

# HOTELS & RESTAURANTS INDIA

# fhrai magazine

JUNE 2017

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**K. Syama Raju**  
President, FHRAI

## Dear fellow members,

The main objective of GST is to harmonise the tax base, laws, and administrative procedures across the country, creating a common market to promote healthy competition. The GST rates were recently announced and multiplicity of tax slabs was introduced, adding to the prevailing confusion. To top it all, hotels with a tariff of ` 5000 were considered as 'luxury' by the GST Council, pegging the highest tax slab of 28 per cent on it. Small restaurants with an annual turnover of less than ` 50 lakh will be taxed at 5 per cent and other non-air-conditioned restaurants will be taxed at 12 per cent, while air-conditioned restaurants will be taxed at 18 per cent, and restaurants inside star hotels at 28 per cent.

We have recently given a representation to Union Finance Ministry officials, highlighting that the proposed 28 per cent GST slab will adversely impact the hospitality and tourism industries. The delegation requested the government to relook at the present proposal and strongly advocated a "one nation one hospitality tax" at 12 per cent across the country. Further, we have requested the government to relook at the Luxury Tax limit of ` 5000 and to enhance it suitably as is followed in most of the countries the world over since ` 5000 (US \$75) cannot be considered 'luxury' today.

### **BANDH OBSERVED**

To voice our concerns to the government, most of the 3000 odd hotels in Bengaluru had shut down on May 30, 2017, in protest of the steep tax rates under GST. The *bandh* was successful by and large. While there

are over 3000 licensed hotels registered with the Association, even non-members took part in the *bandh*. In Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, around 40,000 hotels and restaurants remained closed. Messes, tiffin centres, and other eateries, bakeries, and sweet shops that have an annual turnover of over ` 20 lakh also participated in the *bandh*.

In Tamil Nadu, over two lakh standalone restaurants and those attached to hotels in the state downed shutters on May 30. It is with great difficulty that many restaurants had become part of the organised sector. Now, this exorbitant increase in tax would mean a decrease in footfall and customers who cannot afford food in restaurants will go to street vendors. That will have a domino effect and many small eateries that have come into the tax ambit would shift to the unorganised sector and the quality of food will suffer.

Apart from the increased tax rates, hoteliers are unhappy over the way the taxes are to be collected. The *bandh* was successful by and large in Kerala and Puducherry as well. Representations were handed over to the state authorities requesting a review of the announced GST rates.

"One Nation, One Hospitality Tax".

With warm regards,

**K. Syama Raju**  
President, FHRAI



We have requested the government to relook at the Luxury Tax limit of ` 5000 and to enhance it suitably as is followed in most of the countries the world over



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Technology drives business. Tech experts and hoteliers talk about how technology influences operations and inconceivable innovations that can shape the future



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High tea culture is gaining popularity across the Indian metros. What makes this experience worth the hype? Find out from expert chefs of renowned hotels



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#### FHRAI

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**Vivek Nair**  
Hony. Secretary  
FHRAI

“As per the latest UNWTO Barometer for March, 2017, India's rank in International Tourist Arrivals in both 2014 and 2015 is 24 as against the previous ranks of 41 and 40 in the year 2014 and 2015, respectively”

## Dear fellow members,

The recent developments and policies belie the importance of our industry and fail to recognise that this industry is one of the largest employment generators and net foreign exchange earners with a potential for an exponential growth. It is imperative that we impress upon the government of the deteriorating effects of the recent developments that are adversely affecting our industry and, in particular, our plans for an increase in the employment figure. We are fairly disappointed that for the other part, i.e., hotels and restaurants, a regressive GST taxation regime has been applied.

Hotel and restaurant businesses are striving to create higher standards and get higher ratings. The new proposed GST regime is too punitive. We have requested the committee of Finance Ministry to relook at the present proposal and advocate a uniform hospitality GST of 12 per cent across the country. Unless India is competitive in taxation rates with its neighbouring countries, it will not be able to achieve the ambitious target of increasing FTAs from the present 8 million to 14 million in 2022.

As per the latest UNWTO Barometer for March, 2017, India's rank in International Tourist Arrivals in both 2014 and 2015 is 24 as against the previous ranks of 41 and 40 in 2014 and 2015, respectively. With this inclusion, the share of India in the ITAs has also increased from 0.68 per cent (based on FTAs) to 1.12 per cent in the year 2015. Earlier, India's rank in the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI), 2017, had also

shown a 12-place jump from 2015. India's rank in the TTCI report of 2017 was 40 as compared to 52 in 2015, 65 in 2013, and 68 in 2011.

While UNWTO gives ranking in terms of number of ITAs, TTCI is composed of 14 pillars organised into four sub-indices of 'Enabling Environment', 'Travel & Trade Policy and Enabling Conditions', 'Infrastructure', and 'Natural and Cultural Resources'.

There was a 63.4 per cent growth in FTAs on eTV (e-Tourist Visa) in April, 2017. I hope the growth continues despite the GST. During the month of April, 2017, a total of 1.14 lakh tourists arrived on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 0.7 lakh during the month of April, 2016, registering a growth of 63.4 per cent. The January-April, 2017, period saw a total of 5.82 lakh tourists who availed e-Tourist Visa as compared to 3.91 lakh during January-April, 2016, registering a growth of 48.8 per cent.

Technology remains the facilitator as well as disruptor for all services. It often becomes difficult to prioritise where hoteliers should be betting big in technology. In our cover story, we get the opinion of technology and hospitality experts on the same. They talk about trends, enhancing hotel websites, mobile usage, interactive walls, cyber security, and most importantly, competitively-priced technology for hotels.

With kind regards,  
**Vivek Nair**  
Honorary Secretary, FHRAI





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(L-R) Suresh Kumar, Co-opted EC Member, FHRAI; SM Shervani, EC Member, FHRAI; Luv Malhotra, EC Member, FHRAI; Souvagya Mohapatra, EC Member, FHRAI; Sanjay Sood, EC Member, FHRAI; T Natarajan, EC Member, FHRAI; Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, Hony. Jt. Secretary, FHRAI; K Syama Raju, President, FHRAI; Garish Oberoi, Vice President, FHRAI, Dilip Datwani, Vice President, FHRAI, at EC Meeting of FHRAI.

# In the Spotlight

The FHRAI Executive Committee Meeting was held on May 9, 2017, at Radisson Blu Hotel Amritsar, Punjab, where members also got the opportunity of visiting The Golden Temple. Here are some glimpses from the same. Also included are pictures from the cocktail and dinner party hosted by HRANI for EC Members on May 8, 2017, at Taj Swarna, Amritsar.



(L-R) K Syama Raju, President, FHRAI; Garish Oberoi, Vice President, FHRAI; Dilip Datwani, Vice President, FHRAI, at EC Meeting of FHRAI.



(L-R) SM Shervani, EC Member, FHRAI; Luv Malhotra, EC Member FHRAI.



(L-R) Rakesh Roy, MC Member, HRANI; Vinod Gulati, MC Member, HRANI; Amarvir Singh, VP, HRANI.



(L-R) Bharat Malkani, EC, FHRAI; Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, EC, FHRAI; T Natarajan, EC Member, FHRAI.



(L-R) Anil Chadha, Co-opted EC Member, FHRAI; Suresh Kumar, Co-opted EC Member, FHRAI.



(L-R) Anil Chadha, Co-opted EC, FHRAI; Suresh Kumar, Co-opted EC Member, FHRAI.



(Above) FHRAI and HRANI members at Amritsar.



(L-R) K. Syama Raju, President, FHRAI; Pradeep Narayan Singh, MC Member, HRANI.



EC Members of FHRAI visiting The Golden Temple, Amritsar.



(L-R) Paramjit Singh, MC Member, HRANI; Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, EC Member, FHRAI; Bharat Malkani, EC Member, FHRAI; Amarvir Singh, Vice President, HRANI; Sanjay Sood, President, HRANI.



(L-R) SM Shervani, Souvagya Mohapatra, SP Jain.



(L-R) Garish Oberoi, Vice President, FHRAI; Vinod Gulati, MC Member, HRANI; Rajjendra Kumar, EC Member, FHRAI.



(L-R) Naresh Sethi, MC Member, HRANI; Harcharan Singh; Amarjeet Singh Talwar; Paramjit Singh, MC Member, HRANI.

# SIHRA MEETS GOVERNMENT ON GST AND LIQUOR BAN

A breakfast meeting was arranged with the Hon'ble Union Minister, M Venkaiah Naidu, on May 14, at the ITC Grand Chola, Chennai, under the aegis of South India Hotels and Restaurants Association (SIHRA). The Minister met with Presidents of the state associations of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, and Puducherry along with Executive Committee Members of SIHRA. The attention of the Minister was drawn to the importance of

tourism as a revenue and employment generator. Two key issues were discussed at the meet. The Association lent its point of view on GST and the negative impact that a tax slab of 18 per cent would have on the sector, especially in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala, and Karnataka. The limit of a ₹ 50 lakh turnover being exempt for hoteliers was also pointed out to be unreasonably low. At the meeting, the issue of banning sale of liquor at hotels and restaurants situated within

500 metres of national and state highways was also deliberated upon, and the impact it had on bars that had to be shut down from April 1, 2017.

The Minister assured the members that the government was fully aware of the importance of the tourism sector and that the memorandum would be sent forward with a note to the respective departments or ministries for a follow-up.



SIHRA

## IN MEMORIAM: SHRI ALOK SHIVAPURI



The FHRAI fraternity extends its deepest condolences on the untimely demise of **Alok Shivapuri**, Principal, Institute of Hotel Management, Catering & Nutrition, Pusa, New Delhi. He left for heavenly abode on May 15, 2017, at 1.45 pm after a short illness for which he had been receiving

treatment at RML Hospital, New Delhi. Shivapuri was a senior academician and hotelier with more than 35 years of experience in managing academics, administration, finance, operations, and personnel at the institute and hotels.

Shivapuri had undertaken educational tours to Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Qatar, France, UK, Italy, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark among several other destinations. He was the Director, Board of Governors, IRCTC; Member- Core Group, National Skill Development Council; Member, Hotel Classification Committee; Member, Expert Committee, UGC; Member, All India Hotel Management Board, AICTE; Director, Board of

Governors, Prayas (an NGO); and Member, Board of Governors, IHM, Lucknow. He also had to his credit a long list of achievements. He started ATC, a full-fledged hotel; a pastry shop; and a commercial restaurant at Food Craft Institute, Chandigarh.

Shivapuri was a strong leader with a motivational management style and a reputation for building and maintaining highly motivated teams of people. He was a result-oriented achiever with an excellent track record for identifying opportunities for growth and development of the organisation.

His demise is a grave loss for not just his family and members of IHM, Pusa, but also the entire hospitality fraternity.

Speaking with commiseration, **SM Shervani**, EC Member, FHRAI, said, "He was an excellent educationist and administrator under whose guidance IHM, Pusa, became a premier hotel management institute of the country. He was a noble and humble human being and a very good friend. It is a personal loss for me."



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# DR. KERKAR RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD AT HICSA 2017



(L-R): Steve Rushmore, Founder, HVS; Manav Thadani, Chairman - APAC, HVS; Dr. Ajit B Kerkar, Chairman, V Hotels; Vir Sanghvi, Co-Founder and Chief Critic, EazyDiner

**D**r. Ajit B Kerkar, President of Honour, HRAWI; Chairman, V Hotels; and a hospitality veteran, has received the 2017 HICSA Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding contribution to the industry. The award was presented at the annual Hotel Investment Conference - South Asia (HICSA) held at Grand Hyatt Mumbai.

Dr. Kerkar joined IHCL in January, 1962, as Assistant Catering Manager. He began his career with J Lyons & Company, London. Climbing the ladder quickly, he became the General Manager of the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai in 1968. In 1970, he became its Managing Director.

Dr. Kerkar was one of the 'Super Managers' appointed by JRD Tata, given complete freedom to run the different wings of the company. Over the next 27 years, Dr. Kerkar successfully built IHCL as India's largest and most profitable hospitality company. In the 1970s, IHCL

expanded in a big way in Delhi, Chennai, Goa, and Rajasthan. By the 1980s, Taj Hotel had turned into a chain embracing the international markets of USA and Europe.

Dr. Kerkar also enhanced India's status as a tourist attraction by developing Rajasthan and Goa as tourist destinations. He has had a well-polished public image and established himself as a capable executive. He is also regarded as the man who almost single-handedly converted a one-hotel company into a thriving hotel chain with an international presence.

Dr. Kerkar is considered as a doyen of the hospitality industry. Unarguably, it was through his vision and

efforts that the first 5-star hotel in Goa was built, after which he went on to establish several other hotels and resorts in Goa. In recognition of his achievement, Dr. Kerkar was felicitated as a Prominent Citizen of Goa by the Government of Goa. He has also served on the Board of Air India, Indian Airlines, and Tourism Finance Corporation of India.

His list of achievements having no end, Dr. Kerkar was also the Tourism Advisor to the governments of Maharashtra and Goa. After his retirement from IHCL as Chairman and MD in 1997, he turned consultant to major hospitality groups. Dr. Kerkar has also been associated with Cox & Kings, which is now run by his children.

All of us at HRAWI congratulate our President of Honour, Dr. Ajit B Kerkar, for being awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award and appreciate his experience and support towards the Association.



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# WITH FIXED FOOD PORTIONS AND ABOLISHING OF SERVICE CHARGE, INDUSTRY IN TURMOIL

One after the other, government-issued guidelines are leaving the hospitality industry in mayhem. While on the one hand it is preparing to fix portion sizes of dishes served by star category hotels and restaurants, on the other, the Department of Consumer Affairs is issuing a strict guideline on the levy of Service Charge by hotels and restaurants.

The hospitality industry of the country is taking a strong stand against these government directives.



A customer patronises a food outlet with the full knowledge that he or she will be levied a service charge



The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution has approved the guideline on Service Charge and circulated it to all states for enforcement. The guideline strictly prohibits levying Service Charge on the bill of a consumer by hotels and restaurants, thereby making it a discretionary one on the part of the consumer.

The hospitality industry has raised objections to the government move from the beginning, saying it is an unnecessary interference on the part of the government on the extra income that is shared by employees.

Talking about doing away with this charge in restaurants, **Dilip Datwani**, President, HRAWI, said, "It is sad to see constant demands being made from the hospitality industry on one issue



**Dilip Datwani**  
President  
HRAWI

or the other. One day it is reducing food portions and on another it is about terminating a legitimate charge.

Service Charge is a global practice and one that has been in force in India for more than half a century. The charge is neither hidden nor disguised. It is categorically and boldly mentioned in the menu.

A customer patronises a food outlet with the full knowledge that he or she will be levied a Service Charge. It is not just hospitality, but many businesses that levy such a charge. We cannot understand why we are being singled out."

