

HOTELS & RESTAURANTS INDIA

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A MONTHLY ON HOSPITALITY TRADE
By DDP Publications



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Dear fellow members,

Even though India has been maintaining its position as the world's fastest expanding economy, concerns over declining investment and growth of manufacturing persist. The Gross Domestic Product grew 7.6 per cent in the year ended March, outstripping previous leader China and faster than last year's 7.2 per cent in line with expectations.

The January-March growth sped up to 7.9 per cent from the preceding quarters, suggesting that despite the caveats India will remain an island of relative prosperity in a world afflicted by economic uncertainty. Gross value added for the year also grew by an expected 7.2 per cent. We hope these figures will boost investment in the infrastructure and development of the country. In turn, this will boost occupancy in our hotels, help increase average room rates and bring more investment into the hospitality segment with friendlier policies from the government.

The aviation industry is also another huge potential market. India has the potential to become the third largest aviation market by 2030, as majority of the population even now only dreams of access to aviation. The expansion of civil aviation is driven by Low Cost Carriers (LCCs), modern airports and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in domestic airlines. If the government's vision of developing unserved airports and airstrips for regional connectivity comes through, then it would definitely give an impetus to hotels in tier II and III cities. As we eagerly await the National Civil Aviation Policy 2016, revised draft for which has been submitted repeatedly, we hope that there are enough provisions for this to move in the right direction.

In current times, technology is the innovator and differentiator, yet the disruptor. If, as hoteliers, you do not take on the paradigms of m-commerce and e-commerce, you might be left out, simply because you are not part of the global addiction to smartphones

and the internet. For some travellers, the mobile phone becomes the key to their room, and for others it may be their means for ordering food from the restaurant or room service. Today hotels are using data analytics to create Hyper-Personalised campaigns in order to identify what is the 'Next Best' product/offer for a customer.

Technology remains at the heart of enhanced and targeted marketing strategies. Digital technology is completely going to influence the booking behaviours of the millennials. Interactive walls, beacons, robots in hospitality, what does all of this mean? You will discover all this and more in our cover story which looks at emerging trends as far as cutting edge technology is concerned.

Along with the highs, there are some challenges. The Ministry of Tourism has formulated an Action Plan for 'Incredible India Bed & Breakfast/Home Stay Scheme.' In a country like India where tourism is at a nascent stage, promotion of homestays at the expense of organised hospitality could spell doom. The primary problem with homestays is that there is no standardisation or categorisation as homestays are unregulated.

Almost all tourist towns across the world have grown on the back of strong hospitality infrastructure and not homestays which are brought in only as a stop gap emergency measure, as Delhi did during the Asian games, due to the three year gestation period to add new hotel rooms. The solution to growth of tourism in India lies in freeing the hospitality sector from red-tapism and following a pragmatic taxation policy.

With warm regards,

Bharat Malkani
President, FHRAI



Bharat Malkani
President, FHRAI

“ The January-March growth sped up to 7.9 per cent from the preceding quarters, suggesting that despite the caveats India will remain an island of relative prosperity in a world afflicted by economic uncertainty ”



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COVER STORY

28

THE MILLENNIAL TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

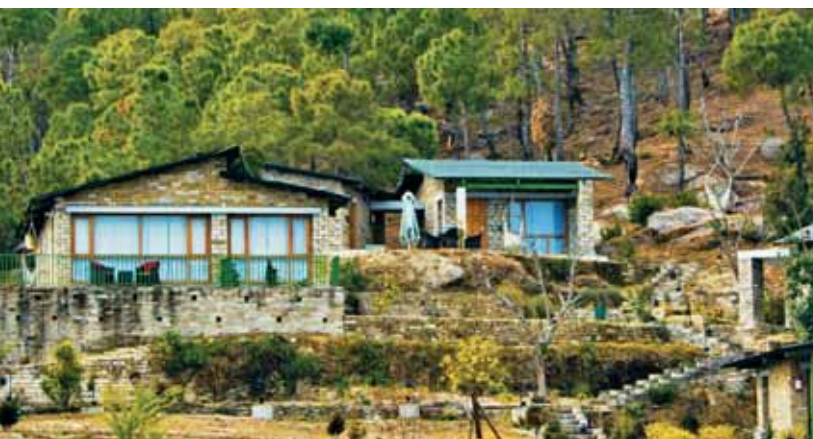
Innovative technology can help hotels save time, energy and money and also helps trigger a competitive edge for hotels. In our cover story we explore Technology Trends for the millennial generation.

COVER DESIGN

Tushar Upadhyay



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Jose Pradeep Director Yuvarani Residency, Kochi, voices his point of view on liquor ban

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66 EVENTS



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Vivek Nair
Hony. Secretary
FHRAI

“
Ministry of Home Affairs has decided to include 'attending a short term yoga programme' and 'short duration medical treatment under Indian systems of medicine' in the list of permissible activities under eTV
”

Dear fellow members,

As announced by the Ministry of Tourism, India witnessed a 10.7 per cent growth in FTAs in April 2016 over the same period in 2015. The total number of FTAs during April 2016 was recorded at 5.99 lakh, which is higher than the total number of FTAs in April 2015 and April 2014, where the numbers were recorded as 5.42 lakh and 5.35 lakh foreign tourists respectively.

Bangladesh accounted for the highest percentage share in Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) into India with 18.09 per cent during the month of April 2016. Among the top 15 source countries, USA was ranked second with 12.24 per cent share, followed by the UK with 9.58 per cent share, making Bangladesh, USA and UK, the top three source markets for India in April 2016.

The percentage share of FTAs from other source markets like Sri Lanka was 3.71 per cent, Malaysia was 3.23 per cent, China was 3.14 per cent, Australia was 3.05 per cent, Germany was 3.02 per cent, France 2.86 per cent, Canada was 2.83 per cent, Russian Federation was 2.81, Japan was 2.50 per cent, Nepal was 2.07 per cent, Singapore was 1.85 per cent and Thailand was 1.61 per cent.

Presently, a 'Tourist Visa' is granted to a foreigner whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sightseeing and casual visit to meet friends or relatives and 'e-Tourist Visa (eTV)' is granted to a foreigner whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sightseeing, casual visit to meet friends or relatives, short duration medical treatment or casual business visit. All Indian Missions abroad and Foreigners Regional Registration Officers (FRROs)/Foreigners Registration Officers (FROs) in the country have been

requested to take action as per above amendments.

Realising the importance and fame of yoga world over, the Ministry of Home Affairs has decided to include 'attending a short term yoga programme' and 'short duration medical treatment under Indian systems of medicine' in the list of permissible activities under eTV.

With global warming and rising drought conditions across many states, we as responsible hoteliers need to do our bit. We can help by reducing consumption by eliminating wasteful use of water, through co-engagement with our guests and by re-looking at our service designs. The time has come to create a new resource modest service design for the supply chain through creative communication.

Some of the key water saving practices include serving half a glass of water when requested; reusing untouched water, crockery and cutlery; requesting the guest to use less water to avoid wastage and informing them about drought conditions in many states; requesting the guest to turn off the taps when not in use or lowering the flow of the water; using a cover on the pool while not in use to reduce evaporation, among others.

I hope all of you will urge your employees to follow these measures and help in conserving water!

With warm regards,
Vivek Nair
Honorary Secretary, FHRAI



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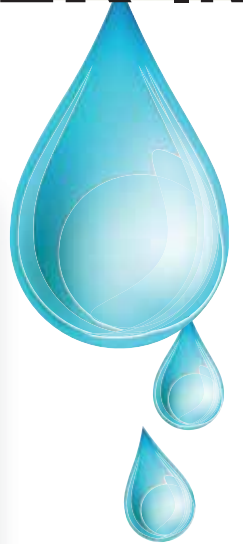
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HOTELS SAVE WATER IN

Hoteliers are doing their bit to conserve water as is evident in these different media reports. Water is a very precious resource and conserving it has become the need of the hour. Every drop of water saved could make a difference and especially so when all the hoteliers and restaurateurs join hands it could mean a significant one. We urge all hotels and restaurants to take inspiration from this.



Mumbai, Apr 27 (PTI) With many parts of the country reeling under drought, the apex body of hotels and restaurants in the western region today said it has issued guidelines to its members on water conservation.

"Water is a precious resource and conserving it has become the need of the hour. Every drop of water saved could make a difference... when all the hoteliers and restaurateurs join hands, it could mean a significant one," Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) President Bharat Malkani said.

"Using less water helps us become more flexible during times of water shortage and conserving the natural resource is simple and inexpensive," he said.

HRAWI is the apex body of hotels and restaurants in the western region, including the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa and the Union Territories of Daman, Diu and Silvassa.

Some key water saving practices it has recommended include serving half a glass of water when requested by customers, reusing untouched water, requesting guests to use less water and keeping swimming pools covered when not in use to reduce evaporation. PTI 5M NP ABM PTP

HRAWI issues guidelines on water conservation

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) has issued guidelines to its members on conservation and use of water. In a letter addressed to its members, Bharat Malkani, president, HRAWI, has urged member hoteliers to conserve water by adopting steps like serving water and refilling only upon guests' request, and not using the water hose to sweep the paths or driveways but by using just dry broom.

Some of the key water saving practices that the association has urged its members to follow include: serving half a glass of water when requested for some, reusing untouched water, crockery and cutlery, requesting the guest to use less water to avoid wastage and informing them about the drought, requesting the guest to turn off the taps when not in use or lowering the flow of the water, using a cover on the pool while not in use to reduce evaporation, among others.

"Water is a precious resource and conserving it has become the need of the hour. Every drop of water saved could make a difference and especially so when all the hoteliers and restaurateurs join hands, it could mean a significant one. Using less water helps us to become more flexible during times of water shortage, and conserving water is simple and inexpensive," said Malkani.

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India gives tips to save water

Many parts of the India are still reeling under drought.

Looking at this the Hotel and Restaurant Assoc (HRAWI) of Western India has issued guidelines to its members on water conservation.

It has recommended some key water saving practices.

Some of it include:
 - serving half a glass of water when requested by customers,
 - reusing untouched water,
 - requesting guests to use less water,
 - keeping swimming pools covered when not in use to reduce evaporation.

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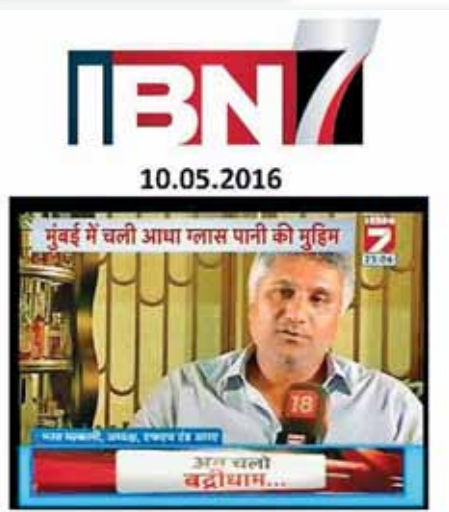
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Business Standard

Hotel industry body urges members to conserve water

With many parts of the country reeling under drought, the apex body of hotels and restaurants in the western region today said it has issued guidelines to its members on water conservation.

"Water is a precious resource and conserving it has become the need of the hour. Every drop of water saved could make a difference. When all the hoteliers and restaurateurs join hands, it could mean a significant one," Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) President Bharat Makani said.

"Using less water helps us become more flexible during times of water shortage and conserving the natural resource is simple and inexpensive," he said.

HRAWI is the apex body of hotels and restaurants in the western region, including the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa and the Union Territories of Daman, Diu and Silvassa.

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TRAVEL

Indian hotels unite to conserve water

HRAWI lists a series of steps to reduce water use and waste

The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) has issued guidelines to its members regarding the use and conservation of water.

Bharat Makani, president of HRAWI, has urged hoteliers to take a series of steps to conserve water such as only serving and refilling guests' glasses upon request and using dry brooms to sweep floors, rather than hoses.

"Water is a very precious resource and conserving it has become the need of the hour," said Makani. "Every drop of water saved could make a difference and especially so when all the hoteliers and restaurateurs join hands. It could mean a significant one."

"Using less water helps us to become more flexible during times of water shortage, and conserving water is simple and inexpensive," he said.

Other water conservation measures suggested by the HRAWI include reusing untouched crockery and cutlery, requesting that guests turn off the taps when they are not in use, and covering swimming pools to reduce evaporation.

HRAWI's members include hotels and restaurants in the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Goa, and the Union Territories of Daman, Diu and Silvassa.

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HRAWI ISSUES GUIDELINES ON WATER CONSERVATION

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"Due to the prevailing drought conditions in our state we shall be serving you half a glass of water. Please thank you for your understanding."

Hotel Industry Unites For The Cause Of Water Conservation

HRAWI President Urges Members To Use Water Cautiously

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) has issued guidelines to its members regarding the use and conservation of water. In a letter addressed to its members, Bharat Makani, president, HRAWI, has urged member hoteliers to conserve water by adopting steps like serving water and refilling only upon guests' request, and not using the water hose to sweep the paths or driveways but by using just dry broom.

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FHRAI Executive Committee Meeting Glimpses

Federation of Hotels and Restaurant Association of India (FHRAI) held its Executive Committee (EC) meeting on June 4, 2016 at Pride Plaza Hotel, Aerocity, New Delhi here are few glimpses from the same. The burning issue of OTAs and forthcoming FHRAI convention was taken up in the meeting.



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HRANI MC meeting and dinner Snapshots

The Hotels and Restaurants Association of North India (HRANI) held its Managing Committee (MC) meeting on June 3, 2016 at Dusit Devarana, New Delhi. This was followed by an informal cocktail and dinner, where **Suman Billa**, (IAS), Joint Secretary, MOT, Govt of India was invited.



Photo Credit: Simran Kaur



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51ST FHRAI ANNUAL CONVENTION FROM SEP 22-24, 2016

The 51st FHRAI Annual Convention is being held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh which is "the heart of Incredible India", from September 22-24, 2016. Indore the convention city charms with its architectural



Amitabh Devendra
Secretary General
FHRAI

grandeur, a melting point of diverse religions and languages. It has given a cosmopolitan nature to the city.

Amitabh Devendra, Secretary General, FHRAI says, "The theme for this year's convention 'Brand India' is inspired by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's vision based on

the 5 Ts 'Talent, Tradition, Tourism, Trade and Technology'. The convention logo brings together the symbol of a flaming torch and the welcome gesture of 'Namaste'."

Radisson hotel is the main convention hotel where all the business session on 23-24 September 2016 shall be conducted. Tentatively, eight business sessions are planned for the Convention. The venue for the inaugural ceremony (22nd Sept. 2016) and the prestigious FHRAI awards (24th Sept. 2016) is the Amber Convention and Banquet Centre.

“
The theme for this year's convention 'Brand India' is inspired by PM Narendra Modi's vision of the 5 Ts 'Talent, Tradition, Tourism, Trade and Technology'

”
Besides the Radisson Hotel the other hotels where arrangements



have been made for the stay of delegates include: Sayaji Hotel, E-fotel, Shreemaya Celebrity, Somdeep, Waterlilly, Mangalcity, Atithi Satkar, Omni Group Hotels and Gardens, Golden Gate, Infinity, and Amarvilas.

