

JULY-AUG '23 VOL.18 No.3 ₹ 100

**HAMMER**

# HOTEL

**Business Review**

An Exclusive Business Magazine for the Hotel Industry

**Business**

**Pillars of Hospitality Industry**

**Feature**

**How to Win Hotel Guests' Loyalty!**

**Design**

**Blending Culture & Style**

**F&B**

**Revamping a Coffee Shop**

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With the growing environmental awareness, green hospitality is gaining currency. This global trend holds true for India too. Not only the international tourists, but many environmentally conscious, globally aware domestic travellers are voting for green hospitality in their leisure and business trips within the country. The awareness of preservation of ecological balance has led to the concept of Eco Hotels or Green Hotels. Cover Story finds the various new techniques adopted by hotels to be eco-friendly.

In the post-covid times, the role of information technology has gained a crucial role for the augmentation and survival of hotel business in India. Various factors need to be taken into consideration for holistic marketing of a hotel which can derive better results. In the Business Story of this issue, we have explored the role of sales and marketing team, responsible for maximizing the hotel's revenue through various effective ways to market a hotel.

Besides these topics of concern for the industry, we have dealt with many other pertinent trends and happenings for the industry as well—through our information, analysis and opinions. One of them is current Feature Story which explores strategies considered fruitful to keep the customers happy and patronize the hotel.

A coffee shop is extremely important for the hotel. This is where people meet up and create memories with their peers. The revamping of a coffee shop is an important change, yet there is a need to respect the old style and that is what has been elaborated in F&B story.

**HAMMER**  
**HOTEL**  
 Business Review  
 An Exclusive Business Magazine for the Hotel Industry

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Hammer Hotel Business Review is a bi-monthly magazine, printed, edited, owned and published by Rajneesh Sharma on behalf of Hammer Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 206, Samrat Bhawan, Ranjeet Nagar Commercial Complex, New Delhi. Printed at Print Creations, C-112/3, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase-1, New Delhi.

**Editorial Policy:** Editorial emphasis in Hammer Hotel Business Review magazine is on educational & informational material specifically designed to assist those responsible for managing institutional Hotel business. Articles are welcome and will be published on the sole discretion of the editor.

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Annual subscription rate within India is Rs. 600 and for overseas it is US \$110, for surface mail. Single issue is available for Rs. 100 in India and US \$25 for overseas. Cheques are payable to Hammer Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

HAMMER

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# Design Fair Asia

21-23 September 2023 at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore



After a successful inaugural edition in 2022, FIND – Design Fair Asia, the key marketplace for furniture, interiors and design, returns to the Singapore Design Week on 21-23 September 2023 at Marina Bay Sands. With over 18,000 sqm. of exhibition space, 15,000 visitors, 350 international brands, 50 international speakers during the Global Summit and an array of young emerging talent showcases are expected at the upcoming event.

The highly anticipated tradeshow and design hub will once again connect leading suppliers across furniture, lighting, décor, textiles and smart interiors technology with Asia's burgeoning interior design, property development, retail and workspace sectors.

Asian markets have proven to be more resilient in the aftermath of Covid-19, and the growing demand for high-end and bespoke design within the construction, hospitality, commercial or residential sector is a testament to this. The design market shows enormous promise for global furniture brands, with Southeast Asia alone projecting growth of 8.35% (2023-2027) to US\$248.9 billion in this sector by 2027 alone.

According to Colliers' research and a development survey by Lodgings Econometrics, there were some 2,000 hospitality projects underway across Asia as of the end of 2022. In conjunction with rebounding travel demand, investment in Asia Pacific hotels rose, supply in India and Vietnam continues an aggressive upward trajectory with 383 and 240 projects in progress respectively.

"As projects and travel in the region are significantly upscaling, the confidence for the industry is growing. Likewise, the hospitality and retail industry is moving into a new era,

catering to the next generation of consumers, with smarter supply chains, integration into local cultures, and addressing sustainability needs whilst going through a technological evolution. Design brands understand this, and we want to help suppliers to capitalise on Asia's markets as we believe the positioning of FIND as a regional business platform is very compelling," says Carl Press, Director of FIND - Design Fair Asia, dmg events.

FIND – Design Fair Asia is expanding its business matchmaking services through a regional hosted buyer program and value-driven networking initiatives for business visitors. This is supported by strong partnerships with key industry bodies including Society of Interior Designers Singapore (SIDS), Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA), Singapore Retail Association (SRA), Asia Pacific Space Designers Association (APSDA), Vietnam Design Association (VDAS) and several leading regional industry groups.

## Key Event Highlights

The FIND – Global Summit, curated by Yoko Choy, China editor of Wallpaper\* Magazine and Chair of Content for FIND – Design Fair Asia, in conjunction with a panel of leading industry insiders, brings together thought leaders, renowned craftspeople, and the creative community to discuss the exciting developments driving the industry today.

Over three days, across dozens of sessions, the FIND – Global Summit will present insightful seminars, including inspirational master classes by Italian interiors and contemporary design magazine INTERNI, along with sessions from leading property developers, regional architects, hospitality professionals, and change-making practitioners.

The summit will be focused on five pillars reflecting the issues of most concern to the design community today, including regenerative design, the Asian blueprint, the innovation era, creativity, commerce and communication and holistic hospitality with more details to be released in due time.

## Made in Italy for Asia

Fiera Milano in collaboration with the Italian Trade Agency which supports the promotion abroad and the internationalisation of Italian companies will once again organise a collective participation of Italian companies at FIND – Design Fair Asia 2023.

The uniqueness of 'Made in Italy' design will be showcased at the "The Italian Design Futures Capsule". The multidisciplinary studio Stefano Boeri Interiors, founded by the architect Stefano Boeri, with the architect Giorgio Donà, has planned an area entirely dedicated to Italian companies. Enthusiasts and buyers will find over 30 leading brands inside the capsule, demonstrating the creativity, excellence and craftsmanship that Italian companies are known for.

## EMERGE @ FIND

The Southeast Asian design talent showcase will return after its successful debut last year. Presented by Design Singapore Council, the second edition features the curatorial theme of "CRAFT + INDUSTRY: MAN + MACHINE" to showcase the spectrum of work produced across Southeast Asia, from the handmade and the crafted, to pure industrial and/or mass production, from over 50 emerging and established designers from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.



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## First Hilton-branded Hotel in NCR

Hilton announced the signing of Hilton Sohna Resort & Spa, marking the debut of its flagship brand in the Delhi-NCR region. This marks Hilton’s second hotel and management agreement with the Dangayach Group, following the recent landmark signing of the country’s first Waldorf Astoria in Jaipur. The Sohna property will also add the third full-service brand to Hilton’s current footprint in the Delhi / NCR region besides the DoubleTree by Hilton Bani Square and DoubleTree by Hilton Gurugram.

Spread across 9.3 acres, the 165-key resort will feature 105 Palace Rooms and 60 Villas and offer captivating vistas of Aravalli Hills. With 7,500sqm of indoor and outdoor space dedicated to meetings and social events, the resort is ideal for weekend getaways, destination weddings and corporate events. It will also feature multiple dining outlets, a state-of-the-art fitness centre and a designated spa zone.

“We are excited to bring Hilton’s flagship brand to Delhi-NCR and celebrate our deepening partnership with Dangayach Group,” said Navjit Ahluwalia, senior vice president and country head, India, Hilton. “As Hilton strategically expands across India, we look forward to welcoming more guests with our signature hospitality and delivering best-in-class performance and returns to our owners.”

Located in close proximity to the recently opened Delhi Mumbai Expressway, Hilton Sohna Resort & Spa will offer easy access for travellers from both Delhi and Gurgaon.

“We are pleased to expand our partnership with renowned hospitality company Hilton, and leverage its strong global reputation and brand equity,” said Atul Dangayach, managing director, Dangayach Group. “With its proximity to business centres, good connectivity and planned infrastructure upgrades, Sohna is fast evolving as a popular MICE and leisure destination, and we take great pride in partnering Hilton to set the benchmark for hospitality with the opening of the first Hilton Hotels and Resorts property in Delhi / NCR.”

## IHG Sign voco Goa Arpora

IHG Hotels & Resorts has announced the signing of a management agreement with Ginger Tree Goveia to bring a new hotel to Goa - voco Goa Arpora, set to open in January 2025. Earlier this year, IHG announced the signing of two voco hotels in the country across Jim Corbett and Gurugram. The latest signing marks the rapid expansion of – voco - IHG’s seventh brand in the country in a prime leisure destination, further strengthens IHG’s footprint in the country.

Centrally located in prominent North Goa, voco Goa Arpora will offer proximity to popular night markets, high-quality dining experiences, boutique shopping and the prominent beaches of Baga & Calangute. In addition to best-in-class guest rooms, the hotel will feature an outdoor pool, a rejuvenating spa and a well-equipped gym for guests looking to unwind. voco Goa Arpora will also house meeting rooms spread across two venues and a banqueting space. For guests looking to indulge in exceptional culinary experiences, the new hotel will offer three dining options including a bar and lobby lounge, catering to diverse guest preferences.

Commenting on the announcement, Sudeep Jain, Managing Director, South West Asia, IHG Hotels & Resorts said, “We are delighted to bring our voco brand to Goa in partnership with Ginger Tree Goveia. Goa is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the country and there is a constant demand for quality branded accommodations. We are confident that voco Goa Arpora, with its distinct premium hospitality experience, will be a preferred stay option for leisure travellers.”

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## Marriott Hotels Opens Doors in Coorg

Marriott Hotels has unveiled the Coorg Marriott Resort & Spa amidst the tranquil landscapes of Coorg, Karnataka. Nestled amid the verdant expanse of the Makandur forest, this modern haven offers a gateway to immersive local escapades, all cradled within the serene sanctuary of a lush botanical haven.

With 108 elegantly appointed villas and cottages, the Coorg Marriott Resort & Spa showcases panoramic emerald landscapes. Each villa boasts abundant natural light, plush bedding, and modern conveniences. Moreover, the resort extends its warm hospitality to four-legged companions, enhancing the vacation experience.

Within the dining sphere, the resort presents a diverse culinary offering. Madiker Kitchen caters to a global palate with international favourites and traditional Coorgi cuisine. Grills by the Valley, promises a forest-framed dining experience with innovative dishes and skilfully crafted cocktails. The Great Room, welcomes guests to indulge in artisanal teas, coffees, and creatively infused cocktails amidst a library setting. As the day winds down, the swim-up Pool Bar provides an ideal setting for sundowners and light bites.

"We are thrilled to bring Marriott Hotels to Coorg, famously known as the Scotland of India, a land endowed with breath-taking natural splendour and glorious history. This opening underlines our commitment and focus as we continue to expand our footprints across leading travel destinations within India, providing travellers with trusted and high-quality

accommodation choices" said Ranju Alex, Area Vice President, South Asia, Marriott International.

Renowned as one of Southern India's premier hill station destinations, Coorg boasts enchanting vistas of mist-shrouded hills and luxuriant landscapes, providing a picturesque canvas for travellers. What sets this locale apart is not only its breathtaking natural allure but also the spectrum of exhilarating activities on offer, including intrepid treks, exploration of coffee plantations, and the enchantment of cascading waterfalls.



## Country Inn Premier – The Prominence, Dehradun Launched

Espire Hospitality Group announced the opening of its second property under their upscale brand 'Country Inn Premier– The Prominence', Dehradun in Uttarakhand. Nestled in the foothills of



majestic Himalayas, this upscale hotel offers a perfect blend of contemporary aesthetics and enriching experiences, coupled with the brand's signature heartfelt hospitality.

The hotel features 42 well-appointed modern rooms and suites, thoughtfully categorized into Classic Rooms, Club Premier Rooms, and Premier Suites. The property offers an exquisite multisensory experience, featuring an exclusive menu with delightful fusion of local and global flavours. "Let's Catch Up," the on-site café, presents a selection of savories, bite-sized snacks, and refreshing beverages, offering a perfect venue for those seeking a moment of relaxation or a place to catch up with friends.

For events and celebrations, the hotel features an elegantly designed 3,650 sq. ft. ballroom, blending indoor elegance with a charming outdoor lawn, accommodating up to 200 guests. For smaller meetings, the versatile venues, Arcade 1 and Arcade 2, can be customized to accommodate up to 30 guests.

Akhil Arora, Chief Executive Officer, Espire Hospitality Group commented, "We are thrilled to open our second 'Country Inn Premier' hotel in the state capital of Uttarakhand. Dehradun has significantly evolved with modern times while maintaining its vintage charm. The place is the hotspot of many activities, hidden attractions and ardent foodies which makes it a perfect destination for our new launch."



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## International Housekeeper’s Week Celebrations

Taj North Goa Resorts is embracing the International Housekeepers Week with a heartfelt celebration to honour the dedicated housekeeping team. This annual event recognizes the essential role of housekeepers in maintaining the highest standards of cleanliness, creativity and guest comfort within the resort.

In the two day magnum opus, Taj North Goa Resorts under the dynamic leadership of the Cluster General Manager Dr. Anmol Ahluwalia would be curating a series of events to showcase their gratitude for the housekeeping staff’s tireless efforts. The festivities kick off with an opening ceremony that brings together the housekeepers of various resorts of Goa and the colleges imparting hospitality education in the state to acknowledge the vital contribution that the housekeepers make to the guest experience.

The agenda of the celebration is a blend of appreciation, skill-building, and relaxation. Interactive workshops and training sessions not only empower the housekeepers with industry trends but also highlight their role in upholding the resort’s reputation for luxury and impeccable service.

This event provides an opportunity for the housekeeping team to showcase their talents in a creative and festive atmosphere.



Through creative bed settings, flower décor, towel art, bedside table décor, amenities display in the room the team’s diverse skills are on full display, reminding everyone of the invaluable contributions they make.

## Leisure Hotels Group Signs Business Hotel in Dehradun

Leisure Hotels Group (LHG) an experiential luxury resort chain in North India and the largest across the state of Uttarakhand announces the signing of an up-coming boutique business hotel in the capital city of Dehradun.

Located on Rajpur Road, the 60-keys hotel will offer a myriad of facilities for the business traveler. The well-appointed rooms and suites are meticulously designed to provide utmost comfort. They will be equipped with the latest amenities and ergonomic workspaces, ensuring a seamless guest experience. Guests can unwind in the restaurant, take a refreshing dip in the swimming pool, or meet with associates at the rooftop bar while enjoying the breathtaking views of the Mussoorie hills. The hotel also boasts private meeting rooms for business engagements and indoor banqueting facilities ideal for conferences and other social gatherings.

Speaking on the occasion, Mukund Prasad, Director of Leisure Hotels Group, said, “We are excited to collaborate with Auradon Resorts and leverage our existing foothold in Uttarakhand. Our latest addition, a business hotel, marks our twentieth venture in the state. Our vision is to become the preferred choice for discerning travellers in Uttarakhand, all the while preserving the authenticity and cultural heritage of the state through sustainable practices. This milestone brings us closer to fulfilling our vision.”

This greenfield project is scheduled to open its doors in 2024, promising an exquisite experience that blends comfort with the captivating beauty of Uttarakhand.



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## IHM Chennai Celebrates 60 years!

The Institute of Hotel Management, Chennai, began in 1963 and has grown over the last few decades to be recognized as one of the leading institutes for hospitality education. This institute which has produced some of the finest hospitality industry professionals began with one building in Taramani with barely 60 students and has now grown to accommodate nearly 1000 students, from across the



country on its campus. In the early days, this Institute was often referred to as the Madras Catering College, which led to the students being given the moniker 'MadCats'. Many of these MadCats came together recently to create the IHM Chennai Alumni Association formally, to be able to join the Institute in celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of their alma mater.

Malepati Chakravarthy, a 1977 alumnus, now President of the IHMCAA said, "IHM Chennai alumni are in senior positions within the Hospitality industry around the world as CEOs, COOs, Vice Presidents, Executive Chefs and General Managers. They fly the flag of our institute high and we are extremely pleased to be able to conduct these celebrations, for the next generation to be inspired by the legacy of our college."

S. Bipin Kumar, who graduated in 1988, took charge as Secretary of the Alumni Association in 2022. He added, "Some of our MadCats have even gone on to become internationally renowned, with Michelin stars and other leading global hotelier awards to their name."

Mrs. Parimala. R, the Principal in-charge of IHM Chennai, is also an Alumnus, who graduated in 1993 and began working at the Institute within a few years. Parimala said, "Today as I look back upon my 30-year association with this campus, I feel a sense of both pride and nostalgia. I am glad that together with the Alumni Association, we have been able to put together a grand celebration that is worthy of the milestone."

The daytime event at the IHM Chennai campus included Dr. B. Manivasan, Principal Secretary, Tourism, Culture & Religious Endowments, as the Chief Guest, during which an additional Girls Hostel built with a grant from the Ministry of Tourism, Gol inaugurated. The evening program included a grand gala dinner for over 400 alumni hosted by the Alumni Association.