Commenting on the proposed idea to fix portion sizes of dishes served by star category hotels and restaurants, Datwani further stated, "Although the thought behind this concept is noble and we appreciate it, the implementation of this idea is highly impractical. It essentially would mean that hoteliers will now have to customise dishes or portions of a dish to individual appetites. If the suggested move does come

into effect, the pricing would most certainly be affected, making eating out more expensive for the consumer. Serving smaller portions may reduce food wastage but will definitely increase fuel consumption, which translates to energy wastage. Consumers today are conscious about not wasting food and they don't place orders for food items that they cannot consume. Additionally, restaurants and hotels nowadays have tie-ups with NGOs that pick up any excess food that is safe to consume and distribute it among the poor and needy."



Serving smaller portions may reduce food wastage but will definitely increase fuel consumption, which translates to energy wastage



The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India has been rendering professional assistance from time to time to all its members on topics of vital importance. With new legislations coming in every now and then, HRAWI is looking to guide the hotels and restaurants in the regions that come under its purview, that is Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, and the adjoining Union Territories, in dealing with the regulations, while assessing the impact that they have had or may have on ancillary segments of the business.

A policy that regulates the business of hospitality impacts more than just the industry.



# HRAEI AND KOLKATA POLICE TO JOINTLY ADDRESS DRUNKEN DRIVING

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI) has begun a massive campaign in collaboration with the



**Sudesh Poddar**  
President  
HRAEI

“We are planning to get in touch with cab aggregators like Ola and Uber and will request them to set up kiosks at nightclubs and bars. This is an easy and practical way of handling the problem”

Kolkata Police to address the menace of drunken driving. Posters urging patrons to not drink and drive will soon appear in nightclubs, pubs, and restaurants across the city of Kolkata and eventually in the rest of eastern India.

Addressing the issue and to help curb the menace, Vineet Kumar Goyal (IPS), Additional Commissioner of Police (I), Kolkata Police, held

a meeting with close to 30 hotels, bars, and nightclubs to discuss prevention of drunken driving and the resultant mishaps.

Conducting breath analyser tests on those that were suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and encouraging people to avail the help of hired drivers or cabs were suggested at the meet. HRAEI, however, pointed out that they had no legal authority to use it on patrons.

“We have now been told that our legal authority to use it will be explored. So, for the time being, we are not going to use it,” said **Sudesh Poddar**, President, HRAEI.

As a follow-up, senior members of HRAEI recently met V Solomon Nesakumar (IPS), Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic), Kolkata Traffic Police, in a bid to check drunk driving. It was decided that a joint initiative will be launched to curb the practice that has resulted in several fatal accidents over the last few months. The drive will include an awareness programme and will be followed by an effort to keep a vigil on late-night drinking.

Restaurant and pub owners have been requested to make sure that patrons who seem to be inebriated are either guided to a cab or driven back by the club's driver.

“While we have accepted this suggestion, all of us don't have enough drivers or cabs at our disposal. That said, we are planning to get in touch with cab aggregators like Ola and Uber and will request them to set up kiosks at nightclubs and bars. This is an easy and practical way of handling the problem,” said Poddar.



**T.S. Walia**  
MC Member  
HRAEI

“The idea is to drive home the risks of drunken driving, which is good. We need a campaign like this that will sensitise those who drink alcohol”

The posters are expected to be ready soon. They will be followed by a city-wide hoarding campaign as well. “The stress of the campaign will be on drinking responsibly. The idea is to drive home the risks of drunken driving, which is good. We need a campaign like this that will sensitise those who drink alcohol,” said **T.S. Walia**, MC Member, HRAEI.

The regional association of eastern India is a common voice for hotels, restaurants, and associates for unhindered progress of the hospitality industry in the country's eastern region while ensuring the good of society simultaneously.

# HRANI AWARDED SAFE & NUTRITIOUS FOOD AMBASSADOR



Garish Oberoi, Treasurer, HRANI, receives award from FSSAI at National Summit held at The Lalit New Delhi.

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) has been awarded Safe & Nutritious Food Ambassador (Early adopters) by FSSAI. The award ceremony was held on May 16, 2017, at The Lalit New Delhi during the FSSAI National Summit on "Transforming the Food Safety &

Nutrition Landscape". The award was received by Garish Oberoi, Treasurer, HRANI. Amitabh Kant, CEO of NITI AYOOG was the Hon'ble Chief Guest at the Summit. The event witnessed the presence of Dr. RK Vats, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Over a hundred senior

officials from civil society organisations, development agencies, academia, food businesses, and government departments participated in this Summit. On behalf of HRANI, Garish Oberoi, Treasurer and Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General of the Association, attended the event.

## ASSOCIATION MEETS FSSAI

A delegation from HRANI led by Sanjay Sood, President; Garish Oberoi, Treasurer; and Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General, met Pawan Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI, and submitted a representation with

regard to changes in FSSAI licensing conditions, which were undoable for hotels and restaurants.

The delegation brought to the notice of the CEO that some of the

conditions did not even come under the purview of the hospitality sector and needed amendment. Agarwal gave a patient hearing and a positive response for the amendments that were discussed.

## UNIFORM GST, SAYS HRANI

RN Kukreja, Vice President, HRANI, and Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General, HRANI, represented the hospitality sector for establishment of a uniform GST. During the meeting with stakeholders and industry associations of Delhi, the delegation from HRANI apprised Manish Sisodia, Deputy Chief Minister, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, that the proposal of 28 per

cent GST slab would adversely impact the hospitality and tourism industries. He was further informed that upon implementation, GST would make India hugely uncompetitive while quoting rates in the global market. To compete in the global marketplace with countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore that have taxation of not more than 7 per cent,

GST should be uniform and the quantum of the same should not be more than 12 per cent. The Hon'ble Minister was also requested to take up the tax limit of ₹ 5000 and enhance it suitably. The Deputy Chief Minister gave a patient hearing and assured that the matter would be taken up with the GST Council and Central Government.

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## LAUNCH

## PARK PLAZA NOIDA REBRANDED RADISSON NOIDA

Park Plaza Noida has been rebranded Radisson Noida, the first Radisson hotel to be inaugurated in Delhi-NCR. Strategically located in proximity of Noida's corporate hub as well as the central business districts of Ghaziabad and New Delhi, the hotel has completely reinvented itself to better serve its discerning guests. "I am delighted to welcome this hotel to the Radisson brand family. Delhi-NCR is a key market for us and Noida remains a promising destination, being a thriving corporate suburb. We appreciate the investment that our strategic partner, Bestech Group, has made in upgrading this hotel and the trust they have demonstrated in the Radisson brand," said **Raj Rana**, Chief Executive Officer, South Asia, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group.

"We have enjoyed working with Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group for 15 years, where a high level of dedication and expertise is demonstrated in managing brands and hotels successfully. We are confident that the rebranding of Park Plaza Noida to Radisson Noida, with new facilities and services, would be greatly appreciated by our guests," said **Dharmendra Bhandari**, Managing Director, Bestech Group.



## OPENING

## ROYAL ORCHID LAUNCHES THIRD HOTEL IN MYSURU

Royal Orchid Hotels has announced the launch of its third hotel in Mysuru with Regenta Central Herald. The hotel is located on Nelson Mandela Road, Bannimantap, close to the city's railway station. Regenta Central Herald offers 70 rooms, a fitness centre, and a multi-cuisine restaurant. The MICE facilities with multi-functional banquet spaces can accommodate up to 300 guests, making it an ideal venue for social and corporate events. With this launch, the Royal Orchid chain of hotels now has 43 hotels in 28 different cities of India and is all set to add five more hotels to its portfolio in the coming months. With this addition, the hospitality group will have attractive offers for tourists and guests travelling to the city of Mysuru to visit its many attractions that include the Palace of Mysore, Brindavan Gardens, and Chamundi Hills. Royal Orchid Hotels will be looking for more properties to manage in untapped markets across India and abroad.



At the launch, **Chander Baljee**, Chairman and MD, Royal Orchid Hotels, said, "As we embark on this expansion drive, we are very particular in identifying strategic, high-value markets that present a unique fit for our time-tested services and ambitious growth plans. We are in a consolidation mode and are looking at expanding through management contracts."

## LAUNCH

## NOVOTEL'S FIRST LAUNCH IN CITY OF NAWABS

AccorHotels has opened Uttar Pradesh's first Novotel, Novotel Lucknow Gomti Nagar, in the capital city of Lucknow. The business hotel is strategically located in the heart of the city's commercial hub, Gomti Nagar, a short drive from Lucknow airport and railway station. The hotel features 106 well-appointed rooms including two suites, all equipped with modern in-room amenities. Designed to meet the needs of today's modern travellers, the business hotel's lobby features a dedicated web corner, a multi-touch table interactive platform that allows guests to experience a wide range of entertainment, and a virtual concierge help desk that gives guests access to important information on their fingertips to plan their travel itinerary in the city.

**Jean-Michel Cassé**, Chief Operating Officer, India & South Asia, AccorHotels, said, "The cultural capital of North India, Lucknow has traditionally been the epicentre of literature, cuisine, and

the performing arts. The city's radial expansion has given way to new growth corridors, attracting plenty of investments. It is this confluence of culture and business that makes Lucknow a compelling destination for travellers."



## OPENING

## LEMON TREE OPENS TWIN PROPERTIES IN GURUGRAM



The Lemon Tree Hotel Company has announced the opening of its twin properties in Gurugram, thereby becoming the largest owner of hotel rooms in the millennium city. Adding a collective inventory of just under 400 rooms, Lemon Tree Hotel, Sector 60, and Red Fox Hotel, Sector 60, located just off Golf Course Extension Road and a short distance from key business hubs also house a separate convention centre with commercial and office space, making them the largest accessible MICE destinations in Delhi-NCR. These special hotels allow people of varying abilities to access all areas of the hotel with ease and offer specially-designed rooms and suites for differently-abled guests.

**Vikramjit Singh**, President, Lemon Tree Hotels, said, "It is our sixth property in Gurugram that continues to attract business and leisure travellers throughout the year and the twin property launch, along with the convention centre, proves how successful our brand has been in this market." With this launch, Lemon Tree Hotels now commands a joint inventory of 530 rooms in the city.

## RESORT

## SWOSTI CHILIKA RESORT, ODISHA, TO OPEN IN JUNE

Swosti Group is soon to launch a world-class resort of international standard, the Swosti Chilika Resort, spread over nine acres and located on the bank of Chilika Lake, Odisha. The 70-key resort, designed by one of Thailand's most renowned architectural firms, will also have spas on houseboats, a yoga centre, herbal gardens, an amphitheatre, and provide facilities to residents that would include water boats, water scooters, facilities for water surfing, and boating facilities for 26 islands. Sports and adventure enthusiasts can also make use of badminton and tennis courts, mini golf, bird-watching tower, bicycle tours, and village tours. The resort also offers basic cooking classes, boat restaurants, facilities for conferences, and large open spaces for

wedding functions. Swosti Chilika Resort will offer four types of accommodation- The Presidential Suites; Millpond- The Pool Villas; Windchime-The Quad Villas; and Midlake County- The Hotel Blocks.

The restaurants at the Swosti Chilika Resort offer an incredible array of local delicacies and the choicest of international cuisines with the décor and the ambience adding to the mood. The centrally-located coffee shop that is surrounded by greenery is a perfect setting for relaxing or catching up with friends. Ekayaa, the spa, is equipped with single and double treatment suites, beauty treatment rooms, and meditation and relaxation decks to rejuvenate and re-energise the mind, body, and spirit.



## RESTAURANT

## BANAN REACQUIRES STAKE IN SAGAR RATNA

Jayaram Banan, Founder of the Sagar Ratna brand, has reacquired his stake in the business that he had sold to a private equity firm in 2011. The firm, which had the controlling stake, and Banan mutually agreed that it was in the best interest of Sagar Ratna that he take control of the company. Pursuant to this understanding, the private equity firm has exited and Banan has now gained full control and ownership of the popular chain.

Banan's name has been synonymous with Sagar Ratna since its establishment more than two and a half decades ago. The chain of vegetarian restaurants is spread across the country through 36

company-owned stores and 52 franchisees in 12 states. He now has plans to expand the business further by opening more than 100 branches and an equal number of franchisees in the next three years, with an aim to make it one of the largest chains of vegetarian restaurants in the country. Banan is a hands-on restaurateur and is well-poised to achieve this goal. He has several strategies in place from revamping the existing administration, refurbishment, and renovation to expansion with induction of a new, experienced, and driven team. He is confident that he will take Sagar Ratna to new heights and make it one of the best vegetarian restaurant brands in the country.



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## OPENING

## GOLDEN TULIP SUITES COMES TO THE MILLENNIAL CITY OF GURUGRAM

Golden Tulip Suites Gurgaon, situated in Haryana's millennial city, has opened doors to guests. It is an upscale hotel that has been designed keeping in mind the requirement of long-staying guests and families. The property boasts of 74 Executive Suites out of its inventory of 106 rooms. It is strategically located in Gwal Pahari and has good connectivity to both Delhi and Faridabad. The hotel offers multiple dining options for guests where they can choose from the all-day dining, multi-cuisine restaurant Branche; barbeque at the deck - The Grill; relax at the contemporarily-designed lounge at Branche Bar; and experience the finest coffee and bakery assortments at The Deli, the in-house bakery. The hotel also boasts two meeting rooms that are well-equipped with state-of-the-art technology and conference facilities.

**Vimal Singh**, Managing Director, Golden Tulip Hotels and Resorts, South Asia, said, "We promise to deliver world-class services and facilities through all our properties. We understand the demography of our country and the business of hospitality, and our vision is to offer our product in areas that require quality accommodation at competitive prices. Golden Tulip Suites Gurgaon is an ideal location for corporates in Delhi-NCR who are looking for long stays at an international brand."

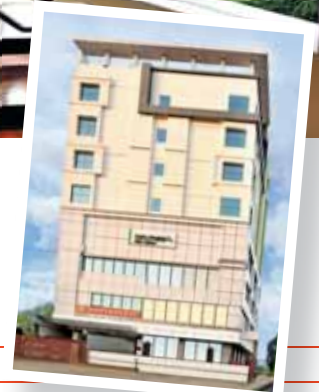


## LAUNCH

## STAYWELL LAUNCHES LEISURE INN SHREY, JODHPUR

Australia's largest privately-owned hotel management company, StayWell Hospitality Group, is extending its international footprint with the opening of the company's fifth property in Rajasthan, the Leisure Inn Shrey in Jodhpur. The property will deliver a roof-top restaurant and conference facilities along with well-appointed rooms and international service standards that the Leisure Inn brand is famous for. Additionally, the hotel will house the famous vegetarian restaurant, Grand Chanakya, which has a sister restaurant under the same name in Jaipur at the Leisure Inn Grand Chanakya.

**Rohit Vig**, Managing Director, StayWell Hospitality Group in India, said, "We have signed 12 hotels under the Park Regis and Leisure Inn brands, which will result in the opening of properties in Hyderabad, Goa, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Gurugram, and Greater Noida."





