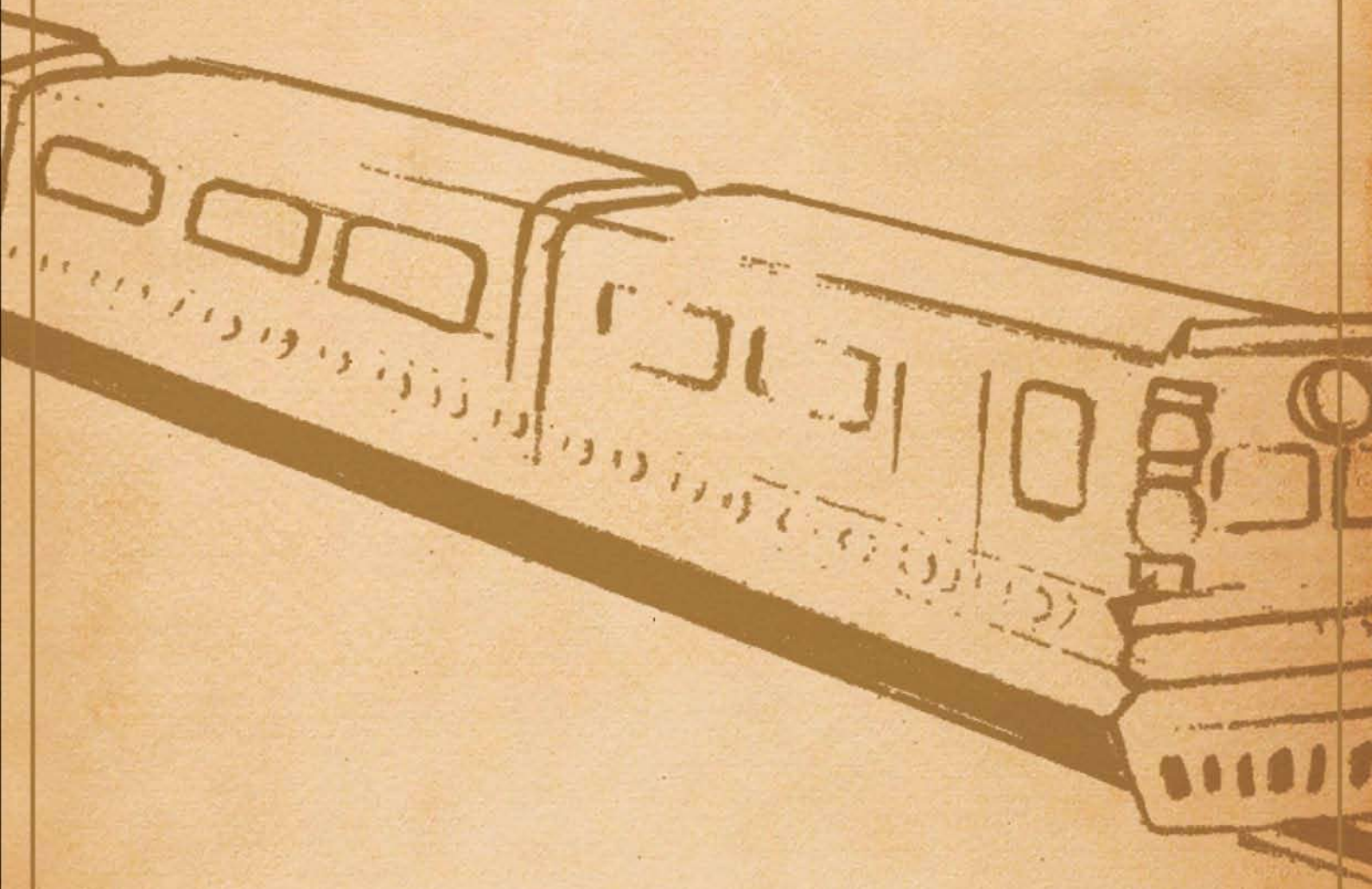




Many worlds. One voyage.