## Signum Hotels & Resorts Enters Gujarat

Signum Hotels has launched Signum CityScapes Landmark in Dahej, a vibrant port town located on the Gujarat's scenic coastline. Strategically located, the hotel offers 48 elegantly furnished rooms, ensuring a comfortable and convenient stay for both business and leisure travellers.



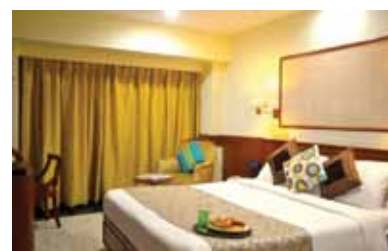
Designed with a captivating façade, Signum CityScapes Landmark boasts a range of outstanding facilities that cater to every guest needs. The hotel features multi-cuisine dining, business and meeting facilities, a well-equipped gymnasium, complimentary Wi-Fi, and on-site parking facility. A 24-hour emergency needs store and 24/7 doctor on call offers additional conveniences.

Announcing the hotel launch, Mehul Sharma, Founder & CEO, Signum Hotels & Resorts said, "Dahej's dynamic growth and strategic location make it an exciting destination for Signum Hotels & Resorts' entry into Gujarat. With the unveiling of Signum CityScapes Landmark, we invite travelers to experience the perfect blend of comfort and convenience in this vibrant port town."

Dahej, situated on the southwest coast of Gujarat, is a bustling industrial hub on the Gulf of Khambhat's coast. Once a fishing village, it now boasts cutting-edge industries, shipyards, and petrochemical complexes. It is also home to the Dahej Special Economic Zone (SEZ), an industrial estate spanning over 12,000 acres, that houses over 1,000 companies from various sectors, including chemicals, pharmaceuticals, engineering, and plastics.

## 'Regenta Place The Emerald', Juhu Opens Doors

Royal Orchid & Regenta Hotels announced their arrival in upmarket Mumbai with the launch of its 68 rooms boutique property 'Regenta Place The Emerald' in Juhu. The hotel is strategically located at the Juhu Tara road making it an ideal choice for both leisure and business travellers.



Chander K Baljee, Chairman and Managing Director, Royal Orchid & Regenta Hotels said, "The launch of 'Regenta Place The Emerald' in Mumbai is in sync with our continued vision of strengthening presence in key domestic markets. Maharashtra has always remained a critical market in terms of tourism and business potential and we are delighted to be able to expand our footprints in Mumbai, the financial center of the state of Maharashtra."

Philip Logan (COO), Royal Orchid & Regenta Hotels, said, "Our diverse portfolio of accommodations are testament to the fact that we are well poised to set new standards in the hospitality industry. While we already have a presence in Navi Mumbai, the launch of 'Regenta Place The Emerald' in Juhu, at the heart of Mumbai marks an exciting beginning for the brand. We are delighted to add a new landmark in this city and are certain that the elite, urban positioning of the exquisite property will welcome our loyal as well as new guests not only locally but from all over the world."

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# IHCL Announces New Properties

## Ginger Kochi, MG Road Kerala

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) announced the opening of Ginger Kochi, MG Road in Kerala. Strategically located on Mahatma Gandhi Road, the 73 keys hotel is close to Kochi's major attractions. At Ginger Kochi MG Road, guests can savour delectable culinary delights at Qmin - the signature all-day diner,



or maintain their fitness routine at the fitness center and a swimming pool. The hotel also features a meeting room as well as a spacious banquet hall for special events and celebrations. With the addition of this hotel, IHCL will have 17 hotels in Kerala, including five under development.

Speaking on the occasion, Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, IHCL, said, "The opening of Ginger Kochi, MG Road reaffirms our confidence in the significant potential of Kochi, Kerala's commercial capital. It is also the key gateway for tourism into the state. This will be our second Ginger branded hotel in the city reflective of the demand and multiple micro markets present in the city."

## Vivanta Jammu, City Centre

IHCL opened its first hotel in Jammu in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Situated in the heart of the city, Vivanta Jammu, City Centre offers panoramic views of the Himalayas. The 90 keys Vivanta Jammu, City Centre is strategically located at Residency Road, in close proximity to the famous Raghunath temple. With the addition of this hotel, IHCL will have five hotels in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir including one under development.

In addition to the elegant rooms and suites with a contemporary design, the hotel offers a range of eclectic culinary



offerings including Mynt - the all-day diner offering international and local favourites, a speciality restaurant – The Grill, and bar

– Wink. The hotel features state-of-the-art health and wellness facilities, including a rooftop pool crafted for rejuvenation. The over 3,800 sq. ft. of versatile banqueting space, is ideal for meetings and social celebrations.

Ujjwal Bhimwal, General Manager, Vivanta Jammu, City Centre said, "The stylish and sophisticated hotel is perfect for both business as well as leisure travellers. I look forward to welcoming guests to the city's new address."

## 'The Crown' – A Seleqtions Hotel in Bhubaneswar

The group also announced the opening of 'The Crown, Bhubaneswar' – IHCL Seleqtions hotel in Odisha. The hotel's design inspired by the cultural heritage of Odisha is located in the heart of Bhubaneswar. Spread over 1.75 acres of lush greenery, the hotel is strategically located adjacent to the Kalinga stadium and a short driving distance to Biju Patnaik International Airport.

The 81 keys hotel offers spacious rooms with their décor influenced by the local art and craft. Guests can indulge in a gastronomic journey at the all-day diner Zodiac Café, enjoy coastal specialties at Bait or relax at the bar, Highness with handpicked



selection of beverages. The hotel also offers confectionery and on-the-go meals at Deli, the patisserie.

With over 10,000 square feet of meticulously designed event spaces spread across five conference venues, as well as expansive open spaces, it is an ideal destination for every occasion. The hotel features state-of-the-art gym and a pool. The Crown offers curated exclusive experiences to enhance your stay, including fascinating temple visits and culinary trails.

With the addition of this hotel IHCL will have six hotels in the state of Odisha across brands including two under development.

Jalpreet Singh, General Manager, The Crown, Bhubaneswar – IHCL Seleqtions, said, "This hotel is a testament to our commitment to enhancing the travel experiences of our guests, providing a haven of luxury and comfort amidst the vibrant beauty of Odisha."

# The Fern Hotels & Resorts Launches New Properties

## Blue Ocean The Fern Resort & Spa, Ganpatipule

The Fern Hotels and Resorts, announced rebranded launch of its luxury resort, Blue Ocean The Fern Resort & Spa at Ganpatipule in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra. This is the company's 27th hotel in Maharashtra. The resort is located on scenic Malgund Beach, famous for its



rich heritage, historical forts, marine life and natural greenery. The prime location allows guests to explore nearby attractions, including the Ganpatipule Beach, Swayambhu Ganapati

Temple, Malgund, Pawas, Jaigad Lighthouse and many more.

Blue Ocean The Fern Resort & Spa has 55 tastefully appointed rooms, suites and villas with panoramic sea views. All rooms are fully air-conditioned and equipped with tea/coffee makers, wardrobes, ergonomic work tables, Wi-Fi connectivity, LED TVs, hair dryer, in-room dining, eco-friendly lighting and eco-friendly bathroom amenities. The resort facilities include a swimming pool, a spa, children's play area, all-day dining restaurant, and a top-notch banquet. Additionally, the in-house multi-cuisine restaurant Atlantic offers a delicious buffet, a la carte options, and indoor and outdoor seating for guests to indulge in an outstanding culinary experience.

Speaking on the launch Sunil Rane, Chairman and Managing Director, Omkar Properties Pvt. Ltd. added "We are delighted to be associated with The Fern Hotels & Resorts, India's leading environmentally sensitive hotel chain. Our resort will undoubtedly provide guests with wonderful experiences, especially tourists trying to unwind over the weekend or travelers seeking a luxurious stay and exceptional hospitality".

## Koolwal Kothi Zinc Journey by The Fern, Nawalgarh

The Fern Group also launched the Koolwal Kothi Zinc Journey by The Fern, Nawalgarh. This is the company's 12th hotel in Rajasthan. The Kothi prides itself on its vintage furnishings and painstaking attention to detail while emulating life of 80-100 years ago.

The resort is located in a lovely garden next to a spacious green roundabout. The location allows guests to live the lifestyle



of the Maharajas of Rajasthan. The property offers an exceptional stay experience with 24 individually designed rooms and suites.

Speaking on the launch Varun Khandelwal, Partner, Indralok Hotels added "We are excited to provide a unique paradise to our guests where luxury and tranquility coexist."

## The Fern Bambora Fort, Udaipur, Rajasthan

The Fern Bambora Fort, Bambora-Udaipur, first Fort resort by The Fern Hotels and Resorts announced its opening. Nestled in the breath

taking rugged landscape of Bambora village, the fort offers a picturesque and enchanting setting for its guests. The resort is accessible from Maharana Pratap Airport, Udaipur's Ranapratap Railway Station and Chittaurgarh Junction Railway Station.

The Fern Bambora Fort, Bambora-Udaipur offers an exceptional stay experience with 32 regency-fashioned well-appointed rooms and suites.

The resort also features a swimming pool, an in-house bakery, lush lawns, children's play area, spacious banquets and meeting rooms. 1711 AD Lounge, the lobby-level restaurant serves authentic



Rajasthani and multicuisine options in similarly matched regal decor.

The menu features the finest foods from the nobles' kitchens as well as a selection of mocktails from the beverage card. The Sheesh Bar offers an extensive selection of finger foods, alcohol and Cuban cigars, and gives guests the opportunity to experience soothing music and immerse themselves in the majestic ambiance created for the Maharajas.

Announcing the launch, Mohit Sharad, Associate Vice President - Sales & Marketing (North & East India), The Fern Hotels and Resorts, said, "With the launch of The Fern Bambora Fort, Bambora-Udaipur, we celebrate a significant milestone in this vibrant region."

## Mysa Zinc Journey by The Fern, Nani Devati, Gujarat

Mysa Zinc Journey by The Fern, Nani Devati, Gujarat was recently launched, making it the company's 25th operational hotel in Gujarat. The resort is located a short 45 minutes drive from Ahmedabad, making it an attractive staycation option for both corporate and leisure guests, for their conferences & meetings, corporate events, social celebrations or just a get-away break from the city.

Mysa Zinc Journey by The Fern, Nani Devati offers 24 luxurious rooms and suites with a refreshing view of the golf



course. All the rooms are fully air-conditioned, with Eco-Friendly lighting and bathroom amenities. The property is spread over 9 acres inside the exquisite Glade One Golf Club, allowing guests to indulge in the 9-hole Gary Player-designed golf course. The resort also offers multipurpose courts, spa treatments and a refreshing pool for its guests. Whether for leisure or business, the resort will comply with every demand of its guests, offering a memorable and elegant stay in its sylvan surroundings. Tabebuia, the all-day diner that serves appetizing buffets and a la carte, is nestled against lush green lawns and the lake, facing the golf course, and offers both alfresco and indoor dining.

## IHCL Signs New Properties

### Sign Ginger Hotel in Jorhat, Assam

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), announced the signing of its first hotel in Jorhat, Assam under the Ginger brand. The hotel is a Greenfield project on a fully fitted lease. It will be designed around the brand's lean luxe design and service philosophy of offering a vibrant, contemporary, and a seamless hospitality experience to its guests.

Commenting on the occasion, Suma Venkatesh, Executive Vice President - Real Estate & Development, IHCL, stated, "IHCL is very committed to North East India and has been expanding rapidly in the region. Jorhat, a thriving city is an important center for tea trading and the gateway to leading tourist destinations in Assam. We are delighted to partner with Kamal Jain for this Ginger hotel."

The 100-key hotel is strategically located on Club Road, adjacent to Jorhat Gymkhana, the third oldest golf club in the world, and a short driving distance from the airport. The hotel will feature Qmin, the signature all-day-diner offering a wide range of delectable culinary options. Additionally, there will be a well-equipped fitness center and meeting rooms.

"We are excited to be associated with IHCL, India's leading hospitality company. This will be the first Ginger hotel in Jorhat," said, Mr Kamal Jain.

With the addition of this hotel, IHCL will have five hotels in Assam, including three under development.

### Sign Ginger Hotel in Kolhapur, Maharashtra

IHCL signed its first hotel in Kolhapur, Maharashtra under the Ginger brand. The

hotel is a Greenfield project and will be designed around the brand's lean luxe design and service philosophy. With the addition of this hotel, IHCL will have 31 hotels in Maharashtra, including 11 under development.

The 100-key hotel is strategically located in the city centre at a short driving distance from both the Kolhapur airport as well as important commercial districts. The hotel will feature Qmin, the signature all-day-diner offering a wide range of delectable culinary options. Additionally, there will be a well-equipped fitness center and meeting rooms.

"We are excited to be associated with IHCL, India's leading Hospitality Company. This will be the first Ginger hotel in the city of Kolhapur," said, Ramchand Jeswani, Managing Director, Jeswani Group. of Companies

## Pride Hotels Group to Expand its Presence

### Signs 'Pride Resort Rajkot', Gujarat

Pride Hotels Group has signed 'Pride Resort' in of Rajkot, Gujarat. Strategically located along the scenic ring road, this luxurious property will offer an exceptional experience for both leisure and business. With its state-of-the-art banquet halls and a sprawling 60,000 sq ft lawn, Pride Resort Rajkot is set to become the epitome of elegance for all types of indoor and outdoor gatherings. The Pride Hotel Rajkot is expected to be operational from October 2023.

In addition to its impressive event spaces, Pride Resort Rajkot will feature a range of amenities to enhance the guest experience. A coffee shop and a fine dining restaurant will offer delectable culinary options, while the open terrace restaurant will provide a picturesque setting for dining. The property will also house a fully equipped fitness centre, a refreshing swimming pool, and a dedicated kid's play zone to cater to guests of all ages.

Atul Upadhyay, Executive Vice

President, Pride Hotels Group, expressed his excitement about the upcoming launch, saying, "With the signing of Pride Hotel Rajkot we are delighted to further expand our presence in the heart of Saurashtra region of Gujarat."

### Signs 'Pride Express Dwarka', Gujarat

The Group also signed a 'Pride Express' in the city of Dwarka, Gujarat. Nestled at the



beachfront and adjacent to Dwarkadhish temple, the most revered pilgrimage site dedicated to Lord Krishna, the hotel will offer guests a perfect blend of comfort

and convenience with its well-appointed sea-facing rooms.

The hotel will also feature state-of-the-art amenities including spacious banquet halls, a vibrant coffee shop, an open terrace restaurant offering breathtaking views, a fully-equipped fitness center, and a dedicated kids play zone, ensuring a delightful stay for guests of all ages. The Pride Express Dwarka is expected to be operational from October 2023.

Speaking about the latest addition to the Pride Hotels Group, Koustuva Mukherjee, Associate Vice President, Pride Hotels Group- Gujarat, expressed his excitement, saying, "We are thrilled to introduce Pride Express Dwarka property under our esteemed brand. This hotel showcases our commitment to providing guests with exceptional hospitality and an unparalleled stay experience. We are confident that Pride Express Dwarka will establish itself as the epitome of luxury and comfort in this historic and picturesque destination."

## The Fern Hotels & Resorts Takes Over The Metropole Hotel, Ahmedabad

The Fern Hotels & Resorts, India's leading environmentally sensitive hotel chain, has announced the takeover of The Metropole Hotel, Ahmedabad under the company's revenue-share model.

Located close to the banks of the Sabarmati River, the hotel is



currently operational and undergoing refurbishment and upgradation. On completion, it will be rebranded as The Fern Residency Subhash Bridge, Ahmedabad, and offer 69 rooms & suites. The hotel

also boasts a multi-cuisine restaurant, spacious banquets, meeting rooms, and a Health Club.

Speaking of the rebranding, Suhail Kannampilly, Managing Director, The Fern Hotels & Resorts, said, "We are thrilled to be introducing The Fern Residency Subhash Bridge, Ahmedabad as our newest addition to our growing portfolio of hotels in Gujarat. The refurbished property will reflect our commitment to delivering exceptional hospitality experiences while maintaining a strong focus on sustainability. By blending modern comforts with the essence of traditional splendour, we aim to offer our guests an unforgettable stay. With its prime location in the heart of Ahmedabad, the hotel is the perfect choice for travelers seeking a truly enriching experience."

## jüSTa Hotels & Resorts Celebrate 18th Anniversary

jüSTa Hotels & Resorts, a brand owned by Bangalore-based Onora Hospitality Pvt Ltd, is celebrating its 18th anniversary in August. To commemorate this milestone, the company plans to launch a series of initiatives over the next one year to share this achievement with their guests. Launched in 2005 with a Service Apartment in Bangalore, the company opened city hotels in Bangalore and Delhi in 2006. By the year 2020, jüSTa had set up 14 boutique hotels in various cities across India.