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# New pain point for hoteliers



GST rates are out and hoteliers are again disappointed. Terming the rates as too complex, high, and non-competitive, the hotel industry has declared that it will make representation to the Finance Minister and the Minister of Tourism to review the rates once again. Varied associations in South India have already participated in a 'bandh' to lobby against the increase in taxes. In this article, FHRAI members share their opinion on GST rates.

**Kanchan Nath**

Post spirits being down due to the liquor ban, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was another shocker for the hospitality fraternity. The new rates for GST, announced by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, will be applicable from July 1. Restaurants with a turnover of less than ₹ 50 lakh will be levied a tax rate of 5 per cent. Restaurants that are not air-conditioned will have a 12 per cent tax rate; while those that are will have to shell out 18 per cent in taxes. Also, 5-star restaurants will have to submit a Luxury Tax of 28 per cent. Hotels and lodges with tariffs less than ₹ 1000 will be taxed at 5 per cent while those with tariffs

between ₹ 1000-₹ 2500 will be charged a 12 per cent tax. An 18 per cent tax will be charged on room tariffs between ₹ 2500-₹ 5000.



## K Syama Raju President, FHRAI

We have recently given a representation to Union Finance Ministry officials. Highlighting that the proposal of 28 per cent GST will adversely impact the hospitality and tourism industry, the delegation requested the government to relook at the present proposal and advocated a uniform hospitality GST at 12 per cent across the country. Further, we have also requested the government to reanalyse the Luxury Tax limit of ₹ 5000 and enhance it suitably as is followed in most countries the world over since

₹ 5000 cannot be considered as luxury today. The Service Tax proposal under the new GST regime has been set at 28 per cent for hotel tariffs above ₹ 5000.



We have requested the government to relook at the proposal and advocated a uniform GST





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**Garish Oberoi**  
Vice President, FHRAI



There remains a feeling of despair among the fraternity. A GST of 5 per cent or even 8-12 per cent for all would have been better. However, to isolate hotels with room tariff above ₹ 5000 through a 28 per cent GST is not right. Also, air-conditioning is a necessity these days. Why must air-conditioned restaurants be charged more? It seems we have become a soft target for the government. The different representations that were given by the various associations to the government have been futile.

“A GST of 5 per cent or even 8-12 per cent for all would have been better”

With demonetisation, liquor ban, the issue of MRP, and now GST, we will not be able to compete with our neighbouring countries at all. It seems there is a huge gap between what the government says on paper and what it does for tourism.

**T.S. Walia**  
Vice President, FHRAI



The GST rates announced by the government will not be a boost to the industry. The high incidence of taxes under the Goods and Services Tax is set to further destroy the already struggling tourism industry of the country. It will prove to be the final nail in the coffin for international tourism in our country, as foreign tourists will now hesitate more than ever in selecting India as a travel destination. This will also further strengthen the tourism markets of neighbouring countries.

“If these policies are a fish tank, GST will prove to be the biggest shark”

Despite having a huge landmass and unparalleled natural beauty, unfavourable government policies prevent tourists from visiting our country; if these policies are a fish tank, GST will prove to be the biggest shark.

**Dilip Datwani**  
Vice President, FHRAI



The government should realise that while neighbouring countries like Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia levy taxes ranging from 5-10 per cent, we cannot afford to have such complex and high GST rates. This is simply not viable; tourists will simply skip coming to India.

“The decision to place hotels in the 18 per cent slab may not be in the best interest of tourism in the country”

This will hamper tourism immensely and neighbouring countries will only stand to gain from such a policy. We must look to further our tourism revenue through policies that are more supportive of the industry. By rationalising taxes, India can easily quadruple its tourism revenue, and in absolute terms, earn more money for the exchequer.

The decision to place hotels in the 18 per cent slab may not be in the best interest of tourism in the country and the industry feels dejected.

**Sanjay Sood**  
EC Member, FHRAI



GST is a good law framed by a group of people who have limited knowledge of administration and tax management. I am surprised to see so many slabs for tax rates in similar services. In the instance of hotels, it seems the Finance Minister has not been made aware of how difficult it is going to be for the common man to understand the differences. Also, I do not understand the mindset of the government when imposing a higher tax rate on air-conditioned restaurants. Is air-conditioning really such a big matter? Why can't we provide a good environment to all at the same cost? Such a law will only create an opportunity for taxation authorities to harass taxpayers and extract money from them. There should have been a single tax rate on every commodity or service with the exception of foodgrains, vegetables, and fruits. We talk of One India, but this has divided the communities within the same sector.

“It will be very difficult for the common man to understand. There should have been a single tax rate on every service”

## Bharat Malkani

EC Member, FHRAI



“With rates so high, we are now officially the costliest tourism destination in all of Asia”

The proposed GST rates for the hospitality industry are perfect for further development of the industry in neighbouring countries. With rates as high as 28 per cent for mid-scale hotels and 18 per cent for budget hotels we are now officially the costliest tourism destination in all of Asia. These announcements were greeted with great deal of happiness by hotels in Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Thailand to name a few countries. When questioned, the senior authorities in the tourism department in these countries noted the excellent work being done by the GST Council in promoting their country's tourism. They expressed confidence that the 8 million tourists who visited India would now no longer need any further coaxing to come to Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur or even Singapore.

## Luv Malhotra

EC Member, FHRAI



“Luxury Tax should be over ₹ 10,000. Better slabs would have helped promote tourism”

The GST slabs that came out were shocking to see. We have asked the Union Government to look at a 12 per cent slab of GST across the board, rather than breaking it up into parts and creating further confusion in the hospitality industry. ₹ 5000 is definitely not 'luxury'. A ticket from Delhi to Mumbai costs more than ₹ 5000, taxed at 5 per cent, and the same aircraft also has a business class which is taxed at 12 per cent.

I think terming a night's stay at a 5-star hotel, that charges ₹ 5000, as 'luxury' is a joke. It completely defies logic. Luxury Tax should be over a minimum of ₹ 10,000. Better slabs would have gone a long way towards promoting tourism in the country, not just domestic but international as well.

## Souvagya Mohapatra

EC Member, FHRAI

A "One Nation, One Tax" concept enumerated with the introduction of GST, which would have replaced the plethora of taxes levied under different names, was a welcome move and hinted that total tax liability on customers would reduce, benefitting the hotels for increased business. However, a tax slab as high as 28 per cent on luxury and high-end hotels would be counterproductive. Due to digitisation, all tax administration processes would bring in greater transparency and enable work in a hassle-free environment. In the long run, it is going to be beneficial for the citizens of the country. Upon implementation of GST, consumers will be king and GST will end tax-terrorism.

At present, taxes on banquets are about 25 per cent and on rentals about 10.15 per cent without the addition of Luxury Tax, wherever it is applicable. Under GST, an 18 per cent tax with full ITC will be levied, which will give a boost to the banqueting business at hotels. Till now, restaurants in hotels were charging approximately 14.5 per cent VAT on food only and 6 per cent Service Tax on food and beverages. However, with the introduction of GST, tax will vary from 12 per cent to 28 per cent, depending on the facilities in the restaurant. For restaurants, hotels, and food outlets other than

those of the 5-star category or above, GST will have a positive impact. For hotels that lie in the 5-star category or above, the higher taxes may lead to low footfalls and reduction in business.

A lot of companies are embracing technology to automate filings and compliances related to GST. At the back end, shifting to the GST module would result in incurrance of additional costs for new technology, systems, and accounting practices.

GST will not only help check tax evasions but also help India evolve as a more tax compliant society. It will lead to increased simplification of administration and increased transparency, enabling wide compliance and ultimately unifying the country as a single market.

“A lot of companies are embracing technology to automate filings. At the back end, shifting to the GST module would result in incurrance of additional costs for new technology”



# The Techie Hotelier

In this high-tech era, technology plays the contradictory role of being a facilitator as well as disruptor of services. With so much happening, it becomes difficult to prioritise where hoteliers should be betting big in technology. In our cover story, we try and get the opinion of tech and hospitality experts on the same. They talk about trends, enhancing hotel websites, mobile applications for hotels, interactive walls, cyber security, and most importantly, competitively priced technology for hotels.

Kanchan Nath

A hand is shown holding a glowing blue globe. The word "FUTURE" is written in large, bold, yellow capital letters across the center of the globe. The background is a dark blue with various futuristic elements, including a circular interface with a central sphere, a line graph, and a waveform. The overall theme is technology and the future.

**FUTURE**



Avijit Arya

“  
If your team is not checking everything on the mobile, you are losing out on at least 15 per cent additional website revenue”

## THE TECHIE PERSPECTIVE

### Avijit Arya Chief Mogul (CEO), Internet Moguls

Almost every month, a new trend comes in and creates an opportunity for hoteliers to nurture their business because the first-movers on any new trend are the ones who conquer it successfully. These days, the foremost trend is that of videos that go “viral” and get shared wildly. Today, every platform gives you the opportunity to connect with your clients through video advertisements. Also, along with the introduction of the “live” feature, many hoteliers are increasingly using it to market the features of their hotel. Everyone on social media is a consumer of content and this is a trend that one must continue to observe. Apart from that, e-mail marketing and reputation management are also some trends that seem to have taken the market by storm.

### CONNECTING WITH GUESTS

Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp and chat-related features that can be automated to talk to several potential guests at one time are captivating and providing huge value by saving time and powering the sales process like never before. Unfortunately, it can be concluded that some hoteliers are taking ages to jump onto this simple tool to make additional revenue.

### MOBILE SALES FUNNEL

Move over from the desktop to the mobile. If you have a funnel on the mobile that works to convert, you will succeed. It's easy to check and test various funnels on your mobile. If your team is not checking everything on the mobile, you are losing out on at least 15 per cent additional website revenue.

### CONVERT LOOKERS TO BOOKERS

In my opinion, Smart TVs truly stand true to their name only if they recognise what a customer saw last time and show them their favourite channels or give them the option to resume watching a movie. Smart TVs should store information like trending shows, to be played when customers check in.

Interactive walls have also been around for a while. They help in saving time and guests can get information and interact with the teams online or through video. That is the new way of connecting and allows flexibility in this new era. By all means, all these tech extensions should be a part of the hotel experience. Gone are the days when hoteliers could lure guests by the thickness of the mattress; now the super-fast Wi-Fi guarantees occupancy. It is better to convert “lookers” into “bookers”.

### FIREWALL YOUR DATA

Security is still not a concern for most organisations who are sitting ducks for theft of sensitive information by competitors or hackers.

Having a firewall to protect your data is like having security guards and bouncers at clubs and restaurants, in the absence of which a disaster is just waiting to happen.



The funniest part is that most organisations call for proposals and go with the cheapest vendor for their cyber security, even though results have shown that databases of major organisations have been hacked time and again.

### HIGHLY INVOLVED PROVIDERS

Collaborating with technology providers where the founder is involved with the workings of the organisation is beneficial; in a large organisation, systems and working tend to get rigid and that is not feasible for hoteliers who constantly need innovative ideas and upgrades.

The provider must be open to listening and not just selling the existing product. I often call a good provider (who has been shortlisted) to my office several times so as to ease his process of understanding my problems. If during the process he loses his patience, it's a good indicator of how things are going to be in the long run.







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Sagun Sawhney

“Any enhancement initiative should be device-agnostic, considering a consumer's growing use of mobile devices for booking”

## Sagun Sawhney Head of Sales (India), Oracle Hospitality

### TRENDS IN TECHNOLOGY

Two of the most pressing challenges that hoteliers are facing today are escalating pressures on improving efficiency and the rising demands of guests who expect faster, better, individualised, and hassle-free services. As a result, today's top five technology trends focus on addressing the primary issues of mobility, cloud-based management, security, data analytics, and network infrastructure.

### MOBILITY

Mobile devices and applications untether hotel staff and free them from the front desk, meaning they can cater to guests anytime, anywhere to deliver a fast and exceptional service. Hotels need to leverage data in a way that appeals to guests and encourage loyalty by supporting personal content consumption through downloadable hotel applications, booking platforms, and social media channels.

### CLOUD-BASED MANAGEMENT

Hoteliers are increasingly moving back office, front office, and operational platforms to the cloud, capitalising on the technology's capability to accelerate innovation, reduce time to benefit, improve operating efficiency, and reduce the cost and complexity of IT.

### SECURITY

Guest privacy and security of financial data are fast becoming a priority in the hotel industry. With the increasing sophistication of hackers, recent rise in malicious attacks, addition of mobile and social channels, and proliferation of mobile and non-bank payment systems, hotels are being forced to invest more and more in intrusion detection and protection systems and capabilities.

### DATA ANALYTICS

At a time when hoteliers are besieged with data and information, it has become essential to conduct data analytics. Reporting tools that provide comprehensive and centralised data hubs, which can be mined quickly for insights, are necessary to make faster, better strategic decisions and deliver personalised service tailored for each guest.

### NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE

With an increasing prevalence in ownership of personal mobile devices, delivering exceptional guest room and mobile experiences requires investment in fast, inexpensive, and easily accessible Wi-Fi network infrastructure. Hoteliers are increasing their coverage and updating their networks to accommodate these demands as well as supporting

facing mobile solutions that enable hotels to deliver services to the guest anywhere in the hotel.

### ENSURING ACCURACY

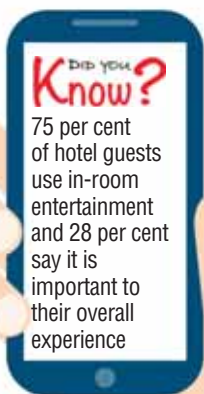
It is imperative to remember that the guest experience begins on the hotel website and is the main reason why many are focusing on fully integrating online booking efforts with the enterprise property management system. Achieving such seamless operational efficiency means customers booking directly can access room availability in real-time and view up-to-date information about hotel initiatives such as loyalty programmes. Delivering accurate information strengthens relationships, bolsters the brand, and maximises bookings. It's also critical that any enhancement initiative be device-agnostic, considering a consumer's growing use of mobile



devices for booking and comparison shopping. All of these devices must present websites that are visually aesthetic, easy to navigate, offer personalised shopping, showcase vibrant property images, and have the ability to integrate innovations such as virtual reality tours.

### DATA CENTRALISATION

In selecting a new technology platform, hoteliers need to take into account a variety of buying considerations, including factoring needs based on their size and category, and specific strategic priorities. However, at a time when delivering individualised guest service is a priority and will only become more important in the future, IT must meet the three objectives of accelerating innovation, improving efficiency, and reducing cost and complexity. This is why many hoteliers are moving to cloud.





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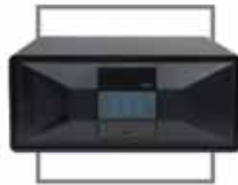
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Media Hubs**



**Kube System  
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Wyntronix Innovations is a company formed with an intent, to address the growing needs of the Hospitality Industry, and provide quality Electronic products and unfailing service support across India and South Asia.

The staff of the company have rich industry knowledge and have a reputation of being extremely service oriented and fulfill the principle of "Customer First" genuinely.

