

today's hotelier

February 2020 | todayshotelier.com

The Official Publication of 

The dos and don'ts of dual branding

When to combine resources and
when to go solo

THE C-SUITE Brand standards

The intersection of guests,
owners, brands, and staff

Connecting to the brand

Brand standards reach across all
areas of a hotel, including – and
especially – technology

TINA EDMUNDSON
Global Brand Officer,
Marriott International

ADA
COMPLIANCE
How to react in
the face of ADA
litigation



Reimagined. Reinvented. The All-New 6.



G6 Hospitality is parent company to Motel 6 and Studio 6, two of the most iconic lodging brands in the United States. G6 owns and operates nearly 1,400 locations across the United States and Canada, with over 155 new properties now in the pipeline, 50% of them new construction. Since G6 is one of the most reliable and financially rewarding franchise opportunities in economy lodging, becoming a franchisee in the G6 family is the smartest investment you can make.



FRANCHISE WITH US TODAY.

1.844.456.3627 | motel6franchise.com | franchisesales@g6hospitality.com

©2020 All rights reserved. G6 Hospitality Franchising LLC. 4001 International Parkway, Carrollton, Texas 75007. This advertisement is not an offer to sell a franchise. An offer can be made only by means of a Franchise Disclosure Document that has been registered and approved by the appropriate agency in your state, if your state requires such registration. Minnesota Registration Nos. – Motel 6: F-5053; Studio 6: F-5052. *Source: Item 19 of the March 5, 2019, Motel 6 FDD. **Source: Item 19 of the March 5, 2019, Studio 6 FDD.



An iconic American brand.

Motel 6 offers smart franchisees an opportunity like no other. Don't miss your chance to join the fastest-growing brand with one of the lowest operating costs in the economy segment.

THE BOTTOM LINE

AVERAGE OCCUPANCY*

66%

AVERAGE DAILY RATE*

\$60



Why choose Studio 6?

Today, the demand for quality and comfort at a value is stronger than ever for extended-stay travel. Studio 6 has begun answering that demand in earnest and sees its future as a promising one. As a Studio 6 franchisee, you'll have the national recognition Motel 6 can give you, with the branding and operational support you need. And that's promising for your bottom line.

THE BOTTOM LINE

AVERAGE OCCUPANCY**

72%

ONE OF THE EXTENDED-STAY SEGMENT'S FASTEST-GROWING ECONOMY BRANDS



WE HANDLE PAYMENT PROCESSING SO YOU CAN FOCUS ON YOUR GUESTS

For more than 20 years, we've specialized in helping you process payments without hidden fees,¹ teaser rates or long-term contracts.² AAHOA members receive preferred rates, a dedicated lodging support team, and experience seamless integration into existing property management systems.

TRUST. SIMPLICITY. SECURITY.

Find out why more than 10,000 AAHOA members choose Chase as their payment processor. Call 1-800-727-1872 or email lodging_team@chase.com today to learn more.



¹ All applicable fees are listed on the Schedule A.

² Certain restrictions may apply. Not all businesses may qualify for month-to-month or no long-term contract, such as businesses who: require processing capabilities in multiple currencies, process over \$5 million in annual credit/debit card sales or have certain software or connectivity requirements. Qualifying businesses may terminate their contract at any time by providing 30 days' written notice. Businesses who receive a promotional consideration from Chase may be required to repay all or a pro-rated portion of the value of such promotional consideration if the contract is terminated within the first 24 months. Businesses who do not qualify for the no long-term contract may be subject to additional terms and conditions, including a defined initial term and early termination fees. Talk to a Chase Representative for more details. Businesses are required to complete an application and agree to terms and conditions at the time of enrollment.