THE LAUNCH OF A LUXURY TRAIN



CASE STUDY

Background:

In the early 90's The Department of Tourism, Government of Karnataka (DOT) took aggressive initiatives in promoting Karnataka as a tourism destination across the world while Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC) ensured hospitality, travel & tour to the in-bound travelers.

KSTDC a Government of Karnataka Enterprise established in the year 1971 is the largest tour operator in the state with a chain of hotels, tours operation, taxi services and training in hospitality. Apart from all this KSTDC also works towards last mile connectivity to various tourist destinations in the state.

Window of Opportunity:

As the Department of Tourism progressed in putting Karnataka in the global map, the Department of Tourism felt the need to cater to the luxury travel segments who were interested in visiting Karnataka to explore the rich heritage and to experience the culture of Karnataka.

Hence the Department of Tourism analysed the window of opportunity to cater to the luxury traveler visiting Karnataka and a need to introduce a product that caters to the needs and requirements of the luxury traveler.

Problem:

Though KSTDC had established the infrastructure at all the tourist destinations, still it would need years to put the infrastructure required to cater to the luxury travel segment and a model of public private partnership would also take considerably high time to be ready to cater to the demand that had arisen.

Solution:

To address this issue of catering to the luxury travel segment, the Department of Tourism conducted various studies and analyzed how the other state in the country as well as in other parts of the world cater to the luxury segment. The solution was to introduce "A Luxury Hotel on Wheels".

Challenge:

The first and foremost challenge was to build a luxury train that showcases the rich Culture and Heritage of Karnataka. Secondly was to establish the train in the global market.

Though there were 2 luxury trains operating in the country namely "The Palace on Wheels" that was operating in northern part of India and was a great success in the global market and "The Deccan Odyssey" which was also operating in the northern market but was struggling to establish.

Critics always mentioned that a luxury train would be an expensive mistake, the challenge was to ensure that the train will be a success.

The advantage was that there was no luxury train for South India.

The Train:

Post the decision to launch the train, the challenge was to build the train.

The Department of Tourism handed over the responsibility to KSTDC to take it further from here. The Coaches were built by Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai over a period of 10 months. The Indian Railways contributed the bare shells of the train as a support to this initiative.

The cost of building the train was estimated at Rs. 20 Crore, The Minister of Tourism, Government of India contributed 4 Crore and the balance of Rs 16 Crore was invested by Government of Karnataka.

The train was named as "The Golden Chariot" inspired by the famous stone chariot of Hampi and to commemorate the 50th year of the formation of Karnataka State.

The exteriors of the train colored Deep Purple and Gold, while the color Gold stands for luxury and grandeur, and the color deep purple represents elegance and sophistication.

Details of the train:

Total No. of Coaches	18
Passenger Coaches	11
Dining/Restaurant Cars	2
Lounge Bar	1
Spa & Gym	1
Generator Cars	2
Staff Car	1
Total Passengers	88
Coupes per Coach	4
Lounge per Coach	1

Each coach of the train is named after the dynasty that ruled Karnataka

**Kadamba | Hoysala | Rashtrakota | Ganga | Chalukya | Bhahamani
Adhilshahi | Sangam | Shathavashna | Yudukula | Vijayanagara**

Cabin Coaches fully air conditioned cabins. 26 twin bed, 17 double bed cabins as well as 1 cabin for the physically challenged. Each room is provided with amenities like Wardrobe, Vanity cum writing desk, LCD TV in every cabin, 5 star facilities and accessories in every wash room

The 2 restaurants "**Nala**" named after a king and legendary chef from the times of the Mahabharata. "**Ruchi**", a name that means fine taste in Sanskrit. Interiors inspired by the timeless aesthetics of Hampi and Halebidu 4 seater and 2 seater dining cabins with comfortable sofas and chairs upfront

The Lounge Bar Coach named "**Madira**", the mythical drink of the gods. Plush and royal interiors modeled after the Mysore Palace