The Convention organising Committee under the leadership of Vivek Nair has invited numerous dignitaries who will be gracing the occasion such as Ram Naresh Yadav, Governor M.P; Sumitra Mahajan, Lok Sabha Speaker; Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Tourism Minister; Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Chief Minister, M.P; Dr. Raman Singh, Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh; Surendra Patwa, State Tourism Minister, M.P.

ASPI NALLASETH AS SG

Aspi Nallaseth had taken charge of the HRAWI as the Secretary General, effective January 2016. He brings with him varied and invaluable expertise in the hospitality industry, spanning over four decades.

A professional from the Institute of Hotel Management he has exposure to work culture in India, Europe, West Africa and the Middle East. His

well-developed powers of leadership combined with drive, confidence and commitment has stood good in his career, giving him an exposure at various levels in City Hotels, Resort Hotels, Industrial Catering Establishments, Fast Food Chains and Club Management, Recruitment for the Hotel & Cruise Industry, Education & Hotel Consultancy/Green Field & Brown Field Projects.



Aspi Nallaseth
Secretary General
HRAWI

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HOTEL INDUSTRY SCEPTICAL ABOUT HOMESTAY PROMOTION

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) has raised concerns over the government's plan to open up homestays as a way to bridge the acute deficiency of hotel rooms in the



Bharat Malkani
President
FHRAI

“Homestays have no standardisations or categorisations. As homestays are unregulated, there are no redressal systems in place”

country for promoting tourism. The proposal which may allow anyone to offer stays at their homes will have no government intervention and not attract any kind of taxation or commercial tariffs. The hotel industry is sceptical about the outcome of such a plan as it could backfire with no assurance of guest safety and would have consequences that affect employment and tax revenues.

“In a country like India where tourism is at a nascent stage promotion of homestays at the expense of

organised hospitality could spell doom. The primary problem with homestays is that there are no standardisations or categorisations. There have been multiple cases of exaggerated promises, misrepresentations, disagreements and conflicts with guests, hygiene issues and intimidations among others. Because homestays are unregulated, there are no redressal systems in place,” says **Bharat Malkani**, President, FHRAI. “Hotels are required by law to send details of foreign guests to the police station by submission of a C Form. This is a security requirement from the Ministry of Home Affairs. Homestays are not required to be compliant and the industry fears that this will become the de facto accommodation for foreigners who seek anonymity from the police.”

HRAWI also questioned the relevance of subjecting hotels to administrative clearances, liquor permits and other licenses while home stays providing the very same services are exempted. Homestays, functioning just like hotels do, are prevalent even today in a lot of states. However, they are unorganised and are presently limited in numbers. With the Government's new shift in policy focusing on homestays, the dynamics are expected to change. “The hospitality industry without homestays in Maharashtra today can generate almost `600 crore per extra night that a foreign tourist stays back to the government as foreign exchange earnings, besides being the highest employment generator. Almost all tourist towns across the world have grown on the back of strong hospitality infrastructure and not homestays which are brought in only as a stop gap emergency measure, as Delhi did during the Asian games, due to the three-year gestation period to add new hotel rooms. The solution to growth is freeing the

hospitality sector from red-tapism and following a pragmatic taxation policy,” says **Kamlesh Barot**, Past President, FHRAI.



Kamlesh Barot
Past President
FHRAI

“The hospitality industry without homestays in Maharashtra today can generate almost `600 crore per extra night that a foreign tourist stays back”

“If the homestays concept does go into execution then hotels that are presently operating with the highest taxation applicable in addition to paying for utilities such as water and electricity at commercial rates are bound to be doomed. Tourism cannot afford to run or prosper without hotels and the Government will have to consider an alternate plan that can either allow hotels to operate with the same relaxations as would be given to homestays or vice versa,” concludes Malkani.

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HRANI TAKES UP HOSPITALITY ISSUES

DELHI TOURISM POLICY

HRANI participated in a meeting cum workshop organised by Department of Tourism, Govt. of NCT of Delhi on preparation of tourism policy and master plan for promotion of tourism and tourism infrastructure in Delhi. The meeting was chaired by **Keshav Chandra**, Secretary (Tourism), GNCT of Delhi and also saw participation of industry associations like - FAITH (umbrella body comprising of 10 hospitality, travel and tour organisations) and NRAI, including key stakeholders from hospitality and tourism industry of Delhi.

The purpose of this meeting was to review and analyse the current status and unique features of Delhi with regard to the state of its development, systems and procedures and identifying the potential aspects/points to be comprised in the proposed Tourism Policy of Delhi. Further, a presentation was also given by M/s J P S Associates who are engaged as Consultants to support the GNCT of Delhi in preparing this document. The presentation highlighted the issues and concerns of industry in Delhi including suggestive measures to overcome the same.

COAL VERSUS CHARCOAL

Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) has proposed to amend the approved fuels and prohibit use of any kind of coal for food preparation/tandoors in dhabas/restaurants/eateries in NCT of Delhi. Contrary to the perception that coal and charcoal are one and the same thing, HRANI clarifies that the restaurants use charcoal, and not coal, for preparation of food in grills/tandoors and submitted a detailed representation on the same. HRANI has requested DPCC that the use of Charcoal should be permissible for usage in dhabas/restaurants/eateries in NCT of Delhi.

The recommendation supported use of charcoal due to following reasons:

- ✂ Used in art for drawing, making rough sketches in painting and is one of the possible media for making a parasmage.
- ✂ Used as a medicine due to gastric effects.
- ✂ Importance of charcoal in tandoor cooking has made tandoori food a popular item in Indian cuisine worldwide.
- ✂ Charcoal grilled foods have less fat than pan-cooked foods.
- ✂ Chemical properties of charcoal in terms of sulphur content is negligible i.e. 0.1 per cent.

In light of the submissions, HRANI also submitted an opinion article on 'Coal versus Charcoal' by nation's apex body of Chefs—Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA) and an exclusive hearing on the subject has also been requested.

FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS AUTHORITY OF INDIA



Pawan Aggarwal
CEO
FSSAI

HRANI participated in a meeting conducted by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in New Delhi to discuss new initiatives to improve and monitor restaurant hygiene. The meeting was chaired by **Pawan Aggarwal**, CEO, FSSAI and saw participation of industry stakeholders including other hospitality associations.

With an agenda focusing on initiatives to improve hygiene standards in restaurants and to build public confidence on the quality of food served by outlets

they eat in, FSSAI introduced the following endeavours to the meeting attendees.

◆ **Reframing of Schedule IV:** Revision of standards providing detailed requirements of food hygiene and safety for various categories of FBOs. The hygiene standards will be classified into three categories—Basic, Advance and Global.

◆ **Food Hygiene Supervisor (FHS) Program:** A FHS will be a trained and certified supervisor



in the restaurants who will be responsible for carrying out implementation of hygiene standards in their respective restaurants. It will be mandatory for every catering establishment to have a FHS. FSSAI is introducing this programme in collaboration with Sydney TAFE.

♦ **External Audit:** Assessments of food hygiene and safety procedures will be conducted by external

agencies selected by FSSAI and the restaurant can choose any of the select agency for the audit.

♦ **Customer Feedback:** A feedback form will be designed with coded responses on food hygiene. It will be mandatory for the restaurants to display it in the restaurants. The customer can submit their feedback (on WhatsApp or SMS or FSSAI App) along with the FSSAI license number.

♦ **Mandatory Display of Certificates and Ratings:** FSSAI will be making it mandatory for the restaurants to display the following documents

- a. FSSAI Licence no. and declaration
- b. Hygiene Rating
- c. Customer Feedback Checklist

Concluding the meeting, Aggarwal gave a very pragmatic approach and directed the FSSAI concerned officials to work with the hospitality organisations to draft a document on the modules of hygiene and food safety standards for different levels so as to provide a robust compliance of FSS Act in food catering establishments.





RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT

July 18-20, 2016

The food services market is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 11% over the next five years to reach \$78 billion by 2018. With an increase in the consumer's discretionary expenditure on dine-in services, the demand for better service quality at restaurants is also gaining much attention. Hence, there are several start-ups in fine dine-in restaurants and allied technologies. However, there are limited restaurant management training programmes, which can help the restaurants to benchmark, compete, and grow their business. To address the management training needs in this area, this programme aims to skill the participants in four primary areas: managing restaurant operations, managing restaurant revenues and menu pricing, design thinking for nurturing innovation and integrated user experiences in restaurants, and strategies for a successful restaurateur.



Objectives

- To equip the participants on restaurant operations management skills
- To guide entrepreneurs for start-ups in restaurant space and nurturing innovation
- To address the pricing and costing complexities in restaurants

Contents

A few topics which the programme will focus on are as follows:

- Menu pricing decisions
- Relevant cost analysis to maximize capacity utilization
- Break-even analysis
- Process and capacity analysis and restaurant system dynamics
- Role of ICT in restaurant management.
- Business models, opportunity recognition, planning a market entry, and competitive dynamics.
- Restaurant business valuation
- Experience design, innovation, and agile thinking

For nomination forms and more information, please contact:
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 Vastrapur, Ahmedabad 380 015
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 Fax: +91-79-2630 0352 (ExEd)/2630 6896 (General)
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GETTING READY FOR THE PRICE WAR

The day Trinamool Congress earned their resounding victory in the West Bengal Assembly polls, the global hospitality behemoth JW Marriott announced the opening of its luxury hotel in Kolkata. The long-



Sudesh Poddar
President
HRAEI



With nearly seven hotels to become operational in the next three to four years, Kolkata is set to double the room capacity in the four to seven star segments

awaited project at EM Bypass will be operational from the Durga Puja with 191 rooms.

Close to its heels a few more hotels are expected to be added in the 'mid-market upscale' to 'super-luxury' segments with approximately 1,000 rooms on the fray. As more rooms are going to be added to the existing inventory in the hospitality landscape of Kolkata, experts expect a price war in the sector.

"But that's not all. With nearly seven

hotels to become operational in the next three to four years, Kolkata is set to double the room capacity in the four to seven star segments. All the projects are in various stages of construction. Moreover, there are more projects awaiting clearances to start construction," said **Sudesh Poddar**, President, HRAEI.

Will the increased supply bring down the tariffs in city hotels? According to a report by consulting firm HVS, based on data sourced from apex industry association (FHRAI), the average rates in 2014-15 were ₹ 4,867, lower than ₹ 5,230 in 2013-14. Occupancy rates have also gone down to 67.7 per cent in 2014-15 from 70 per cent in 2013-14. According to HVS, these new rooms, adding to the existing inventory of around 2,530 rooms, will put pressure on rents in the short to medium term.

"In other words, both occupancy and average rate may be under pressure, but gradually the city will absorb the additional rooms and gradually improve its performance in the long-term," adds Poddar. Nationally, the hospitality industry, which has seen a slight recovery in occupancy in 2014-15 after stagnation in the preceding two years, is expecting the improving trend to continue in 2015-16 as well. "But net income will remain constrained by the growing supply of rooms and rising expenses," says Pranav Singh, Secretary, HRAEI.

Since most of the most of the upcoming new hotels are in the 5-Star category, mid-market hotels don't expect much of a difference. They believe even if the luxury hotels start a price war their rates are not expected to come down so low to affect them. "Besides, there is a huge demand of hotel

rooms in the mid-market (100-room category) sector in city. Especially in the peak season—say November to February—most of the hotel rooms are sold out at a premium

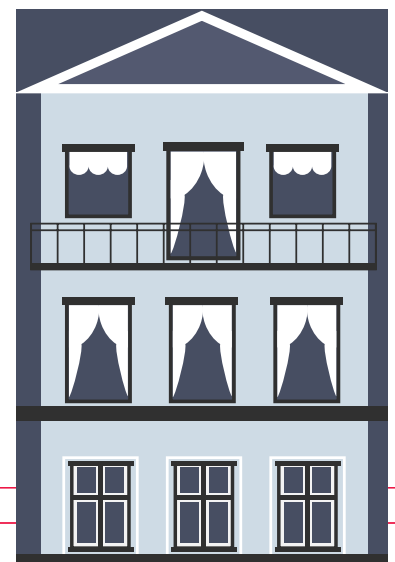


Pranav Singh
Secretary
HRAEI



Net income will remain constrained by the growing supply of rooms and rising expenses

rate. The demand for rooms, in the category, is far greater than the supply," says Poddar.





A 100 Year Old Heritage Resort at the Bay of Bengal

MAYFAIR Gopalpur-on-Sea

The 'Palm Beach' was set up by an Italian in 1914 making it the oldest hotel of the State and probably the first beach resort of the country. Gopalpur-on-Sea is a palm fringed beach and Maglioni's dream fused with the sepia and romance of the sleepy town, where the silence is still probably broken only by the breakers and the occasional coconut thudding on the ground.

In 2011, 'Mayfair Hotels & Resorts' stepped in to protect, renovate and restore the 'Palm Beach'. The Resort captures the appearance and feeling of the old colonial with a Mediterranean touch. Keeping up with its rich heritage the Resort is a haven for tourists searching for serenity while relaxing in the luxurious contemporary setting.



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KERALA SHOWCASES AT BITE



Further capitalising on its initial forays into China, Kerala Tourism showcased the very best of 'God's Own Country' at the Beijing International Tourism Expo (BITE) 2016.

It was for the second time the south Indian state was featured at the annual forum in the Chinese capital—this time held during May 20-22—which brings together major players in the hugely lucrative Chinese outbound tourism market, widely considered the world's largest by volume. Led by **U. V. Jose**, IAS, Director, Tourism, Govt of Kerala, the team saw judicious representation from the state's leading hoteliers, Ayurvedic resorts and tour operators. A whopping 120 million of Chinese

tourists travelled worldwide in 2015, an increase of 12 per cent in comparison with the year-ago period. With most of these tourists preferring to holiday in Asian destinations, Kerala is well positioned to experience a surge in Chinese visitors.

According to Jose, "The state aspires to augment the strong destination pull it already enjoys. The modern traveller in general and the Chinese visitor in particular, is always expanding his/her horizons, seeking out ever newer experiences,"

"The objective of such tourism facilitation initiatives and participation in such high-profile industry

events is to highlight the wondrous possibilities on offer in Kerala," the official added. "In this respect, China is a top priority for us because its citizens are worldly and, more to the point, especially well-versed in Kerala and its offerings."

To this end, the expansive Kerala pavilion sought to renew the focus on the state's rich legacy of martial arts, holistic medical traditions, the beauty of its backwaters and its snakeboat races. Driving home the point were attractions from the private partners: Eastend Hotels and Resorts, Kairali Ayurvedic Health Resort, Poovar Island Resort, Somatheeram Ayurvedic Resort and Spiceland Holidays.

KTM 2016 OFFERS MANAGEMENT SKILL TRAINING TO SELLERS

Sellers at the upcoming edition of the Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) are being offered help to raise their sales and marketing skill to international standards with a series of training programmes ahead of the event in September. The KTM society is organising short courses on skill development, including topics such as selling skills, customer/ guest centricity, entrepreneurship and revenue management, for its members of the show.