All businesses are subject to credit approval. Merchant services are provided by Paymentech LLC ("Chase"), a subsidiary of JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. ©2019 JPMorgan Chase & Co. All rights reserved.

contents

February 2020 | todayshotelier.com

14

THE TASTE OF EXPERIENCE

The comfort of predictability in hotel stays gives way to the modern traveler's yearning for experiences
by LISA GORDON



18

Connecting to the brand

Brand standards reach across all areas of a hotel, including – and especially – technology
by FIONA SOLTES

22

The dos and don'ts of dual-branding

A decade's worth of data reveals dual-branding hotels may not be beneficial in the long run
by SUSANNA DANIEL

26

4 areas of focus, unlimited possibilities

How to discover your focus and maximize your AAHOA membership in 2020
by HEATHER CARNES

departments

- 6 LETTER FROM THE CHAIRWOMAN
- 8 LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO
- 9 GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
- 42 AAHOA CLUB BLUE, PLATINUM & SILVER MEMBERS
- 44 AAHOA MEMBERS IN ACTION
- 47 CLASSIFIEDS
- 50 ADVERTISERS INDEX

columns

- THE C-SUITE.....**10**
Brand standards: The intersection of guests, owners, brands, and staff
by TINA EDMUNDSON
- COMMON GROUND.....**12**
Support for Visit Florida and encouraging tourism
- FINANCE.....**30**
What role does brand play in a financing transaction?
by RUSHI SHAH
- SMALL BUSINESS.....**32**
The small business brand
by ALFREDO ORTIZ
- LEGAL CORNER.....**33**
Brand standards: The letter of the law
by RICHARD M. SALTZMAN
- ADA COMPLIANCE.....**34**
How to react in the face of ADA litigation
by MARTIN H. ORLICK
- HX: FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION.....**36**
AAHOA leaders shared industry wisdom at HX: The Hotel Experience Powered by AAHOA
by GENEVA TODDY
- CITY SPOTLIGHT.....**38**
Sacramento
by ASIF LAKHANI

5 THINGS TO KNOW

ABOUT AAHOA THIS MONTH

1.

AAHOACON registration promotions end this month. Have you registered for the leading event for hoteliers? Taking place April 13-16, in Orlando, FL, the 2020 AAHOA Convention & Trade Show promises to be the best one yet. Early-bird discounts and complimentary Lifetime Member registration end February 13, so register today.

2.

Other important February deadlines. Recognize the hard work in others by nominating a fellow hotelier for one of AAHOA's annual awards by February 3, and be sure to make your nominations for open positions on the Board of Directors by February 16. Both nomination forms are available at AAHOA.com/AAHOACON20.

3.

We're headed to Las Vegas! Join AAHOA at the Radisson Hotel Group's Americas Business Conference, February 24-27, in Las Vegas, where AAHOA Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala is a featured speaker. AAHOA will also host its Brand Alliance Meeting on February 25.

4.

Expand your thinking on multi-brand hotel development. Register for AAHOA's Successful Multi-Brand Hotel Development Workshop, a one-day seminar that will teach you everything you need to know about building a thriving multi-brand property. The workshop, taking place March 4, will conclude with a tour of a dual-branded hotel. Visit MyAAHOA.com to register.

5.

Make your voice heard at State Capital Lobby Days. Many state legislatures across the country are convening to make decisions that will impact your business. AAHOA's State Capital Lobby Days are critical to maximizing your impact, and they're an excellent opportunity to make your voice heard and meet your senators and representatives. Get involved and learn more at AAHOA.com.

2019-2020 AAHOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AAHOA OFFICERS