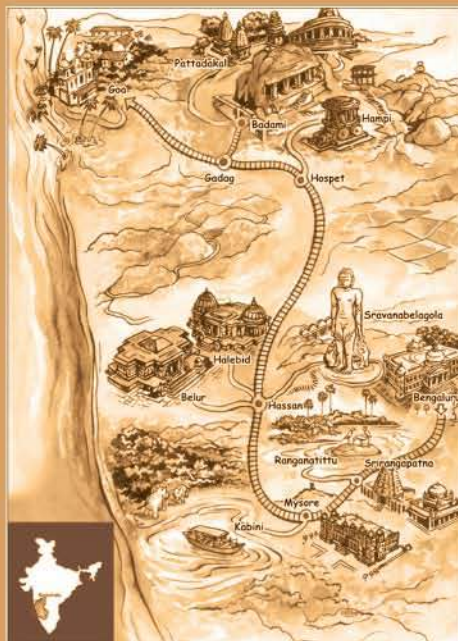
The interiors of the train was designed and executed by M/s Pendse and Associates, Mumbai.

The Itinerary:

Karnataka has many worlds to offer to the traveler, Heritage, Wildlife, Nature, Adventure, Beaches, Water Falls etc., Karnataka is positioned as One State Many Worlds. Further The Golden Chariot was positioned as Many Worlds One Voyage.

Carefully studying the need of the International luxury traveler, the itinerary was designed as a journey that makes conversation with 1600 years of history.

The voyage of 8 days / 7 nights starts from Bangalore and travels through Mysore, Kabani, Shravanabelagola, Belur, Halebidu, Hampi, Badami, Pattadakal, Goa and terminates at Bangalore



Launching the Train:

The strategy was to create more hype and launch the train, hence the launch activity was planned in 3 phases and to be launched by the 1st citizen of the country.

Pre - Launch Activity:

A thanks giving event and a press meet was planned and conducted at Chennai on receiving the train from Integral Coach Factory. (ICF)

Launch Activity:

An event of flagging off was planned and conducted at Yeshwantpur railway station Bangalore, the president of India Smt. Pratibha Patil launched "The Golden Chariot" by waving of the green flag, followed by a press conference. Media representatives from all parts of the world were invited.

Post - Launch Activity:

The train commenced its 1st Commercial run on 3rd March 2008; a high intense cultural activity was conducted. Delegates from Trade and Media were taken on a Familiarization Trip (FAM). A host of media representatives witnessed the 1st Run.

Communication to the trade and Indian tourism Offices across the world, Road shows were conducted in Mumbai, New Delhi and Chennai.

The Handover:

The Golden Chariot finally rolled out of Integral Coach Factory (ICF) on 24th January 2008.

Pre - Launch Event:



Press clippings:

The Golden Chariot rolls out of ICF

BY Bureau
Chennai, Jan 24: In a bid to enhance the tourism industry, Integral Coach Factory on Wednesday handed over the keys of the Golden Chariot to the Karnataka Government.



ICF general manager Babitha Gopal handed over the keys to Karnataka Minister, Culture, Tourism and Information, Dr. V. V. Srinivas Murthy.

Explaining the unique features of the Golden Chariot, Murthy said that the train would be first in the world to be first in the world.

He hoped that the project would be a wonderful project in future. V. V. Srinivas Murthy who is also the

ICF general manager Babitha Gopal handing over the keys to Karnataka Minister, Culture, Tourism and Information, Dr. V. V. Srinivas Murthy at a press conference yesterday.

Srinivas Murthy, after handing over the keys, said that the ICF had manufactured the first luxury coach in a record time of one year.

The 18 coaches were not delivered yesterday.

Golden Chariot to chug out of Chennai

Pratibha Patil likely to flag off the train from Yeshwanthpur

Staff Reporter

CHENNAI/CHENNAI: An eagerly awaited luxury train built by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) is set to chug out of Chennai on Friday.