Since art is one of the key focus areas of jüSTa Hotels & Resorts, art & craft workshops and artist residencies will be organized at some of the properties. The art workshops will focus especially on promoting traditional Indian art forms and introducing the guests to a region's indigenous art and craft. Moreover, food festivals will be held across all the 20 jüSTa Hotels & Resorts in the coming months. The company is also conducting a massive tree plantation drive wherein around 5,000 trees will be planted across jüSTa Hotels & Resorts.

Thanking his guests for the beautiful moments and memories created over the years, Ashish Vohra, Founder & CEO, jüSTa Hotels & Resorts, said, "Eighteen years ago, we embarked on a journey to create not just hotels, but experiences that would linger in the hearts and minds of our guests. Today, as we celebrate a remarkable milestone, I am humbled by the unwavering support and trust our guests have bestowed upon us over the years. Their patronage has been our driving force, inspiring us to push the boundaries of excellence in hospitality."



## IHCL Introduces J Wellness Circle; A Holistic Wellness Brand

IHCL has launched its holistic wellness brand - J Wellness Circle - on the International Yoga Day. Inspired by traditional Indian healing wisdom and based on principles of Ayurveda and Yoga, J Wellness Circle will offer curated experiences for rejuvenation of mind, body and soul.

Speaking about the announcement, Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & CEO, Indian Hotels Company said, "IHCL's iconic brand Taj is a pioneer in spas, offering treatments deep rooted in India's ancient approach to wellness. J Wellness Circle will build on the legacy enhancing it on a wider scale, encompassing physical and mental well-being."

He added, "The wellness tourism market has been growing steadily in recent years and IHCL's impressive portfolio of over 50 spa and wellness centres globally, is well positioned to cater to this increasing demand."

J Wellness Circle spas and wellness centres are spread across some of the most majestic palaces, iconic city hotels, idyllic beach resorts and serene mountain getaways. Designed specifically for well-being, it offers guests retreats including stays, spa therapies, immersive experiences



and nourishing cuisines.

Guests can embark on a journey of holistic wellness with traditional Ayurveda, Yoga and healing therapies like pain relief with Svastha, sleep therapy of Nidra and Shringaar, a ceremonial ritual that perfects beauty. It also features curated location-based experiences like the world's only floating spa-boat on Lake Pichola at Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur and tented-spas at Rambagh Palace, Jaipur.

J Wellness Circle integrates sustainability across all its offerings with use of authentic and organic ingredients for treatments as well as nutritious and balanced dining options. Highly trained therapists from the in-house spa academy ensure guest delight.

Recently J Wellness Circle was launched at Taj Lands End, in Mumbai. Speaking about the announcement, Somnath Mukherjee, Senior Vice President, Operations, IHCL said, "Today fitness and wellness have become priority for guests. Taj Lands End is embracing this trend with the introduction of the J Wellness Circle. Designed for well-being, it offers guests spa therapies, immersive experiences and nourishing cuisines."



### Sidharth Shah

Fortune Hotels appoints Sidharth as a new Head-Finance. He is a Chartered Accountant with over 17 years of experience in financial management, and has led various IT & planning process transformations and digitization initiatives during his tenure at ITC Infotech India Ltd. Sidharth has also served as the Head of the Eastern

District of Trade Marketing & Distribution (TM&D) Division at ITC Ltd. He also headed Finance for hotel ITC Maurya and been commended for his exceptional negotiation skills and employee relations expertise.



### Nitin Marriya

Nitin Marriya has been elevated to General Manager at Le Meridien Nagpur. A graduate in Science from St. Joseph's College Bangalore and alumnus of IHM Bangalore, he with over 18 years of experience began his journey with The Leela Hotels & Resorts and subsequently worked at Taj Hotels and IHHR Hospitality. He served as Hotel Manager at Le

Meridien Hyderabad, prior to which he was Cluster Director of Sales & Marketing at Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel and Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park.



### Manish Kumar Pathak

Manish Kumar Pathak, has assumed the position of Operations Manager at Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach. With an illustrious career at renowned hotels, Manish arrives adorned with a rich tapestry of experience and exceptional expertise. His previous tenure at Novotel Ahmedabad as Director of F&B saw him successfully overseeing food and

beverage operations, implementing strategic marketing programs, and ensuring the highest standards of quality control. He was also nominated for the F&B Person of the Year at the Accor Annual Awards.



### Anuj Soin

Anuj Soin has been appointed as the General Manager of Radisson Hotel Sector 29 Gurugram. With over 17 years of hospitality expertise in both commercial and operational roles, he has been with Radisson Hotel Group for over four and half years, and his last assignment was with Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport as Director of Operations. He worked with

The Taj Group, Marriott Hotels, and Leela Hotels. Soin has handled large operations with a keen understanding of finance, marketing strategy development, and communication.



### Somrup Chanda

Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield has appointed Somrup Chanda's as Director of Operations. Having accumulated around 18 years of expertise, he started his journey with Grand Hyatt Mumbai and subsequently worked with Park Hyatt Hyderabad, Hyatt Regency Pune-Delhi-Kolkata, Sheraton Grand at Brigade Gateway, and Crowne Plaza & Staybridge Suites Yas Island, Abu

Dhabi. Chanda will oversee several key areas including enhancing the brand, developing products, managing budgets, talent development, succession planning, and organising work and initiatives on quarterly basis.



### Supreet Roy

Supreet Roy is the new General Manager at Sheraton Grand Pune. With an illustrious career spanning over two decades, he brings an unparalleled level of expertise. Having completed his education from IHM Kolkata, Supreet has a strong hospitality background. He has worked with some of the most renowned hospitality brands such as as

Hyatt, Radisson, Imperial Hotel, and the Accor group of Hotels. As the former General Manager of Novotel Chennai Chamiers Road, he propelled the hotel to extraordinary success.



### Manoj Mathew

Tamara Leisure Experiences (TLE) announces the elevation of Manoj Mathew as Senior Vice President - Operations. Having worked for over 3 years as Vice President - Operations, Mathew has fortified and enriched all facets of the company's operational endeavours. With over 38 years of experience, he in his new capacity will retain oversight of the Operations function,

including spearheading upcoming unit launches. His ardour for the industry is evident through active engagements with esteemed organizations like SKAL International, Bangalore, and Karnataka Tourism Society.



### Ajay Singh

The Fern Kesarval Hotel & Spa has promoted Ajay Singh as General Manager. In his new role, he will foster teamwork, establishing trust, providing professional leadership, and exceeding stakeholder expectations. He is determined to deliver his very best by continuously enhancing his knowledge and skills in line with the latest trends in the hospitality industry.

With his leadership skills, industry experience, and commitment to providing extraordinary guest experiences, he will play a pivotal role in driving the hotel's success



### Uday Sinha

Uday Sinha takes over as General Manager of The Fern Hillside Resort, Bhimtal, Nainital. With a track record of 15 years, he previously worked with Country Inn Hotels & Resorts, Leisure Hotels, ITC. His unparalleled expertise in tourism and hospitality makes him a valuable asset. With a focus on customer satisfaction, he strives to cultivate a harmonious

workplace culture and maintain the highest ethical standards in management and corporate governance, while simultaneously exploring emerging markets in nearby cities at the foothills.



### Surajit Banerjee

Surajit Banerjee is the new General Manager of T2 Beacon Hotel, Mumbai. He embarked on his T2 Beacon journey as the Operations Manager. His exceptional performance and unwavering dedication have propelled him to a well-deserved promotion. With a career spanning 20 years, he worked with renowned hotel brands, including Sarovar Hotels &

Resorts as Assistant Front Office Manager and Taj Hotels & Resorts as Duty Manager. He has exceptional abilities in guest relations, revenue analysis, service strategies, and hands-on management.



### Jitendra Raghuwanshi

Jitendra Raghuwanshi takes over as General Manager of Koolwal Kothi Zinc Journey by The Fern, Nawalgarh, Rajasthan. He possesses a wealth of experience in the hospitality sector and has worked with renowned names like Taj Group, Sayaji Group, Hotel Best Western, Lemon Tree Hotels, Country Club Ltd. and Puranmal Sweets LLC Dubai, before

joining Concept Hospitality. With an impressive background in the hospitality industry and strong leadership acumen, he is set to lead the property to new heights.



### Nadeem Khan

JW Marriott Bengaluru Prestige Golfshire Resort & Spa has appointed Nadeem Khan as Director of Rooms. He brings with him over 14 years of experience in hospitality management, customer engagement, and property administration. He holds a Bachelor of Hospitality Management from IHM, Bangalore. He has been instrumental in the opening of Marriott's Luxury

Collection hotels across India, showing his expertise in managing luxury properties and delivering exceptional guest experiences. He has also proven his skills in managing highly successful hotel operations.



### Akshay Puri

Akshay Puri takes over as General Manager of The Fern Residency Subhash Bridge, Ahmedabad. He brings a wealth of expertise to his role as General Manager. Prior to this assignment, Akshay was General Manager at The Fern Residency, Mundra. Committed to elevating guest satisfaction with strategic initiatives and a focus on brand development, he

aims to drive overall growth for the hotel. His leadership is driven by a commitment to excellence and a genuine desire to create lasting memories for every guest.



### Saif Usmani

Shangri-La Eros New Delhi has appointed Saif Usmani as the Spa Manager. With an impressive track record in the wellness and spa industry, he brings an abundance of experience. He has previously worked with Oberoi Hotels and Resorts, Mandarin Oriental, Sheraton, Jumeirah. He also worked as Spa Manager at The Lalit Great Eastern Kolkata and Wellness Practitioner

and Consultant at iKSANA Wellbeing Centre where he developed personalised wellness programs and implemented wellness practices such as yoga, fitness, nutrition, and spa therapies



### Subhro Mukhopadhyay

Subhro Mukhopadhyay takes over as General Manager of The Fern Residency, Turbhe. With over 21 years of experience, he held leadership positions with Hyatt, Qatar Airways, Lufthansa Airlines, The Zuri Hotels, IHG, and Royal Orchid Hotels. He was the part of pre-opening teams for The Fern Residency in Calangute (Goa) and The Fern Residency Subhash

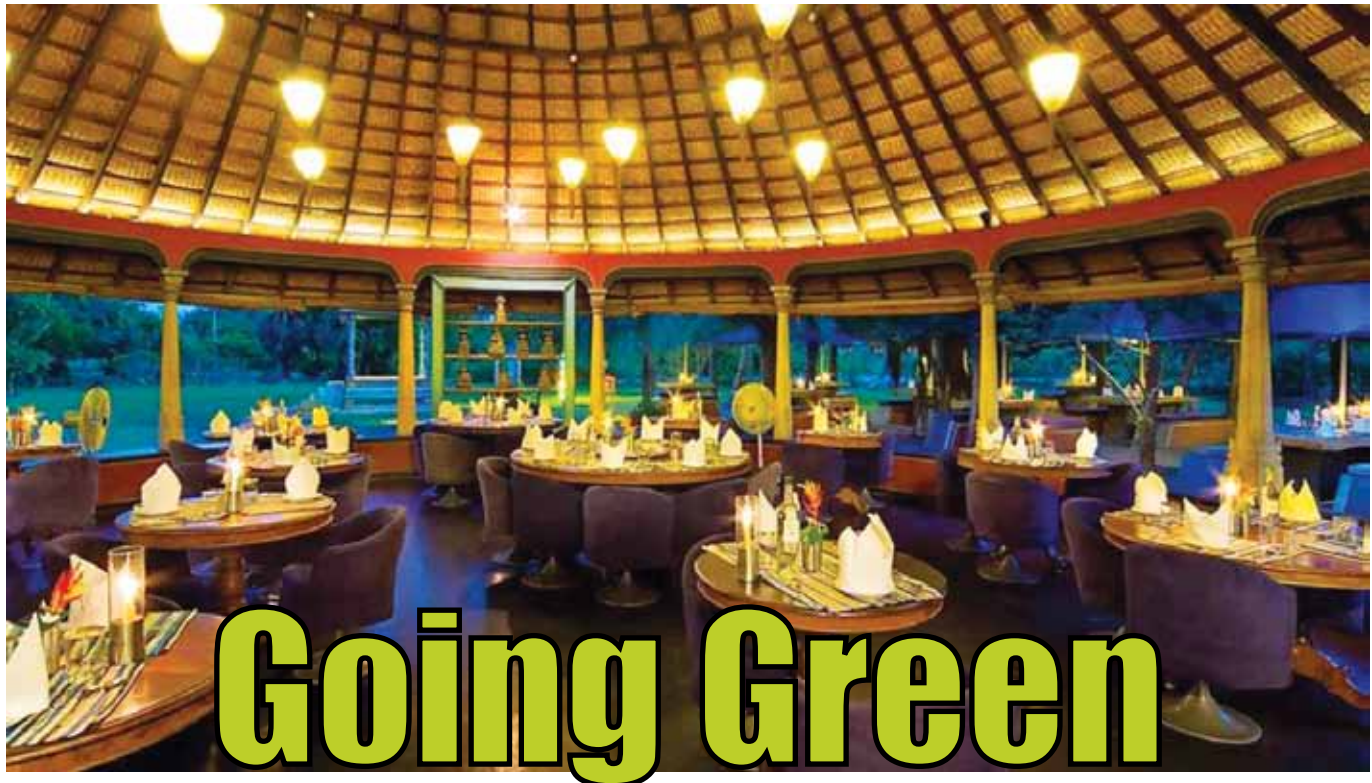
Bridge in Ahmedabad. His primary focus will revolve around achieving operational excellence, ensuring exceptional guest satisfaction, and fostering robust stakeholder relationships to boost profitability.



### Kulpreet Kaur

Hyatt Centric MG Road Bangalore has appointed Kulpreet Kaur as the new Director of Sales & Marketing. With a decade of experience, she began her career in food and beverage operations at Taj Exotica Goa and Taj Yeshwantpur. She then joined Aloft Cessna Business Park before joining Sheraton Grand Whitefield hotel and convention center.

Each chapter of her hospitality career has showcased her expertise and commitment to excellence, which will play a crucial role in the continued success of the hotel.



# Going Green

“Tradition is the democracy of dead!” said Hitler. This would be highly appropriate for the present day scenario of the hotel industry which has not only to adopt itself to suit the needs of the international traveler in terms of opulence and service but also becoming eco-friendly. The awareness of preservation of ecological balance has led to the concept of Eco Hotels or Green Hotels. Over the last couple of decades going green has been amplified in India. Several hotels are adopting new techniques like installation of renewable sources, insulated facades, waste management systems, etc.

**Ashok Malkani** examines various aspects of going green.

Over the last few years there has been an increasing awareness about sustainability and eco-friendliness. Though the cost of living crisis has, to some extent, tightened the purse strings of tourists, the desire in helping environment and expecting brands to be eco-friendly still persists not only among the millennials and gen Z but with almost all age groups.

The rise in awareness among consumers about environmental and social issues has led to a growing demand for sustainable tourism practices. As a result, many travelers are opting for eco-friendly accommodations and activities that promote sustainable tourism.

The sustainability issue has become an important issue and even the theme for World

Earth Day this year was “Invest in Our Planet”. The year 2023 is expected to witness more industries taking strategic action towards embracing circular economy and innovation in recycling technology.

Technology can be used by hospitality industry to help reduce power consumption and reduce pollution and waste. This would help hotels in maintaining economy. Centralized monitoring and control of consumption points can reduce power consumption and increase efficient utilization of resources.

People are becoming more aware of maintaining eco-friendliness in all aspects of life. An eco-friendly hotel is beneficial not only for the environment but sustainability which, in turn, helps in hotel economy. No wonder

more and more hotels are embracing eco-friendly trends.

According to a study by Barclays 87% of hospitality businesses say that environmental sustainability is important to their customers and 91% important to their employees. Chalet Hotels Limited claims that it is the first Hospitality Company, globally, to join Climate Group’s RE100, EP100 and EV100 initiatives linked to renewable electricity.

Rajneesh Malhotra, COO at Chalet Hotels declares that they have also committed to move to electric vehicles across the portfolio by FY2025, as part of Climate Group’s EV 100 initiative. The hotel is amplifying awareness and encouraging use of EV, among guests and employees. Chalet is installing EV charging

points at the properties.

The LUX\* South Ari Atoll, Maldives, the first hotel group in the Maldives to acquire the SEMSI (Stock Exchange of Mauritius Sustainability Index) status, is making concerted efforts to promote a sustainable approach to resort life and tourism. Plant-based food lovers can have an array of vegetarian and vegan “Keen on Green” options across all 8 restaurants at the resort.

Various hotels in India have already initiated steps towards stop using energy produced by fossil fuels and adopting alternative sources. Many hotels have installed EV charging points at their properties.

### Popularity of Eco-hotels

It is believed that travelers are willing to pay more for eco-friendly hotels providing them with top-notch guest experience. According to a report by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, sustainable tourism market is projected to grow by 6.7% annually from 2023 to 2028.