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For more information please contact: **Wyntronix Innovations Pvt. Ltd.**

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Conventional software becomes outdated and requires excessive waits for upgrades, sometimes as long as two or three years. By comparison, cloud technology undergoes updates routinely as if it were perpetually enhanced, compressing innovation cycles to just a few months. Buyers must take note of some key considerations while evaluating their technology options.

Centralisation through cloud-based technology, the first consideration, will help them lower costs by allowing hotels to centralise hardware and software for hotel and F&B operations. Flexibility through cloud solutions, the second consideration, can be achieved without the need for on-premise servers and eliminating accompanying work such as procurement, installation, and expansion. Thirdly, buyers should select a company that offers a sufficiently high level of customer support, from implementation to addressing any day-to-day operational issues.

With cloud technology, backups, maintenance, and security updates are all performed by the cloud technology provider. Lastly, having visibility into all the key drivers of hotel performance is not just an operational necessity but a strategic imperative.



Operators are sitting on a mountain of data; it's essential to have a solution that can systematically mine it and analyse it to generate a continuous flow of actionable insights. These insights can lead to more informed business decisions as well as create more personalised guest experiences.



**Manoj K Mohanty**

### **Manoj K Mohanty** Senior Vice President – Sales, South Asia & Southeast Asia IDS Next

#### **INNOVATING THE FUTURE**

Technology is a massive enabler for the hotel industry, helping hotels automate operations and serve guests better. A number of trends have helped shape and continue to shape the industry. Today, adoption of IoT (Internet of Things) technologies has had a big impact on a hotel's system like HVAC, smart TV, and guest room entertainment. According to Gartner, there will be 26 billion IoT connected devices by 2020. Wireless charging is another useful trend. Around 90 per cent of travellers globally view their smartphone as their number one travel companion. Hotels have identified this and have gone a step ahead to adopt wireless charging pads. These charging pads will be seen at all major and mid-sized hotels as one of the standard amenities to serve guests. Interactive walls are also increasingly being used to delight guests at hotels. Hotels can leverage interactive walls to showcase their services and amenities.

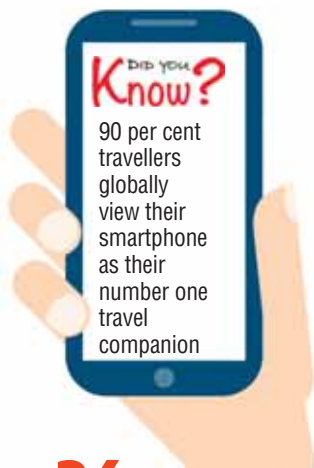
It has been estimated that by 2020, robotics will become an important part of the hotel industry.

Right from reception to concierge to room service, everything will be handled by robots. Virtual reality, a bit futuristic at present, is being used by hotels to offer a different type of experience to their guests. Hotels can enable guests to go on a virtual trip to exotic locations, and tour conference places, guest rooms, and other amenities of the hotels.

#### **EQUIPPING THE MOBILE**

For a hotel, its brand website is one of the most important marketing assets. Therefore, hotels should leverage the power of web booking engines to receive maximum number of direct bookings through their website. Embedded in a hotel website, the web booking engine allows travellers to view availability of rooms in real-time.

Hotel websites must also be mobile responsive. This means that whenever potential buyers visit a hotel website using their smartphone, they must be able to navigate through all the pages seamlessly. This is because the trend of booking a hotel using the phone has increased exponentially in recent years.



Still fretting about the PMS you should choose for your hotel?

Try mycloudPMS, at no cost, then decide if it is right for your hotel.



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Raj Rana

## THE HOTELIER'S PERSPECTIVE

### Raj Rana

Chief Executive Officer, South Asia  
Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group

#### GREEN TECHNOLOGY

At Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, we invest in technology to minimise the environmental impact of operations, improve profitability, and ensure better value for owners.

For heating in high altitude areas, we use radiant heating technology that is more efficient and saves more power than room heaters. We are looking to implement this at our upcoming hotels in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir. Magnetic chillers that save more than 20 per cent power vis-à-vis screw chillers are the latest trend in technology and we will be deploying them at our upcoming hotel in Maharashtra. Some other industry trends include use of Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) motors, jet fans with carbon-oxide sensors at car parking areas, LED lighting fixtures, heat pumps, and wind power. These contribute substantially towards maintaining clean, green, and sustainable practices in the industry.

#### TECHING HOUSEKEEPING

Room occupancy is a vital part of the hospitality business. Increase in demand puts pressure on cleaning and selling available rooms at a quick pace. Technology is a critical enabler of such requirements. We have effected Clax Advanced Laundry solution that works at lower temperatures and delivers clean linen with less water and energy consumption at select hotels. At Radisson Blu Jammu, we have invested in Milagrow Robots for automated room and swimming pool cleaning. Some other industry trends in housekeeping include electronic housekeeping control systems, ultraviolet sterilising wands, UV inspection black lights, and automated systems for supplies and inventories.

#### CHANNELING SOCIAL MEDIA

In today's digital world, customers expect brands to deliver a seamless experience both physically and virtually. Social media plays a critical role in delivering this and has proven to be more cost-effective and efficient in managing customer relationships. Brands must be extremely quick, efficient, and cautious in handling queries on social media as it can affect brand reputation and have long-term implications.

We continuously invest in our brand websites and enhance our booking process to delight today's savvy and modern guests. We have deployed platforms like Revinate and Engagor to track customer complaints

and gauge sentiment across OTAs and social media on an ongoing basis.

#### INTERACTIVE SYSTEMS

At Carlson, we realise that the stay experience of guests is drastically elevated with high speed Wi-Fi service. This is still a focus area for us even though the technology has evolved from being a luxury to a necessity. Furthermore, to enhance guest experience, we have equipped our hotels with a guest room management system that enables efficient control of lighting, heating/cooling, and guest services through intuitive touch panel interfaces. Other industry practices



like interactive in-room systems that allow guests to connect their gadgets to their room's TV screen for streaming their favourite TV shows and movies are also widely popular and elevate guest experience.

#### ANALYSING FEEDBACK

We attribute very high priority to guest loyalty and consider it a win when a guest recommends our brand. We have therefore invested in Medallia survey, which is a tool to gather feedback from our guests on a regular basis. Additionally, our research teams continuously observe consumer behaviour patterns to refine our booking platforms as per the needs of the customers. Our global loyalty programme, Club Carlson, has proved highly successful in increasing frequency of visits and brand loyalty. The programme rewards members with a collection of exceptional benefits, services, and privileges.

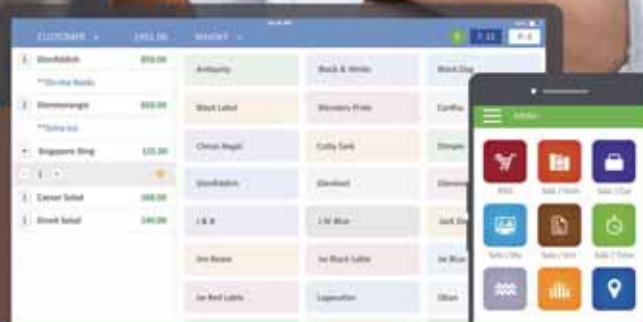
“Magnetic chillers that save more than 20 per cent power vis-à-vis screw chillers are the latest trend in technology”





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Nilesch Patel

“  
My Web Valet  
is a great  
example of how  
AccorHotels  
is leveraging  
technology  
to offer more  
personalised  
services”

**Nilesch Patel**  
Director of IT  
AccorHotels India

### SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMMES

Energy efficiency programmes in hotels have been a rising trend for many years and new advancements are allowing to take them to the next level where the building itself becomes smart. A technology sustainability programme is easy to sneak into other upgrades that hotels are making. As hotels add automation systems, an energy-management back-end system that controls all of the devices will make it easier for guests and staff to limit energy consumption on a larger scale. With automated lighting, HVAC, and occupancy sensors, hotels can reduce the amount of time for which lights and air conditioning remain on when they don't need to be. Integrating them further with housekeeping, time of day, and check-in or check-out times provides additional efficiency.

### QUICK REDRESSALS

With 95 per cent of customers checking the reputation of hotels online before making their bookings, it's crucial for hotels to be aware of what guests are saying about them online and work on delivering a good experience to each guest. Hotels must learn to respond to issues of any nature, positive or negative, as early as possible. While responding, brands must remember that honesty goes a long way. The world today is more transparent than ever and any attempt to withhold information or evade an issue will only result in a bigger crisis.

### MY WEB VALET

As the hospitality industry continues to climb the digital curve, in-room technology is becoming an increasingly important part of the guest experience. In order to capitalise on in-room technology, hotels must learn to adapt quickly to the ever-evolving changes in this area, but also make the connectivity process easy for the guest. Investing in complex in-room technology, no matter how cutting edge, may not serve the purpose. It is best to keep the technology simple and easy to use. Guests will value a hotel application that gives them the option of bypassing the front desk for trivial, time consuming hotel services such as placing a room service order, checking the weather or calling for laundry service.

My Web Valet application is a great example of how AccorHotels is leveraging technology to offer more personalised services and enable a seamless customer journey, helping guests plan and experience their trips better. Catering to guests who are always

on the move and like to consume information digitally using smart devices, we have also introduced "PressReader for AccorHotels", an innovative service that lets guests read more than 4000 international and local newspapers and magazines on their own devices. Replete with new-age functionalities, the application allows guests to translate content into 17 languages, listen to articles while they are on the go, and share them across social media platforms with ease.

### VOICE OF THE GUEST

In the day and age of technology where internet is the fastest and most preferred medium of communication, we use various online tools to analyse and understand our guests better. This also helps us improve their experience with us, thus driving advocacy to our brands.

Additionally, the unique Voice of the Guest programme allows the compilation of all customer assessments shared across various online platforms. This programme improves the compendium of customer feedback, thus allowing better responses, enabling the dispersal and distribution of information, and answering directly to guest feedback through an internal collaborative community. Finally, constant monitoring of reviews on websites like TripAdvisor and responding to the guest on their feedback in a timely fashion has also helped us shape our appeal.

### EFFICIENCY VERSUS ADDED COST

At AccorHotels, technology is not merely concerned with adding ease to the guest experience, rather we take it a step ahead by aiming to provide a perfect amalgamation of technology along with the warmth of the personal touch. Last year capped off the digital transformation plan for AccorHotels that addresses a full range of digital channels, making AccorHotels the leader in a fast-changing industry. We are investing 225 million Euros over a five-year period and are leading the charge in the hospitality space.

Upgrades are a must when technologies shift. In such a situation, rather than viewing the upgrade as an added cost, or unnecessary financial burden, it is important to look at what operational efficiencies the new technology can bring, including any improvements in staff activities and morale that can be delivered and how the technology will ultimately benefit the hotels revenue performance.





HOSPITALITY WIFI HOTSPOT



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NETWORKS



Shantha de Silva

**Shantha de Silva**  
Head of South West Asia  
InterContinental Hotels Group



“  
With GRS, a guest will have the ability to choose a higher floor with a sea view or a room on a quiet floor  
”

### GREEN ENGAGE SYSTEM

Energy costs are increasingly impacting the hospitality sector. Most hospitality chains are working towards reducing energy costs by eliminating wasteful consumption and adopting 'green' building methods. Waste is an issue of increasing importance in the hospitality sector.

Environmental issues are driving the industry towards more sustainable management of solid and liquid waste. At IHG, we have our online sustainability programme - IHG Green Engage System. All our hotels in India are now IHG Green Engage hotels.

This system has been designed to measure the impact our hotels have on the environment, and help them manage their costs. It provides over 200 'Green Solutions' that cover every aspect of the hotel lifecycle and IHG hotels that achieve a Level-3 certification or above can reduce energy usage by up to 25 per cent.

The IHG Green Engage system demonstrates to our stakeholders, including our colleagues and guests, our commitment to address climate change, water scarcity, and environmental degradation. The environment benefits, our owners have the benefit

of cost efficiency, and our guests get to participate and stay at hotels that share their values.

### GUEST RESERVATION SYSTEM

We continuously gather insights from consumers, which enable us to research, develop, pilot, and launch new ways of engaging with guests and enhancing their stay. We know that swift responses to guest requests are essential to improving guest satisfaction during their stay.

We have partnered with Amadeus to develop a next generation, cloud-based Guest Reservation System (GRS), which is an industry first. Globally, GRS will be launched by the end of the year and will be rolled out to the Asia, Middle East, and Africa region in 2018. This system will allow for faster direct bookings and even at the last-minute, allow you to sort through availability and customise your stay as per your preference. With GRS, a guest will have the ability to choose a higher floor with a sea view or a room on a quiet floor.

After the roll out, we will be in a better position to understand our guests, which will further enhance our direct booking channels because it's all about personalising stays for our guests.





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Harish Chandra

## Harish Chandra General Manager – IT, Sarovar Hotels & Resorts

### MOBILE FOR MANAGEMENT

Mobile applications are helping in managing customer relationships better. These applications allocate tasks to available manpower automatically and help escalate pending issues to higher authorities immediately. Data analysis of guest service requests and complaints helps understand guest requirements and issues with hotel services. We are also able to measure productivity of employees and manpower requirement.

### VIRTUAL REALITY

The hotel industry is capitalising on the power of SMAC (Social Media, Analytics, and Cloud) and leveraging digital marketing. Hotels have increased digital marketing budgets to engage with today's guests on social media platforms, mass mailing, etc., to convert potential guests into actual guests. An investment in SMAC has become a must for maintaining and enhancing the hotel business. Today, high resolution digital photos and videos of the hotel are a must to attract guests. Hotels have also started investing in artificial intelligence and virtual reality. A 360 degree tour of the hotel's public areas and guest rooms has also become a common practice. Professional firms are capturing hotel videos and details via drones as well.

### DATA AND LOYALTY

We use cloud-based QMS to do data analysis of guest feedback on various operational areas and have been quite successful in interpreting our guest requirements and issues with our products and services, if any. Data analysis also helps us in designing guest-friendly hotels. We are investing in technology that enhances guest experience and helps our valuable guests stay comfortably by creating a home-away-from-home experience. Data analytics help us in revenue and yield management as guest room is a perishable commodity. It helps us in knowing room rate as per marketing demand to sell it better. We are evaluating new data analytics and artificial intelligence technologies to understand guest preferences. Additionally, there is a big scope of using iBeacon, which allows Bluetooth devices to broadcast or receive tiny and static pieces of data within short distances. This will help hotels in identifying guests as and when they enter the hotel to provide them with tailor-made experiences based on their

personal likes and dislikes from prior stay-history.

### REAL-TIME BOOKINGS

Today's guest believes in doing everything instantly online. As a result, hotels have invested significantly in developing responsive websites and mobile-based applications. We are evaluating development of mobile booking applications to facilitate last-minute bookings by pushing real-time offers via our website and social media platforms. We are

“  
An investment  
in SMAC has  
become a must  
for maintaining  
and enhancing  
the hotel  
business”



also exploring the interface of our CRS with PMS to achieve single-image inventory, integrated central reservation systems with distribution, and hotel property management system.