KTM, organised in partnership with the Department of Tourism, will be held at the Samudrika and Sagara Convention Centre, Willingdon Island from September 28-30. The programme will also train the sellers on how to handle people from different nationalities.

"As KTM is an international event, our sellers have to deal with people from varied nations who speak diverse languages. Cultural sen-

sitivity is therefore a must," said **Abraham George**, President, KTM Society. "The Society will hire experts from the respective fields and conduct workshops covering tourism promoting destinations of Kovalam, Ernakulam, Munnar, Thekkady, Wayanad and others."

The ninth edition of KTM, with its focus on 'Responsible Tourism' and 'Muziris and Spice Route', is expected to attract around 1,500 buyers.



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LUXURY

V RESORTS BLACK

V Resorts has launched V resorts Black – their signature escapes with luxury properties with the launch of Queen Meadows Ranikhet, an eco-resort, with villas inspired by provincial homes that promise a pristine Kumaon experience. The stone and wood villas are made from old-world British barracks and have expansive views of the snow-capped Himalayan ranges.

To begin with, the collection will feature four properties, one each in Sariska, Ranikhet, Ranakpur and Pench, each providing a



luxurious hideaway in pristine surroundings, along with authentic food and beverage experiences and impeccable service. From enchanting lakes, vineyard tours, quiet spas, interpretive wildlife to luminous turn-of-the-century palaces, V Resorts offer distinctiveness with the 'V Resorts Black' collection of resorts. The BLACK collection has exclusive resorts all offering a distinct experience in scenic locations, away from the din of the city. Personalised attention, intense local experiences, plush accommodation, curated holiday, comfortable and customised stay, the resorts in this collection promise all of this.

The properties are ingeniously designed to blend with the environment, the buildings aesthetically sculpted to fit the natural contours of the hills or plains. Some resorts are built using reclaimed wood and stone from old dilapidated British Era barracks, while others are built around the forest areas.



LAUNCH

THE FERN RESIDENCY, MIDC, PUNE OPENS WITH 40 ROOMS

The Fern Hotels & Resorts opened The Fern Residency, MIDC, Pune a mid-scale business hotel in the state of Maharashtra. The hotel has 40 rooms, a multicuisine cafe, a rooftop global cuisine restaurant, and state-of-the-art banquet hall. The unit is owned and



Amrut Mhaske, Chairman & MD & Mahesh Mhaske, Executive Director, Mhaske Leisure and Sarosh Khatib, Sr. VP, Sales & Marketing, Concept Hospitality at the launch of The Fern Residency at MIDC, Pune



promoted by Mhaske Leisure. The company is into hospitality and development of real estate. The Fern Residency is a smart business hotel strategically located in the hub of the Industrial area of Pune with all eminent features for business travellers, catering

to mid and budget segment. The hotel has 40 exquisite rooms with state of the art coffee shop "Ten Café" and a signature speciality restaurant "AZU". The hotel provides all facilities keeping in mind today's business traveller's needs like Wi-Fi free zone and conference facilities.

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Innovative technology offers multiple advantages to hoteliers. It saves a lot of energy, money and time, besides giving the hotel a competitive edge. Experts from hotels and IT share how different kinds of technology give their business a boost.

Kanchan Nath

Nilesh Patel
Director-IT
AccorHotels India

PERSONALISED SYSTEMS AND INTEGRATION

Conventionally, having largely stayed away from technological assistance, the hotel industry in India has seen a sea of change with digital technologies playing an increasingly important role in shaping customer expectations. 'Service', related to personalised care and hospitality, is finding a friend in advanced systems, gadgets that accentuate service imparted. It is safe to say that technology will continue to drive guest experiences today and tomorrow.

In terms of specific technology trends, smartphone devices, mobility and social media continue to remain the biggest buzz in hospitality industry. Mobile is the new face of computing as devices such as tablets and smartphones revolutionise the way we interact with the world around us, especially in a country like ours where mobile internet and smartphone penetration is increasing at breakneck pace.

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCING TRAVEL PLANS

Social media has had a profound impact upon the hospitality

industry and for any hotel to not capitalise these channels, listening and interacting with their customers 24/7, is tantamount to willingly flying blind. Besides these two, hotels are increasingly witnessing demand for personalised systems (capturing guest preferences and proactively by using data to personalise guest offerings through technology) and integration of information and solutions (to cater to guest needs on a single platform to gather holistic reports for management information and customer communication).

We are investing 225 million into a digital plan that will not only enhance every part

of the customer's journey but also enhance the service experience of the staff, owners, franchisees and partners. As a part of this plan, we recently launched our new digital strategy 'Leading Digital Hospitality' with the key objectives to rethink and incorporate digital technology throughout the customer journey. The plan is based on two essential pillars-IT infrastructure and data management. According to conservative estimates, 52 per cent of travellers say that social media influenced a change in their travel plans. Therefore, we are investing heavily into the technology, providing live information on the group as well as each of our brands.



Nilesh Patel



UPCOMING TECH TRENDS

- ◆ Fixed-mobile convergence
- ◆ Guest apps
- ◆ Virtual check-ins
- ◆ Smart rooms (rooms with smart features)
- ◆ Social listening and interaction



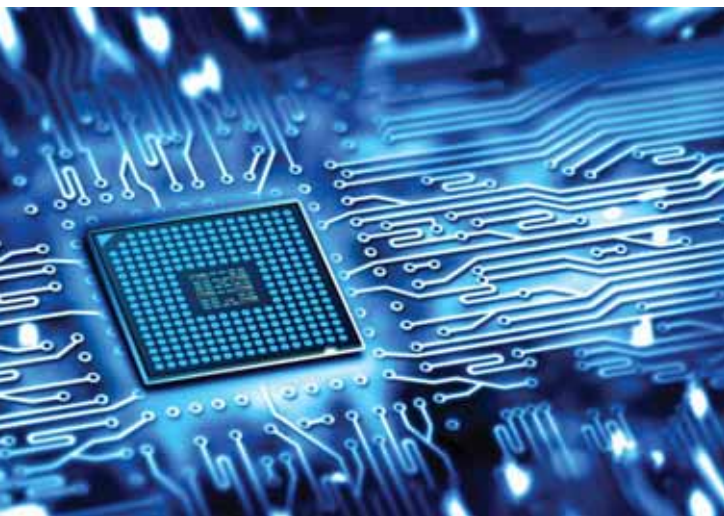
Niklas Andreen

Niklas Andreen
Senior Vice President
Hospitality, Travelport

MOBILE KEY TOOLS

The starting point in helping our hotel partners drive occupancy and ADRs (Average Daily Rate, also known as Average Room Price, ARP) is ensuring that travel agents have the confidence to sell the most relevant hotel content as well as the depth and breadth of understanding of the content they need. This should be regardless of the point-of-sale they are using, whether it is an internet booking engine, a customised agency desktop or a corporate booking tool.

The other key element in helping increase occupancy and ADRs is to effectively promote the relevant brand experience and the different room types available by providing a true



differentiation of the offering to the end traveller. This complements the traveller's requirements for a hotel room at the best value rate (instead of the lowest rate) and will drive both occupancy and ADRs.

Travelport's hospitality offering effectively meets these needs as we have invested in meta-technology that enables us to provide unrivalled hotel content (650,000 properties) as well as

ensuring that our travel agency customers can easily compare and book this content. We have evolved from a traditional 'green screen' GDS to a travel



The mobile aspect of travel will become a game changer, but I don't think we have fully grasped how fundamental mobile is



commerce platform, enabling our hotel partners to sell their content their way.

All of these components mean that Travelport leads the so called GDS travel industry in delivering the highest attachment rates of hotel room nights to airline tickets. In 2015, we sold 65m room nights and, according to our figures, we deliver at least a minimum of 10 per cent to 15 per cent ADR premium vs the other hotel distribution channels.

The challenge for the industry moving forward is to continue adding relevant content to ensure that both leisure and corporate travellers have the maximum choice and flexibility. We also need to continue to develop the way we capture all of the different rates – negotiated corporate rates, retail rates, and effectively display their differences not only in price but also in ancillary components.

GAME CHANGING TRENDS

The mobile aspect of travel will become a game changer, but I don't think we have yet fully grasped how fundamental mobile is for the hotel industry. When the traveller's mobile phone becomes the key to their room so they don't need to

queue at the check-in desk and becomes their way of ordering food from the restaurant, or room service, that's when it will change the way hotels run.

Hotels can use mobile to push relevant offers to the traveller, allowing them to upsell and provide added value as well as giving them the opportunity to utilise aspects like the check-in desk for other useful services. There's so much hotels can do to take advantage of mobile capabilities, to benefit both their business and provide a seamless offering to the traveller. Not only does this have great benefits for hotels and allows them to take their retailing to another level, but it also suits the traveller by encouraging a more seamless travel experience.

It's for these reasons that Travelport acquired MTT (Mobile Travel Technologies) the world leader in mobile and digital transformation for the travel industry, which enables airlines, corporate travel agencies and hotels to deliver sophisticated mobile travel applications. Through MTT, Travelport is building its mobile capabilities to be a part of this transformation. Its comprehensive and innovative product set supports the entire journey end to end, from travel research and booking, to planning and preparation, to in-airport, in-flight and at-destination services.

The mobile experience will also redefine the way hotels want to sell their content using different distribution channels. We believe that digital technology will likely influence travellers' booking behaviour as well as the key ancillary options, which is why we are working closely with our hotel partners to understand them and ensure we capture all the changes that happen in light of this trend.

Ashish Vohra
Founder & CEO
Justa Hotels & Resorts

BRAND WEBSITES

With the current rise in OTAs, hotels are encouraging first time guests booked through third party channels to book directly with the hotel using the different modes available. This helps in driving brand loyalty and savings on the huge commissions charged by third party channels. The brand websites are also being promoted aggressively on all available online platforms and social media.

Upcoming tech trends

- ◆ Mobile Keys
- ◆ Mobility of PMS
- ◆ Cloud Computing with Desktop/Mobile access
- ◆ Technology for Conversion
- ◆ VR for Hotel Content

REVENUE MANAGEMENT

Room sales are now a high ticket business and with the advent of online travel portals needs to be macro-managed where rates and inventory are dynamically changing by the hour. It requires full time involvement and as such this function is a specialised department or out-sourced to the domain experts. Distribution is controlled by tools such as channel managers to manage existing traffic flow and through deals for better positioning to drive new traffic.

ANCILLARY REVENUE

With pressures on the bottom lines, it is critically important to push for additional revenue which can come through bundled offers to potential guests as value add at the time of booking. Technology available on brand websites as well as on third party platforms allows us to achieve this and more.

COMMUNICATIONS

In addition to the traditional communication modes like telephones, text messaging, email and fax, these days hotels can reach out to and keep the guests updated on the status of their reservations, car transfers, food orders, various promotions and offers with the use of brand and social media pages, online ads as well as mobile apps of the brand app and third party

ones like what's app, snapchat, messengers.

BRANDING AND MARKETING

It is becoming imperative for all hotels to have a presence online to be able to extend their reach to potential customers. Brand websites are actively being promoted through search engine optimisation, key words reaches, tagging with related and third party websites. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, LinkedIn and Youtube are extremely effective in attracting and engaging new customers. In addition, PR exercises in getting popular bloggers and media personnel to experience your hotels is a definite way to attract a global audience of dedicated potential customers to your brand.



Ashish Vohra





Swaran Singh

Swaran Singh Regional Manager Aspect, North and East India

THE PERSONAL TOUCH WITH AUTOMATED MESSAGES

Taking on new frontiers in artificial intelligence, Aspect has recently developed next generation CX technology as Sussex Radisson Blu Edwardian for Carlson. This has completely re-imagined customer service for the hospitality vertical. It works on the consumer appeal of texting/messaging as a communication channel, the

The natural language understanding (NLU) interface enables guests to use natural, conversational language rather than remembering cryptic commands, though the application is backed up with live assistance when needed.

Complaints or requests that need a follow-up by hotel staff can therefore be immediately addressed. Guests can even ask explicitly for an immediate callback should a human touch be desired.

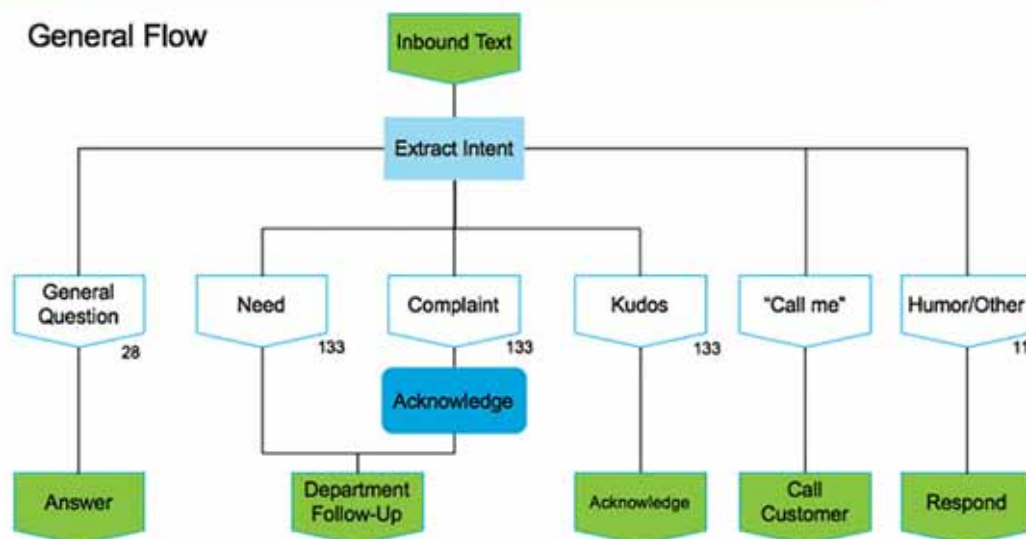
From the outset the solution was designed to let guests

breakfast', 'What cuisine does your restaurant offer', or 'What time do I need to check out?', to room service needs such as 'Can you send more towels?', or 'I'd like a paper delivered to my room' – the system would need to understand plain English inquiries, and even distinguish between 'a paper' (newspaper) and 'some paper' (stationery)."

HOW DOES ASPECT PROVIDE GREAT CUSTOMER CARE ON THE GO, AS PEOPLE USE MULTIPLE CHANNELS TO INTERACT THESE DAYS?

When your customers are

General Flow



ubiquity of SMSs and the value of CRM to show the guests how the hotel knows them.

TELL US ABOUT THIS NEW SOLUTION, EDWARD DEVELOPED BY ASPECT FOR HOTELS.

Edward works by using automated and intelligent text-based interaction, via a self-service interface that is accessible 24/7 and powered by Aspect's Customer Experience Platform (Aspect CXP). Guests can use the service to message their requests and get immediate responses.

send SMS text messages to be served throughout their stay, and even before check-in. We were intrigued when we found out how many different questions a guest could have during a hotels stay, 'When is

“Aspect Social and mobile self service help you stay on the same page as your customers, wherever they are”

travelling, it's important to be available for them during every step of their journeys. Travelling can be stressful even for the well-seasoned adventurer, especially if an unexpected cancellation or change in plans occurs.