With such a hue and cry about green/sustainable hotels one may wonder what exactly is an eco-friendly hotel?

Punish B Sharma, General Manager - Vice President - Operations (West), The Fern Hotels & Resorts, succinctly puts it thus: “An eco-hotel, also known as a green hotel or sustainable hotel, is an accommodation establishment that prioritizes environmentally friendly practices and strives to minimize its impact on the environment.

In our hotels, we have implemented a range



of sustainable initiatives, such as energy and water conservation, waste reduction and recycling, use of renewable energy sources, eco-friendly building materials, and support for local communities and ecosystems. We, at Fern Hotels & Resorts, aim to promote sustainability, social responsibility, and eco-consciousness among our guests, offering them an eco-friendly and responsible travel experience.”

As the demand for eco-friendly hotels increases, more and more properties are embracing measures that would make them eco-friendly.

A study on “millennial consumer behavior”, conducted by The Nielsen Company, found that

sustainability is a shopping priority among this influential and travel-prone generation. In fact, 66% of global respondents would “pay more for products and services from companies committed to positive social and environmental impact. According to a Deloitte report, “2023 Travel Industry Outlook”, the demand for more sustainable travel options was growing.

An increasing number of travelers, it is believed, are willing to accept higher costs for the opportunity to support more eco-friendly hotels and other environmentally friendly businesses. According to Expedia + Skift: “Half of the consumers would be willing to pay more for transportation, activities, and lodging if the option was more sustainable.”

If you are confused about “sustainability” Amit Kumar Thakur, General Manager, Pilibhit House, Haridwar IHCL SeleQtions provides the answer. He defines Sustainable Development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. He further states that hotels across the world, which form an essential component of tourism are investing in making sustainable improvements to their infrastructure

Sharma disclosed, “An increasing number of people are opting for green hotels. The age group that tends to prefer eco-hotels is predominantly younger travelers, specifically millennials and Gen Z, who are more environmentally conscious and prioritize



sustainable travel options. Additionally, eco-hotels are popular among travelers from Western countries, such as Europe and North America, where sustainability awareness is more prevalent. However, the preference for eco-hotels is gradually spreading in India among travelers of all ages and nationalities who are opting for these properties as awareness about environmental issues grows worldwide."

He adds, "eco-hotels are becoming increasingly popular in India and, at the Fern Hotels & Resorts we have 100 + hotels that promote Eco-friendliness. With a growing awareness of environmental sustainability and a shift towards responsible travel, more travelers in India are actively seeking eco-friendly accommodation options.

Our hotels in India have embraced sustainable practices and eco-friendly initiatives to cater to this rising demand. At Ferns Hotels & Resorts, we promote green initiatives, energy efficiency, waste reduction, and responsible sourcing of materials. We offer eco-conscious travelers a chance to experience a more sustainable and environmentally friendly stay. As the awareness and preference for sustainable travel continues to grow, the popularity of eco-hotels in India is expected to increase further "

Hotels across the globe are combining luxury with sustainability. Anil Chadha, Divisional Chief Executive-ITC Hotels has disclosed that nearly 57% of the ITC hotels' electricity consumption was being generated through renewable sources. They have also been able to reduce fresh water consumption over the last 5 few years, equivalent to irrigating 100 thousand trees, sequestering 95 thousand tonnes of Co2. According to him, among the measures adopted by ITC Hotels for sustainability is that they recycle and reuse more than 99% of solid waste



**Punish B Sharma**

### Why sustainability?

As an increasing number of hotels are opting for sustainability, one may query: Why?

Sustainability can lead to cost savings for the property. Sustainable practices like energy-efficient lighting, water conservation, and waste reduction can help hotels and resorts reduce their operational costs. Yes, incorporating sustainable practices in revenue management studies can lead not only to profitability but also an increasing brand reputation.

As awareness of effects of climate change and environmental degradation rises among the population, particularly among tourists, it is imperative for the hotel industry, which is one of the largest consumer of natural resources, such as water and energy and generator of considerable amount of waste to help in preserving natural resources for the future generations.

It may be mentioned that governments all over the globe are implementing regulations to reduce the environmental impact of hotels and improve animal welfare.

The Indian Government too has taken many steps to help growth of tourism, which is the major player in promoting hotel

occupancy. The government can aid further by offering financial incentives such as tax breaks, grants, or low-interest loans to hotels that implement sustainable practices such as energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste reduction.

Several hotels in India and around the world are turning to renewable energy sources like solar, wind and geothermal to power their operations.

Even the building designs are changing, utilizing sustainable materials, energy-efficient systems, and water conservation measures. These designs not only reduce energy and water consumption but they also create unique guest experience.

As far as waste reduction is concerned, many hotels have adopted recycling programs. Besides this many of them have started using biodegradable and compostable materials.

### Making Eco-Friendly Hotel

There are several measures to be taken to make hotel eco-friendly and "green".

Sharma discloses, "To make our hotels eco-friendly, several steps could be adopted. Some of them are:

**Energy Conservation:** This can be done by implement energy-efficient lighting, heating, and cooling systems. Use LED lighting, motion sensors and timers to control energy usage in unoccupied areas. Efficient heating and cooling systems can not only reduce energy consumption but also reduce your utility bills. This leads to cost savings and increased profits.

**Water Management:** Water is a scarce resource, and hotels consume a large amount of water on a daily basis. It is necessary to reduce water consumption and this can be done by installing low-flow fixtures and toilets. Collection of rainwater for landscaping and other non-potable purposes is also adopted. Recycling and reusing water, can lead to significant cost savings and environmental benefits.

**Waste Reduction:** Establish recycling programs and promote waste segregation. Use biodegradable or compostable materials for disposable items.

**Sustainable Materials:** Opt for eco-friendly building materials and furnishings, such as recycled or locally sourced products. If one purchases sustainable products and



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materials like organic bedding, recycled paper products, and environmentally-friendly cleaning supplies, you not only contribute to environmental conservation but also support local businesses, which can enhance the hotel's reputation as a socially responsible business.

**Renewable Energy:** Incorporate renewable energy sources like solar panels or wind turbines to power parts of the hotel.

**Green Certifications:** Seek eco-friendly certifications like LEED or Green Globe to demonstrate the hotel's commitment to sustainability.

**Local Sourcing:** Source food and products locally to support the community and reduce the carbon footprint of transportation.

**Guest Education:** Educate guests about the hotel's eco-initiatives and encourage their participation in sustainable practices.

**Nature Preservation:** Preserve and protect natural habitats and landscapes surrounding the hotel.

We, at The Ferns Hotels & Resorts, by taking all the above initiatives, have significantly reduced its environmental impact. We also appeal to the eco-conscious travelers to seek sustainable accommodation options."

### Growth of Eco-friendly Hotels

As a result of continuing economic growth, there has been an increasing trend of consumers' focus on sustainable consumption over the past two decades

Sharma declares, "The growth of eco-friendly hotels has been significant in

recent years. Ferns Hotels & Resorts is an environmentally sensitive hotel brand. Our focus is on increasing environmental awareness and demand for sustainable travel options. We are happy that an increasing number of hotels are adopting eco-friendly practices to cater to eco-conscious guests. This trend is expected to continue as travelers prioritize responsible and environmentally friendly accommodation options."

Hotelbeds', world's leading B2B bedbank, has reported a surge in the number of travelers booking eco-friendly hotels. Its latest data shows that 30% more people have actively chosen to book properties that are part of the TravelTech company's Green Hotels programme.

With increasing preference by tourists for green hotels, there has been an increase in the eco-friendly properties.

As travellers become more conscious of their impact on the environment and seek out accommodations that align with their values, the demand for these hotels will grow and there will thus be an increase in the number of Eco-friendly properties. In this connection it may be mentioned that a report by the World Travel and Tourism Council found that the tourism sector in India could create over 45 million jobs by 2025 if it adopts sustainable tourism practices.

Sharma asserts, "I envision a promising future for eco-friendly and sustainable hotels. We are committed to leading the hospitality industry in sustainable practices and setting new benchmarks

for environmental stewardship. Our focus will be on enhancing energy efficiency, implementing green technologies, and promoting responsible tourism. By providing guests with eco-conscious experiences, we aim to not only meet their expectations but also inspire them to make more sustainable choices. The future of eco-friendly hotels lies in our collective efforts to protect the planet while offering exceptional hospitality, ensuring a greener and brighter tomorrow."

### Conclusion

There can be no doubt that the demand for green hotels is going to rise over the years. However, for ecotourism/lodging to be successful, residents must benefit directly from tourism as a sustainable source of income. To encourage sustainable practices in hotels, American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) has a sustainability resource center on their website. These resources include sections on advocacy/public policy, data benchmarking, procurement and sourcing, energy efficiency, water stewardship, food waste and other resources.

Since India does not have such facilities Hotel owners and managers could develop their own Eco-Friendly / Sustainable Code of Ethics. Or hotels could work with their associations to create an eco-friendly and sustainable code. Hotel operators, via their (Green Teams) should identify hotels that have embraced eco-friendly practices and create a data base of resources of eco-friendly and sustainable hotels and benchmark their practices for consideration and fit it in their own operations.

Currently, no policies for green management exist, although some hotels do engage in some environmentally-friendly practices. Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) one of the oldest and biggest has set a global benchmark for environmental sustainability with Seventy-Eight EarthCheck certified hotels (ECC hotels). According to its 2022 annual report it has made an investment of Rs. 1.54 crore in EarthCheck certifications.

The Indian budget for 2023 provides an opportunity for the hotel industry which can help in amplifying their sustainability quotient.

The future thus seems bright for sustainable hotels! ■

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# Pillars of Hospitality Industry

Marketing and sales are essential areas in the hospitality industry, which not only depends on room revenue but also on F&B and other areas. The sales and marketing team is responsible for maximizing the hotel's revenue. This department is tasked with earning revenue from various verticals like room occupancy, event spaces, leisure facilities, restaurants, etc. And it is definitely not a cake walk as there are various problems that it has to tackle like seasonality, competitors, et al. **Ashok Malkani** tries to fathom the department's problems and the strategies they adopt to tackle the issues as well as the latest trends in marketing in the industry.

The beds are made in a spic and span manner, the pillows are neatly arranged, and the towels are placed systematically on the bathroom racks. The only thing missing is: The guests! This scenario is likely if your sales and marketing (S&M) team is slack and laidback or the marketing strategy is not correct.

Sales and marketing are important elements in the hospitality industry as they directly correlate to profitability of the property. The hotel's revenue can be maximized only if the strategies are correct. For achieving this you need to keep up with the latest hospitality marketing trends.

But how are sales and marketing strategies for hospitality industry different from any other business?

Suniil Bhatia, Director, Sales & Marketing, The Mirador Mumbai states, "The Basics are more or less the same with a focus on the Brand Identity and Emotion of the Hotel/Chain as the basis of the Marketing."

Sarath Sankar, Director of Sales and Marketing - Angsana Oasis Spa & Resort, Bangalore is of a similar opinion. "However," he adds, "while the basic principles of marketing hold true across industries, the hospitality

industry presents its own unique considerations. In addition to the traditional marketing mix of 'Product, Price, Place, and Promotion,' the hotel industry adds three more "P's": People, Process Management, and Physical Evidence. When developing a marketing plan for a hotel, these factors must be carefully considered."

Vandita Singh, General Manager, Marketing & Communications, The Fern Hotels and Resorts assert that Marketing in the hospitality industry stands apart from other industries due to its emphasis on intangible services and guest experiences. She adds, "Unlike product-centric marketing, hospitality marketing focuses on promoting memorable stays and personalized interactions. The intangible nature of services makes it essential to showcase the value of experiences through compelling storytelling and visual content.

Building strong guest relationships and fostering loyalty play a central role in this industry, as positive word-of-mouth and reviews drive new customer acquisition. Moreover, the industry's seasonality and location-centric aspects require tailored marketing strategies to capitalize on varying demand and highlight destination uniqueness. Overall, hospitality

marketing revolves around delivering exceptional experiences, understanding guest preferences, and maintaining a positive online reputation.”

Kulpreet Kaur, Director of Sales & Marketing, Hyatt Centric MG Road Bangalore declares, “Marketing for the hospitality industry operates within multiple parallel paradigms. Unlike many other industries, hospitality marketing is influenced by factors such as seasonality, perishable services, customer loyalty retention, and personalization. While it reaches a wide range of clientele, it is not limited to a specific market or geographic location. By incorporating strategies such as social media engagement, influencer bonding, and online reputation management, marketing for hospitality gains a significant advantage over many other industries.”

Aparna Ajith, Director of Sales & Marketing, Sheraton Grand Bangalore Hotel at Brigade Gateway adds, “Hospitality marketing crafts intangible experiences, weaving emotions and managing seasonality. Through personalization, multi-channel tactics, and influencer synergy, it bridges local charm and global reach. Success hinges on converting allure into guest satisfaction, each interaction reinforcing the brand’s commitment.”

Rahul Khandelwal, Director of Sale & Marketing, Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield, besides emphasizing on experience aspect, relationship building and seasonal demand, he avers, “Hospitality marketing embraces Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability to attract eco-conscious travelers. Demonstrating commitment to the environment and communities enhances brand reputation, appeals to socially responsible guests, and fosters stronger connections with customers who value meaningful initiatives.”

Arvind Kewalchand, Marketing Manager, Hotel Royal Orchid Bangalore, opines “Marketing in the hospitality industry is distinct due to intangibility, customer experience focus, seasonality, relationship marketing, online reputation, local presence, dynamic pricing, visual content emphasis, global reach, and collaboration. It prioritizes creating positive emotions, fostering loyalty, and driving revenue.”

### Seasonality Issue

Industry stalwarts believe that an important issue in sales and marketing is seasonality. Factors like weather conditions and holidays



**Rahul Khandelwal**

have an effect on this industry. So how does the sales and marketing team meet issues like seasonality and competition?

Vandita states, “Tackling the challenges of seasonality and competition in hotel marketing requires a well-rounded approach. We, at Ferns Hotels & Resorts, deal with them thus.

During off-peak seasons, we implement strategic pricing strategies, offering attractive discounts and packages to incentivize bookings. Targeted email campaigns and social media promotions focus on showcasing unique seasonal experiences and events. Collaborating with local attractions and businesses for cross-promotion can also drive year-round interest. Moreover, we emphasize the hotel’s indoor facilities and amenities during unfavourable weather to entice guests.

To stand out in a competitive market, we emphasize our hotel’s unique selling points and highlight guest testimonials to build trust. Online reputation management ensures prompt responses to reviews, enhancing our image. Engaging social media content and visually captivating visuals help differentiate us from competitors. We also stay updated on market trends to adapt our offerings proactively. Collaborating with online travel agencies and influencers helps us in expanding our reach to attract new audiences.

By strategically leveraging these approaches, we successfully navigate seasonality challenges and outshine competitors, ultimately driving occupancy rates and guest satisfaction.”

Suniil disclosed, “We, at Mirador Hotel, analyse past and present data to understand the seasonal cycles. Events, festivals and wedding dates are also considered to create specific ads

and marketing posts.

Competition, as always, keeps the hospitality industry’s sales and marketing teams on their toes. Understanding traveler’s patterns and food trends are the basis on which competitors align their marketing campaigns.

Winning marketing strategy can be developed by having the optimum mix and reach of digital marketing campaigns.”

Arvind declares, “To tackle seasonality and competition in hotel marketing one should adopt following methods:

- Diversify target markets and offer off-season promotions
- Focus on attracting events and conferences during low-demand periods
- Target international markets with opposite seasons
- Emphasize unique selling propositions and conduct competitive analysis
- Manage online reputation and form strategic partnerships
- Personalize guest experiences for increased loyalty.”

Rahul reveals, “To tackle seasonality you should concentrate on unique festivals and on engagements. Guests always want something unique and experiential.”

Aparna disclosed, “In addressing seasonality, we, at Sheraton Grand Bangalore Hotel at Brigade Gateway, implement themed packages, collaborate with local attractions, and employ dynamic pricing. To combat competition, we emphasize distinct experiences, leverage favourable reviews, and foster guest loyalty with personalized incentives and loyalty programs.”

Kulpreet states, “In a diverse country like India, population diversity mirrors the challenges posed by seasonality. It also has a significant influence on marketing strategies. The effective promotion of specific events or festive celebrations requires meticulous planning and execution several weeks in advance. Staying on-trend and maintaining high visibility are essential for remaining competitive in such a dynamic market.

Sarath says, “As far as seasonality and competition is concerned I believe that for marketing a hotel, one needs to focus on a few key elements. Firstly, a strong online presence is essential, along with engaging social media content. It’s crucial to maintain a great reputation online and regularly monitor global review indexes compared to competitors.

Utilising software designed for this purpose can be immensely helpful. Additionally, prioritizing direct business over B2B is important, as retaining loyal customers who choose to book directly can significantly impact the hotel's success. By implementing these strategies, the hotels can effectively navigate seasonality and surpass competition."

### Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is vital for any industry as it impacts almost every metric important to running any business. Happy customers will continue to patronize the product. This is all the more important in hotel industry. Fostering of loyal customers can help hotels in not only increasing their revenue but also aid in reducing costs associated with customer acquisition. Importantly, it helps in building long-lasting relationships with their guests. So how does the marketing dept. gain customer loyalty? ,

Arvind avers, "The marketing department gains customer loyalty through personalization, consistent messaging, customer segmentation, loyalty programs, exceptional service, post-purchase follow-up, social proof, surprise and delight, community building, continuous improvement, and retention campaigns."

He adds, "To develop a winning marketing strategy:

- Conduct market research and set clear objectives
- Know your audience and define your unique selling proposition (USP)
- Create an integrated marketing mix and allocate the budget wisely
- Develop valuable content and measure campaign performance
- Stay customer-centric, adapt, and optimize based on results

Vandita elaborates, "The marketing department plays a crucial role in fostering customer loyalty through various strategies:

**Personalization:** Understanding individual preferences and tailoring marketing communications create a personalized experience, making customers feel valued and understood.

**Loyalty Programs:** Designing and managing effective loyalty programs with rewards, exclusive offers, and tiered benefits encourage repeat business and brand advocacy.

**Exceptional Customer Service:** Marketing collaborates with customer service teams to



**Kulpreet Kaur**

ensure prompt and positive responses to queries and concerns, leaving a lasting impression on customers.

**Engaging Content:** Providing valuable and engaging content through blogs, social media, and email campaigns keeps customers connected and interested.

**Post-Stay Engagement:** Following up with guests after their stay for feedback and appreciation reinforces a sense of care and encourages future bookings.

**Surprise and Delight:** Offering unexpected perks or personalized surprises during a guest's stay adds an element of delight and enhances their loyalty.

By employing these tactics, the marketing department cultivates customer loyalty, driving repeat business and turning satisfied guests into brand advocates."

Rahul says "Customer loyalty can be gained by:

- Transparent communication, which fosters trust and loyalty
- Building consistent brand identity and offering exceptional service
- Personalization, recognition, and loyalty programs
- Listening to guest feedback.
- Delivering on our promises

Kulpreet declares, "The marketing department of Hyatt Centric MG Road Bangalore gains customer loyalty through various strategies. We prioritize personalized experiences, excellent customer service, and exceeding expectations. Additionally, we offer loyalty programs, exclusive discounts, and special perks for our valued guests. Our goal is to create unforgettable moments that keep our

customers coming back for more."

Sarath too is of a similar opinion. He adds, "Continuously innovating new products and services is vital to retaining customers. By implementing a customer-centric approach throughout our entire organisation, we can cultivate a positive culture that fosters successful customer loyalty programs. We, at Angsana Oasis Spa & Resort, Bangalore, aim to exceed expectations and ensure that each customer feels valued and appreciated, enhancing their loyalty towards the brand."

### Tackling Unfavourable Reviews

Warren Buffet, an American business magnate, investor, and philanthropist has said, "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it." With the influence of social media and online reviews acquiring a significant and consequential importance, a negative review could affect the hotel's reputation and business adversely. Online reviews have, today, become an integral part of the hotel business ecosystem. They have to be tackled effectively by the marketing department. So how can it succeed in negating these negative reviews?

Sunil states "We reply to them acknowledging the shortfall in service and client expectation with an assurance of remedial measures being taken to rectify the same. A note of thanks for their honest feedback also helps in building trust in the long run. Some reviews that are purely posted as unfavourable out of unreasonable guest demands and expectations are sometimes also replied to clarify and support our stand in not allowing the guests to simply get away with anything which is detrimental to the Hotels Policies, Procedures and Reputation."

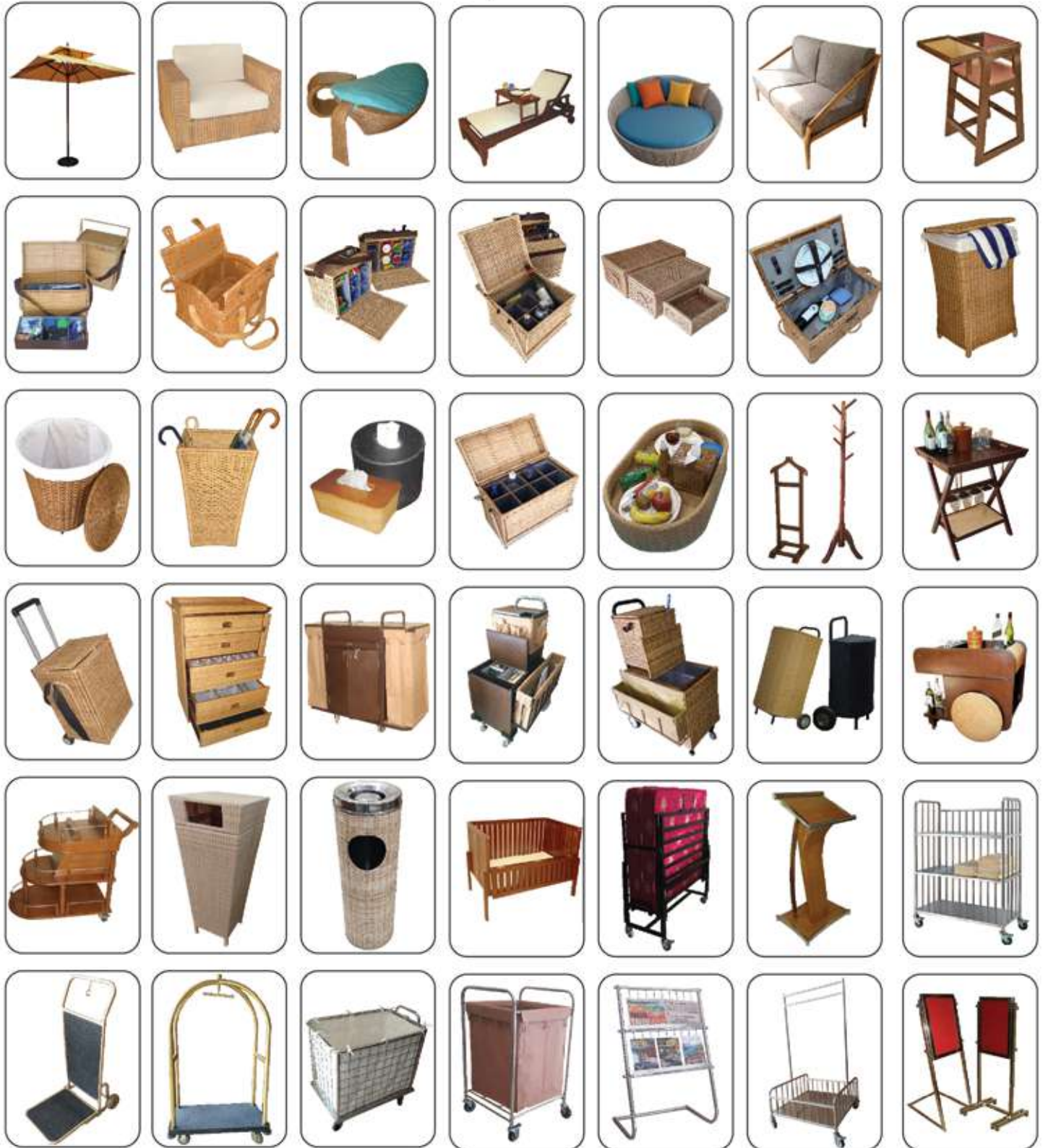
Vandita declares, "Tackling unfavourable reviews involves a proactive and customer-centric approach. We promptly acknowledge and respond to the feedback, showing genuine concern for the guest's experience. Privately reaching out to address their concerns and offer resolutions is essential. By demonstrating a willingness to listen and improve, we aim to turn negative experiences into positive ones. Implementing changes based on feedback helps prevent similar issues in the future. Our focus remains on providing exceptional service, ensuring guest satisfaction, and building long-lasting relationships."

Arvind says, "To tackle unfavourable reviews:

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  - Resolve the problem and offer a solution or compensation
  - Be transparent about any mistakes and show willingness to improve
  - Learn from feedback and implement changes for better experiences
  - Monitor and respond to all reviews, both positive and negative"

Rahul succinctly says, "We tackle unfavourable reviews by being true to the feedback and taking it seriously as it is Voice of the Guest."

Aparna reveals, "In managing unfavourable reviews, the hotel responds promptly, empathetically addressing concerns while proposing solutions. Positive attributes are highlighted, reinforcing a balanced perspective. A strong commitment to continuous improvement is emphasized, often extending a private outreach to the guest for personalized resolution. This demonstrates proactive guest care and a dedication to enhancing the overall experience."

Kulpreet avers, "Addressing unfavourable reviews is an integral part of our commitment to continuous improvement."

She adds, "Such reviews are treated with the highest care and regard. To begin, we thoroughly evaluate the input to find real issues. Once recognised, we take aggressive actions to correct any flaws and prevent them from recurring. Our goal is to engage in constructive dialogue with the guest, offering genuine apologies and solutions where appropriate. This method not only fixes urgent difficulties, but also reflects our commitment to client pleasure and continuing service improvement."

Sarath Says, that they take unfavourable reviews seriously. He emphasizes that they maintain transparency with their guests and actively seek their feedback. He states that if there are unfavourable reviews "Our dedicated in-house training and development team thoroughly analyses the root causes, identifies any errors, and devises customised training programmes to address these issues. By constantly striving to improve, we ensure a flawless experience for our valued guests."



**Arvind Kewalchand**

### Social Media and Technology

Social media and technology are two instruments that are being increasingly used for promoting hotels, thus increasing their revenue and credibility. Social media marketing has the potential to increase direct bookings and improve brand awareness. It helps hotels in building relationships with customers, increasing brand awareness, and driving more direct bookings.

Besides social media, information technology also helps hotels in its quest for earning more revenue. IT helps hospitality businesses manage inventory, bookings, reservations, and customer data better.

How does social media and technology help the hotels?

Suniil states, "Social Media is helpful in reaching out to the target market on an interest and on geographical basis. It also enables client engagement and user generated content which further helps in reach multiplicity"

He continues, "Speaking about technology I would say that Artificial Intelligence, Revenue Management Tools, Programmatic Advertising, Chatbots, 3D Venue and Room Renderings, Voice Command Based Devices etc. aid in positioning and promoting the hotel as a modern one in sync with the present times."

Vandita declares, "Social media helps in promoting your property by providing a platform to engage with potential guests, showcase unique offerings, and build brand awareness. It allows you to share captivating visuals, customer testimonials, and behind-the-scenes content, creating a compelling narrative about your property. Through targeted advertising and influencer collaborations, social media helps

reach a broader audience and drive bookings. Moreover, it facilitates real-time communication, enabling you to address queries promptly and build strong guest relationships."

She adds, "While Social media's viral nature can amplify your property's visibility, enhancing its reputation and attracting more guests, technology plays a vital role in hotel marketing. It enables targeted advertising, personalized promotions, and data-driven insights. Online booking platforms and mobile apps make reservations convenient for guests. Social media and email marketing help engage with potential and past guests. Analytics tools track marketing performance, aiding in strategy optimization. Virtual tours and interactive content showcase the property's amenities. Overall, technology enhances reach, efficiency, and guest experience, making it indispensable in modern hotel marketing."

Arvind declares, "Social media helps promote properties by increasing visibility, showcasing visuals, engaging with customers, building brand awareness, offering promotions, leveraging user-generated content, collaborating with influencers, promoting events, targeting ads, building communities, providing real-time updates, and gathering feedback for improvement.

"Technology, on the other hand helps in hotel marketing by enabling:

- Online booking systems for easy reservations
- Social media marketing for brand visibility and engagement
- Data analytics for targeted campaigns
- Personalization of guest experiences
- Email marketing for promotions
- Virtual tours and visuals to showcase facilities
- Mobile apps for guest convenience
- Online review management for reputation
- Chatbots and AI assistants for customer service
- Digital advertising to reach targeted audiences
- Revenue management for optimizing rates
- Reliable Wi-Fi for enhanced guest experiences

Rahul replies "Social media has global reach and we can showcase the property through visual appeal. We can target specific demographics and interests. Through this we can engage with customers and provide



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prompt responses, share the guest testimonials regarding their experience at the hotel. We can also run engaging campaigns to attract guests, and build recognition and connections with our audience.

“Technology aids in:

- Establishing a strong online presence through websites and social media
- Enabling targeted digital advertising based on data analytics
- Utilizing CRM systems for personalized marketing and guest management
- Engaging guests through mobile marketing and virtual tours
- Streamlining online booking and reservations
- Automating email marketing campaigns

Aparna asserts, “Social media becomes a dynamic stage for Sheraton Grand Bangalore’s promotion. It brilliantly highlights the hotel’s Food & Beverage offerings and offers sneak peeks into upcoming deals and exclusive room promotions, all presented vividly through engaging visuals. The direct avenue it provides for guests to message and enquire allows for prompt responses from the hotel, creating a personalized touch. By fostering these direct interactions, forging influential collaborations, and showcasing user-generated content, the hotel not only extends its reach but also cultivates a sense of community, fostering deeper guest loyalty.”

Speaking about technology she says, “Technology plays a pivotal role in hotel marketing. It streamlines reservations through online booking platforms, while social media and websites effectively showcase amenities and offerings. Advanced data analytics refine marketing strategies, and CRM systems enable personalized guest interactions. Virtual tours provide immersive previews, online reviews influence decision-making, and email campaigns along with chatbots facilitate seamless communication. Collaborations with influencers expand visibility, culminating in an enhanced guest experience and amplified digital presence for the hotel.”

Kulpreet, declares, “We recognize the powerful impact of social media in promoting our property. Social media platforms allow us to reach a vast audience, engage with potential guests, and showcase the unique features and experiences our hotel offers. Social media helps us build brand awareness,



**Aparna Ajith**

attract new guests, and foster positive word-of-mouth recommendations. It has become an indispensable tool in our marketing efforts to stay connected with our customers and stay ahead in the industry.”

She discloses, “I firmly believe that technology is instrumental in our marketing efforts. The digital landscape has become the driving force, allowing potential guests from around the world to access detailed information and make informed decisions about their stay. With innovative digital platforms and seamless user experiences, guests can effortlessly book tables and rooms without even speaking to a human. This integration of technology has revolutionized our industry and enhanced convenience for our valued guests.”

Sarath reveals, “We strategically use various social media channels to highlight our new packages and prepare for upcoming seasons. Our team creates customised content tailored to our target audience, ensuring maximum engagement. By staying constantly connected



**Vandita Singh**

with our guests through multimedia channels, especially social media, we build strong relationships and increase brand awareness.

Additionally, our informative website provides guests with the necessary information to research our resort before approaching us for a better understanding.”

He adds, “Technology plays a crucial role in marketing a hotel. With the advancements in digital technologies and the availability of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software, it has become easier than ever to connect with the target market and effectively disseminate information. The use of technology allows us to gather and analyse data with heightened efficiency and accuracy, enabling us to better understand customer needs and preferences. By leveraging data-driven insights, we can create personalised experiences and tailor our packaging offerings, ultimately leading to more successful marketing strategies.”

### Latest Trends

Today’s travelers are researching more online. And they are not attracted by the usual publicity routine. Hotels have to adopt new trends. It is believed that voice search is one of the new marketing trends. So what are the trends adopted by hotels?

Vandita states, “The latest trends in sales and marketing in the hotel industry revolve around personalization, sustainability, influencer marketing, virtual and augmented reality experiences, contactless technology, experiential marketing, and user-generated content.

Hoteliers are focusing on tailoring offers to individual guest preferences, promoting eco-friendly practices, collaborating with influencers, utilizing VR/AR technologies, implementing contactless services, creating unique guest experiences, and encouraging user-generated content for authenticity and trust-building.

These trends cater to the changing preferences of modern travelers and provide opportunities for hotels to remain competitive in the market.”

Kurpreet declares, “Trends are passé as the gears shift every minute, readjusting with even the slightest variations in the market. Incorporating personalized experiences, digital marketing strategies, social media engagement, and sustainability initiatives are

crucial for staying competitive in this dynamic industry.”

Aparna, avers, “The hotel industry is witnessing a dynamic shift in sales and marketing trends. Shortened booking windows have become prominent, reflecting evolving consumer behaviour. The concept of “bleisure” is gaining momentum, with travelers extending business trips for leisure purposes. The hybrid work model has led to the rise of “work-cations” where hotels cater to both professional and relaxation needs. Adapting marketing strategies to resonate with Gen Z, leveraging social media and influencers, has become vital.

Hotels now focus on selling curated experiences rather than mere products, tapping into the growing demand for personalized and immersive stays. Wellness tourism is a key area of emphasis, aligning with travelers’ pursuit of health and rejuvenation. The trend of short staycations in nearby locales is on the rise, offering quick getaways. These trends collectively define the evolving landscape of sales and marketing strategies in the hotel industry.”