### SECURITY OVER COST

Hoteliers are well aware that investment in technology is a must for guest engagement and branding. Our hotels cannot survive if they will look at investment in these technologies as burden. We need to keep up with the ever-evolving technology to uplift guest experience. The biggest challenge that we see is that technology changes very fast, resulting in pressure on ROI. Due to cyber threats, it is crucial to invest in security solutions. This should be done irrespective of strained budgets. New technologies like IoT, Robotic Process Automation (RPA), Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Virtual Reality (VR) are currently not heard of much or used in the Indian hospitality industry's technology space. We, at Sarovar Hotels, are internally evaluating these state-of-the-art technologies and also keeping an eye on industry adaptability of these technologies. Sarovar Hotels will definitely use these solutions if we found them appropriate for uplifting guest experience.



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- Providing hospitality solutions since 1988
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#### Our Strength

- Knowledge of business - think like a hotelier
- Research new and emerging technologies
- Believe customers are our teachers
- Listen, listen, listen to our customers

#### Our Solutions

- Comprehensive & Simple to use
- Enhanced for mobile communications
- Multi-property
- Business intelligence & Real-time dashboards

# In-sync with Tech...

Technology is present in almost all aspects of the hotel industry. Its efficient adoption and utilisation help make or break businesses. **Hrshikesh Joshi**, General Manager, Express Inn, tells us how they are using technology to optimise functionality in their hotel.

“

We have a complete online presence that is effectively managed by a dedicated resource

”

## HOW ARE YOU USING TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE REVENUE MANAGEMENT FOR THE HOTEL?

Technology, in today's date, is an integral part of the hotel. Besides day-to-day operations, it plays an important role in revenue management with ERP/ CRM going digital globally. Hence, for a global reach, online channels and CRS are absolutely necessary to ensure that all possible business resources are tapped. We have a complete online presence that is effectively managed by a dedicated resource for all avenues that are open for sale, helping us tap all segments that must be employed for generating the required optimum yield.

## WHAT NEW TECHNOLOGY HAVE YOU RECENTLY ADDED TO YOUR HOTEL PROCESSES?

Our tie-up with Preferred Hotels has been a valuable addition, which has enabled us to be placed on the GDS and other global platforms through their CRS.

## WHAT ARE THE LATEST TRENDS THAT YOU ARE SEEING IN TECHNOLOGY FOR HOTELS?

The trends that we have observed are guest rooms and services being more equipped with technologically-advanced systems and gadgets like iPod docking

stations, one-point-contact for all kinds of services needed by guests, and proper communication through complaint and request management softwares. Other trends would be good-quality Wi-Fi, technologically-advanced security systems with metal detectors, baggage scanners, etc., and energy conservation mechanisms like solar panels.

## HOW DO HOTELS MANAGE TO BE ENERGY-EFFICIENT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY?

The use of solar panels, LED-lighting with motion sensors to minimise the usage of energy, and centralised control of air-conditioning through a building management software are some of the key trends in the industry. Energy-efficient pumps for water circulation, water treatment plants, access-controlled systems in elevators to avoid excess usage, and solar heaters for generation of hot water are also trends that make the hospitality industry as technologically-advanced and environmentally-conscious as it is.

## WHAT STEPS HAVE YOU TAKEN TO FACILITATE REAL-TIME BOOKINGS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY?

We have tied up with Preferred Hotels, which has given us access to GDS through the SynXis System where we are able to control the online inventory and rates based on our needs. This further helps us manage room inventory and optimise yield.

## TECHNOLOGY IS ACCOMPANIED BY THE ADDED COST OF UPGRADES. WHAT IS YOUR TAKE?

New technology to increase efficiency would always be an asset as the initial cost could end up saving a lot of operating cost in the long run. Whatever is necessary has to be done. Software upgrades are an absolute necessity for automation of work to increase work efficiency and deliver prompt service.



**Hrshikesh Joshi**

# YOUR **POS** COMPANION

POSist, a cloud-based point of sale solutions provider, offers an innovative solution to help increase revenue while providing services that help understand customer preferences.

POSist is a complete cloud-based Point of Sale (POS) solution especially customised for all types of restaurants and food outlets. It has a global presence with over 3300 restaurants in 90 cities across five countries, and works with customers ranging from small kiosks to fine-dine restaurants and serves some of the largest chains in the country.

More than just a POS software, the system is focused on saving money for restaurants, making money for restaurants, and growing the restaurant business. Its anti-theft module is the world's first solution that is able to single-out the exact point from where internal pilferage happens in restaurants and also identify the staff members who indulge in thieving activities. Pilferage and thefts are a major cause of restaurant losses, and POSist helps prevent that. The recommendation module enables order-takers to upsell the food without any prior training. The POS automatically prompts the item that should be ordered along with the current order. This is done based on the customer's ordering history if it's a repeat

customer. For new customers, suggestions are given based on item popularity and high profit items, thus increasing restaurant revenues.

Apart from this, POSist also assists restaurateurs and hoteliers to make the best use of their customer data. Its marketing application enables them to centrally manage the entire customer data and run area specific offers. POSist's feedback application helps to capture the views and feedback of the customers, thus providing a holistic customer engagement.

POSist is constantly innovating and building technology to help restaurants achieve this.

“

POSist has a global presence with over 3300 restaurants in 90 cities across five countries

”

## The powerful **FLEXIBLE** Software for Hotels & Hotel Chains



# EXCEED SOFTWARE

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# Transforming the back office with

# TECH

**Prologix First**, a hospitality software development and marketing company, provides integration across back office functions, paperless operations, and ever-rich functionality through **Web Pro'l'IFIC**, the most cost-effective, yet high-performance software for high volume transactions in hospitality.

Technology these days provides you never-before choices that allow you to make your back office operations more efficient while reducing costs.

## DEPLOYMENT OPTIONS

On account of confidentiality, you may opt to install your back office software on your site. On the other hand, web-based technologies offer alternatives that reduce up-front investment and/or make your back office operations more efficient. **Web Pro'l'IFIC** can be installed on-site, hosted in central sever for a chain as well as available as SaaS on cloud.

- Hotel chains can provide shared IT services to their operating units from a single location. Whether hosted at a private data centre or at a credible hosting agency like Amazon, Microsoft or IBM, shared services dramatically reduce up-front investment.

- Centralisation also enables valuable new opportunities to standardise processes across the chain, to automate multi-property transactions and reconciliation, and faster consolidation and reporting of multi-property data.

- Another viable option is to simply subscribe to a cloud service. This reduces up-front investment and systems administration chores while delivering all the benefits of hosted systems.

## INTEGRATE BACK OFFICE FUNCTIONS

Many hotels do not control materials consumption at the itemised level because of manpower costs. **Web Pro'l'IFIC** is an easy-to-use purchase, inventory, and costing system that minimises human effort while integrating with

purchase and general ledgers that can help retrieve some money that may be left on the table by making it feasible for businesses to monitor itemised procurement and consumption. Efficiency is gained by electronically receiving accounting journals from the PMS, POS, HRMS and any other invoicing or cost recognition system.

## MORE FUNCTIONALITY, LESS COMPLEXITY

Greater computing power and more sophisticated software tools have made it possible for software suppliers to provide innovative and valuable features such as the ability to upload data from Excel spreadsheets into the ERP, the facility to electronically archive supporting documents with each transaction, export data into third party analytical tools, event-triggered alerts delivered by e-mail or SMS and much more. Advances in usability and human engineering have made it possible for software to be designed with more functionality while retaining ease-of-use.

## GO MOBILE

Imagine the benefits of simultaneously capturing material receipts into the ERP while near the delivery truck or at the receiving bay. Mobile technology has made this possible, just as it has made it possible to make informed decisions and authorise transactions while away from the desk.

Evaluate your options today and contribute to the efficiency and profitability of your business with **Web Pro'l'IFIC**.

## MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS

Gone are the days when you needed to churn out reams of paper printed by the computer as part of your routine operations or as part of record keeping needs. **Web Pro'l'IFIC** is one such software that ensures greater environmental consciousness, reduced cost of operations and human effort.





# Web Prol'IFIC

Hospitality Back-Office Software



## EXCLUSIVE FEATURES FOR CHAIN HOTELS

### SAMPLE FEATURES:

- Central Purchase
  - Chain-wide Inventory Status
  - Cross-property Consumption Analysis
  - Central Directory of Recipes
  - Multi-property Debtors Accounting
  - Central Supplier Payments
  - Benchmarking & Analytics
  - Financial Consolidation

Web Prol'IFIC is the **only** proven multi-property software that can be deployed as a shared service over broadband networks, making it the most cost-efficient back office software option for hospitality chains.

It reduces financial investment, helps standardize accounting procedures, is easier to administer and enables optimal use of skilled back office resources.

Web Prol'IFIC is proven at more than **500 hotels** internationally. To **know more**, contact [info@prologicfirst.com](mailto:info@prologicfirst.com).



### PROLOGIC FIRST

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Website: [www.prologicfirst.com](http://www.prologicfirst.com)

## Online Travel Agents



# Legacy PMS is dead. Move to the Cloud!

With hospitality industry changing at a rapid pace, hoteliers need to raise their game by adopting modern and agile systems. Moving out of outdated legacy systems is the way forward.

Traditional client-server or “legacy” systems enabled hotel reservations but fell short of keeping up with the changing travel landscape. Several on-premise vendors tried and failed at perfecting integration with online channels and real-time inventory updates. Eventually, this led to the disappearance of these bulky, outdated systems that ran on expensive hardware and software. Legacy vendors have realised this and are attempting to get onto cloud-based solutions. The 2016 Lodging Technology Study suggests that 70 per cent of hotels are adopting some form of cloud-based solutions and majority of them would shift from an on-premise Property Management System (PMS) to cloud-based PMS in 2017.

In recent years, we have seen a significant shift towards online hotel bookings. Reports suggest that around 57 per cent of total travel reservations today are done online and 93 per cent of a traveller’s booking decision is impacted by online reviews. This has completely changed the dynamics of the hotel industry, not just in developed markets but in India too.

It is also important to note that there is an increase in competition from global brands entering the Indian market, and when they enter, they capture the market with better processes, advanced technology, better distribution capabilities, and analytics-based pricing strategies. This gives them more reach and touch-points with potential customers.

Hoteliers in India should up their game with better pricing strategies, marketing and loyalty programmes, and better distribution. The current competitive scenario can be considered as an opportunity for Indian hotels if it is utilised smartly. Hoteliers in India need the right tools and technology to efficiently manage their properties and drive more bookings. Having higher visibility, better online reviews, and real-time control over pricing can provide them a competitive edge over established global brands. Hence, a lot more is expected from a PMS apart from enabling room reservations. Legacy client-server systems have completely failed to stand up as a solution as they do not allow hoteliers to reach out to potential

customers in real-time. Not having a two-way integration with GDS, OTAs, channel managers, and review management tools keeps hoteliers from having control over inventory, dynamic pricing, and reputation management. This serious shortcoming makes hoteliers lose revenue as some of their rooms remain unsold. Also, this lack of automation leads to double-entries and overbookings, resulting in operational chaos.

This is where cloud-based PMS has emerged as a comprehensive system that caters to the needs of modern-day hoteliers. Cloud-based PMS simplifies hotel reservations, reduces manual errors, increases market reach, drives more bookings, and improves revenue management.

Next generation cloud-based systems also offer integration to reputation management tools, rate shoppers, and revenue management systems, helping hotels have a holistic view and take informed pricing and marketing decisions.

One of the best features of cloud PMS that hoteliers will appreciate is the accessibility of the properties from anywhere, anytime. Hoteliers sitting in a different geographic location can access and analyse their hotel's performance reports from any connected device. Hotel managers, while moving around the property, can easily keep an eye on operations through their phone or tablet.

Cloud-based PMS will soon become the norm for hotels because of the wide range of benefits it offers. Hoteliers in India who want to achieve operational efficiency, which is key to smooth functioning of the hotel, cannot afford to rely on outdated legacy systems to drive more bookings. For upcoming hotels, the initial cost of investing in client-server technologies is prohibitive, not to mention the additional overheads they would incur.

Hotelogix cloud-based PMS simplifies hotel reservations. With robust online channel integrations and automation, hoteliers can increase their online market reach and drive more bookings. Hotelogix gives you a powerful platform to win over the competition. It integrates with all

LEGACY SYSTEMS	CLOUD-BASED PMS
High start-up cost - hardware, software licensing, IT staff, consultation charges	Easy to get started with no hardware/software setup costs
Periodic hardware and software upgrade overheads	No hardware/software upgrade overheads to worry about
Non-existent remote access and centralised control over multiple properties	Easy remote access and control of multiple/geographically distributed properties
No group-level analytics to quickly change forecasts and strategies	Group-level analytics to help you take informed decisions
Restricted visibility because of incapability to integrate with distribution networks like GDS and OTAs	Increased market reach with seamless integration with all avenues of online distribution
Booking errors/revenue loss due to no online channel manager integrations	Robust online channel integrations to avoid booking errors and increase ADR
Manual management of rates leads to inefficiencies and loss of revenue	Dynamic pricing to enable right rates at the right time to the right customer, and increase occupancy rates
Outdated technology. Susceptible to bugs, data security issues, and downtime	Technology is up-to-date with virtually non-existent downtime or security issues

major distribution channels such as Global Distribution Systems (GDS), Online Travel Agents (OTAs), and channel managers. Extensive integration options give hoteliers the much needed operational efficiency to increase occupancy rates and eliminate booking errors.

With access to built-in analytics and more than 100 reports, hoteliers can track and analyse the current growth and performance of their properties. They can also forecast and take informed decisions with data-backed business intelligence.

### WHY HOTELOGIX?

- Increases direct bookings
- Leverages dynamic pricing
- Connects to online channels
- Visualises group-level analytics
- Enables mobile access
- Improves online reputation
- Centralises control over multiple properties
- Deploys multiple POS outlets
- Controls housekeeping activities





Nilesh Shah

## HANDY TECH FOR ALL

RanceLab FusionResto is a tightly integrated system for managing multiple business processes of a restaurant, helping to ease the load and speed up service.

RanceLab FusionResto is a single platform that offers end-to-end ERP for Point of Sale (POS), inventory, accounts, customer loyalty, supply chain, payroll analysis, promotions, and managing single-to-outlet chains.

**Nilesh Shah**, Co-Founder, RanceLab, says, "We provide a complete business solution through a multi-lingual, multi-currency, multi-outlet support with quick implementation, rapid adaptability as per user needs, IT expertise, efficient user interface,

robust security, and food costing management resulting in profit."

There are various functionalities that are also available on the mobile platform such as Mobile POS and Reports, which help the staff in taking orders with zero errors and speed up their service; Mobile Customer Feedback that eliminates the need for paper forms owing to its inbuilt customer feedback module; Kitchen Display and Token Display that help avoid the mess of misplaced KOTs by notifying the customer and staff once an order is ready; Tablet Menu to help enable customers to view dishes before ordering, also proving beneficial to restaurateurs by easing changes in menus; and Mobile Payment through tie-ups with digital wallets.