It's important to be there for your customers when they need you most, with whatever channel they reach out to you on. Solutions such as Aspect Social and mobile self service provide you with the ability to stay on the same page as your customers, wherever they are.

WHERE DOES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE REALLY SHINE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY?

Use of Bots is quite common in the USA and several other parts of the world in this industry. Hotels sometimes have trouble providing guests with the exact same booking experience through apps because the way the app works could depend on the type of smartphone and the type of operating system used to run the smartphone.



With Facebook Messenger, the user experience is pretty standard. With Bots being able to answer guests' questions and process booking inquiries, that cuts out the need for some human assistance.

Chat Bots may give hotels the option to shift labour positions to better serve the guest.

HOW ARE THE USERS REACTING TO THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY?

Millennials would probably prefer messaging such as Bots as a way to communicate with a hotel.

But there are other travellers who would rather call the front desk to book a room, meaning there's still a need for a regular customer service line at the property level.

IS THE PRODUCT ALREADY OUT OR NOT? HAS IT BEEN INTRODUCED IN INDIA?

The solution is currently available in India, but not yet implemented in this domain. However other verticals such as travel and retail are using it widely.

According to iHITA (International Hospitality Information Technology Association), 41 per cent of travellers, when booking a hotel room, would be influenced by the availability of state of the art technology at the hotel.

Deepak Mavinkurve Founder & CEO RepuFact

SMART CONTROLS

Millennia is now acknowledged as high spenders in hotels and mobile phones, Wi-Fi and social media are more of a necessity. Technology is bringing in many impactful solutions to the hotel industry across their entire spectrum of the hospitality industry. They can be anything form: a) Stronger controls around utilisation of resources by switching to natural energy and developing smarter recycling solutions. b) More data and analytics around business transactions thus helping hotels reduce their customer acquisition costs. C) Improved customer experiences tools.

As thought leader in the customer experience space, we are extremely excited with some of the new trends that we see in the industry. In the coming year, one will hear a lot about some of these solutions. Both Gen X and the Baby Boomers have

also got smart with the usage of technology. Many big brands and larger boutique hotels already allow their customer to book, check-in, open hotel room doors, set room ambience including lighting, AC, concierge services, room service as well as check out and pay the bills using a single mobile application. These applications are not just appealing to the customer, but can result in optimisation of resources and reduction of costs in the long run.

BEACONS

Beacons work on bluetooth technology and can help Hotels to profile their customers at micro-location within the hotel. If they are well integrated with the existing hotel apps, beacons can also help hotels to effectively manage many routine hotel formalities like room service, housekeeping, in-room entertainment, but also be used in more complex hotel features like customer behaviour, staff efficiency, Upsell and Cross Sell hotel products, loyalty and more contextual interactions with the

guest. The combination of an app = the beacon can almost become a personal concierge for the guest.

AUGMENTED REALITY

Mobile app on iPad, iPhone and Android devices can use AR to

“Beacons work on bluetooth technology and can help hotels to profile their customers at micro-location within the hotel”

visualise 3D products in their real environment, in real size and in real-time. AR has great marketing benefits and can be used by hotels in their apps to give a 360 degree view of the property or actually take the guest out on a virtual tour. This allows customers to visualise the layout of the hotel, as well as visit and experience all the amenities such as restaurants, pools and spas offered at the hotel.



Deepak Mavinkurve



Christian Lukey

**Christian Lukey
Head of Hotel
Distribution
Amadeus Asia Pacific**

**ASIA PACIFIC HAS 1
BILLION+ SMARTPHONE
USERS**

The environment for hotels is dramatically changing due to the growth of competitive players such as large online players. This is why many hoteliers are now looking to retain ownership of how they distribute their hotels through the various channels available.

Hoteliers choose to distribute their hotel inventory through Amadeus as it's a high-yield and low cost channel compared to other players in the industry who offer low room rates along with high commissions. Amadeus allows hoteliers to offer a lot more than just a low room

being made from smart phones and the majority of these guests are Millennial and Mobile First travellers. With Asia Pacific now boasting more than one billion smartphone users, guests are now more connected, tech savvy and informed than ever before, and this means they want personalised offers to match their needs. Hoteliers are working to proactively understand traveller preferences and expectations in order to engage

about events occurring for a specific group. By enabling an interactive wall/display with beacon technology, a targeted message or personalised image can be displayed.

**WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY
AND ROBOTS IN HOTELS**

Wearable technology and robots are already a reality today in the hospitality sector and will only become more popular in the years to come, and not only



with their guests at the right time, with the right messages, to create the perfect guest experience and drive loyalty.

For example, Amadeus is working with the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) to develop a next-generation cloud-based Guest Reservation System (GRS) which will allow them to cater for, and in many cases pre-empt, rapidly changing guest needs. This will ultimately drive a superior and more personalised experience for guests.

**INTERACTIVE WALLS
IN HOTELS**

Interactive walls need to be enabled with APIs through multiple vendors and services in order to deliver a rich experience for guests. We see that there is even more potential for interactive walls, especially in event and meeting spaces. For example, hotels can create interactive readerboards to display timely information

for guests, but also for venue staff and major hospitality organisations.

Hospitality venues are using robotics to further deliver a memorable and personalised guest experience. Amadeus and Savioke Inc., the creator of autonomous robot helpers for the services industry, partnered to bring the future of guest service to hospitality. For example, these robots can autonomously navigate through a hotel to deliver items like extra towels to any room.

Robotic concierge and way finding is also already in use at properties. Aldebaran which makes the well-known Pepper robot, has deployed NAO humanoid robots for use as concierge team members. NAO robots, enabled through partner APIs, can provide directions to venue amenities, tell guests when an event starts or where it is located on the property.

rate and offers more flexible offers with cancellations rates, Wi-Fi, breakfast included and much more. This can be a very attractive option to business or leisure travellers who are looking for more than just a room and want additional flexibility.

Mobile will continue to impact the hotel landscape in a big way. Already, we're seeing 65 per cent of same day reservations

Siddharth Mohan Gupta
Head of Information
Technology
The Imperial New Delhi

TECHNO-LODGING

With the advent of Gen Y or Millennial, for a hotel the word 'lodging' has now changed to 'techno-lodging'. From intelligent booking systems that show Best Available Rates to the In Room Technology that does everything just with a tap, it's all connected and in your hands. With hotel's perspective it is a good way to optimise their cost of customer acquisition and bring efficiency to their operations. With the recent drive of big corporations to generate revenue and with the spur in the numbers of startups we see a big shift in the focus of companies in developing technologies for hospitality. There is a lot which is happening and about to come in near future. And it is nothing less than amazing!

GDS AND MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Hotelligence 360 is an intelligence tool that is used for provide historical electronic booking data from the Global Distribution Systems (GDS), including information on business sources, rates and length-of-stay patterns, for both individual subscriber properties and their local competitive sets. Similarly a Demand 360 tool gives hotel performance data across channels and across segments 365 days.

Hotels can gain data of their competitive set across all major channels such as OTA, Brand.com, GDS, CRS, Direct and across segments such as Negotiated RFP, Discount and Promotion, Wholesale, Group.

DIGITAL MENU FOR RESTAURANTS

Although this technology couldn't make its mark in our industry

due to its heavy cost involvement however we see a lot of value in this technology. A digital menu digitally portrays menu of any outlet on a digital device such as a tablet. The menu will show you pictures of the dish or a service, wine pairing, some history of the dish (if attached), can show the recipe, other guest ratings, menu can be multi lingual as per the need. It creates that required indulgence of a guest rather than keeping him wondering

UPCOMING TECH TRENDS

- ◆ Virtual Reality
- ◆ 3-D printing
- ◆ Guest Preference Portals
- ◆ Smart Rooms with Sensors and Internet of Things (IoT) based devices
- ◆ Wireless with GBPS connectivity in rooms

what to choose. This technology is one which helps a traveller transcend the limitation of a conventional menu of choosing the right dish. Similarly it helps your chefs in the kitchen to be more productive while dealing with a full restaurant. The biggest advantages are that you can

generate Facebook likes for your outlets and change your menu any time without any additional cost. It is a good way to retain your guests.

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE TOOLS

Personally speaking after Opera the other important tool that hoteliers work mostly work with is Excel. Being bombarded with so many reports and other records it was very difficult to convert all this to meaningful data all this while. However now Business Intelligence tools are taking over and the good news is that you can add any Excel or prescribed formats to these softwares to make meaningful reports of your choice and it all goes across the systems that you may be using. All you need to feed are excel files. These technologies are being developed or developed across the industries for analysing Big Data. Big Data simply is something that you have in your reports. It majorly helps the hotels to know their guest, their needs patterns, efficient inventory control or it can be anything that you feel needs to be checked or monitored.



Siddharth Mohan Gupta





Sunil Amonker
Revenue Manager, Planet
Hollywood Resort, Goa

ONLINE CHECK-IN

Hotels will soon evolve and have the traditional on arrival formalities made hi-tech—check-in online, receive confirmation barcode, scan the barcode in the lobby, collect your key.

Positive review or feedback on social media holds major role to get the hotel maximum booking

Upcoming tech trends

- ◆ SEO
- ◆ Smartphone
- ◆ Smart In-Room Technology
- ◆ Social media
- ◆ Self check in

conversion, online reputation directly affects sales volume. At the property we take guest feedback seriously and act on each online review with a spontaneous positive revert. Our General Manager personally replies and handles all the Tripadvisor reviews.

DIGITAL INTELLIGENCE

Digital Intelligence today is the psychology blog for digital marketers. PH is very new in India and hence applying latest insights from guests, media and marketing to digital marketing is crucial. Creating awareness of the brand is a must, at the same time educating the guests brand uniqueness and what we bring in is a challenge.



Sunil Amonker

Satyajeet Krishnan
General Manager
The Taj Mahal Hotel
New Delhi

SMART HAS A NEW DEFINITION!

In today's technologically driven day and age, SMART has an all new definition and new implications. It calls for being constantly updated about trends in the digital space because that is what helps one seize marketable opportunities. It has become imperative for every brand entity to build a strong digital presence and across all social media platforms.

The focus for The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi has always been on creating interesting content so that we can continuously build and increase user engagement. Keeping in

mind that our guest segment extends across both geographies and demographics, we aim at striking a balance between traditional communication and new age digital dialogue. Through our Facebook and Twitter pages, we aim to keep patrons updated about the latest happenings at the hotel. This is done through a mix of photos and videos to keep our online followers engaged. From time to time, we also put interesting and relevant fun facts online. For TripAdvisor, there is a joint process of response generation

from the offices of the General Manager, Resident Manager and Director of Public Relations & Marketing.

Customer feedback comes to us through online channels. We incorporate this in our day to day functioning and it helps us in providing patrons with unique and innovative experiences.

TRENDS IN INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Hotels continuously focus on enhancing guest experience and this means constantly adopting new technologies to improve offerings and services. Managers in the hospitality industry need to keep an eye on the following trends:

1. Mobility: Smartphones and tablets have changed the way we interact with technology.

Upcoming tech trends

- ◆ Increased presence on social media
- ◆ Digital Media Marketing
- ◆ Online Bookings
- ◆ Electronic Point of Sale
- ◆ Mobile Applications



Satyajeet Krishnan

Hotels need to integrate these into the system so as to give seamless service to customers.

2. Social: Today social media has become extremely influential. It is imperative that management monitors social media tools to stay on top of what people are saying about the hotel online.
3. Personalised Systems: Customers expect hotel experiences to be completely personalised for them and hotels have to develop ways to link customer preference data with hotel management systems in order to develop a personalised, high quality service for guests.



BUILDING DIGITAL INTELLIGENCE

There are various mechanisms and operative systems within the hotel that track the voice of customers and help identify ongoing and upcoming trends. There are external agencies that

help us by providing regular trends and updates about the industry and reports on guest feedback. All of this gives us better clarity and an overall picture that helps work on future strategies to make a mark in the digital space.



Binu Mathews
Chief Executive Officer
IDS Next

GAME CHANGER TECH-TRENDS IN THE HOTEL MARKET IN 2016

Looking at today's hoteliers' requirements to attract guests and sale more rooms to stay profitable, a Central Reservation System (CRS) could be the most advisable platform.

For example, our SkyRes, the web-based CRS effectively centralises property-wise reservation related data from the

Hotel PMS along with call centre and phone reservation system.

SkyRes acts as the central reservation office and delivers bookings to multiple properties in a chain. Its dashboard displays the status of critical KPIs including availability, rates, reservations, travel agent and corporate performance and revenue generation reports. SkyRes enables users to achieve higher conversions in direct booking thereby benefitting the hotel to maintain profitability.

Currently, there is a brouhaha surrounding Cloud-based hotel PMS and this is for real. Hoteliers are considering this as a viable option as they don't have to bear the high cost of on-premise local server-based hotel PMS which includes hardware costs and investment on IT team. Another key usefulness of Cloud-based hotel PMS is its ease of access. With a Cloud-based hotel PMS, users can access the PMS from anywhere to keep track of their daily hotel operations.



Binu Mathews

“
 SkyRes acts as the
 central reservation office
 and delivers bookings
 to multiple properties
 in a chain
 ”





Godwin Fernandes

**Godwin Fernandes
IT Manager
Resort Rio, Goa**

THE MOBILE APP

The mobile app can become your one point of contact for your entire holiday, right from booking the stay to ordering food and checking out. Listed below are some of the key features that the app can control. Booking a Room and Payment, Remote check-in without the conventional procedure of checking in at the reception, unlocking doors

Digital intelligence

- ◆ Data Collection and analysis from various online sectors
- ◆ Google Analytics
- ◆ Retargeting
- ◆ Tracking customers through cookie
- ◆ Community Building
- ◆ Social Media marketing
- ◆ Application for online feedback

with validation using QR code, Ordering Food (restaurant menus readily available on the app),

get alerts on events happening in the vicinity, check- out reminder, controlling lights, room temperature (AC/Fan), booking transport for your travel, Iris Scan Technology—Guests need to look into the camera fitted on the door for it to open. No need for room keys, Go Boards in lobbies—provide all essential information to guests (news, stocks, weather, flight information, local information about restaurants and events). It is like a ready dictionary of the city one is visiting.



Amber Jain

**Amber Jain
Information Technology
Manager
Pullman & Novotel New
Delhi Aerocity**

THE IN-ROOM TECHY EXPERIENCE

Technology is changing at a fast pace and guests are getting more and more tech-savvy leading them to demand higher standards. Earlier internet was just a service like other services offered in the hotel but nowadays it is a need for guest and is as important as food.

Guests are highly connected and multi-device dependent since stationary desktops are replaced with fast, mobile computing devices.