Rahul states, “The latest trends in sales & marketing in the hotel industry include:

**Wedding Destination:** Hotels are becoming sought-after wedding destinations, offering picturesque venues and comprehensive wedding planning services to cater to the growing demand for unique and memorable wedding experiences.

**Sustainability Initiatives:** Sustainability is a key focus, with hotels implementing eco-friendly practices, green certifications, and promoting their commitment to environmental conservation to attract eco-conscious travelers.

**Globalizing F&B Promotion:** Hotels are embracing global flavours and diverse culinary experiences in their Food & Beverage (F&B) promotions. This trend appeals to travelers seeking authentic and international dining experiences.

**User-Generated Content (UGC):** Leveraging UGC in marketing campaigns is gaining traction. Hotels showcase guest experiences and testimonials as authentic and persuasive content to influence potential guests.

**Personalization:** Personalized marketing is on the rise, with hotels utilizing data analytics to understand guest preferences and create tailored offers and experiences, enhancing



**Sunil Bhatia**

guest satisfaction and loyalty.

**Influencer Marketing:** Collaborating with social media influencers and travel bloggers allows hotels to reach a broader audience and gain credibility through authentic endorsements.

**Health and Wellness:** Hotels are emphasizing health and wellness offerings, including fitness facilities, spa services, and wellness packages, catering to travelers seeking relaxation and rejuvenation.

Arvind reveals, “In the ever-evolving landscape of the hotel industry, sales and marketing trends are continually shaping the way hotels attract and engage guests. Personalization has taken center stage as hotels leverage data analytics to tailor experiences, making guests feel valued and understood. Social media influencer marketing has gained momentum, allowing hotels to reach a wider audience through authentic content creation.

Virtual experiences have emerged as a



**Sarath Sankar**

response to changing consumer preferences, offering guests immersive online activities and events. Sustainability and eco-friendly practices have become key selling points, appealing to environmentally-conscious travelers.

Additionally, contactless technology, direct booking incentives, and AI integration are transforming guest experiences by prioritizing convenience and safety. Hotels are also focusing on inclusive and diverse marketing campaigns, showcasing their commitment to social responsibility. In this era of digital storytelling, hotels use compelling narratives and user-generated content to connect with their audience emotionally.

Furthermore, a growing emphasis on wellness and local experiences adds to the appeal of hotels catering to guests’ physical and cultural well-being. Amidst these innovations, data privacy and security measures are paramount to safeguarding guest information. As hotels adapt to these latest trends, they aim to create memorable, personalized, and authentic experiences that cater to the diverse preferences of today’s travelers.”

Sunil reveals, “Every hotel/chain has been working on creating their own eco systems which provide loyalty points, member privileges and benefits by co branded credit cards, airline and travel agency alliances etc. larger multi business chains with a wider net do cross pollination across their various business verticals to sell more products and services to more clients.”

He continues, “The idea is to capture and convert clients who fit in the category of the particular hotel/chain and add lifetime value to the growth and further expansion of the hotel/chain and industry as a whole.”

## Conclusion

The success of a hotel mainly depends on the talent and ability of the sales and marketing team. It has to keep itself abreast of the latest trends. The role of the marketing team entails driving demand for the property, liaising with trade partners and ensuring the satisfaction of the guests. Group bookings, direct bookings, destination marketing, cross promotional sales, guest rewards strategies are some of the methods to ensure success of the property. And sales and marketing teams are essential for this! ■

# How to Win Hotel Guests' Loyalty!

By Sharmila Chand

A competitive marketplace throws lots of challenges and opportunities for the hotels to devise their best strategies in place. The foremost challenge common to all hotels is seeking to attract new guests to their property. The second challenge as a follow up is to retain their loyalty.

Here we talk to hospitality stalwarts as they share their winning strategies they consider fruitful to keep the customers happy and patronize the hotel. As the hotel industry is a vibrant and dynamic sector that is constantly evolving, 'Attracting and Retaining of the Guests' becomes imperative as the ultimate aim.



"Special discounts and deals can attract guests for a one-time visit, but for a long-term relationship, it is essential to create value-based propositions and unique experiences such as Yoga classes, Ayurvedic therapies, curated experiential food festivals."

**Shuvendu Banerjee,**  
General Manager, Crowne Plaza  
New Delhi Okhla

## Loyalty is Royalty

**Shuvendu Banerjee, General Manager,  
Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla**

Guest loyalty is always at the forefront at Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla as it helps foster an environment that allows sustainable growth. Repeat guests not only benefit the hotel with boosted occupancy and revenues but also allow hotel team members to develop relationships with the guests. This helps team members better anticipate guest needs and can set a hotel up for an enhanced guest experience. Trends say that average order value of a repeat guest is higher than a first-time visitor.

Our hotel is a part of IHG Group and our re-imagined 'IHG One Rewards' program connects members to IHG Hotels and Resort's growing portfolio to 17 brands and 60,000+ hotels across the world. Revolving truly around its guests, the program offers them richer benefits, more ways to earn, newly enhanced credit cards, all powered by leading technology on an easy-to-use mobile app.

The most exciting part of the program is the recognition of the fact that not all members want to use their points in the same way. This led to the introduction of 'Milestone Rewards'- a new, technology-enabled platform that allows members flexibility to choose the rewards that matter most to them.

Interestingly, this has helped us increase footfall in our restaurants as well as we have interlinked our most lucrative IHG Dining Deals program with IHG One Rewards, where guests can enjoy a 25-30 % discount on every meal along with additional points.

**Varun Sahani, Senior VP Operations,  
Kamat Hotels India Ltd.**

Implementing a rewarding loyalty



"Listening to guests' suggestions and addressing their concerns demonstrates that their opinions are valued and that you are committed to enhancing their experience."

**Varun Sahani, Senior VP  
Operations,  
Kamat Hotels India Ltd.**

program can significantly impact guest retention. By offering incentives to encourage repeat visits, you can foster a sense of loyalty among your guests. Consider providing loyalty points for each stay, exclusive discounts, room upgrades, or special access to events or services. These rewards will make guests feel appreciated and valued, strengthening their connection to your hotel.

## Going Digital is the Key

**Shuvendu Banerjee, General Manager,  
Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla**

The internet is truly one of the most cost-effective yet powerful ways to reach potential guests daily. It is technically the first avenue where your hotel or a brand

establishes contact with a guest. Creating eye-appealing content and showcasing the USPs and WoW experiences of our hotels has been an integral part of our social media.

Real-time guest testimonials, behind the scenes actions topped up with strategic demographic and psychographic targeting have helped us enter the profiles of our potential target audience. We secure several leads via Facebook and Instagram pages every month.

Another key strategy is collaborating with carefully selected influencers and securing positive words from the press for strong advocacy case. Additionally, accurate content optimization on the website with relevant key words helps our hotel appear in relevant search queries.

### Guest Feedback and Engagement

**Varun Sahani, Senior VP Operations, Kamat Hotels India Ltd.**

Encouraging guest feedback and actively

engaging with them are essential for continuous improvement. Surveys and social media platforms can serve as valuable tools for gathering feedback. Listening to guests' suggestions and addressing their concerns demonstrates that their opinions are valued and that you are committed to enhancing their experience. Show appreciation for their input and take action based on their feedback to create a guest-centric environment that ensures lasting satisfaction.

**Shuvendu Banerjee, General Manager, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla**

To retain a guest, it is extremely imperative to seek feedback from the guests during and after their stay to provide resolution to any challenges faced by them or take corrective measures wherever appropriate. Listening to your guests denotes that you care about their experience and will always be ready to go the extra mile. Every guest's feedback is important to us. In fact, reviews on online

platforms not only show us a big picture but make for a crucial selection criterion for a guest for hotel bookings. Hence, we make sure that we acknowledge and respond to every review.

Another important aspect is giving our guests a reason to come back to our hotel. We have curated special discount-based bounce back cards and value-based promotional offers with exciting elements for guests to plan a repeat visit. Maintaining a database of special occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries also helps us bring back the guests and offer them top notch hospitality.

### Role of Personalization

**Nirav Akshay Oza, CEO of Efacee Hotels**

In the realm of luxury hospitality, personalization is the key to creating memorable guest experiences. High-end hotels are leveraging data analytics and guest preferences to offer bespoke services. From personalized welcome amenities

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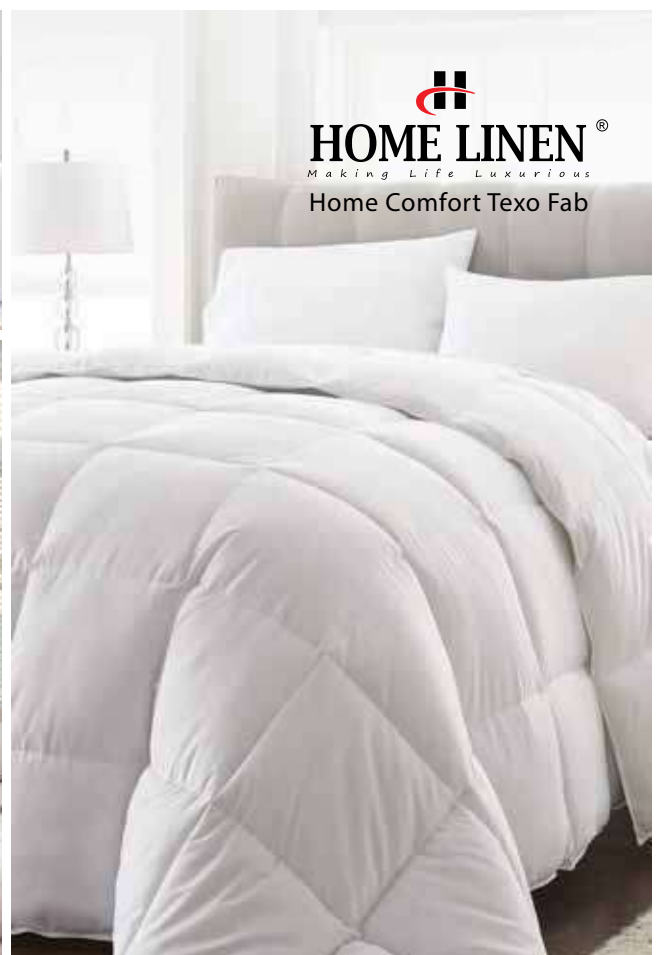
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“From personalized welcome amenities to curated itineraries and tailored dining experiences, hotels are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that each guest’s stay is unique and exclusive.”

**Nirav Akshay Oza,**  
CEO of Efcree Hotels

to curated itineraries and tailored dining experiences, hotels are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that each guest’s stay is unique and exclusive.

Utilizing advanced data analytics, luxury hotels are providing hyper-personalized services and tailored recommendations to meet the individual preferences of each guest.

**Sanzeev Bhatia, President & GM, The Metropolitan Hotel & Spa, New Delhi**

As guests seek memorable experiences that resonate with their individuality, personalization holds utmost importance, be it in rooms, F&B or wellness, etc. We have been curating unique, immersive experiences for our guests as far as possible to let them have a sense of connection & feeling of being truly understood.

Also, personalization boosts loyalty, repeat bookings & guest revenue. Keeping in mind the customer needs & requirements, we have four category of rooms with different inclusions, that allow us to offer customized packages and also allow us for the targeted up-selling opportunities, be it a room upgrade, meal inclusion, etc.

**Varun Sahani, Senior VP Operations, Kamat Hotels India Ltd.**

Tailoring your services to individual

guests’ preferences is an effective way to enhance their experience. Collecting and utilizing data on their past stays, interests, and preferences will allow you to offer personalized experiences. Welcoming guests with amenities that align with their preferences, accommodating their room choices, and providing tailored recommendations for activities and dining will make them feel valued and appreciated.

**Value Proposition over Discounts**

**Shuvendu Banerjee, General Manager, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla**

Special discounts and deals can attract guests for a one-time visit, but in case a



“In this ever changing world of guest needs and desires, the ultimate question to be answered is “what is the guest expectation” for us to meet the same and exceed. Our winning strategies at Taj North Goa Resorts are clear identification of target audience so that the activities ensured at the resort are curated towards them. With the legacy of our resorts, we are guest centric and continually adapting with new food and beverage outlets and services, maintaining our core strength of hospitality.”

**Dr. Anmol Ahluwalia,**  
Cluster General Manager –  
Taj North Goa



“As guests seek memorable experiences that resonate with their individuality, personalization holds utmost importance, hence we have been consistently curating unique immersive experiences, be it in rooms, F&B or wellness, for our guests to let them have a sense of connection & feeling of being truly understood.”

**Sanzeev Bhatia, President & GM,**  
The Metropolitan Hotel & Spa,  
New Delhi

hotel is looking for a long-term relationship, it is essential to create value-based propositions and unique experiences. The guests can choose to indulge amongst the plethora of options such as Yoga classes, Ayurvedic therapies, curated experiential food festivals, interactive culinary sessions, live entertainment options & more to unwind in a true sense. One of the stellar examples is our signature food festival Dilli 6 where we rope in ‘khansamas’ from Chandni Chowk to curate an authentic Old Delhi experience.

If we talk about millennials and Gen Zs, they are very particular about what they want and we strive to curate the element of variety as well as personalization for them. For example, our menus boast of super food led dishes, vegan & gluten free options and we are very proactive hopping on to the latest social media trends. Being a sustainability driven brand also helps us with respect to environment conscious citizens.



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# Blending Culture & Style

**H**otel Sangam, one of the oldest and most prestigious hotels in Tiruchirappalli, TN, had been around for more than four decades. Trichy, as it is more popularly known, is an ancient city on the banks of river Cauvery in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu.

The hotel was very well known and popular for banqueting. The property owners though initially planned a partial renovation but later based on the deep study done by Total Integrated Design (India) Pvt. Ltd. (TID), an interior design consultant, felt it would be worthwhile to do a complete renovation. They then worked with the architect Prasad to re-plan certain areas to bring up the facilities and BOH to be operational and functional for a hotel that has 20,000 sq. ft. of banqueting space.

The brief to TID for the public areas was to design a contemporary 5 star hotel, yet keeping it in lines with some

cultural elements. The colour scheme was to be taken from Marriott brand standards. As TID (Singapore and India studio) had also designed their hotel in Madurai, the similar direction could

be followed.

## The Design Process

As a part of its design process, TID did research on the city about its history &





culture. Based upon the research of local popular places like Srirangam temple, Sri Ranganathaswamy temple and Rockfort temple, TID created the final design at reception back drop with inspiration of the Gopuram.

Other design features are visible in the hotel in various places such as hostess desk, consoles, glass film, etc. The same motif in a linear fashion can be seen in various other places in the hotel like at the entrance, buffet counter top panelling, lift wall top panelling etc.

The Gopurams are mostly very colourful and therefore when it was interpreted at the Reception back drop – colours were added too but within a certain palette. In order, for this to stand out, the rest of the backdrop wood is kept light and in single tone. The storyline also develops with the architectural elements in the Lobby Lounge Counter, The Hanging Display, and the metallic Gopuram pattern along the corridor marble wall.

**The Execution**

Initially the project was to be done in 2 phases as it was a running hotel. But due to the first nationwide Covid-19 lock down the client decided to shut full hotel and reconstruct at one go, thinking that it’s a matter of few months of lock down. Due to extended pandemic situation the work continued over zoom calls, online presentations, shipping the material Boards to the site & Marriott HQ, site video calls and couriering samples back and forth for approval.

TID with both offices at Singapore and India working on the project could manage to commit and deliver to the client, despite the various country lockdown / restrictions. The project team of the property owners were eyes and ears for the site which helped TID continue working so that the hotel could open in 2022. The hotel execution was done in the midst of the covid scare and it was also a rare situation to be managed with video calls and frequent interaction but finally when flights were possible the site was visited by TID.

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Since it was part renovation, and part new construction, amalgamating the design with the existing structure and new, was one of the challenges faced. But in the final product the spaces seamlessly merge with each other following the design language.

As the structure was dismantled there were site situations which created more space to be accommodated by making the amendments along the way to make the space usage more efficient. In some areas such as the All Day Dining & the Banquet Lift Lobby the ceiling height was a challenge due to the existing structure and there was continued dialogue between client and other consultants to reach a solution.

Various materials used were made in India, and even the client was happy to source locally, without compromising on the quality. The tiles used for the public toilets and the all day dining were made in India and delivered to the site by the vendor in peak pandemic time. Even the



architectural LED lighting fixtures, used throughout the project were from Indian manufacturers to encourage growing businesses in these tough times.

After the local travel restrictions were lifted, it was easier, and economical to get the materials delivered, and the quality standards were ensured.