### EDUCATION

## ASPIRING WITH DISNEY

If you aim to stay relevant in today's changing times, Disney Institute is the perfect launchpad for hotel management students, helping them to prepare for the challenges in the future.

With quality education and opportunities aplenty, Disney Institute aims to deliver to its students a world-class environment that embraces challenges and gears them up for the future.

Established in the year 2016, Disney Institute is a co-education institution providing training and education in hospitality, garments, and fire and safety. This education venture provides perennial job opportunities and enables students to get employment anywhere in the world.

“

Disney Institute is committed to continuously upgrading its curriculum to meet the changing and demanding requirements of the hospitality industry

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The international hotel industry is facing an extreme shortage of talented, competent, well-trained, and experienced staff. The promotion of tourism and rapid globalisation have given a boost to the hotel industry worldwide. This has thrown up a massive requirement for well-qualified, trained manpower that can ensure that the different segments of a hotel run efficiently and professionally.

Disney Institute is committed to continuously upgrading its curriculum to meet the changing and demanding requirements of the hospitality and garment industries. Students who enrolled in the DHMC programme of the institute have successfully been placed in different hotels that include Vivanta by Taj, Trivandrum; Vasundhara Sarovar Premiere, Alleppey; Keys Hotel, Trivandrum; Turtle on the beach, Kovalam; The Residency Towers, Coimbatore; and several other hotels and resorts.

# COMPLETE RANGE OF F&B SOLUTIONS FOR HORECA

The business of F&B requires innovative solutions to keep things distinctive. **Food Service India** helps achieve this goal through a multitude of products.

As India's largest F&B solutions provider under the leadership of SK Maratha, President, Food Service India, the company is committed to making the business of its HoReCa partners profitable and successful. With a broad range of innovative food and beverage solutions and over 250 products across cuisines and meal courses to choose from, Food Service India boasts of more than 6,000 HoReCa partners all over India benefiting from its services.

Their R&D team ensures innovative and quality products to customers. The HoReCa-specialised team has experienced F&B chefs who provide continuous in-kitchen support and demonstrations.

The key highlights of Food Service India solutions, exclusively for HoReCa in India and abroad, are building own F&B menus, long-term relationships for solving kitchen challenges, more

than 80 years of experience in the industry, and five development setups in India and Dubai.

Some of their popular brands are Springburst, offering taste enhancers and seasonings; Sunbay, that offers a wide range of base gravies; Chef's Art, providing a range of products that are used across cuisines; and Spicefield, which is a complete range of spices.



## TECHNOLOGY

# SIMPLE SYSTEMATIC SOLUTIONS

ISG eSolutions has been providing solutions for hospitality since 1988. They want to remain focused on the hospitality segment as well as provide excellent after-sales support.

ISG eSolutions, a hotel's trusted partner in business, has recently partnered with Excellere Solutions and started conversion of InnSeries to a web-based version, which will be fully operational by year-end. InnSeries is a flexible and modular integrated suite of software applications designed to manage all aspects of hospitality operations. The product is recognised for its scalability, comfortable usage, and inherent flexibility. It interfaces with touch screens, smart cards, interactive TV systems, telephone systems, electronic key management systems, climate control systems, and other similar products. InnSeries versions have been in use for over a decade by many international hotels and hospitality organisations.

### FRONT-OFFICE PRODUCTS

These include InnFront, a front-office management system; InnTel, a telephone management system; and InnMessaging, the organisation's complaint management system.

### RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT

ISG's restaurant management system helps you manage a

more successful food service business by controlling costs, saving time, and maximising profit. Restaurant modules include InnTap, the touchscreen point-of-sale system; InnControl, their F&B management system; and InnMat, the material management system.

### INVENTORY AND ACCOUNTS MODULES

These include InnMat, the material management system that also imbibes purchase orders and InnAct, the financial accounting system that includes asset register and bank reconciliation.

### BANQUET AND SALES

The banquet management system is designed for banquets, restaurants, catering services, and those who need a programme to automatically book events, establish the menu, calculate pricing, and present a function planner. InnSales helps sales teams maintain corporate and travel agent contracts, CGR, and commissions.

# OTAs: Erasing gaps or deepening them?

Considered to be disruptors, OTAs are also important for distribution of hotel inventories. We find out from Presidents of regional associations of FHRAI about the extent to which hotels must invest in this leg of business, thereby ensuring that the properties remain occupied.



**Sanjay Sood**  
President  
HRANI

Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) are responsible for one-third of the online hotel bookings, indicating their importance in the distribution of hotel inventories. Travellers seem to enjoy using OTAs as a one-stop-shop where prices are usually ultra-competitive, and user experience is second to none on most devices (desktop, laptop, smartphone or tablet). When it comes to market exposure, there is no comparison to one that a large OTA can provide a hotel with, which is especially appealing for unbranded properties that might otherwise have limited visibility. Whenever a customer makes a reservation on an online travel portal, the hotel pays a commission of 15-18 per cent to OTAs, sometimes even as high as 25 per cent. These commission

levels are undergoing changes due to industry pressure from leading hotel chains, but the issue remains nonetheless.

OTAs have a definite room inventory, in agreement with hotels, at specific prices, but the prices of these rooms are kept inversely proportional to customer demand that tends to be high during the peak season and low during the off-season. Hence, prices offered by OTAs are no different from the ones that consumers can get if they go to the hotel directly. With increased supply and heightened competition, commissions paid for bookings coming through OTAs are burning holes in the hotelier's pockets. Moreover, stringent clauses like 'Rate Parity' that OTAs impose on the hotels are taking their toll. Overall, these conditions are posing a negative impact on hotel revenues. Investment in OTAs should be done by examining a hotel's revenue stream by day of week.

“Stringent clauses like 'Rate Parity' that OTAs impose on the hotels are taking their toll”



**Sudesh Poddar**  
President  
HRAEI

Online Travel Agents are both a friend and foe to a hotel owner. They allow maximum promotion of the property across multiple online channels. Most of the guests nowadays look at wildly different websites based on where they are geographically located. Hoteliers, however, find it challenging to drive traffic to their own website because search engines are flooded with online travel portals, paid and keyword searches, and sponsored advertisements. OTAs are well-versed with the trick of listing and routing customers to the hotelier, but for a steep commission.

The core question is how much of a hotel's total business is actually derived from OTAs. There is no right or wrong approach with regard to how many OTA bookings should be accepted. However, OTAs' arm-twisting of hotels on rate parity and deep discounting must not be allowed. The ideal OTA commission must never exceed

10-12 per cent. Hotels should never go for OTAs at the cost of losing loyal customers.

It is also increasingly helpful for a hotel's website to

“OTAs are well-versed with the trick of listing and routing customers to the hotelier, but for a steep commission”

contain some of the stronger marketing techniques and design attributes of OTAs and comparison websites, thus beating them at their own game. Hotel owners must invest in automation, which enables the company to monitor where the rates are heading. Independent hotels must also depend on a good channel manager.

Staying in contact with guests through newsletters, social media, and postal mailings is imperative, giving guests a reason to stay at the hotel again. Using emotions, innovative content, qualitative offers or quantitative discounts will help this cause. Using incentives to motivate guests in recommending the hotel to friends is also advantageous. Guests attract guests when they're satisfied and rewarded for it. Finally, it is important to ensure fair play for all distribution channels, keeping prices same for all (comparable) booking channels.



**Dilip Datwani**  
President  
HRAWI

The hotel industry and OTAs must work in tandem for mutual benefits. Having said that, dealing must be fair to both the parties for a long and fruitful association.

Online platforms have rapidly scaled up and have started arm-twisting the industry, something that needs to stop immediately. They tend to have small payrolls and are often less capital intensive than the business for which they serve as intermediaries, allowing them to achieve significant market power in a very short span of time. Hotels need to come together before it's too late.

A concentration of market power can create a perverse situation where the business of providing a good or service is significantly less profitable than the business mediating its sale. The market is dominated by a handful of OTAs who are using their market share to negotiate a high rate of commission from hotels and introduce one-sided agreements that prevent hotels from charging less, directly from a consumer.

There are simple steps which can be taken to improve transparency in the online hotel booking market. OTAs are currently engaging in

numerous practices such as advertising false discounts, manipulating search results distorted by commercial factors rather than best deals for the consumers, and hidden commission arrangements. Consumers are not aware of a number of factors such as services that appear free, in fact carry a hidden commission charge that is somewhere between 15-30 per cent. The basis for search rankings must be clearly presented. Hotels must insist that OTAs not offer rates to customers lower than what the hotel has contracted to them, desist from any practice that is unfair to either partner, and not give consumers unfair advantages that can later be abused as legitimate dues and demands. If an OTA wants to offer customers a special price that they will



**Hotels must insist that OTAs not offer rates to customers lower than what the hotel has contracted to them**

manage to cover in their own commission, it must be done in conjunction with the hotel, after seeking permission from the hotel prior to making such an offer. The hotel must, if need be, provide it in time. Alternatively, OTAs should not mandate hotels to match their portal rates and let hotel websites show a rate that is less than the OTA rate. We need to safeguard mutual interests which primarily relate to higher occupancy at a better room realisation for hotels and a fair margin for OTAs.



**K. Syama Raju**  
President  
SIHRA

For hoteliers to remain competitive in the current environment, there is a need to have granular competitive intelligence that is reviewed and revised regularly to provide real, in-depth insight into market nuances and competitive changes. Having this data in real-time and on-demand is crucial for hoteliers to ensure they can stay up-to-date in a dynamic market. It is important to know your target audience and price, source market, weekend/weekday events in the market. Hoteliers should know which audience they want to attract to their brand website and when is strong OTA visibility crucial for achieving their budgets and goals. They should also know who they need to attract via OTA/meta channels. To facilitate this, hoteliers need access to reliable and accurate information for their local market to plan ahead, as well as new types of intelligence metrics (such as OTA or meta-search rankings) to better understand their online visibility and monitor how occupied the market is in certain periods.

As the market is becoming ever more dynamic, the focus will be on becoming agile and dynamic to not only

recognise, but use the latest data technologies to drive business. A lot of business is moving online and towards the mobile channels, given the fact that OTAs generate 40 per cent of hotel bookings through mobile devices. Traditional segments will blur even further, giving rise to the need for hoteliers to know how to address these online, mobile, and newly-emerging sales and marketing channels.

OTAs don't just spend more on marketing than hotels because they have more to spend, but they also spend smarter. Most of the bigger OTAs have invested heavily in recent years, building strong data sciences teams, statisticians, and database wizards who are well-equipped to unravel the tangled web of modern marketing. Those investments have paid off, helping OTAs achieve a dominant role in travel marketing and resulting in higher distribution costs for hotels.



**Hoteliers should know which audience they want to attract to their brand website and when is strong OTA visibility crucial for achieving their budgets and goals**

Though it's unlikely that hotels will be able to compete with OTAs from a technology perspective, they can use the data to improve guest experience.



# In-house SQUAD

Personalised services and a clean environment attract guests. The housekeeping staff ensures that all bodes well with them. We decipher what goes into the making of a team of housekeeping professionals and its best-kept secrets.

A spick and span space is one that you feel welcome in. Hoteliers understand the significance of this aspect and ensure that they do all it takes to keep hotel lobbies polished and rooms kempt. Technology and the human touch go hand-in-hand in facilitating this task, making its execution quick and methodical.

## Varnali Payne

Executive Housekeeper, Mayfair Lagoon, Bhubaneswar



Varnali Payne

### GREEN PRACTICES

Housekeeping, a critical function of the hotel, is experimenting with new practices to cater to the evolving tastes of guests with regard to hygiene and cleanliness. Environment-friendly practices are the new trend as guests have become more conscious and are opting for eco-friendly amenities and commodities. Water and energy optimisation tools are now being used to employ resources more effectively and efficiently. Housekeeping has also become technologically advanced with adoption of Wi-Fi, GPS, and handheld gadgets gaining momentum, enhancing faster communication between guests and employees. Using microfibre for enhanced cleaning is another new trend in the housekeeping department.

### CONTEMPORARY APPEAL

The freshness of a lobby is maintained through fragrance diffusers and keeping the lobby well lit. We regularly refurbish furniture, keeping contemporary style in mind, redesign the lobby space, and change the theme periodically in accordance with occasions. We focus on aesthetics and cleanliness to make a lobby feel resplendent.

### ESSENTIAL AROMAS

- Water lily
- Marigold
- Lavender
- Jasmine
- Misty

### STAFF-TO-ROOM RATIO

Our resorts are well spread-out, house large-sized guest rooms, and are surrounded by greenery. Keeping in mind the large banqueting facilities, food and beverage outlets, public areas, and gardens, our staff-to-room ratio is 1:12 as we never compromise on quality or personalised services. We ensure that the guest is attended to quickly for any request or issue that may arise any time. In the peak season, our staff is capable of turning around a room in approximately 40 minutes, with one person turning around 12 rooms a day.

### COMPACT GADGETS

We use Dustee, a compact machine that vacuums, scrubs, and polishes floors. We have trained our staff to use the machine effectively and help deliver the best possible output.





**Mridula Anand**

## **Mridula Anand**

Executive Housekeeper, Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach and The Bheemli Resort Managed by AccorHotels

### **A SWITCH TO TECH**

The housekeeping staff of a hotel is entrusted with maintaining a hygienic and clean environment. A decade ago, staff was required to manually complete paperwork such as room checklists, discrepancy reports, vacant and occupied cabin lists, after finishing their assigned job. Technology has now brought about improved efficiency and eliminated most of the time-consuming work in the housekeeping department.

This year, it seems, there will be an increase in engagement with local vendors, especially for room and bathroom amenities. Apart from that, use of technology also seems to be on a rise with guests also being requested to utilise online applications. That said, the most interesting trend of all is the changing nature of guest demands. At times, guests have specifications in terms of food and beverages that they consume due to taste preferences or for medical reasons. Resultantly, for housekeeping, personalising services for guests is gaining popularity with more and more customised services now being on offer.