Wireless broadband connections in rooms and throughout the hotel must now be fast, easily accessible and preferably free. At Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, we deliver high speed connectivity, online services, and allow guests to optimise their own digital experience. It is no longer just the business guests that require technology. Apart from high speed internet, guests needs all other services to speed up like check-in, check-out, bill settlement and invoice over the email, online table reservations though mobile computing devices. and all these services depend on the technology. Our hotel network infrastructure and products are updated and free to give quick, prompt and effective services to guest.

SECURITY OF DATA

Security of data and prevention against hacking is very important, ensuring data security is crucial. In Accor group security of data is the foremost preference and we never compromise with any aspect to ensure the same in line with our digitalization mission like being in compliance with PCI standards or strict access control methods.

ENERGY SAVING KITCHENS

In hotel kitchens, there is substantial equipment that requires heavy electrical input apart from the air conditioning to be maintained at a certain temperature to maintain the freshness of food. Taking advantage of being a new hotel in the market, we have sourced in the latest equipments that have a less intake of the electrical input thereby reducing the energy consumption as well as operating cost.



Tarun Gulati and Sankalp Goel Co-Founders, DJUBO

CLOUD/SOFTWARE AS A SERVICE (SAAS)

The ability to provide entertainment with a single click and mobile content has led to the trend of hotels investing in cloud services. While hotels want to offer digital content, they don't want to invest in IT infrastructure and staff, making cloud computing the ideal solution. Not only is the initial capital investment lower, but it gives hotels the flexibility to expand and adjust their IT needs along with business growth. It removes the administrative burden of managing an IT system in-house.

PERSONALISED SYSTEMS & AUTOMATION

Guests are expecting digital interactions with the hotel to



concierge app requires a small investment and can lead to greater efficiency and savings as hotel staff are able to focus on customer service.

GLOBALISATION

The last major trend currently in the hospitality industry is globalisation. Hotels will need to adopt different management approaches to survive amidst high levels of economic uncertainty. This means that the technology systems in use must account for the global perspective. All of these trends have already brought about

to showcase their offers. This means that ads will be able to target people everywhere they move. For tourism brands, this means that the data will become more behavior-driven and more targeted. People can be targeted in certain locations, based on their activity. Hospitality, travel, and tourism brands can use smart wearable devices to improve guest experiences.

Hotels are already offering more futuristic experiences, with robots delivering any items ordered through room service to a guest's door. A



Tarun Gulati

“The technology that underpins these changes will deliver a sharp competitive edge at all levels”



be personalised, from checking in at a venue's automated desk, to ordering room service with a digital device instead of standing in queues or moving around the hotel premises to order food.

When investing in digital apps for check-ins, room service and other customer-oriented digital interactions, hotel operators are investing in systems and technologies that can personalise the experience for guests. Investing in a check-in/

a profound change in the hospitality industry and will continue to disrupt and redefine operations.

WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY AND ROBOTS

Machine-to-machine technology is already taking flight for a large number of hotel chains. Wearable technology will see an increase of about 28 per cent in 2016, which means even more data for marketers and more opportunities for brands

boutique hotel that is nestled between Apple's headquarters and other tech companies have a robot butler that is able to move between the various floors of the hotel in order to take items such as toothbrushes, chargers and snacks to guests.

These types of digital systems not only make it easy for hotel staff to deliver items to guests, but it also offers a forward-facing digital experience to people who stay at the hotel.



Sankalp Goel



Harish Chandra

Harish Chandra
CIO- IT, Sarovar Hotels

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL LISTENING

Review analytics, competitor benchmarking reputation management and social listening is a new trend. Every well managed and reputed hotel wants to reach a level where they are being proactive in their approach and not reactive. ORM has become very popular important in our hospitality industry in last two to three years.

Every hotel needs analytics solution to make informed management decisions. Guest feedback is very important for any property to know where to focus their efforts on. We listen to the negative comments very carefully for us to improvise further.

A single review cannot give you an entire picture but a data set can go a long way to give you a clear picture for future investments in key areas which makes decision making pretty easy. As far as competitor benchmarking is concerned, we believe an entity cannot make a decision without taking their competitors into consideration. So yes, they are very important.

Upcoming tech trends

- ◆ Home away from home 'IOT' Internet of things
- ◆ Social media and 'ORM' Online Reputation Management
- ◆ Utilising power of cloud computing
- ◆ Mobility—automated room solutions



Suhale Kapoor

Suhale Kapoor
Co-founder and Executive Vice President
Absolutdata Analytics

BIG DATA

In the hospitality sector, Big Data promises to tap vast wells of data to bring new consumer insights and immense competitive advantage. The hospitality industry has

started realising the true power of Big Data and how it can be applied to multiple areas such as real-time analytics, complex competitive analysis, hotel room reservation system, consumer sentiment analysis and intelligent traffic management.

Hotels and OTAs can find the massive amounts of data

generated from multiple data sources overwhelming. But the true value extraction depends on meeting big data challenges continuously while improving operational efficiencies.

With the right analytics, big data can deliver richer insight since it draws from multiple sources and transactions to uncover hidden patterns and relationships.

Beyond Simply WiFi

High Speed Internet Access Services have become essential to providing a positive experience in a hotel, **Umarao Singh Gautam**, Co Founder, Eastern Services and Consultancy tells us more about the same.



Umarao Singh Gautam


USP

We are specialised in providing managed High Speed Internet Access Services in hospitality industry sizing few to thousands of rooms. Our solutions are engineered with centralised controller-based design supporting 802.11a/b/g/n/ac standards along with different authentication mechanisms (Complimentary, Local, PMS, SMS, Social Media).

Our solution features "Zero Configuration", location-based services, multilingual, PDA/Smart phone friendly, tiered bandwidth, advanced QoS, load balancing, high availability, privacy and security, account printing, Lawful Intercept support meeting regulatory compliance requirements, flexible reporting. Our proven technology solutions, PAN India coverage, toll free number, 24x7 support, remote network monitoring and qualified and experienced teams are some of the factors differentiating us.

Trends in WiFi in hospitality

Guests are increasingly tech-savvy and might have very high speed Internet connection at home, so poor WiFi provisioned (coverage and speed) at hotels leads to frustration. With guests posting negative comments on social media, hotels are at a competitive disadvantage. With increasing list of WiFi enabled devices, every guest expects to connect multiple devices simultaneously. 802.11n/ac enabled, per room AP deployment providing good signal in entire room and Gigabit infrastructure along with very simple, quick and easy self authentication mechanism (by integrating with hotel billing system) is the key to success. With other secure SSID's, the same smart WiFi network infrastructure is used for the in-house app services (room service, laundry, controls for lights, music, temperature.) and by hotel staff to access the admin network, PoS, voice, among others.






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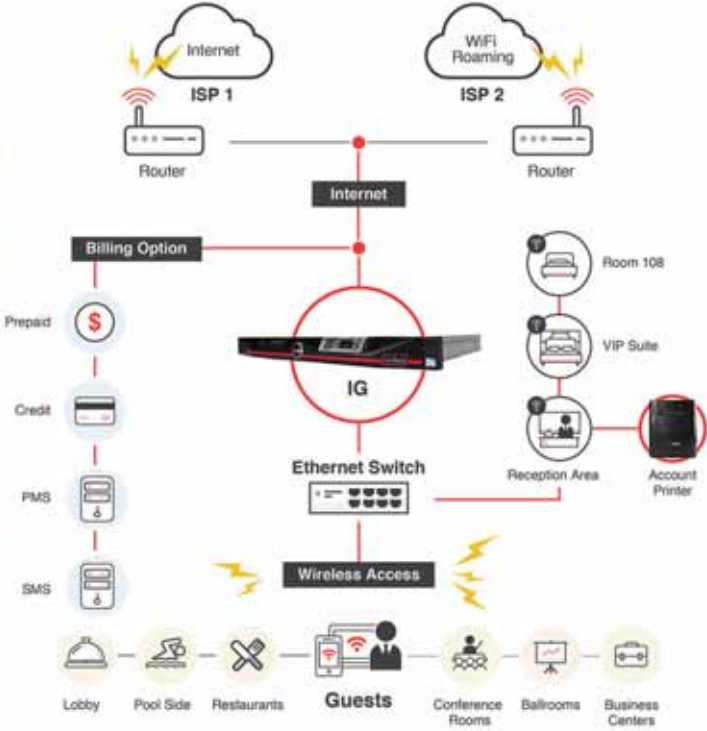
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Avinash Lodha



2016 will see the launch of task driven application functionality that loads in no time and permits data transfers



Avinash Lodha
Chief Executive Officer
RezNext Global Solutions

GAME CHANGER TECH-TRENDS IN THE HOTEL MARKET IN 2016

Mobile technology will continue to rule. What will change is the way it is utilised by the hotel and the utility that it provides the user. While hotels have started using their mobile apps to manage their distribution, very often because of internet connectivity issues while on the go and with availability of a multitude of features and functionality, normal tasks like quick updating of inventory or rates become quite a cumbersome process and defeats the purpose for which the application was created.

2016 will see the launch of specific task driven application functionality that loads in no time and permits data transfers in sub second timeframe allowing tasks that are core to executing a profitable distribution strategy very easy to perform. This will

truly change the way hoteliers operate today. The focus is all about simplifying the complexity in the existing ecosystem.

From a user's perspective, 2016 and beyond will see more functionality for users to have a personalised experience starting from their check-in. Engagement apps that allow guests to personalise their room prior to their check in – ask for a preferred temperature setting, a meal to be served, have the business centre set up or have the printer ready – all of these can be requested for and kept ready. These apps will also help hotels engage with the guests while at the property and be the first ones to know if the guests have a positive or negative feedback.

BEACONS/NEAR FIELD COMMUNICATION (NFC) TECHNOLOGY

Beacons are emerging concepts for proximity-based marketing and engagement. In making an offer lucrative the context of the offer and the relevance

of the offer are both vital. With beacon technology the industry is addressing these two aspects. Hotels leveraging beacon technology can send out personalised offers as per the persona of the guests who just walked in.

You meet the context criteria because the guest is at the F&B outlet and an offer on a special dish is displayed at the point of decision making. Because you had access to the guest's profile, you also know what dishes you could present to him in the offer. Hence you addressed the relevancy question as well. What hoteliers need to be careful about however is being aware of the guest's personal space.

Knowing the customer too well can also be sometimes annoying for the customer. Hence it is very important to apply discretion as required. Having said that when used the way it should be, beacon technology can be a great guest relationship and loyalty building tool.



Zubin Bilimoria

Zubin Bilimoria
Director, Global Sales
RezNext Global Solutions

INTERACTIVE WALLS IN HOTELS

Interactive walls can provide a great accommodation experience with soothing music to visuals as you pass by a hotel's lobby or provide greater engagement as a virtual tour assistant. There are multiple ways an interactive wall can build a deep connection with the brand.

For a business man, an interactive wall gives him the opportunity to present to his audience in a business centre in a whole new way. Social

get-togethers in the lobby can be a fun event especially if you are planning to visit a particular location offered by the hotel. As a group you can quickly walk through the experience of what the destination has to offer and more importantly even share that offer of experience with your friends on a social media channel.

Possibilities are immense. Your wall in the room can be your presentation screen for you to rehearse, or for you to interact with the hotel's various facilities.

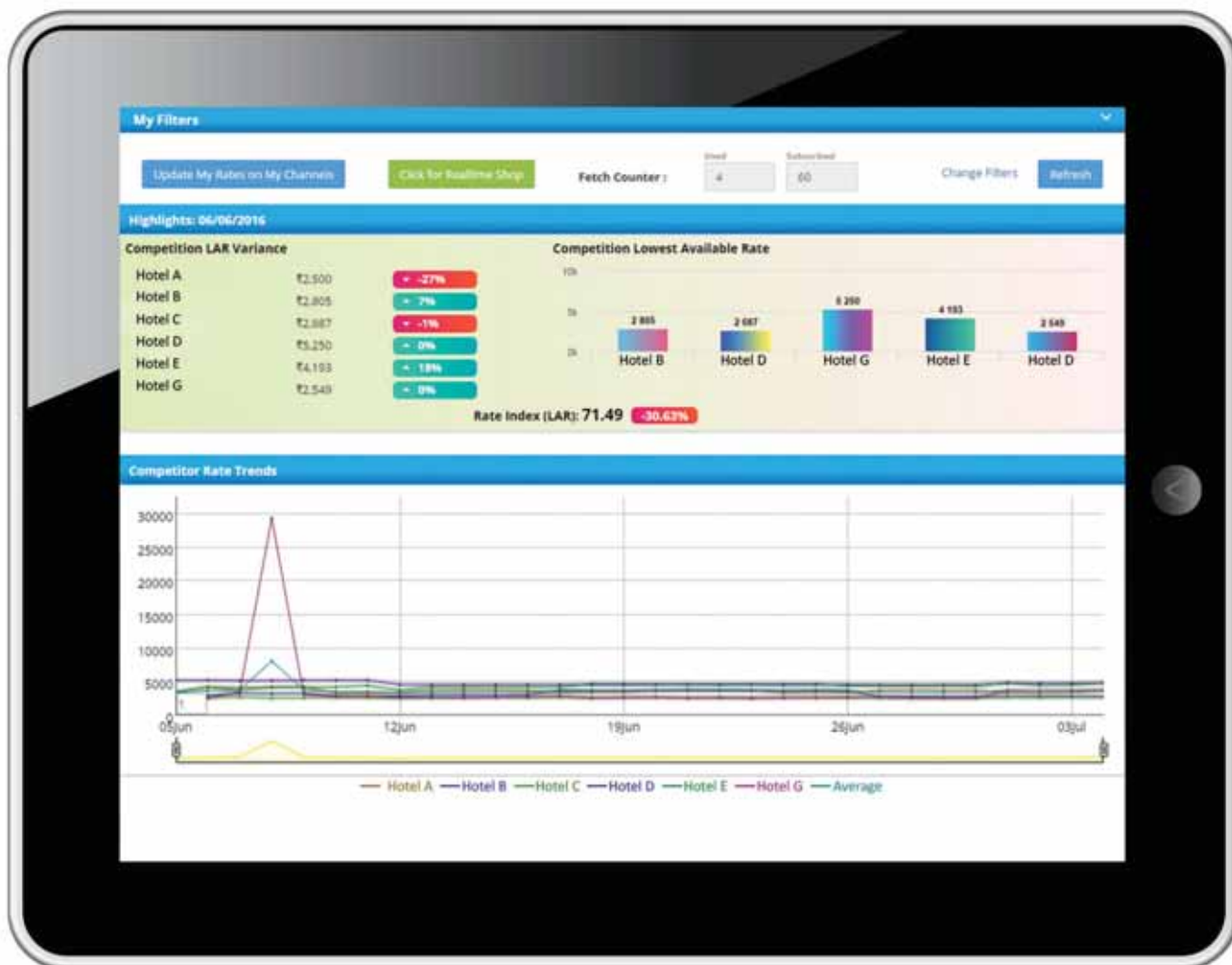
For large resort properties, this can be very useful as interactive walls can act as a tour guide covering what's all to do at the resort.

WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY & ROBOTS

Wearable technology is making significant inroads in the travel industry. Combined with virtual reality, wearable technology can really transform guest experience. The apple watch for instance is also paving way for self-check in and check out process and seamless in room entertainment. Robots are still new to the industry. In my view they may assist the staff at the hotel with some of their tasks but completely replacing the staff in a hotel is far from a possibility now.

Besides it's the people who add the hospitality in this business, without which the experience would never be the same.

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Ritu Anand

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“iHome offers various products which are simple plug, play and charge with ease of usage that can be adopted by children”

SDI Technologies offers a wide variety of innovative products to hotels around the world under the brands—iHome and Timex.

iHome's products can be found worldwide through virtually every distribution network in over 70 countries. Amson Interconnect is the national distributor and authorised partner for iHome (U.S.A) in India. Amson is also authorised to sell in Asia Pacific, barring a few countries.

iHome Alarm Clock radio with iPad/iPhone/iPod docking speaker system are specially designed for hotels and is the number one brand in hotel and service apartments. They are present across all major national and international chains of hotels

including Starwood, Hyatt, Marriott, Accor, Four Seasons, IHG, Hilton, Raintree, Oakwood, Radisson Taj, Royal Orchid, Sarovar and many more. They have footprints in Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bhutan.

According to **Ritu Anand**, Vice President Corporate Amson, “Dynamic in-room

entertainment options are fast becoming a must-have for all hotels.” Guests often want all of the comforts of home, even when they are enjoying the luxury of staying in a hotel. Having more accessible in-room entertainment options is also huge plus for families who have children, or people who travel for business and thus spend a lot of time in the room itself. These options can help boost for guest retention.

iHome offers various products which are simple plug, play and charge with ease of usage that can be adopted by children. A good in-room entertainment system helps a guest relax, feel comfortable and recharge.

iHome caters to all segments in hospitality starting with basic model for Budget Properties -iBT230; Standard Model iBT31 and iDL46 Docking Speaker for Luxury Properties. And Amson Interconnect brings on the table – commitment, timely service and latest technology for our hotel partners.”

The new range speakers from iHome are iPhone5s/6, iPad compatible docks with USB Port, plus they work for the android, symbian-based Smartphones and tablets being offered by other brands. The bluetooth models come with USB port and speaker phone facility. That makes them universal in appeal across all consumers/guests. We are leaders in Docking speakers and Alarm Clock Radios, and are happy to present the iHome -iBT 31

iHome iBT 31

Guests can use the wireless stereo audio streaming over bluetooth from their iPhone, iPad, Android, windows—most bluetooth devices. The iBT31 is a fully featured bedside alarm clock with twin speakers for clear quality sound. Guests can control their music or take calls with wireless speakerphone over bluetooth, or listen to FM radio or line-in-audio. A USB port keeps mobile devices charged and ready to go.



iDL46

iHome

live life loud

Alarm Clock Stereo FM Radio with Lightning Dock & USB Charge/Play for iPad/iPhone/iPod



CHARGE & PLAY **USB** **Wake Sleep** to iPod/iPhone/iPad **charges** iPod/iPhone/iPad **DUAL ALARM** **7.5.2** **ALARM** **Programmable SNOOZE** **AM/FM PRESETS** **AUX LINE-IN** **10-99** **AUTO SYNC** **UNIVERSAL VOLTAGE ADAPTOR 100-240V** **Made for** iPod iPhone iPad

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Prashant Govindan

Enhancing Customer Experience

HARMAN offers hotels and resorts audio, video, lighting and control systems that are easy to deploy, scale and manage. Their systems fit the unique demands of a single boutique/lifestyle hotel as well as the performance and reliability requirements of a multinational hotel conglomerate with multiple brands and high customer expectations. **Prashant Govindan**, Senior Director – Professional Solutions, HARMAN

India and Sri Lanka talks about latest trends in audio and infotainment solutions for hotels and restaurants. He says, "With the advancement in Internet-of-Things, today, hotels are embracing technological developments to provide their customers improvised audio visual entertainment and infotainment services. Given the impact of high end audio visual and lighting solutions on the customer experience, any hotel would like to bank upon them. They not only create an enthralling ambience at the property but also carve a memory amongst people who come to attend corporate



and other events. In the Indian context, role of infotainment and audio visual solutions has seen a paradigm shift due to the ever increasing growth of the hospitality sector."

Together with them, we have grown by offering the right proposition for an enhanced user experience. As we like to say, "A HARMAN System is an Extension of Your Hotel's Identity" we believe, customer experience is prime for any property and that is what HARMAN offers. Our installations at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Delhi and MFDC Auditorium (Manipur Film Development Corporation), Manipur are a testament of our wide range of product portfolio.

QUALITY IN-ROOM PRODUCTS



Adrian Goldwyn

Wyntronix products are installed in over 900 hotels, 85,000 plus hotel rooms across India and South Asia. **Adrian Goldwyn**, Managing Director, Wyntronix, holds over 25 years of industry experience. Wyntronix Innovations was formed in 2014, to address the needs of the hospitality industry, for quality electronic in-room products and unfailing service support across India and South Asia. The company is positioned as the master distributor for multiple international companies and will be their partners in the region to ensure prompt services are provided.

THE PRINCIPLES

ONITY Inc - USA: Onity is a world renowned entity in the field of electronic security systems for the hospitality industry since past three decades. Onity is a group company of the United Technologies Corporation (UTC). The core products include electronic locking systems, electronic guestroom systems, energy

management systems and minibars.

AEI Communication - Malaysia: AEI was formed to serve the hospitality industry with advanced in-room analog and IP telephony solutions. The range of telephones include coded and cordless phones, bathroom phones.

RAYSGEM - UK: A company focused on bringing technology and luxury together to form a combination of waterproof technology and display technology to the development of broad temperature range technology and high brightness and to the light and mirror panel. Raysgem offers waterproof TV, mirror TV, outdoor TV and other high-end products including customised design and development.

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Minibars
Silent minibars designed specifically for the hospitality industry



Media Hub's
Convenient way to connect gadgets to TV

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

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Equipped for success



Rajesh Mohta

With more than seven years of experience in production and manufacturing of hospitality equipment, Rajkiran Kitchen Equipments is a renowned name across the industry. They are the manufacturers of quality hospitality equipment, required for dexterous operations of hotels, restaurants, fast food parlours, bakery, bar, industrial canteens, hospitals, commercial kitchens, food processing and other allied units.

Telling us more **Rajesh Mohta**, Proprietor, Rajkiran Kitchen Equipments, said, "Apart from providing quality equipments, we also specialise in the complete layout design and engineering

facilities for restaurants as well as hotels. The hall mark of our equipment is performance and the cutting edge technology used during the manufacturing process. Our business motto is 'we don't just build equipment - we build relations', which has resulted in our wide client base."

The company has been able to carve a niche for itself due to its consistent quality; time bound deliveries, competitive price, excellent after sales service and transparent policies.

Some of their prominent clients include, Nizams Kathi Kabab - Connaught Place (Delhi), Cuisine

Nexus - Amritsar, DLF (Gurgaon), Kamla Nagar (Delhi), Vaishali (Ghaziabad), Yamunanagar, Jai Prakash Industries Onkareshwar (M.P.), Wagnaghat (H.P.), Tehri Dam (Uttaranchal), Jai Prakash Hydro Power - Tala (Bhutan), Baghliar (J. & K.), Jaypee Group - Rewa (M.P.), Bela (M.P.), JIIT - Noida (U.P.), SRF Polyfilm - Pithampur (Indore), Eicher Motors Ltd. - Pithampur (Indore), Hotel Raj Palace - Katni (M.P.), Hot Breads - Srinagar, R & R Army Hospital - Delhi, Central India Christian Mission - Damoh (M.P.), VIP Clubs - Raipur (Chhatisgarh), Jaypee Greens - Noida (U.P.), Hotel Vikramaditya - Ujjain (M.P.), among others.



BIGGEST STRENGTH IS CUSTOMISATION

Repose Mattress is one of the fastest growing inner spring mattress manufacturing companies in South India. **Balaji V**, Chief Marketing Officer, Repose Mattress tells us more about their product line.



Balaji V

The vision for the company is to become the trendsetters in the innovative development of variety of spring mattresses and sleep products, with continuous focus on stringent quality controls, innovative products and best customer service. Giving us their USP, Balaji said, "Our biggest strength is customisation. We have a great range of products in our stable. We, in fact, have a product for people from different walks of life. PAMPERO series is the entry level spring mattress that allows any coir

mattress user to upgrade without an impact on his or her purse. SPINE-PRO range is engineered for people either currently suffering from backaches or protect their spine and thereby preventing backaches. This also includes LATEXO which is nothing but 100 per cent natural latex foam."

Talking about their products, he said, "In the luxury segment, we have five great offerings - EXTRORDINO that is a luxury pocketed spring mattress with

Aloe Vera treated fabric, ENVIRO-PRO that is all-natural with Latex and organic bio-cotton fabric, FORTUNO that a great dual-top layers of Latex and Memory foam, ROMANTO that is meant for romantic, cozy couples and IMPERIO which is the ultimate in comfort. This is built with around 2,000 tiny springs which provides highest level of flexibility and excellent spinal support. Ticking used in this product is made out of 100 per cent bamboo pulp fiber which is antibacterial."

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Since The past 3 decades Swosti Group is at the forefront of quality hospitality services in Odisha. From a standalone property to 3 full-fledged hotels it's been a long and exciting journey for the group and what has made this possible is the un-relented passion to extend excellent customer experiences. Hence every aspect of services are designed with minutely studied insights. All these resonate in the happy faces of customers.

Moving forward, Swosti Group would be unveiling a world class luxury resort on Chilika Lake, the 2nd largest lagoon in the world and admired for its irresistible beauty and tranquility. Beautiful islands, varied flora and fauna, exquisite migratory birds, picturesque villages all around make it one of the most exciting places to be in. To allow travelers to soak in and experience this magical sight in its full glory and grandeur, Swosti Chilika resort with 70 finely crafted cottages and innumerable amenities has been planned to be amongst the best that the country has experienced!!



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Prohibition or Cultural Change

What is Needed?



Jose Pradeep

Indian political parties which were leader driven organisations, have in the past couple of years tried to put up a team spirit, even though in reality it still continues to follow the age old traditions. Each party is today looking to put up a spotlessly clean image and there seems to be a clamor to be in the limelight for different reasons. As the elections loom large in front, there is a sudden interest of politicians to become the saviours of humanity by imposing ban on liquor.

In the most recent of cases Kerala was in the limelight for closure of bars below five stars and now the government has gone beyond any reasoning to do away with all kinds of bar licensing for good. Close on heels is Bihar which implemented total ban and Tamil Nadu is contemplating the same. It is very evident from the timing that this is no moral awakening but a political call to muster votes as the old tricks of the trade have turned out to be non productive.

A hotel promoter invests crores of rupees most of which is in

the form of bank loan into a property to earn revenue by selling rooms, food and beverage, spa, health club. He goes through the pain of getting all legal clearances and licenses before he starts operating it. Once he starts operating he has to seek out a space for himself and fight out the competition to bring in business while maintaining extremely high overheads. In between this entire circus when his own government does a U-turn and fails to protect his interest, whom can he approach with his problem? Bar in a hotel is a facility, a value addition to clients – a fact that was well accepted by these governments. Overnight Bar has become a negative term, a bane to the society and cultural evil? Real issue is not bar but alcoholism which is a concern in today's world we should address this.

Is alcoholism or alcohol related problems so critical? Is prohibition a solution for a civilised educated democratic country? – Lets analyse. Statistics show that more deaths in India happen due to various other reasons. Deaths due to road accidents in 2013 was 1,37,000. Death due to smoking averages about 10,00,000 a year. Cardiovascular diseases today officially are the largest cause of death in India – no official data could be found on this. Whereas alcohol related deaths reported in 2012 were only 5,478 for the whole of India.

Needless to say in the mad rush of life, one of the stress buster or unwinding element today is liquor and it's a proven fact that people enjoy drinking regardless of social strata one belongs to. Like any other intoxicant excessive use or misuse leads to trouble. We need to find a constructive ways to handle these issues. Liquor ban is impractical as it leads to bootlegging, violence, intolerance and more.

Ban is required on country made liquor as that is main culprit for deaths reported.

Unscientific and impractical decisions affects all in the state which is directly again linked to socio economics. Direct impact of ban leads to

loss in jobs and revenue—primarily tourism and excise revenue—which are key sources of income and development drivers for most of the state governments.

There is no doubt that tourism has been hit vis-à-vis event business and inbound movements thanks to this change in liquor policy as numbers have plummeted, even domestic tourism is getting hit. Our loss is the gain for our neighbouring countries. Today when the government has enabled eVisa to bring more tourists; we have created situations to kill this much anticipated growth. It pains to see huge investments turning NPA, or standing on the verge of becoming one among many. There is a lot of hard work which goes behind attracting people to our country and further to each state, besides lot of money. When the business comes knocking at your door and the clients opt out due to unfavourable conditions—Who is to be blamed? Who is the sufferer? Who is the loser?



Representative Image
Photo Courtesy: United Coffe House, CP



Representative Image
Photo Courtesy: The Claridges, New Delhi

“

Tourism has been hit vis-à-vis event business and inbound movements thanks to this change in liquor policy as numbers have plummeted, even domestic tourism is getting hit. Our loss is the gain for our neighbouring countries

”

It is an established fact that Tourism brings opportunities and cultures closer. Today when India is being touted as a country to be watched we come off with surprises that is difficult to rationalise. We haven't learnt from our past experiences and they get repeated. Historically speaking, in India there have been many failed attempts by governments in various states to impose ban on alcohol. In 1920s ban on alcohol sale and consumption came into force in most of the states, only to be either repealed later or intensity toned down. Post independence

it was tried again by Manipur, Nagaland, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana only to be repealed again.

What we need is awareness campaigns and sensitisation measures to instill responsible drinking habits across all channels. What we need is more de-addiction centers and most importantly a radical shift in our thinking and handling of alcohol related issues. What we need is instilling what we lost in the last decade or two – our cultural ethos which is our pride. What we need is de-addiction from new age habits which has cumulatively resulted in an unhealthy state of the society.

What we need is a cultural change. Flag bearers in social, political, religious, corporate circles have to work with governments and communities to bring in an effective change. This will require lot of unlearning and learning – are we ready?

*(The views expressed in this article are of the author, **Jose Pradeep** Director Yuvarani Residency, Kochi and Special Invitee– Kerala, EC SIHRA.)*

Disrupting Hospitality Education



Dennie Matthews

Disruptions can be positive, as we see them bringing enormous changes across various industries. But education in hospitality needs a major disruptor to turn it around.

The last few years have been owned by market disruptors. These disruptors are disruptors of not just industries and professions but they have had the pervasiveness of entering into a common man's life and disrupt the ways we even live and breathe on a daily basis! From the age of telegrams to instant messaging,

from hailing to tapping an app for a cab, from travel agents to OTAs, from hotel chains to shared economy brands like Airbnb, from chauffeur to a self driven car, et al., disruptors have changed the way we learnt to do things a decade ago, yet this is not the end and every other minute someone somewhere in some-corner is

working for an even greater disruption. The writing is on the wall, we cannot afford to be static else we would sooner or later be in a state like the now defunct mobile phone giant Nokia CEO 'we didn't do anything wrong, but somehow, we lost!' This is the refrain of companies, systems and individuals who could not keep up with the disruptors.