### The Final Call

The project which started as a Boutique Hotel with the client's brief of a hotel worthy of its legacy and name had a striking design concept. Later when the Operator came on board, the design was blended to suit the Brand Standards

and the final outcome stands out as a testament to the city and heralding the arrival of the first International Hotel Brand into the city of Tiruchirappalli.

The project enabled TID to use architectural forms and patterns with contemporary materials. They maintained the formality –with a hint of rich colours. They used layering and repeating of patterns to continue the story line. The rectilinear pattern created an impactful illusion which is clearly evident on the brass inlay pattern visible in the main Lobby, and the Public areas Lift Lobbies.

To continue with the 5 star identity of the hotel, marble and stone were used with wood effect. Colour scheme was

base of earthy tones with accent colours to adhere to the brand standards.

Communication and regular interaction to find a solution is always possible if one decides to face each problem like a stepping stone. TID take home this experience of working against adversities during the unprecedented times of the pandemic, and learning to adapt to the situations in a positive manner.

TID could accomplish the task due to design freedom allowed by the client and for being a wonderful team player. Also the key team members of TID Daryll Sim, Saylee Singh, Ritu Bhatia ensured that all the consultants & contractors along with client could work together to achieve the best result. ■

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## Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa

By Sharmila Chand

**S**prawling across 28 acres of lush landscaped gardens, on the pristine shores of North Goa, is Taj Holiday Village Resort and Spa, an iconic haven that offers an unrivalled experience of luxury and natural beauty.

While property is a gateway to tranquillity and indulgence, it seamlessly combines world class amenities with distinguished Indo-Portuguese architectural heritage showcased through Romanesque arches, pillared verandahs and sunny saquãos (central courtyards).

Encircled by the stunning beach\ Sinquerim on one side and cocooned in dense foliage, it operates 142 well equipped guest rooms, terracotta-roof cottages and villas boasting of magnificent decor.

Ideal for a vacation with partner, friends, or family – or even solo – the luxury Resort offers exclusive experiences for everyone and greets every guest in with warm elegant hospitality.

### Accommodation

Premium Cottage Sea View with Jacuzzi

Relax and have a memorable stay at the well-designed cottages, meant to regale the guests in the sights and soothing sounds of the ocean. The décor is an elegant combination of the classic and the contemporary. The Jacuzzi in the outdoor bathroom is an added space for ultimate relaxation. Private lawn sit-out areas further enhance the stay experience.

#### Luxury Sea View Rooms with Balcony

Located on the first floor of a cottage structure these rooms offer an outstanding sea view. Here one can admire the detailing art of Goan-Portuguese architecture. Traditional Goan balcaos (balconies) and original hanging lamps by



local Goan artist Radhika Mallick enhance the charming décor. Soak in the view of the tropical landscape overlooking the horizon, beautifully conceptualised by designer Made Wijaya.

#### Luxury Garden View Rooms with Balcony

For all those who cannot have enough of nature, these rooms are ideal. Cocooned in green foliage, located on the first floor of a cottage structure, each room is a seamless blend of the contemporary with the classic in architecture, design and decor. Ecru walls offset by rich cobalt blue patterns of the upholstery add to the elegant decor. Be with nature while sipping your favourite cup of tea in your own personal balcony. Find your room by looking for the numbers on Azulejos, the famous blue and white tiles, an art tradition inherited from the Portuguese.

#### Luxury Goan Villa Sea View

These villas offer a glorious sunset view as they are embodiment of class with a bedroom, a living room with walk-in closets, a dining area and a private lawn. The combination of modern elegance and

Goan-Portuguese architecture is reflected in this beautiful standalone villa facing the sea. With 52 square meter of space and infused with natural light, the villa is palatial yet cosy. Feel at home, with all the comfort and conveniences - a Treat Yourself mini bar, TV and a bathtub.

**Goan Villas with Sea View**

These standalone villas offer a beautiful view of the Arabian Sea. Classic and modern, here present-day design blends with a yesteryear feel, with design elements that combine Goan-Portuguese architecture and modern elegance. Sit out under the parasols in your own private lawn in the evening and imbibe the relaxed, casual Goan vibe.

**Premium Cottage Garden View**

These garden-facing, ground-level rooms with lush lawn sit-outs, are conveniently located close to the pool and the lobby. Simple, stylish, modern and class - that's how they are with a breath of fresh air and a great view - have it all in these cosy, well-furnished rooms with Goan-Portuguese architecture.

**Goan Villa Garden View**

Summer, monsoon or winter, Goan Villas with lush garden views and added luxury of a living room and a private lawn are ideal for families. Relax in your garden in the shade of parasols. Soak in the subtle hints of traditional Goan-Portuguese architecture melded together with modern elegance.

**Events, Meetings and Conferences**

**The Debate Hall**

A stylish theatre-style banquet hall with



seating capacity of 40, is the perfect venue for corporate events. The elegant space opens out to manicured lawns, where work can flow seamlessly into a more casual setting.

**Moon Deck Lawns**

An opulent 6,968 sq. m. lawn facing the Arabian Sea, Moon Deck provides a lush canvas for a glamorous occasion. From wedding to corporate events, this al fresco space can accommodate 1000 guests.

**Drama**

Drama is an elegant, cosy setting for a social or business meet, with a capacity of 40 pax. Hanging lights, hand-crafted artefacts, vibrant hues, modish interiors and remarkable service set the tone for eventful day. Authentic artwork adorn the vivid walls of this fully refurbished banquet space, making it the ideal venue for any affaire

extraordinaire, be it a corporate meet, high-profile product launch or a lavish cocktail reception. The mélange of azure hues on the carpet, elude to the sea and sand just a moment away from the banquet hall.

**Sunset Deck**

Romance and extravagance merge into one peerless location complete with the sound of the waves and a breathtaking sunset. Overlooking the Arabian Sea, close to the beach, this 1207 sqm deck is an ideal setting for marriage ceremonies. With a maximum capacity of 400 pax, it is also an ideal space for a terrific bachelorette party or office retreat. An exclusive multi-cuisine meal is curated by the chefs for the venue to make it a memorable occasion.

A well-appointed table for two flanked by flaming torches and a mesmerizing backdrop of the Arabian Sea can give a new dimension to dining under the stars. A handcrafted four course menu by the master chefs is yet another highlight for your special evening at this Goa beach resort.

**Weddings are Magical**

Exuding sheer luxury, with beach as the backdrop, every step is taken to make weddings memorable. Bespoke service, exotic culinary menus and dedicated team makes sure the Resort is a perfect venue for an unforgettable lifetime event.

**Dining**

**Banyan Tree**

Dine on Goa's most celebrated Thai



cuisine beneath the shade of a 300-year old banyan tree, in one of the best restaurants in Goa. For a special occasion, 'Private Dining Under The Banyan Tree', is a great experience.

The hotel staff sets up a Celebration Table under the shade of old Banyan-Tree and the chefs curate a special meal which you can savour as the decked up natural surrounding keeps the night young.

#### **Drift**

A dramatic setting and eclectic bar menu usher in a unique brand of nightlife by the seashore. Linger over mojitos, sake and several rounds of tapas while relaxing in a divine al fresco environment.

#### **Pool Bar**

A top contender for the best poolside lounge in Goa, the sunken pool bar is the place to unwind and socialize over innovative cocktails, bar classics and canapés.

#### **Seven Rivers Brewing Co**

Seven Rivers Brew Pub serves superior, authentic beer, while effusing a spirit that is dedicated to life with its high energy and limitless attitude that helps explore, engage and connect.

#### **House of Nomad**

Goa's newly-launched House of Nomad is the perfect oasis in the heart of this vibrant destination, providing travellers the ideal hub for camaraderie, conversations, cocktails and cuisines. Raise a toast to life and the Nomad in you.

#### **Beach House**

A contemporary approach to Goan-



Portuguese cooking traditions makes Beach House one of our most sought-after restaurants. The Goan Chefs leverage an astounding experience at the Taj to add a flourish to iconic dishes like xacuti and vindaloo, using indigenous produce like kokum, palm vinegar and parboiled rice.

#### **Caravela**

The all-day diner, Caravela celebrates signature dishes from Taj's global kitchens.

### **Activities**

#### **Spa**

Envelop your body, mind and soul in serenity and sensory splendor at the signature award-winning 'J Wellness Circle'. The spa offers complete holistic experience encompassing aroma, ayurvedic and natural therapies. The secrets of traditional

Indian wellness and beauty therapies are revealed in a taranquil atmosphere and expert therapists elevate the experience to a deeply meditative state.

The Signature Experiences include Jivanya, Shudhikara, PehelwanMalish, Trupti, Chandana and Sama. The Indian treatments being Sammardana, PadaMardana, PrishtaMardana, Champi and Drishti. Our Spa indulgences offer Soundarya, Sukha, Soma and Abhisarana. The body scrubs and wraps on offer are Narikela and PrithviMrit.

#### **The Pools**

The pool at the property takes the luxury quotient several notches higher while fulfilling all comforts while swimming. The resort boasts of two pools, the main pool which is also a family pool has a swim up bar, a kids' mini pool and is adequately manned by expert life guard.

With its hustle and bustle and the families enjoying is the nerve centre of the resort in the mornings, whereas the V-U pool is a quiet zone for guests overlooking the mini golf course and Arabian Sea beyond. The V-U pool bar offer hand crafted concoctions to quench your soul and to enhance your experience, offering an exclusive peaceful zone for adults only.

#### **Fitness Centre**

The fitness enthusiasts need not worry as the resort offers the facility of a well-equipped fitness centre with training, cardio section, weights and Yoga sessions conducted by experts.

#### **Kids' Activities & The Pets**

The resort offers a dedicated play area for kids, exclusive kids' pool, and park with an array of engaging activities, ensuring that young guests have an enjoyable and memorable stay. To ensure that furry family members are not left behind, the resort is pet friendly with a curated meal offerings for the pets.

### **To Conclude**

In conclusion, Taj Holiday Village Resort and Spa in Goa is a captivating blend of opulence and coastal charm. With its world-class amenities, warm hospitality, and breathtaking surroundings, it promises an unforgettable vacation experience for travelers seeking a slice of paradise on the Goan shores. ■



# “Be empathetic, passionate and keep a keen eye on excellence”

**Souvik Bhattacharya, General Manager, Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa**



Souvik Bhattacharya has been a part of the IHCL family for over 16 years and has led teams at some of the key hotels such as Taj Connemara Chennai, Taj Exotica Resort & Spa Goa, The Gateway Hotel Visakhapatnam and Taj Fisherman's Cove Resort & Spa, Chennai and later the Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa. He brings to the table over 26 years of professional experience and is a true operations veteran. His skills for process improvement and repositioning equip him to take Taj Holiday Village to newer heights effectively.

He takes great pride in the resort's strong culture of the Taj family and the relationships that have been built with the guests over the decades. It is about curating guest experiences, excellent hospitality services. He urges prioritising guest satisfaction, environmental sustainability and creating memorable experiences for the guests. In an exclusive interview, he talks about his work philosophy and more...

## What is the USP of your property?

The most prominent unique selling propositions would be the location. Scenic surroundings, Portuguese architectural prominence with beach front luxury, private cottages and luxury villas. Our exquisite dining options from multicuisine coffee shop to our cocktail forward bar, the only micro brewery in Goa and award winning Thai fine dining restaurant add to the USP. The luxury of two swimming pools – while the main pool with a swim bar and a kids pool caters to families, our V-U pool is a quiet zone overlooking the golf course and out into the Arabian sea. Being a pet friendly hotel, we ensure that your furry family member is not left behind.

## The green initiatives the hotel has taken?

Green initiatives at Taj Holiday Village are not just an ethical choice but also a strategy for long term success. Several measures have been taken to reduce carbon footprint. From using LED lighting to rain water harvesting, treating and re-utilising waste water to maintain the lush greens of the property, acknowledging the significance of water conservation in today's water stressed world. Proper waste management system ensures generation of not only enough manure for the upkeep of our ground but also distribution in the neighbourhood.

The resort prioritises sourcing goods and services locally thereby reducing carbon

emission and supporting the local economy.

We have Electronic Vehicle charging stations to support our guests in their green endeavours. We at Taj Holiday Village in our attempt to reduce single use plastic have our own water bottling plant located within the resort.

## The marketing strategy adopted to promote your property?

Our Marketing strategy has always been guest centric - from tailored marketing campaigns to seamless booking experiences to enhanced guest experiences – Tajness moments. The social responsibility initiatives and environmental sustainability are our guiding benchmarks following IHCL's Paathya initiatives.

## What distinguishes your property from others?

Prime beachfront location, unique blend of traditional Portuguese architecture with cutting edge modern amenities creating a charming and luxurious feel, culinary excellence and family friendly amenities along with pet.

## The 'Differentiating Factor' of your F&B outlets?

We boast of the only beer garden in Goa – 'Seven Rivers', an award winning cocktail forward bar – 'House of Nomad', our award winning Thai restaurant 'The Banyan Tree' with an ethos of farm to fork where the herbs are grown in-house and a unique food concept of trails of Vasco da Gama's conquests.

## What is the most crucial issue Hospitality industry facing today?

Changing customer behaviour is the most crucial issue to tackle in the Hospitality industry today and therefore the strategies are ever evolving.

## What do you enjoy most about being at the helm of affairs at the hotel?

A sense of achievement when a guest leaves the resort with a smile on his face mentioning that they would be back again and soon. To nurture a team driven by passion to deliver the highest level of guest engagement and extremely engaged and curated stay.

## What has been the most rewarding moment in your career?

Successful execution with intricate planning of the Head of State visit comprising of Hon Prime Minister's stay at the Taj Fisherman's Cove Resort & Spa, Chennai for the meet with the Chinese Premier President Xi Jinping in October 2019.

## How do you de-stress?

Family that includes Coffee - the furbaby, movies, music, long drives and of course food.

## What is your guiding philosophy in work?

Be empathetic, passionate and to get the job done with a keen eye on excellence.



# Revamping a Coffee Shop

A coffee shop is extremely important for the image of the hotel. It experiences maximum movement through its opening hours. This is where people meet up during non-meal times as also for the quick bite during busy schedules. It is the coffee shop where most visitors end up waiting if they have come to meet any guest in a hotel.

And not to forget that it is indeed the coffee shop where the most important meal of the day – the breakfast – is served, either in the form of a sumptuous buffet or as a la carte option. Speed is often guaranteed in coffee shops though some international hotels promise more than just service and promptness in their coffee shops.

For most patrons, these coffee shops also serve as all night outlets to visit between those ungodly hours of a late night party where the high energies needed to be brought down to a reasonable level before reaching home. Twenty four hour coffee

shops of Indian hotels were always a well appreciated fact.

In Indian five star hotels, often the coffee shop becomes almost a flagship outlet, often tried before any speciality restaurant of the hotel can earn itself a name. In Delhi, iconic coffee shops have meant a lot for the hotel's reputation and earned regular following. Probably the top of the list here would be The Machan at The Taj Mahal. Others followed suit and when the Oberoi closed its former coffee shop which was just a basic outfit and came up with the new avatar of 360degrees, it changed the face of coffee shops in the capital's five star culture, forever.

Coffee shop is typically located at the lobby level of hotel within the open view of guests. It provides mixed or multi cuisines which are fast to organize. It's open for twenty four hours or from breakfast till mid-night. It has informal atmosphere. Most

coffee shops offer music and modern décor. Coffee shops offer pre-plated food from the kitchen.

## The Concept

Multi-cuisine and plenty of international selection is often the basic unwritten requirement of a coffee shop in a five star hotel. They work almost on a principle of 'something for everyone'. In a good coffee shop of a popular hotel it is easy to find either a parantha or a pizza; a Nasi goreng right next to a Hyderabadi biryani; pasta or indeed a Japanese dish adjacent to an American burger or a hot dog.

Beverage selection too was always well presented in coffee shops of five star varieties. Much before different styles of coffees became popular in India, some of the best coffee was served in these coffee shops – the refillable coffee being the most popular.

Often the chef of the coffee shop was willing to tweak a dish to suit your personal tastes. If you wanted a particular item prepared in a particular way, you could always ask. Some coffee shops were also able to pander to your request of desiring a dish from the neighbouring restaurant of the hotel, provided the kitchen of that place was open.

**The Market**

Globalisation, an expanding middle class and changing lifestyle, have contributed to the increase in coffee shops in the India. Large number of people now regularly visiting coffee shops to be with their peers and to spend some good time.

To gain the major share of this growing segment, hotels also have stepped up their offerings. The current menus of most five star hotels include sophisticated and gourmet coffees along with international choices of quick snacks. The flavour, branding and the variety of coffee on offer has created an aura around these outlets.



Guests who frequent a hotel’s coffee shop today are aware of the latest trends and what is in offering at other outlets. Coffee shop in a hotel is like a window into the hotels offerings and constant innovation ensures guest turnover. This is a major reason why menus in hotel coffee shops offer more options than standalone outlets.