### **A WELCOMING SPACE**

The lobby is one of the most important parts of a hotel because it is where guests begin their visit and where they learn what to expect from every space of the hotel. It is also where guests end their visit, so the lobby determines if the guest intends to return at all. A dingy, dishevelled lobby is a sure way to discourage potential guests from staying at the hotel or returning to one. A well-thought-out lobby design that maximises space should be a priority for all

### **ESSENTIAL AROMAS**

- Lemongrass
- Citronella
- Apple Cinnamon
- Lavender
- Orange Blossom

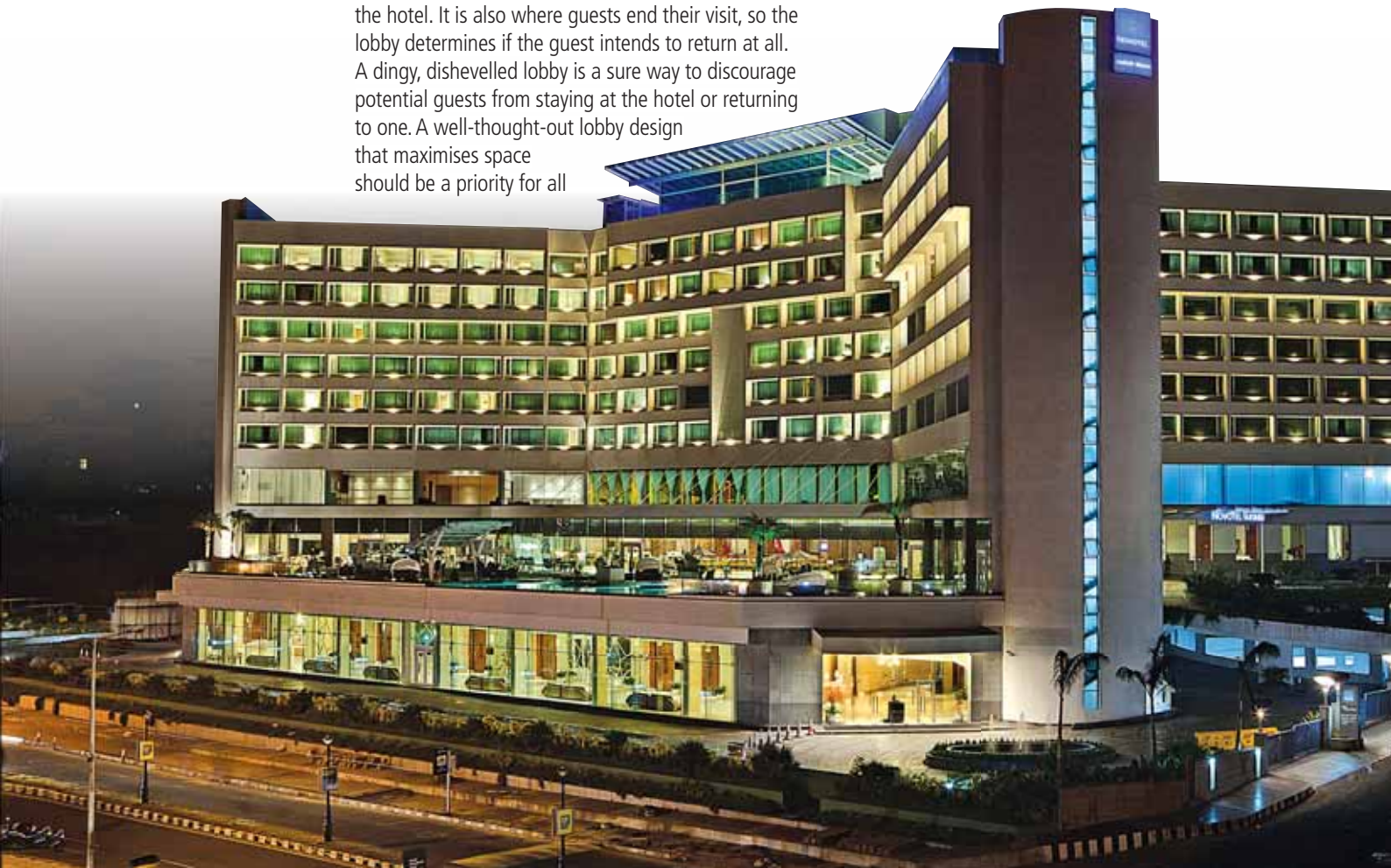
hotel owners. To keep our lobby resplendent, we make use of refreshing fragrances that enhance the atmosphere and help change a guest's perception by providing a more pleasant environment.

Apart from this, we keep fresh flowers in the lobby that add to its appeal. We use moderate colours for the upholstery with matching artefacts that go with the theme of the lobby.

It is also important that a lobby has natural lighting, adding to the overall ambience and helping save energy. It is also crucial that the lobby is free of pests.

### **OUTSOURCING TURNS COSTLY**

In my opinion, outsourcing for housekeeping is a bit expensive and there is no guarantee that one will get quality manpower. At the moment, there is no outsourcing in the housekeeping department at our hotel.





**Yogesh Deshmukh**

## **Yogesh Deshmukh** Executive Housekeeper, Novotel Hyderabad Airport

### **CHANGING VIEW**

Housekeeping plays a very important role in enhancing guest experience and ensuring their repeat visits, thereby helping in revenue generation. Moreover, the housekeeping staff today plays a role in increasing the style quotient of the hotel and also in ensuring security of the guests and the staff. So, the housekeeping department is not just a basic necessity but a crucial player that can help a property stand out in the crowded market of the hospitality industry.

Over the years, our view of housekeeping has substantially changed. It is now more about skilled manpower and a fleet of young professionals who consider housekeeping to be more than just a cleaning and maintenance job. Furthermore, with equipment and machinery being used in line with the advancements in technology, housekeeping has become a more efficient and effective segment of hospitality.

### **CLEANLINESS WITH COMFORT**

The lobby of a hotel is arguably the most important space for the hotel. It is where guests first get an idea of what sort of establishment we, as hoteliers, are running and gives a hint as to how important hospitality is to us as an establishment. Having a poorly-maintained, unkempt lobby is the fastest way to scare potential guests away.

First and foremost, the lobby should be immaculate. Daily cleaning is a must and we like to go the extra mile by simply keeping a vacuum cleaner nearby to quickly touch-up our lobby whenever we have a few minutes to spare. Secondly, we try to avoid letting the lobby become cluttered or otherwise unwieldy. It is

“

During the peak season, the staff can turnaround a room in 25 minutes

”

### **ESSENTIAL AROMAS**

- Cedar
- Sandalwood
- Jasmine
- Cardamom
- Fig

important to have a wide-open space that guests can sit and relax in while their reservations are being taken care of.

### **STAFF-TO-ROOM RATIO**

When it comes to Indian hospitality, a popular sentiment is that hospitality comes naturally to us as we remain true to our age-old belief of *Atithi Devo Bhava* (The guest is equivalent to God). Taking this into consideration, the hotel industry, like every service industry, is personnel-driven. It is the people who work at hotels and provide services to guests and who define the norms of the property and the industry as a whole.

We currently have a robust staff-to-room ratio. More than focusing on the ratio, we make sure that the staff is well trained so that day-to-day activities are carried out in an efficient manner and that staff is capable of handling challenges that come their way with ease. During the peak season, the staff can turnaround a room in 25 minutes and one team member does 18 rooms a day.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IS KEY**

While recruiting, we focus on the traits of a person and their ability to learn and develop. We ensure that Buddy System Training is followed with a checklist of operations, and weekly one-on-one meetings are conducted to check on the developments. We not only technically induct a team member but also extend warmth and affection so as to motivate them to do their best in the workplace. We also acknowledge and appreciate any practical innovation from their side, thus allowing them to be creative.



# Food & Safety

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched several flagship initiatives at the National Summit – Transforming the Food Safety and Nutrition landscape in India – held at The Lalit New Delhi on May 16, 2017.

The whole narrative on food safety regulation has changed. The law provides that people who work in food businesses should be qualified and trained in food safety. Even before this becomes mandatory, FSSAI is building an ecosystem for large-scale training through FOSTAC (Food Safety Training and Certification) programme. FOSTAC is a unique participatory programme designed to enhance public awareness and simultaneously train food safety supervisors, who will then train food-handlers along the food chain on food safety issues. It has 19 short courses ranging from basic and advanced to specialised courses for street food vendors, restaurants chefs, caterers, food business operators, and the public. Some of these courses are ready to roll out. These courses will be delivered through training partners such as academia, industry, FBOs, and government departments. FOSTAC allows for a systematic online registration system that is easily accessible and provides certification for those who have completed the training. It will eventually host e-learning courses that will be available to all and raise the food standards of food businesses by several notches.

In order to empower consumers on all issues pertaining to food safety, FSSAI has launched an online portal, Food Smart Consumer Portal, the first-of-its-kind in India, at the Summit. This is an exclusive interactive portal dedicated to educating consumers to make smart, informed choices, whether they are buying raw food, processed food or eating out. It has a 10-question quiz that allows the public to test if they are "smart consumers". This portal also provides consumers a forum to express their views, ask questions, and register their complaints.

FSSAI also launched its Safe and Nutritious Food (SNF) initiative that takes a citizen-centric approach

to transformative social and behavioural change. The SNF portal would function as an online resource centre containing information on all these initiatives with access to resource materials developed by FSSAI, interactive guides on understanding food safety and nutrition, and be a gateway for everyone to participate.

Social and behavioural change must begin early. To engage children, FSSAI has created Safe and Nutritious Food Mascots – Master Sehat and Miss Sehat – who were unveiled through an entertaining yet informative skit. To honour early adopters of the Safe and Nutritious Food initiative, SNF Ambassador awards were handed out. For the past few months, the FSSAI has been energetically driving large-scale fortification of staple foods such as wheat flour, rice, milk, oil, and salt to combat widespread malnutrition in the country. The industry and government have responded with equal dynamism. About 50 per cent of oil and milk companies in the organised sector will have fortified their products in the coming months. Five major wheat flour manufacturers are fortifying their wheat flour; more companies will be selling double-fortified salt. These early adopters, Fortification Champions, were also honoured with trophies at the event.





# Ringging in TEA TIME

The high tea ritual has made to many a must-do list and hotels have been quick to cash in on this newly-revived trend. We find out from expert chefs what makes this culture a rage and how profitable it is for them to adapt it into their routine.

## Kanchan Nath

Classics never go out of style and the high tea culture of Britain's elite is no exception to this truth. Travel has opened doors to a world of experiences, some that have successfully returned. The high tea culture is here to stay, drawing scores of guests in its wake.



Manav Koul

## Manav Koul Executive Chef, Sofitel Mumbai BKC

### ENGLISH AND INDIAN THEMES

Our high tea menu is segmented into the English high tea menu and Indian *chai* time snacks. The former is inclusive of cheddar cheese with *chutney* on tomato bread, ham with grain mustard mayonnaise on brioche bread, and Scottish smoked salmon with lemon butter on sourdough bread. The Indian *chai* time menu is inclusive of Kanda Bhaji, Mixed Vegetable Pakoda, Vegetarian

Samosa, Kathi Roll, Chicken Pakoda, and Kulfi. The unlimited high tea menu is inclusive of cappuccino, Americano, Café Ristretto, and other similar brews. We offer macarons, fresh mango tart, and similar desserts for those with a sweet tooth.

### ABUNDANT OPTIONS

We have a variety of teas to offer to our guests that include Earl Grey, English Breakfast, Gunpowder Chinese Green,

Organic Green, Herbal Energizer, Tulsi Mint, and Nilgiri and Green Decaf.

### TEA-TIME REVENUE

High tea is a good source of incremental revenue as it is served between the time gap of lunch and dinner. During this time, the footfall in the outlet decreases and it is an appropriate time for chefs and food and beverage ambassadors to use their creativity to market high teas and parties.

**Chef Prem K Pogakula**  
Executive Chef  
The Imperial, New Delhi

**THE ESSENCE**

Drinking of tea not only became a social event for the upper classes but also altered the time and manner in which they took tea. Afternoon tea became a bridge between meals and came to be a mini meal in itself. Afternoon tea and high tea are not to be confused with one another; while the former used to be an upper-class luxury, the latter was the evening meal or dinner of the working classes before they served dinner to the elite. While there are no set rules about the content of a traditional afternoon tea menu, it usually consists of sandwiches and a variety of sweets.



**SOAKING IN THE ATMOSPHERE**

The Imperial's glass-domed tea lounge, The Atrium, with its high skylight ceiling, tropical surroundings, and humming fountain creates just the right atmosphere for a meeting of any kind. A classic three-tiered afternoon tea on weekdays and a curated buffet on weekends complemented by an array of teas, completes the culinary

sojourn. We do offer themed afternoon teas with seasonal fruits, chocolates, nuts, single origin chocolates or any choice in particular.

**TEA-TIME REVENUE**

It has become such a big business for leading hotels that some are putting on six sittings a day to cope with the demand. Our hotel has seen a 20 per cent rise in bookings over the past year.



**Chef Prem K Pogakula**

**Vivek Bhatt**  
Executive Chef, JW Marriott Hotel New Delhi Aerocity

**CAKE AND BAKE MENU**

Our baked accompaniments include Quiche Lorraine, Smoked Turkey Ham and Spinach Breaded Bun, Savory Zucchini Herbs Loaf, Mediterranean Vegetable Straddle, Baked Brie with Sundried Tomatoes, and Capers Phyllo Parcels. We also serve Pistachio Mascarpone Crumble, Fresh Strawberry Tart, Hazelnut Praline Eclairs, Lemon Chiffon Slice, and Wild Berry Pavlova.

At JW Marriott Hotel New Delhi Aerocity, we have an interesting concept of Food on the Wall menu that includes Wall of Bagels, Doughnut Walls, Wall of Madeline, and Wall of Juice.

**A DIFFERENT ROUTE**

We offer a selection of teas to our guests including Earl Grey, Darjeeling, Assam, Oolong, Black tea, and a variety of herb and fruit infused teas. We

also curate our own version of high tea and food breaks based on different themes. Refreshing Summer Coolers, Bake and Cake Wall, Street Affair, Direct from Laundry, Edible Flowers, Molecular Entities, and Mango Mania are some of the themes we have curated in the past.

**TEA-TIME REVENUE**

High tea effectively provides a quick and smart revenue point. It is a comparatively shorter-time meal period, and allows hotels to use the same venue effectively for other purposes too. In addition, it also provides an opportunity to chefs to showcase their creativity in a short and crisp manner.