As I consider hospitality education in our country, I lament that we have not yet had a disruptor in our midst who could shake up, turn around and create a whole new learning ecosystem to give hospitality education the thrust and space it deserves.

“Lack of opportunities for instructors has stymied our education system and thus leads to a situation of no innovation”

Unfortunately we have been in the business of attempting to revive, repair, resolve and restore hospitality education in its present form instead of rethinking and recreating the entire system which is relevant for tomorrow. The hospitality industry requirement is writ loud and clear and all that is needed is to create a new ecosystem which would meet this demand.



How do we then bring this disruption to hospitality education in India? I have tried to highlight three critical elements on this pathway:

Need Assessment: The first thing is to accept what the market realities are and where indeed there is a "market potential". The industry's crying need is for associates at the entry level by the thousands and not that of managers as being currently churned out. The impact is therefore that of mismatch in aspirations of graduating students and on the other end industry looking for good hands but at lower positions. It's no-sense to make a post mortem attempt of aspiration management by asking graduates to do what a good vocational skilled person could equally do! The educators need to quickly realise this hard reality and offer shorter-term programmes rather than a three-year-long high sounding qualification. The pyramid needs to be inverted!

Innovation: Hospitality education can experience innovation when instructors are given the right environment to experiment and be creative in their pedagogical approach. When systems are rigid with no space for fresh thinking, the imparting of any knowledge would become mechanical and lead from diluted to outdated understanding by the learner of the subject matter.

Hence its essential going forward that instructors be allowed much liberty in their teaching style, practices and assessments. It's only an instructor who can know the need and capability of the learner and accordingly plan and deploy sessions. Innovation is also given the required momentum when instructors are given opportunities of continuing education for themselves to be abreast and relevant in their own teaching approach. Lack of opportunities for instructors has stymied our education system and thus leads to a situation of no innovation. But innovation will be the key!

Collaboration: No disruptor has worked in solo, collaboration is critical. In education, collaboration is required on two fronts--firstly with the industry and secondly with global education providers. We are no longer preparing our



Let us accept that technology can completely change the environment of education and make it fun and productive



students for just the local market; we are in the business of creating global citizens. For the first part, an education institute needs to identify and work with only industry folks who have good and transparent human resource policies (and not seekers of free slave labourers), this is extremely important to upkeep the image of the industry, which is to a great extent tarnished on grounds of poor pay scales and work hours!

On the second part having global curriculum incorporated or as value addition is imperative for creating a pool of workforce which understands global benchmarks and practices. No single curriculum today is self sufficient, it is only when we collaborate with the right education partner of repute that an entire programme becomes robust.

Technology: I am frequently amused when I hear from established educators that their programmes have a substantial element of technology imbibed! On digging further you would find that all they have is some hardware and some reservation software. The world has drifted so much ahead and today technology needs to be incorporated right from your branding exercise to the entire learning experience of a student. Technology enables flexibility,

creativity and capabilities never seen before. Institutions must incorporate technology right into their marketing, admissions, class rooms, curriculum delivery, assessments, continuous assessment, peer learning, teacher-student interaction, student-industry interface, placements, alumni associations and much more.

Unfortunately while the world has graduated so much ahead using technology for 1 to 1 learning, blended learning, MOOCs, online assessments and testing—we are still way behind. Let us accept that technology can completely change the environment of education and make it fun and productive. If hospitality education would adapt this, we may perhaps see more hands go up, wanting to be in this industry. This is in brief is my humble submission to our decision makers – will anyone heed?

*(The views expressed in this article are of the author, **Dennie Matthews**, who is the Chief Managing Officer of American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute.)*



Tier III, Tier IV the way forward

We find out from senior members of our regional associations, what are the developments and opportunities available in tier III and tier IV cities of the North, South, East and West of India.



Luv Malhotra
Vice President
FHRAI

As the industry is witnessing saturation in the economic growth and construction opportunities in the major cities of India, concurrently there has been a tremendous wealth transfer from metros and small cities down to the rural areas

“
In tier III cities the hotel segment should strive for budget accommodation for travellers
”

and this is an opportunity for future investments. Metros are on the way for non-gateway cities like Jaipur, Chandigarh, Amritsar, Varanasi, Kanpur, Ludhiana, Faridabad. In the new emerging India, the

growth opportunities in these markets (that have remained an untapped asset of the country for long) is primarily due to the gigantic gap between availability and demand.

Viewed as excellent investment options, these places come to be more cost-effective than metro cities which have escalating property prices. Adding to their advantage the improvement in connectivity has made these cities accessible and hassle free. International airports are a part of cities like Chandigarh and Amritsar.

Key factors supporting growth in these cities include reasonable land costs, limited hotel supply, availability of low cost manpower, healthy demand patterns led mostly by domestic visitation and strong economic and infrastructural growth. While branded hotels, both Indian and foreign, are expected to attract a significant market share in these emerging cities, but at the same time hotels in these markets will take a little longer to stabilise and owners should be realistic about their expectations on occupancy and rates. And though tapping the potential in small towns sounds like a notable takeaway, one cannot treat the tier II and tier III markets, simply as an extension of their tier I markets.



Sudesh Poddar
Hony Treasurer
FHRAI

In eastern India, tier III and tier IV cities can expect big investments in the hospital-ity sector as the results of recent Assembly Election reflect clear mandates in West Bengal and Assam—two big states in the region.

Trinamul Congress's consolidation of power raises the hope of a push on an aggressive growth and development in West Bengal. BJP's foray in the Northeast through a massive win in Assam is expected to bridge the region's gap with mainstream India, both in terms of politics and financial growth.

An early indicator of development of more branded hotels in smaller cities is JW Marriott's recent announcements of properties in

Siliguri, Guwahati, Shillong and Imphal. The group will open its much awaited luxury hotel in Kolkata next October. Hotel brands such as Sarovar, Keys, Tune, The Fern and Ginger are in different stages of assessing the feasibility of setting up of hotels in smaller towns to help them expand their footprint and maximise revenues.

The biggest advantage for some of these chains is that

“
Brands can drive occupancy levels of around 70% in tier III and IV towns
”

operating hotels in smaller towns is 15-20 per cent cheaper than in tier I and tier II cities. Moving away from the crowded and competitive tier I and tier II markets may help branded hotels expect better occupancy in smaller towns, as often they are the only star hotels in the city. They can drive occupancy levels of around 70 per cent in tier III and tier IV towns, unlike the country's average occupancy level of below 60 per cent.



K Syama Raju
Vice President
FHRAI

Driven by the growth story of the mid market segment and the emergence of these cities as the new development hubs, the opportunities in the market have made both international hotel companies and Indian chains strategise their plans for long-term business opportunities. The corporate sector is exploring rural and unexplored markets bringing in hospitality business to these cities that are the state hubs for hinterlands.

As Government of India and Ministry of tourism are keen to promote Rural India based on recent survey on 13 per cent increase of domestic tourist movement, it will fill up the confidence of hotels in tier III and tier IV cities to have their hotel occupancy increased. Ministry of Tourism is keen on promoting heritage centres and monuments which are situated in tier III and tier IV cities and will encourage budget hotels to come up.

Government of India's initiative in introducing eVisa for group tourism will help hotels placed in that place; to provide more amenities for the visitors and also

encourage to investors in building more room. Key factors supporting growth in these cities include reasonable land costs, limited hotel supply, and healthy demand patterns led mostly by domestic visitation, and strong economic and infrastructural growth and higher frequency of low cost airlines.

The Southern states that have progressive economic policies would see their cities benefit the most in terms of industrial investments.

However these cities have still a way to go before they command the volumes that the tier I cities do.

1) Services and Banking, “
All FMCG companies are now targeting these cities and their executives have to travel”

Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) sector still account for a large volume of business to hospitality.

Resorts are an exception to this rule as they depend on the leisure segment which tends to travel out. However, tourism, whether business or leisure, is known to have a relatively high multiplier effect. 2) The over inventory of rooms. 3) The long gestation period for return on investment, coupled with high financing costs is the other significant deterrent. 4) Excessive licensing and lack of single window clearance.



Dilip Datwani
Senior VP
HRAWI

In the last decade, India has seen a rapid evolution of the Indian hospitality industry as consumers are constantly being exposed to international travel, hence are aware of trends and new age concepts. Tier III and IV cities are the new investment destinations. These cities have already attained mass of population and enjoy good connectivity to major centres of commerce. Corporate India has woken up to the idea of 'Striking the hammer when the iron is hot'.

The potential for investors is humongous considering the low costs of land and also manpower. Small is the new big, small towns that is. After exploiting the growth prospects of metros the real estate companies are now concentrating on the Tier III and Tier IV cities. As the Indian economy experiences the boom, the large cities are getting inundated. Large scale investments have skyrocketed property prices and caused a congestion of residential and commercial properties. The high valuations of

property have made it nearly impossible for companies to make decent returns, prolonging the gestation period in turn. This has forced governments and many investment companies to seek out for alternative smaller cities leading to a demand for tier III and tier IV cities.

Cities like Chandigarh, Mysore, Vadodara, Visakhapatnam, Bhopal, Indore, Nagpur and Jaipur are experiencing the initial phase of rapid economic growth and achieving more than 30 per cent growth per annum. These are some of the small cities described as 'emerging centres of growth' as they are now giving a thrust to India's booming economy. What makes the centres of growth

“
Tier III and IV cities are the new investment destinations. These cities enjoy good connectivity”

attractive to the developers availability of reasonable land for development and untapped manpower pool along with the special initiatives taken by the respective governments in providing the smaller cities with infrastructure facilities, creation of SEZs, expanding service sectors and creation of smart cities have all added to the advantage of opening of new hotels.

Luxury WITH COMFORT



Renu Misra

GROHE's exclusive products combining stylish design with innovative feel-good functionalities contribute to a pleasant washroom atmosphere and a positive user experience. **Renu Misra, MD, GROHE India**, tells us more.

Kanchan Nath

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE GROWTH OF GROHE PRODUCTS IN INDIA?

India is perceived as a highly lucrative and a fast growing market for premium sanitary ware products. The design features of bathrooms, spa facilities and sanitary installations are particularly significant in the hospitality industry. When guests visit a hotel, they expect a standard beyond that of a basic domestic bathroom. Surveys have shown that the majority of

guests inspect the bathroom in the hotel room immediately upon arrival. In a place of leisure and relaxation, they expect a luxurious, comfortable and harmonious atmosphere, as well as impeccable levels of hygiene.

WHAT IS YOUR SELLING STRATEGY FOR THE INDIAN MARKET?

Indian consumers are well exposed to global levels of luxury, which in turn allows them to make better and informed



decisions. Quality, technology, design and sustainability are our four brand values that illustrate our commitment to creating exceptional experiences. User-friendly and eco-friendly products combined with seamless technology are kept in mind while designing all our offerings. We set our standards extremely high to ensure that every time a customer turns on a GROHE faucet or steps into a GROHE shower, he feels the difference. GROHE is well positioned to ad-





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dress customer needs with a range of products designed and developed especially for the premium and mass premium segments.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE OVER-ALL MARKET RESPONSE TO YOUR PRODUCTS?

GROHE has received an exceptional response from the Indian market since its launch in the country. Today, all discerning customers who are looking for breathtaking luxurious experiences think only of GROHE. We have managed to capture not just significant mind-share but also the imagination of our growing consumer base.

WHAT ARE THE LATEST TRENDS IN DESIGN FOR BATHROOM AND SANITARY FITTINGS ACROSS HOTELS?

The bath and sanitary fittings segment in India is evolving with new designs and patterns suited for those looking for luxury combined with comfort. As per our studies, the dominant trends will focus on faucets and fittings that are high on luxury and sophistication.

The one or two head mixer taps are the most frequently bought varieties as of now. Earlier, pillar taps were purchased the most but now the buying patterns have altered tremendously. Concealed plastic cisterns, framed concealed cisterns and vanity washbasins are areas that have seen limited scope till now because of their high price but the demand for them is burgeoning everyday as emphasis on world-class, luxurious bathrooms grows in Indian commercial properties.

As far as water closets go, the wall-hung type is getting a preference over standing models. They are being favoured on the basis of their superior aesthetics, design value and also for their compact sizes which

allow for easy housekeeping.

Shower cubicles will surpass bathtubs in both economy and luxury segments for the hospitality sector in particular. Many hotels are opting for smart showers because they not only promote reduced water consumption and space utilisation but are also preferred by most business travellers who often don't have the time for long leisurely baths. In the light of the growing popularity of shower enclosures, shower trays are fast catching up as the most sought-after product in India. As the concept of dry showers gets

more appealing, shower trays are seeing a huge spurt in demand, especially the synthetic kind as they are more cost-effective and long-lasting.

HAVE YOU TAKEN ANY NEW INITIATIVES IN TECHNOLOGY?

Some of the latest additions made by GROHE include the GROHE Eurodisc Joystick. The super-slim, wall-mounted



washbasin mixer offers smooth and long-lasting fingertip control. The sleek finish and award-winning design of the product makes it the perfect amalgamation of form and function.

The GROHE SmartControl push button technology takes the idea of comfortable showering to a new level. The newly designed push button integrates both the on-off function and volume control. The push button has an intuitive symbol for the head shower spray pattern or the hand spray, whichever the user





prefers. Additionally, the contours of the push buttons are such that they allow you to adjust the flow volume accurately even with wet hands simply by rotating them.

Our Eurosmart NEW faucet features a solid metal handle and forward-leaning dynamics. It is the perfect

mix of smart looks, technology and price. Similarly, the GROHE Essence New represents clean, simple and visually pleasing designs. It features all the leading GROHE innovations.

WHAT CSR INITIATIVES HAVE YOU TAKEN ACROSS INDIA?

GROHE Jal Academy was established

in 2009 in Mumbai, which is an award-winning aid project recognised by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development for its innovation and significant social impact. It enrolls young people from economically challenged backgrounds who strive to make a living and enables them to fulfill their true potential via feasible careers.

Apart from the technical aspects, the academy also offers soft skills training which includes the development of behavioural skills in areas such as customer relationship, etiquette and work ethics. Recently, GROHE announced the launch of its GROHE dual tech- Don Bosco Jal Academy in Delhi as well. This move will play an instrumental role in empowering young individuals from financially weaker sections to learn plumbing skills and make a career in the Indian sanitary ware fittings industry.

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STANDARDISING the business of Food

FSSAI today rings a bell of alarm among most hoteliers and restaurateurs, as they remain wary of unprecedented enforcement officials and the uncalled for inspector raj. **Pawan Agarwal**, Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, states his point of view.

Talking about FSSAI, he said, "FSSAI was formed with the legislation of 2006 and from 2011, it has started work, once its regulations were formed. In the beginning we stressed on the product standards of packaged and other food products. The focus was not that much on the service industry. In the food business either we have commodities, or there is packaged or processed food and there is the service industry that include restaurants, catering establishments and hotels." From a food safety and hygiene point of view FSS Act has brought all the licensing requirements under one umbrella. There were disputes about some of these issues which high court has in its order clarified.