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The Golden Chapter:

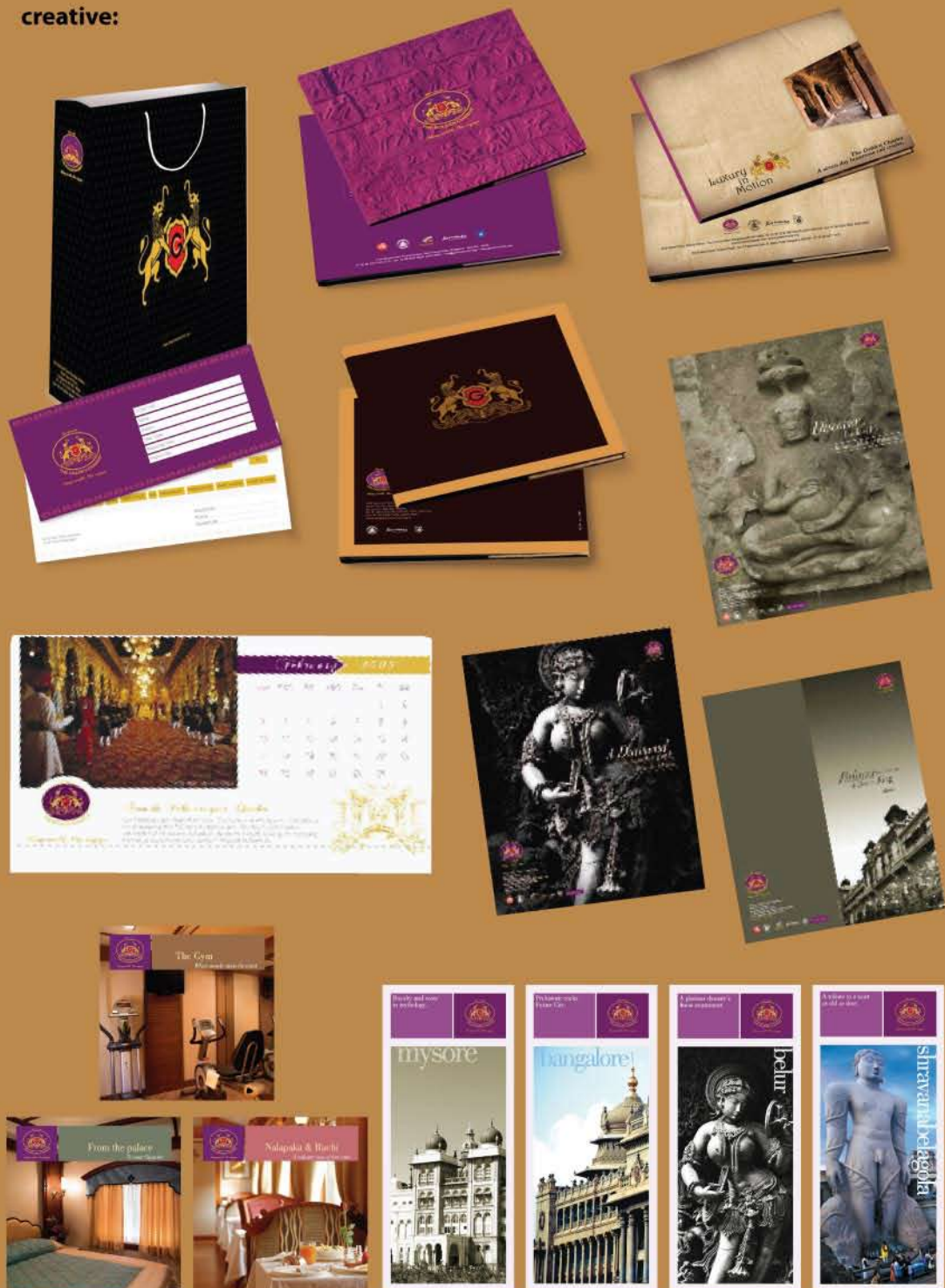
"The Golden Chariot" was launched by the President of India Smt. Pratibha Patil at Yeshwantapur Railway station In Bangalore on Saturday the 2nd Feb 2008 which was presided by The Governor of Karnataka State Sri. Rameshwar Thakur, Sri. R. Velu, Union Minister of State for Railways, Sri. Anantha Kumar, Member of Parliament and other dignitaries



Press clippings:



creative:



The Golden Chariot after Launch:

The Golden Chariot received high visibility and became the subject of discussion in the tourism sector. General Sales Agents (GSA) were appointed to market the product in global market.

The Golden Chariot received accolade from the media and trade.