Jagruti Panwala, CHO

Chairwoman

Biran Patel

Vice Chairman

Vinay Patel

Treasurer

Nishant (Neal) Patel, CHO

Secretary

Cecil Staton

President & CEO

DIRECTORS

Hitesh (HP) Patel, CHO, CHA

Immediate Past Chairman

Sanjay M. Patel

Alabama Regional Director

Girish (Gary) Patel,

CHO, CHA, CHIA
Arkansas Regional Director

Hitesh Patel

Central Midwest Regional Director

Bharat Patel, CHO

Florida Regional Director

Kapil Patel

Georgia Regional Director

Nick Zaver

Gulf Regional Director

Sanjay (Sam) Patel

Mid Atlantic Regional Director

Sunil Patel, CHO, CHA, CHIA

Mid South Regional Director

Akshat Patel

North Carolina Regional Director

Bhavesh N. Patel

North Central Regional Director

Kamalesh (KP) Patel

North Pacific Regional Director

Mayur (Mike) Patel, CHO

North Texas Regional Director

Jayesh R. Patel

Northeast Regional Director

Hiten Patel, CHO

Northwest Regional Director

Chetan (Chet) Patel, CHO

South Carolina Regional Director

Mike Patel

South Central Texas Regional Director

Mike Riverside, CHO, CHA

South Pacific Regional Director

Sawan H. Patel

Southeast Texas Regional Director

Imesh Vaidya, CHO

Southwest Regional Director

Kalpesh Joshi, CHO

Upper Midwest Regional Director

Sandip Patel

Washington D.C. Area Regional Director

Jayesh Patel, CHA

Director at Large

Piyush Patel

Director at Large

Prashant Patel

Director at Large

Nimisha Patel, CHO

Female Director Western Division

Lina Patel, CHO

Female Director Eastern Division

Miraj S. Patel, MBA, CHO, CHIA

Young Professional Director

Western Division

Purvi Panwala, CHO

Young Professional Director

Eastern Division

Faheem Khan, CHO

Industry Partner



FIND THE LATEST AT
WWW.TODAYSHOTELIER.COM

Photo Courtesy of Tina Edmundson

CONNECT

EMAIL: todayshotelier@naylor.com

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/AAHOAofficial

INSTAGRAM: [AAHOAofficial](https://www.instagram.com/AAHOAofficial)

LINKEDIN: [AAHOA](https://www.linkedin.com/company/AAHOA)

TWITTER: [@TodaysHotelier](https://twitter.com/TodaysHotelier)

YOUTUBE: youtube.com/AAHOA

Today's Hotelier

is the official monthly publication of AAHOA
1100 Abernathy Road,
Suite 725, Atlanta, GA 30328
P: (404) 816-5759
info@aahoa.com
www.aahoa.com

AAHOA STAFF CONTRIBUTORS

Lisa Brown, Copy Editor

Heather Carnes, Director, Marketing

Peter Clerkin, Director, Communications

Rachel Humphrey

COO & VP of Franchise Relations

James Jenkins, SVP, Business Development

Kati Siconolfi

Director, State & Local Government Affairs

Cecil Staton, President & CEO

Kathryn Stone, Chief of Staff

Today's Hotelier

is published by

NAYLOR

ASSOCIATION SOLUTIONS

5950 NW First Place, Gainesville, FL 32607

P: (800) 369-6220

www.naylor.com

todayshotelier@naylor.com

NAYLOR STAFF CONTRIBUTORS

Sunny Goel, Design/Layout

Heather Greyling, Publisher

Kira Krewson, Project Manager

John O'Neil, Advertising Director

Nancy Taylor, Senior Marketing Specialist

Geneva Toddy, Managing Editor

Tracy Venzen, Project Coordinator

Chris Zabel, Advertising Associate



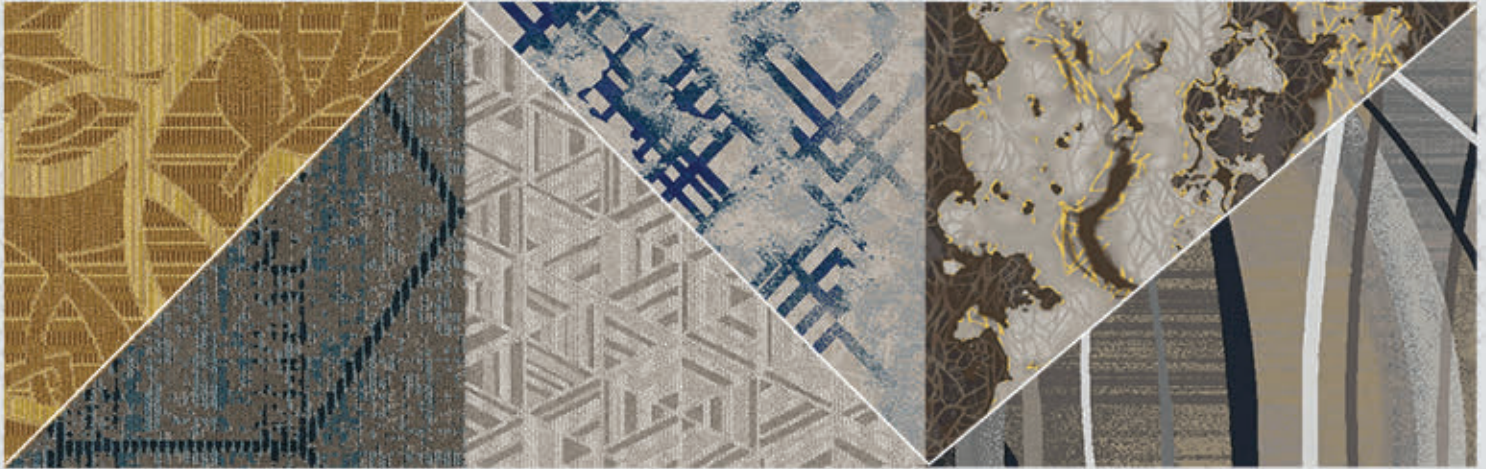
Opinions expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the policy of AAHOA or Today's Hotelier magazine. Publication of an article or advertisement does not imply approval or endorsement by AAHOA.