He added, "Catering establishments from the very beginning have been under the purview of FSSAI. All catering establishments whether they are government canteens, street food joints, food vendors at railway stations, food plazas, mobile units, temple kitchens, or kitchens of religious places. They all come within the purview of FSSAI and many of them are already licensed and registered with us.

Recently we have taken up a special drive, as per which those who have been left out and have not got registered under FSSAI, will be also be registered. Whosoever is providing

food to public at large, will need to be registered under a FSSAI license."

Addressing the concerns of hoteliers, he said, "As far as the concerns of FHRAI and NRAI, independent or chain of hotels are there, they are very much justified. We have said that if you all genuinely believe that there is a need for improving the hygienic standards of restaurants, some of them are doing a good job, one must accept, but we do recognise the fact that many of these restaurants they require to do much more than what they are doing currently.

We are all on the same page that a lot more needs to be done in this particular space. What is to be done? How it has to be done? We have left it to them. We will co-create the regulatory framework for restaurants and hotels and catering establishments. Up till now our entire focus has been on getting these establishments licensed by us, registered with us."



Pawan Agarwal



Giving an idea about the standards that they are going to enforce, he said, "Then there are certain obligations of that license, which are still being deliberated on. There cannot be same standards for everybody, therefore we are taking a dual step, and there will be certain basic hygienic standards, applicable to all, with a zero tolerance policy in basic standards. We will encourage hotels, restaurants and catering establishments, to follow more advanced standards, more than what is given in the basic. That is voluntary.

Wherein they certify that they themselves have volunteered and are following those standards. Then there will be a third category of hotels and restaurants, who want to follow global standards. They will be much better than even advanced standards. Then we will say that if you are significantly better than our advanced standards and are at par with



We will encourage hotels, restaurants and catering establishments to follow more advanced standards, more than what is given in the basic. That is voluntary



the global standards, you have to demonstrate that you are at par with the global standards, and then we will have soft enforcement on them."

Giving his take on heavy metal residue in food products, he said, "This concern of pesticide residue, heavy metal residue, this is a concern that is of recent origin. Until now even the testing facilities of the same were not available. I feel this concern to an extent is overstated by the industry. The processor for the pesticide limits, even the bigger chains if they are sourcing local material, there is hardly anything that they can do. Except when they



are procuring it, they test the raw material and they find it above those limits, then they do not buy it. Then the farmer per force is allowed to adopt good agricultural practices. This is a long drawn affair and boils down to changing the farming practices. Ground water levels are down in some areas there is an extensive amount of arsenic in the subsoil. If there is farming in those areas some of that arsenic will go into the food chain and will create problems. They require long term solution, a solution that goes beyond even the preview of FSSAI. The issue goes down to improving the agriculture and farming practices. These are issues that will actually take decades of research, experimentation, changing the behaviour, changing the farming practices. We will not hold our restaurants and hotels responsible for some of the things that are not in their control."

POSITIVE STATE of MIND!

In an email interview, **Binu Nair**, Human Resources Manager, The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi tells us more about their work-culture, gender parity, and policies for industrial trainees.

HOW DO YOU HELP MAINTAIN THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES?



Binu Nair

The importance of managing associates work-life balance (WLB) has increased over the past few years. The ever demanding customer service expectations and the very nature of the employment have necessitated an increased organisational concern for our associate's wellbeing. There is no standard formula available for organisations to manage WLB as the nature of challenges varies unit to unit. Ideally, the WLB concept requires organisations to integrate the workforce demography and the challenges related to each subsection to bring in effectiveness of such efforts.

At Taj group of hotels, WLB is treated as a comprehensive employment life cycle process which aims at day-to-day attempt to increase the flexibility by which associates can effectively enact their work-roles whilst simultaneously enabling them to enact their family-based roles to the extent necessary.

We have adopted the following series of policies in last couple of years to facilitate the overall wellbeing of our associates.

- Associate Holiday Plan – To spend quality time with family, we have introduced Associate Holiday Plan with 10 free room nights to associates at Taj group.
 - On-site child-care facilities – In this challenging environment for working couple, we have introduced child care facilities for our associates so that they can continue to work which while we take care of their children.
 - Health and wellness programmes
 - Commuting opportunities,
 - Improved internal facilities like associate restaurant, restroom facilities.
- Given the need to explore the tenets of the WLB, our efforts

- Six days off—changing the old policy of one weekly off to six offs in a month which supports our associates with additional two weekly offs to spend more time with friends and family.





are not limited to the above themes of 'employer facilitation' to re-conceptualise WLB. However, a conscious but subtle effort in driving 'positive state of mind at workplace' for our associates are being inculcated through work culture interventions to reduce stress and job-dissatisfaction at work place.

WHAT KIND OF GENDER PARITY EXISTS IN YOUR COMPANY? DO YOU EMPLOY A LOT OF WOMEN IN SENIOR POSITIONS?

As an organisation we believe that gender equality rests on, but is not the same as, achieving gender parity, or females being represented in equal numbers as males in our industry, although the latter offers a 'first stage' measure of progress towards gender equality in our organisation.

Bearing these commitments in mind, we have worked towards gender parity and gender equality with reference to our business operations, explore the linkages between them, and identify the best mechanisms to measure progress.

Our hiring concepts reflect these philosophies wherein special efforts are being made to ensure that we achieve our objectives. In last one year, we have filled in key roles in organisation with women leaders – Senior Vice President – Real Estate & Development. Two out of three Associate Vice President - HR, Associate Vice President CSR, 40 per cent of HOD team at The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi, 50 per cent Restaurant Managers at unit are all women. From having lady butlers to provide Taj's legendary service to female guests to providing crèches at the hotel for female staff; providing pepper spray, security manned home drop facility to female staff and self-defense classes, we provide a safe and stable environment for our staff.

WHAT ARE YOUR POLICIES FOR TRAINEES?

Training at our organisation is not considered or limited to a process of imparting knowledge and skills, but it is conceived as internal capability building process with a sustainable model of creating knowledge bank and talent pool within the system.

A trainee at Taj is considered as an 'internal brand ambassador' wherein he/she is expected to represent the brand while getting trained and also post their training experience with our company. Hoteling is indeed learned at tough environments and conditions wherein the young trainees are exposed to challenges and shift duties. However, we try making the learning experience the best possible by sharing defined learning expectations at the beginning of the training process which is monitored by the internal training department. As part of

FIVE ESSENTIAL TRAITS

- 👉 Passionate
- 👉 Emotionally Stable
- 👉 Team Player
- 👉 Honest
- 👉 Urge for success

our training philosophy we ensure that proper feedback is provided to the trainee on a frequent basis so as to ensure learning curve throughout their learning period. Our conversion rate of trainees to permanent employment itself speaks about the success rate of our training processes.

FC BARCELONA WALLCOVERINGS COLLECTION

◆ Marshalls, has launched signature wallcoverings on FC Barcelona, the popular football club based in Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain. Marshalls has tied-up with FC Barcelona to launch this new wall covering



collection, which pays special tribute to all football lovers across the globe and especially the fans of Barca. These wallcoverings can be used across varied spaces be it homes, offices, hotels, sports bars or clubs. The FC Barcelona collection offers a diverse range of designs ranging from the images of Barca's legendary players to that of the club's official jersey and logo, the FC Barcelona stadium and much more! Moreover, the wallcoverings can be customised for those looking at having specific designs. So all you need to do is, measure the exact size and select your design to create that perfect space.

DESIGNER KIOSKS AND CATERING COUNTERS

◆ Rajkiran Kitchen Equipments brings you the latest designs in commercial food service equipment. These service equipments would add to the elegance of any banquet venue in hotels and restaurants. Other equipments the company provides include those for preparation and cooking, pre-preparation, refrigeration, washing, storage and miscellaneous. Their equipments can be ideally utilised for hotels, restaurants, hospitals, industrial and institutional canteens, bakeries, bars, fast-food, caterers, vegetable processing units and R&D centres. Apart from providing the equipment, they also specialise in complete layout design and engineering facilities.



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'PRIVÉ COLLECTION' BY RADISSON BLU MBD HOTEL



The Radisson Blu MBD Hotel, Noida, has launched their all-new MBD Privé Collection, which offers the highest level of luxury and comfort. Each room in this brand new MBD Privé Collection defines uber luxury as it emulates the fashion and impeccable interiors of rococo style while staying true to its Indian roots by blending it with heavy lush embroidery and authentic 'dabka' work on draperies and cushions.

The rooms have been designed in the best Venetian and French traditions as the decorative scheme encapsulates centuries with styles alternating between those from the Victorian to the most contemporary, which makes its appearance timeless and eclectic. Each furniture piece is bespoke and finished meticulously with gold carvings that date back to the 1800s. All the decorative lights, including goosenecks, table lamps, chandeliers and standing lamps are hand-picked for their unique character and presence.



SAGAR RATNA INTRODUCES NEW MENU

Sagar Ratna, brings a new twist to taste with a refreshing new menu, including healthy variants as options. It now offers, variants of dosa made with ragi and oats. Chaat made from idlis and kheer from sabudana. New dishes include Gadbad Sundae; Veg cheese dosa, Idli Chaat, Rawa Kesari. Healthy variants include Ragi Dosa, Panyaram, Payasam made from jaggery and sugar free, Kuli Paniyaram, sweet lime (mausambi) fresh juice and water melon fresh juice.





COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT GURGAON HOLDS CULINARY CLASS FOR KIDS

Courtyard by Marriott Gurgaon held the second edition of the Kids Master class for aspiring chefs between 7-15 years of age on May 17, 2016. Instituting a unique platform for the kids to showcase their culinary skills, Executive Chef Amit Dash along with his team at Courtyard by Marriott Gurgaon brought together the little culinary wizards under one roof. Through these classes, children can explore the art of cooking and spend the summer vacations creatively. Post this first class the hotel will be having classes till June 16. While on May 17, they learnt dishes from the Mexican cuisine, through the next ten classes, they will be learning to cook Indian, Japanese, Thai, Italian, Chinese and dimsums, fast food items, bakery items, pastries and cakes.



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appointments



SHYAM CHAUDHARY

**General Manager
Leisure Inn West Gurgaon**

★ Leisure Inn West Gurgaon has appointed Shyam Chaudhary as the General Manager. He will be responsible for all aspects of short and long-term planning and preparation of hotel policies, procedures, relevant legislations, overall operations and the annual budget. Chaudhary has an illustrious career of 14 years in the hospitality industry, during which he has proven himself adept at developing, directing and implementing marketing objectives, policies, managing operations in support of the corporate objective. He brings with him expertise in designing programmes.



ANDREAS STREIBER

**General Manager
Shangri-La Hotel, Bengaluru**

★ Shangri-La Hotel, Bengaluru has appointed Andreas Streiber as new General Manager. A native of Germany, he brings with him over 32 years of hospitality, operational and management experience and has spent the last 10 years in senior management positions at several reputed international companies around the world such as Europe, North America, South East Asia and China. A seasoned hotelier, he served as opening General Manager Shangri-La Hotel, Qinhuangdao from 2014 to 2016. He joined the Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts group as director of food and beverage.



VIKRAMJIT SINGH

**President and Chief Revenue Officer
Lemon Tree Hotels**

★ The Lemon Tree Hotel Company has promoted Vikramjit Singh as the President and Chief Revenue Officer of the Company. As President, Singh will be responsible for Sales, Marketing and Business Development for the company. He is one of the founding members of the Lemon Tree Hotels' team and joined the group in 2005. He was the Chief Sales Officer of the Company before being promoted as President. He was an entrepreneur in Assam, where he ran his own hotel, before joining the Lemon Tree group.



MANOJ DEV

**General Manager
Shraddha Sarovar Portico, Shirdi**

★ Sarovar Hotels & Resorts has appointed Manoj Dev as General Manager of Shraddha Sarovar Portico, Shirdi. Dev brings with him an experience of about two decades in the hospitality industry. Some of his previous assignments include roles as Managing Partner, Chakla Belan, Dubai; Managing Partner, The Palace Belvedere, Nainital; General Manager, Vikram Vantage Inn, Nainital; General Manager, Pine Retreat, Mussoorie and Quality Inn Presidency, Kochi. He holds a Diploma in Hotel Management from IHM Chennai and has completed his Bachelors' Degree in Arts from Chandigarh, Punjab University.



KARANBIR GULATI

**Assistant Director of F&B
Pullman Novotel New Delhi Aerocity**

★ Karanbir Gulati has been appointed as Assistant Director of F&B for Pullman Novotel New Delhi Aerocity. In his new role at Pullman Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, he will look after the entire F&B division that includes signature restaurants and bars of both the hotels. He will be responsible for managing guest satisfaction, bringing in new F&B trends, maintaining a good wine and beverage list along with quality service, and offering an innovative cocktail and beverage menu. His passion for wine will add value to the hotel's wine offering. Gulati has nine years of work experience.



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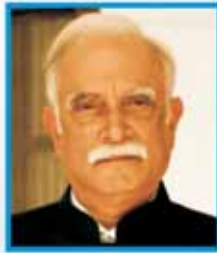
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Shaji Kuriakose

Founded in 1982, FCS has evolved as a leading global provider of comprehensive hospitality guest services applications and solution design services for individual hotels, international chain hotels and integrated resorts, **Shaji Kuriakose**, Director – Sales and Operations, FCS, computer systems tells us more.

FCS is over 33 years old. Telling us about their USP, Kuriakose said, "FCS is trusted by the best hotel brands globally to enhance their guest offerings, with a total

of 12 guest-facing and back-of-house products - all under one roof "FCS Rainbow Solution" We also have a strong local support team with three levels of 24x7x365 support."

e-Housekeeping, e-Recovery, e-Engineering, e-Concierge and most recently launched "e-Laundry". FCS e-Laundry provides an end-to-end, digitized laundry management solution for hotels, whether their laundry operations are in-house or outsourced. FCS m2Talk is another new product launched in Q4 2015. It is an innovative staff communication platform that replaces the walkie-talkie system currently used at many properties, operating on a much more secure platform to streamline staff communications and tasks."



Telling us more about the product, he added, "FCS e-Solution is a dynamic suite of multi-language, web-based applications designed to streamline property operations and guest service.

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There are 10,000 organised hotels all

over India, which means seven lakh rooms are available to sell every day, approx. 10 per cent of the room guests are checking out early morning. This means that 70,000 rooms are vacant between departure and next guest arrival (unutilised room times), be it an early arrival, transit delay, and frequent. Business travellers are looking for just limited hours of hotel stay for their same day travel after their official meeting. Here Slicerooms will be the key element of double the revenue for hotels and flexible stay for



guests without any compulsions of customary hotel norms. The world of travel and lodging is undergoing a sea change. It is the era of innovation and there are so many new concepts and ideas happening in the hotel industry. Travel has also become shorter and convenient which means long stays may not be always required hence the Slicerooms concept will drive the future.





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