**Coffee Shop Characteristics**

Keeping the traffic in mind, the coffee shops are often more functional than the stereotype special cuisine restaurants. Furniture is sturdy and upholstery is of longer lasting and fuss free quality; upkeep is done in a way that the worker is never ‘in your face’. One did not feel under dressed while entering a coffee shop in more casual

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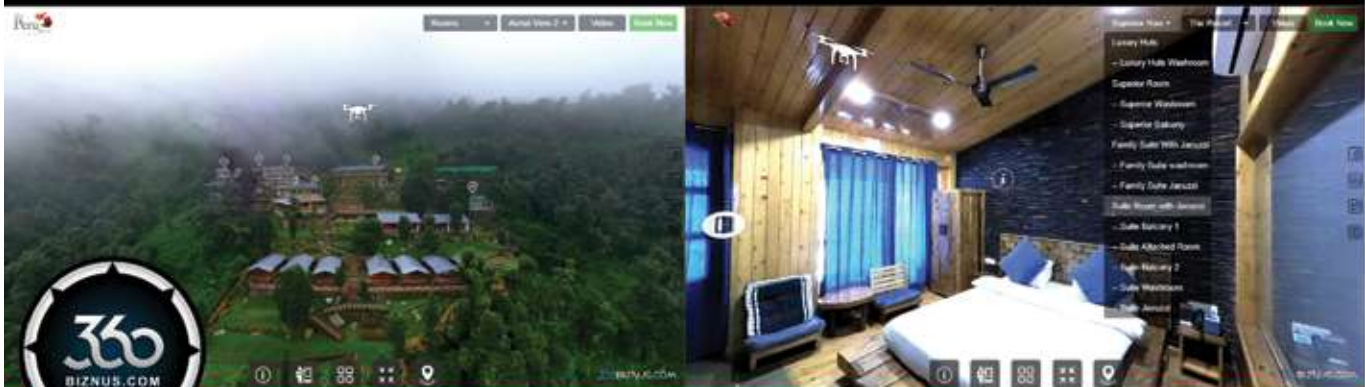
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clothes. Even children were not frowned upon as they are in some places and these endowed the coffee shops with a cosy and comfortable ambience.

Most coffee shops were just about never empty, any hour of the day. Some set remarkable standards for themselves and many in Delhi would remember the largest possible glasses of sherbets and the enormous bread sandwiches of The Machan when it first opened.

Any food lover would be able to identify the strong points of any hotel's coffee shop in his / her city. Then be it the steak or indeed the Melba toasts and of course the sizzlers of Pickwicks at the Claridges, or the desserts section of the ITC Maurya. Some might even remember items like Chooza Kebab – a speciality of the coffee shop of erstwhile Akbar hotel that had an eclectic décor to boot.

### The Need

Repeat visitors mean a need to reinvent an F&B outlet. Hotels have to keep that in mind that people do get bored easily and even with food promotions and additional items in the menu the basic look of the outlet needs to be redesigned to attract new customers and ensure that the old ones continue with their patronage.

Such a revamping has to be planned in great detail because while the coffee shop is being re-done it affects not just the other restaurants but also the room service as the



main kitchen is dependent on items available around the clock from the coffee shop. The planning has to take every segment into account, right from logistics of where the coffee shop customer would be directed not just for breakfast but also for odd times.

Planning is the first step and then comes its execution. Practical problems might arise during the execution so the management has to think on its feet to deal with it at the time.

### The Change

The foodservice industry is becoming very competitive and it has become necessary for operators to keep up with the latest trends to avoid being left behind. Also keeping pace with the industry ensures customer satisfaction and experience they want and expect.

However radical a change in the coffee shop is, one has to also pander to the

customer who is not looking for a vast change that unnerves him / her. A fine balance needs to be struck. Yes, few hotels undertake a sea change in their restaurants. Their kitchens and seating plans were changed with new philosophy and approach.

A new look is often difficult to decide and in a chain hotel probably the decision of revamping of a coffee shop is undertaken in the same way as the redoing of rooms, on a regular basis.

Most of us have our favourite coffee shops and few particularly have more than one for different reasons. But some Café are particularly close to individual heart. For months on end, during the winter, it is the place where people meet every Sunday for a breakfast that lasted over repeated cups

of coffee and much camaraderie for hours. Today guests prefer buffet and even a regular table at the corner, to enjoy a sumptuous meal and relaxed moments.

However, the fact is that any F&B outlet needs to be re-done from time to time and once the planning has been done, then it is just a matter of right selection of executing team to ensure that all deadlines of timeframe are understood and met by all.

Yes, the rewards of revamping are right there – the centrally laid out live kitchen counters are more user friendly and 'international' in their appeal. Yes, the list of a-la-carte has also got some of the staples and some newer versions. The revamping works because it is a change. Things are new, yet they respect the old style and that is essentially what revamping of a coffee shop should be all about. ■

# Clean Chemicals

Ignoring the harms associated with the usage of low quality or higher quantity of cleaning chemicals could be hazardous for workers

While purchasing cleaning chemicals there are various things one should look for. Managers should find out if the chemical formulation contains ingredients that are harmful to those who might breathe its vapours. Will the chemical burn skin? Does it contain carcinogens, or known cancer causing ingredients? Can the over exposure to the chemical fumes cause Tuberculosis? How will the product impact the environment?

These are some the questions that the managers should ask in order to ask for the right cleaning chemicals.

## Right Choice

As buying chemicals has major implications, especially because all products cannot be deemed safe, managers must do their research, deciphering labels and ask vendors and suppliers lots of questions to find out if the product lives up to its claims. They must develop database of the harmful chemicals found in the cleaning products.

For example, some carpet spot removers contain a solvent called butoxyethanol, which when absorbed through skin, can damage blood and major body organs, and also can harm the developing fetus in pregnant women. This solvent is also found in some floor strippers. Building occupants might be sensitive to the solvent's vapours or residue.

As an alternative there are hydrogen peroxide and enzyme based products that work well as carpet spotters. Other ingredients to be aware of include monoethanolamine, sodium hydroxide or sodium metasilicate and zinc. One must not to buy products that contain heavy metals. There is a wide range of carpet cleaning chemicals available. The ingredients vary in each product.

The most harmful chemicals include hydrofluoric acid, nitrilotriacetate or nitrilotriacetic acid, perchloroethylene, tetrachloroethylene and tributyl tin.



## Use Less

When possible, managers should reduce the frequency of tasks that require the most harmful chemicals, like floor stripping and finishing, and carpet spotting and extracting. Some housekeeping departments might follow a specific schedule for these tasks, but if the areas still look good, managers should reschedule the work for a later time.

Lower frequency of carpet cleaning and floor stripping and finishing reduces the number of times workers, building occupants and the environment being exposed to harmful chemicals. Housekeeping managers can lower cleaning frequencies by ensuring entryways and outside areas are clean. Cleaning staff can help prevent dirt from entering buildings by sweeping and pressure washing outer walkways and placing walk-off mats in entryways.

## The Core Group

Though there is no universal rule or law to identify clean chemicals, one must ask the chemical company about the ingredients and the usage manual and be sure these products do not contain toxic or carcinogenic materials. One must be careful about the dubious claims made by these companies – ultimately it is the question of public health.

Just because a product is safe in one way by not containing a certain ingredient, it might be harmful in other way by including something else. It is imperative for the cleaning industry to develop a core

group which must tests and evaluates products and lists those chemicals which are safer and healthier. Tests should be performed to evaluate cleaning products for toxicity, carcinogens, skin and eye irritation, skin sensitization, combustibility and environmental impact.

This will help in identifying the products or services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. The group must lay down the purchase guidelines for the cleaning products.

In developed nations there are groups which list hazardous chemicals and focuses on eliminating or minimizing the use of carcinogens, ozone-depleting substances, formulations with high phosphate concentrations and volatile organic compounds.

## The Responsibility

Cleaning without chemicals may not be possible and therefore their safety aspects should not be overlooked. We care about the quality of machines, manpower productivity, time schedules and profits but how much for the safety of our employees who are performing the task and the clients who are generating the profits. We talk of standardizing the cleaning industry but what steps have been taken cumulatively to achieve the same?

It is very important that the manager must select environmentally preferable products to create a healthy environment. They should work towards using fewer chemicals by cleaning only when needed and ensuring the staff dilute and mix products properly. They should research products carefully: read labels and material safety data sheets, contact manufacturers, search the Internet for chemical information, or contact health departments for more information.

## Digital Virtual Tour

In the ever-evolving landscape of the hospitality industry, guest expectations continue to reach new heights. Immersive experiences have emerged as a key differentiator for hotels and resorts, and among the most effective tools in achieving this is the creation of 360° virtual tours. Enter the realm of immersive 360° virtual tour creators with 360biznus.com – the architects of captivating digital journeys that allow guests to explore every nook and cranny of a property from the comfort of their screens.

These skilled creators are revolutionizing the way hotels and resorts showcase their offerings. Through advanced imaging technologies, they



meticulously capture the essence of a property, seamlessly stitching together a panoramic tapestry that mirrors reality. This virtual exploration provides potential guests an

unprecedented sneak peek into the rooms, facilities, and ambience, influencing their booking decisions.

Immersive 360° virtual tours offer unparalleled convenience, enabling users to 'walk' through corridors, soak in breathtaking views, and envision themselves in the tranquil embrace of luxurious suites. This technology is particularly vital in an era of remote interactions, as it bridges the gap between aspiration and experience.

As hotels and resorts vie for travelers' attention, those investing in immersive 360° virtual tours are undoubtedly gaining a competitive edge. These tours not only attract but also engage, ensuring an emotional connection that lasts far beyond the initial visit to the website. In a world where visual appeal and engagement are paramount, the expertise of immersive 360° virtual tour creators has become an indispensable asset for the hospitality industry to captivate hearts and bookings alike.

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## Hotel Amenities

SMS Enterprises, an old brand name for the world of luxury hotel amenities, believes in providing the best quality chemical free ayurvedic products which better self keeping.



It is understood that chemical based products can harm skin thus SMS Enterprises offer better solution by providing chemical free products such as shampoo, creams, soaps, conditioners, etc. which are good for skin and hair.

All products undergo quality check and are manufactured under strict supervision. The company supply pan-India and make sure the products reach as per the customers needs.

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## Legacy of Handmade Products

Mehta Furnishers is a leading name manufacturing handmade products for the hospitality industry. Founded in 1984, with over 37 years of experience in crafting high-quality, durable and stylish products, it meet the specific needs of hotels, resorts, and similar establishments. The products are made using a combination of traditional techniques and modern design elements, ensuring that they are both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Based in Delhi, India, Mehta Furnishers is dedicated to providing its customers with products that are of the highest quality. It take pride in its ability to manufacture



products that are not only beautiful, but also durable and long-lasting. The product range includes baskets, furniture, dustbins, hampers, trolley-carts, and caddies, all of which are made using materials such as cane/rattan, wood, and metal.

The company believes that its products should not only meet our customers' needs, but also exceed their expectations. Proper care and attention is taken in every aspect of manufacturing process, from sourcing the best materials to crafting each product by hand. The goal is to provide customers with products that they will enjoy using for many years to come.

The all new housekeeping strollers and the mobile caddies have carved a niche for themselves in boutique hotels that are always looking for unique ideas and aesthetic values.

Mehta Furnishers is a company with a rich heritage of quality and craftsmanship. With a commitment to excellence and a passion for its products, they are dedicated to providing their customers with the very best that they have to offer.

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# Fostering Memorable Guest Experiences

## Vivek Sharma, General Manager, Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield



Vivek Sharma boasts a rich career trajectory and in the current role as the General Manager at Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield his focus is on team building, stakeholder engagement, and adaptive leadership, and positioning the property as a top choice. He played a pivotal role at other Marriott properties, such as The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace and Renaissance Ahmedabad. He also held key positions at Hyatt Hotels Corporation, including General Manager at Amritsar and Ahmedabad.

After a Management Training Programme from the Welcom Group Management Institute and a Bachelor's degree in Hospitality Management from the Welcom Group Graduate School of Hotel Administration, Manipal, he started his journey in the hospitality industry with ITC Hotels.

In an exclusive interview with **Sharmila Chand** he talks about his work philosophy.

### What is the USP of your property?

**Pet-Friendly:** The hotel warmly welcomes guests and their furry companions.

**Large Inventory:** Boasting 391 spacious and well-appointed rooms, the hotel offers guests a diverse range of accommodation options.

**Convenient Location:** Situated in Whitefield, Bengaluru, near ITPL and cultural attractions, the hotel provides easy access to key business and leisure destinations.

**Diverse Dining Options:** Guests can enjoy a variety of cuisines, from Indian to international, in the hotel's popular restaurants.

**Sustainability Focus:** The hotel is IBBC LEED gold certified, demonstrating its commitment to eco-friendly practices and sustainability.

### What is your marketing strategy to promote the property?

The Marriott's marketing strategy is centred on its digital services, integrated within its website, with a key focus on online visibility via SEO and Google My Business. Social media, utilized to its fullest, allows the Marriott to increase its reach, engage with customers, and create a strong brand image. Our strategy revolves around our brand's core principles, highlighting the unique experiences we provide. Consistency in messaging across all platforms ensures a potent brand portrayal.

### What would you say the 'Differentiating Factor' of your F&B outlets?

**Culinary Diversity:** Our F&B outlets, such as M Cafe's Indian-International fusion, Alto Vino's fine Italian cuisine, and Whitefield Baking Company's tasty treats, offer unique dining experiences to accommodate a spectrum of tastes and preferences.

**Bespoke Ambiance:** From the stylish M Bar offering curated cocktails to the

poolside Whitefield Bar and Grill, provides a commendable ambiance meticulously designed for a memorable dining experience.

**Specialized Offerings:** With signature offerings like the "Marriott Whitefield Family Brunch" at M Cafe, delectable sandwiches at Whitefield Baking Company, and refined Italian cuisine at Alto Vino, our F&B outlets provide unique, memorable dining experiences.

### Your future plans and new initiatives you wish to undertake in your property?

Looking forward, Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield is launching new initiatives to enhance guest experiences and make us a prime destination for social events, including bespoke weddings and intimate gatherings. We're set to expand our capacity with an addition of 120 rooms next year, further establishing us as a preferred choice for travellers and event planners.

### What is the most crucial issue in the Hospitality industry today?

**Trained Manpower Shortage:** Manpower shortage in hospitality critically impacts operational efficiency and guest experience, leading to delays, errors, and customer dissatisfaction. It also increases financial burdens due to overtime and high turnover costs, while damaging the hotel's long-term reputation, affecting customer attraction and retention.

### What do you enjoy most about being at the helm of affairs at the hotel?

As the hotel's leader, there are numerous aspects of my role that I find fulfilling. Firstly, interacting with our dedicated team and guests fosters a positive and vibrant environment, which is a delight. Staying updated with industry trends and technological innovations allows us

to continuously improve and stay competitive in the industry.

I find great satisfaction in mentoring younger team members and witnessing their growth, shaping a progressive and inclusive environment for employees and guests. As a part of the dynamic hospitality industry, leading the team towards excellence and creating memorable experiences for guests drive my passion. Every day brings new opportunities, challenges, and achievements, making it a fulfilling journey as we continuously strive for improvement and set new industry benchmarks.

### What has been the most rewarding moment in your career?

The pinnacle of my career was serving the Prime Minister and working at the national monument, Statue of Unity. These moments, requiring extensive coordination and team dedication, reinforced the importance of customer service and team-building in my journey. Each rewarding encounter has shaped me professionally and personally, emphasizing our potential impact in the hospitality industry.

### How do you de-stress?

Practicing mindfulness, listening to English soft rock and Hindi golden oldies.

### What is your working philosophy?

My work philosophy centers around positivity, active listening, and empowerment. I approach each day with a smile to create a positive environment, use active listening to exceed expectations, and believe in empowerment for business, team, and personal growth.

### How do you define yourself?

A dedicated leader committed to creating exceptional guest experiences and fostering a thriving team culture.

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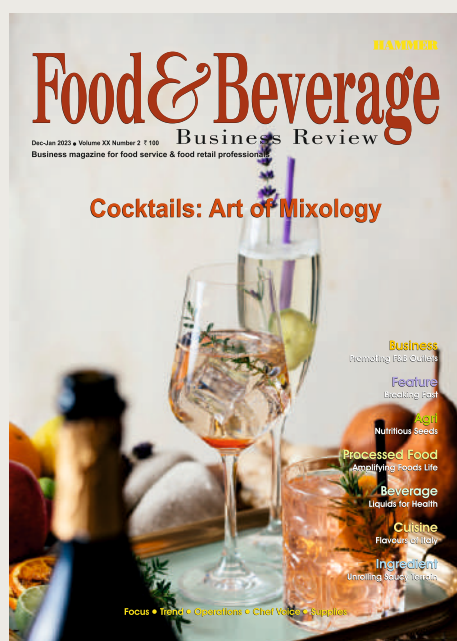
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