**Vivek Bhatt**





**Chef Nilesh Dey**

## **Chef Nilesh Dey** Executive Chef, Crowne Plaza Gurgaon

### **CREATIVE DISPLAYS**

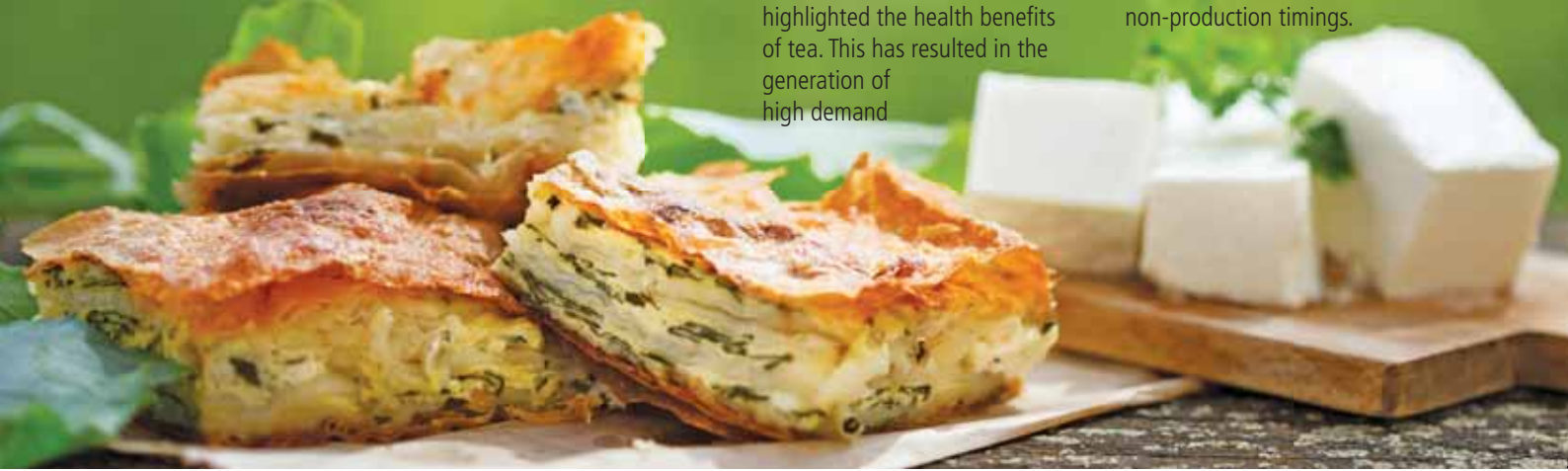
High tea, which traditionally began as a filler between lunch and dinner, has now become the essence of culinary. Chefs nowadays are presenting their creativity through displays and setups that help set a mood and make culinary displays visually attractive. The high tea menu we

offer at our hotel includes standard English scones, clotted cream, and marmalades apart from a variety of cookies, cakes, canapés, sandwiches, and chocolates. We also have regional delicacies on offer.

### **TEA-TIME REVENUE**

Nutritionists have repeatedly highlighted the health benefits of tea. This has resulted in the generation of high demand

for tea products and related services. High tea, therefore, is an extremely profitable option. Selling the best product quality in whole-leaf loose teas, pastries, coffee or chocolates gives the hotel an edge over others in the market. Working on thematic high teas for banquets also provides an opportunity for value addition to non-production timings.



**Chef Ajay Anand**

## **Chef Ajay Anand** Director of Culinary, Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity

### **REFRESHING OFFERINGS**

High tea is a meal that is usually served between late afternoon and early evening. During this time, guests like to indulge in a conversation with each other. Hotels often prepare high tea menus that include food options that are light and healthy, keeping in mind that they should also be refreshing and not too heavy on the stomach at the same time. Earlier, the high tea menu used to be quite elaborate, accompanied by a heavy food menu.

### **CUSTOMISED MENUS**

A typical menu that we offer contains an assortment of Avocado and Coriander Salsa, Pickled Water Dhokla with Tomato Jam, Mushroom and Three Cheese Tart, Smoked Bacon and Brie Cheese, Jalapeno Textured Chicken Tikka, Confit Duck and Swiss Cheese Croquette, Apple and Saffron Dip, Mango Mint Cake, and Key Lime Tartlets along with a wide selection of teas.

### **IN-HOUSE BLENDS**

Our premium signature blends include Silver Needles, Tropical Fruit Dream, Rooibos, and Oolong; while our in-house blends include Indian Masala, Earl Grey Premium, Organic Green Tea, and English Breakfast Tea. We also have six F&B outlets where a casual or formal high tea setup can be done.

### **TEA-TIME REVENUE**

The time between lunch and dinner hours is when a restaurant witnesses very low footfall. In this case, high tea offerings help generate incremental revenue.



**Anupam Banerjee**  
Executive Chef  
The Ritz-Carlton  
Bangalore

**DAINTY LUXURY**

High teas have been gracefully revived by a group of guests not willing to let go of this dainty luxury that was called a highbrow British tradition. Guests these days are leaning towards fresh produce and healthier options.

**LIGHT BITES**

We have a fine selection of luxe, light bites that include classics such as garden sandwiches made with cucumber, croissants with salmon, lemon macarons, scones with fresh cream and fruit preserve, and dainty madeleines. However, to add a twist, we do have an Indian selection as well with fluffy dhoklas, khandvi, and desi puffs. A range of pastries complete the repertoire of



fresh bakes. Many guests have appreciated our Indian varieties like Masala Tea Pannacotta, with rabri and phirni in a chocolate cup.

**A FINE SELECTION**

A selection of teas adds to refinement. Guests at our hotel can choose from Chinese green teas or classics that include Earl Grey, Assam, and Darjeeling teas. A selection of coffees are also available and the timeless cappuccino and macchiato make for great accompaniments as well.

**TEA-TIME REVENUE**

Themed high teas are a great filler during lean periods. Kitty parties, book clubs, trunk shows, etc., are a great way to curate events around high teas and also generate revenue for hotels. We are also planning on arranging a high tea with an art showcase to help draw in larger crowds. We recently launched Cava High Tea, a great way to showcase short eats and help guests indulge in unlimited amounts of Cava. We have received great reviews for it.



**Anupam Banerjee**

**Suresh Thampy**  
Executive Chef, Sheraton Grand Bangalore Hotel at Brigade Gateway

**RELAXED SETTINGS**

Ever since the afternoon tea is back in vogue, high teas have become the latest trend for leading hotels. For corporates and leisure guests, it has become the most stylish and relaxed way of conducting meetings or a must-do for their stays. Trends that are emerging globally and in India include seasonal themes, local and international festive themes, interesting high tea menus, Persian-style tea sets to add to the elegance of the occasion, regional Indian setups, Italian Mediterranean setups, and other such concepts.

**DELICATE MENU OPTIONS**

A truly elegant and sophisticated way to enjoy a delicious and rather refined high tea should feature an exquisite selection of dainty delights with hot tea and coffee, vegetable fritters, mushroom

vol-au-vent, crispy fried chicken wings, lamb satays, chicken satays, Thai fish cakes, assorted cookies, banana and walnut cake, English cake, marble cake, mocha éclairs, *jalebi*, *gulab jamun*, mojitos, iced teas, milkshakes, smoothies, and fresh juices.

**ON THE MOVE**

At our hotel, guests take high tea on-the-move or enjoy the unique

experience where they can select from a wide range of themed menus such as orange, healthy green, bake, spa, and jackfruit.

**TEA-TIME REVENUE**

Tea culture is undergoing a renewal. Hotels with modern and refined high tea setups are also known to be trendy and stylish, keeping themselves up-to-date with local and emerging trends.



**Suresh Thampy**



## THE PERFECT CHILL

◆ Elanpro has added a new range of blast freezers and chillers to its product portfolio. Available in four variants, Elanpro Shock Freezer Series improves workflow in the kitchen. The technologically advanced series is designed to evenly chill or freeze products. It can accommodate staggering quantities of frozen foods, meat, quiche, lasagna, fish, vegetables, cream desserts, pies, cakes, puddings, etc. All models rapidly reduce the temperature of hot food items from 90 to 3 degree Celsius within 90 minutes (blast chill) or from 70 to 18 degree Celsius in 240 minutes (blast freeze). The simple and smooth design offers capacities from 8 to 38 kgs. An efficient choice for blast chilling and freezing, the product has inbuilt safety alarms that capture high and low temperatures and probe alarm failure.



## CLASSIC BREWS

◆ Classic Coffees has launched its range of new blends, designed to enhance the reach and appeal of gourmet coffees through an innovatively designed set of products. The rationale behind the conceptualisation of these products is to create the ideal blend for different times of the day, a first-of-its-kind initiative in India. These distinctive blends are Blaze, Matinee, Sundowner, and Afterhours.



## SLEEK IN STYLE

With Axor Uno, Axor has introduced its new bathroom collection of spouts and handles that are available in radical or gently rounded versions. The precise contours and raised proportions of the taps are their defining stylistic features, lending them a special aura and giving them a sleek and elegant look in any setting. Special surface finishes add radiance to the collection, which comprises over 70 products for washbasins, showers, and bathtubs. Operation of the Axor Uno taps has been reduced to the essential, where the flow of water can be started or stopped by pressing the Select button, by turning the Zero handle or by lifting the ergonomically shaped loop handle.







## EXPRESSIVE LIVING

◆ The new Living Expression collection from Pergo highlights the natural character of wood, even down into the bevels. The matte finish brings out the best of the wood. Living Expression collection is equipped with Pergo's trademark technology, TitanX and PerfectFold 3.0 that not only maintain its elegant finish year-in, year-out, but are also fast and easy to install. Pergo Living Expression is the perfect combination of elegant design and performance to revamp a place with the finest flooring that requires minimal maintenance and care.



## FANCY TACOS

◆ Cornitos is back with a healthy spin for your fancy food. The popular snack company has introduced two new wholesome flavours in its Taco Shells category - Spinach Garlic Taco Shells and Beetroot Chili Taco Shells. Spinach Garlic Taco Shells are prepared using a unique recipe that uses natural extracts of spinach and garlic. Similarly, the Beetroot Chili Taco Shells are also prepared with natural extracts of beetroot and chilli in the shells that bring flavour and colour to dishes.

## AMPLIFYING FLAVOUR

◆ Enhance the taste of your favourite sandwich, burger, salad or wrap with Cremica's new range of sandwich mayonnaise. The slightly sweet and sour mayonnaise offer a refreshing change when tossed with mixed greens or drizzled over your favourite snack. The range of flavours includes Tandoori Mayonnaise, Cheese Mayonnaise, Original Sandwich Mayonnaise, Chipotle Mayonnaise, Mint Sandwich Mayonnaise, Tangy Pickle Sandwich Mayonnaise, and Korma Sandwich Mayonnaise, providing you with salad dressings for every occasion.



## ACCORHOTELS AIDS IMPROVEMENT OF LIFE OF ORPHANED HIV+ CHILDREN

AccorHotels India has announced a partnership with Desire Society, a registered non-profit voluntary organisation engaged in the rehabilitation of HIV infected or affected children, to provide support and care for them. AccorHotels will support Desire Society's Gurugram-based Residential Care Home for HIV+ orphaned children. The Care Home currently houses over 34



children between the ages of 2-14 years and provides a strong support system where essential needs of nutrition, medicine, and education are met. In addition to supporting the Care Home and its upkeep, AccorHotels will also adopt 15 children, across ages, to sponsor their education, health, and dietary needs. Founded in 2004, in Hyderabad, Desire Society has five centres across India with Residential Care Homes for over 300 children. The NGO also regularly organises health care camps and recreational summer camps for an additional 900 non-resident affected children.

**Ashwin Shirali**, Vice President - Talent and Culture, AccorHotels India & South Asia, says, "Our support for Desire Society is a part of AccorHotels India's initiative to care for local communities as an integral part of the Planet 21 Charter to help disadvantaged and socially isolated people. We provide support for projects at the behest of AccorHotels employees towards causes where they feel they can make an impact in improving lives. We commend Desire Society for its laudable work in the fight against HIV and AIDS. The Care Homes run by the society give these children much-needed strength and support to fight against the impact of this disease by giving them a chance towards a productive life. The teams at AccorHotels also look forward to spending quality time with these children every month."

## DINEEQUITY BRINGS IHOP TO INDIA

DineEquity, one of the world's largest full service restaurant companies and the franchisor of two category-leading brands, Applebee's Grill + Bar and IHOP restaurants, has announced the opening of IHOP's first restaurant in India. The world-famous breakfast chain and the leader in family dining opened in Gurugram, Haryana. The menu for this and other India IHOP restaurants will include the beloved American favourites the restaurant is known for, with numerous modifications to appeal to local palates and dietary preferences. Fifty per cent of the menu will be vegetarian, the pancakes will be eggless, and additional lunch and dinner options will be available. The addition of 20 IHOP restaurants in India is expected to generate at least 1000 jobs. The local economy will also benefit from the initial construction and ongoing purchase of goods and services, most of which will be sourced locally.

"With the ongoing growth of IHOP and the introduction of this world-famous dining experience in India, this is a proud moment for us. The family-friendly atmosphere, warm hospitality, and delicious breakfast, lunch and dinner options at IHOP translate to any country and culture the world over, and we look forward to delighting guests in India as we have in our restaurants spanning 12 countries," says **Gary Moore**, Vice President (International), DineEquity.



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# appointments



**MOHAMMAD ALI**

**Area Director of Sales  
– North India  
AccorHotels**

★ AccorHotels India has promoted Mohammad Ali as its Area Director of Sales for North India region. In his new role, Ali will provide leadership and strategic direction to the global sales team and work towards maximising revenue for AccorHotels from North India and Kolkata regions. A seasoned hotelier with over two decades of industry experience, he has deep expertise in leading the sales function and generating revenue for prominent hospitality brands. He began his career at AccorHotels in 2010, as the Director of Sales – MICE.



**RAJ SINGH**

**General Manager  
Novotel Lucknow Gomti Nagar**

★ AccorHotels has announced the appointment of Raj Singh as the General Manager of Lucknow's very first Novotel, Novotel Lucknow Gomti Nagar. Singh, with his extensive experience and domain expertise in the hospitality industry, will steer the hotel to scale new heights of success. In his new leadership role, Singh will spearhead business operations and overall implementation and business development at the newly launched 106-room business hotel. He has over two decades of experience across a broad spectrum of functions.



**NITIN SHARMA**

**Executive Assistant Manager  
Crowne Plaza Gurgaon**

★ Nitin Sharma has been appointed as Executive Assistant Manager at Crowne Plaza Gurgaon. He will be spearheading the operations, sales, and marketing teams at the property in addition to building and honing a dynamic hotel team. Sharma has spent 22 years in the hospitality industry wearing multiple hats of responsibility. With over two decades of experience in the industry, he has worked with renowned brands such as IHG, Nikko Hotels, Uppal Hotels, Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces, and The Grand New Delhi.



**B MADHUSUDHAN NAIR**

**EAM Food & Beverage  
Howard Johnson Bengaluru Hebbal**

★ B Madhusudhan Nair has taken up the position of EAM, Food and Beverage, at Howard Johnson Bengaluru Hebbal. With over 20 years of experience in the hospitality sector, Nair's dynamism and ability to adapt to strategic measures, work with challenges, and bring in effective policies have made him stand tall throughout. Prior to this appointment, he had been associated with The Royal Orchid Hotels for around two years. Nair has also held other positions such as Assistant Food and Beverage Manager, The Leela Palace Bengaluru; and Head of Department, Food and Beverage, The Chancery Pavilion, Bengaluru.



**D CHAKRADHAR**

**Executive Chef  
Howard Johnson Bengaluru Hebbal**

★ D Chakradhar takes charge as Executive Chef at Howard Johnson Bengaluru Hebbal, an upscale mid-market hotel that is part of the Wyndham Hotel Group. Chakradhar has more than 13 years of experience in the industry and has worked with Lemon Tree Premier, Delhi Airport and Seventh Heaven, Hyderabad, among others. Chakradhar began his career with JW Marriott, Mumbai, as Culinary Associate. He was also placed in Dubai for a brief period to overlook operations at Dubai International Airport. Chakradhar also has hands-on experience in multiple cuisines such as Continental, South Indian, and North Indian.

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