©2020 AAHOA, all rights reserved. The contents of this publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part without the prior written consent of the publisher. Today's Hotelier (ISSN 24174062), volume 20, issue 02, is published monthly by Naylor Association Solutions, for AAHOA, 1100 Abernathy Road, Suite 725, Atlanta, GA 30328. Periodicals postage paid at Gainesville, Florida, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Today's Hotelier, 5950 NW First Place, Gainesville, FL 32607.

PUBLISHED JANUARY 2020/AAHOM0220/1335

Editorial inquiries: todayshotelier@naylor.com | Advertising inquiries: John O'Neil, joneil@naylor.com

Celebrating **2** Generations
Of Working Together and Success of AAHOA members
and their families as a preferred flooring vendor
since 1985



Embassy Carpets®

Coast-to-Coast Quality

Since 1985

Luxury LVT | Carpet Tiles



UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN **PRICE** AND **COST**

PRICE IS WHAT YOU PAY • **COST** IS WHAT YOU GET IN QUALITY & SERVICE

Embassy Pacifica

Embassy Carpets®

Embassy Hawaii 5-0

Quality and Trust with Confidence
Since 1985

800 366-7847 or embassycarpets.com



JAGRUTI PANWALA

AAHOA CHAIRWOMAN (2019-2020)



Because a successful relationship is imperative to a successful business, it is imperative for owners to have a good understanding of the franchise agreement's requirements.”

The hotel owner and brand relationship

FOR MOST OF AAHOA'S 19,600+ members, the franchise business model helped them achieve the American Dream. The relationship between a brand and a hotelier is one in which both parties choose the other. When brands choose an owner to develop a property, they consider a number of factors ranging from some that are geographic and market-based to others that are more personal, such as the owner's experience, reputation, and whether or not they would make a good partner. Owners consider many factors as well, such as the brand's reputation, market segment, and potential ROI. These are multimillion-dollar investments, and both parties do their research when choosing a partner. Because a successful relationship is vital to a successful business, it is imperative for owners to have a good understanding of the franchise agreement's requirements.

However, disagreement is an inevitable part of any relationship. Whether that relationship is business or personal, the remedies are often the same – hard work, communication, and, sometimes, compromise. When it comes to franchisor/franchisee relationships, one of the points of contention that I hear hoteliers mention most is brand standards, particularly those that are non-guest-facing. But the disagreements that may arise can be addressed constructively and potentially headed off by working strategically with brands and other hoteliers.

Brands base their standards on market research and testing to create a set of amenities and services they feel will make guests feel welcome and comfortable (and, perhaps most importantly, feel that they are getting their money's worth). Disagreement can come about when brands do not effectively communicate why certain standards are being mandated or if owners feel that their feedback is not valued. Owners are often frustrated by amenity creep, and, sometimes, a brand's failure to explain why certain standards are being implemented can compound those frustrations. Maintaining open lines of communication with a brand and providing valuable feedback based on guest interactions can head off potential disagreements when it comes to new standards.

I recommend working with other hoteliers through franchise advisory councils (FACs), which can facilitate dialogue with brands, and capitalizing on your own relationship with your brand. These relationships also can offer valuable perspective, both to owners when discussing the highs and lows of operating a particular franchise, and to brands when they need owner feedback or simply want to take the temperature of their franchisees. Owner feedback helps brands understand what does and does not work. It improves customer service and can play an important role in a brand's direction as it evolves. The success of this type of working relationship is contingent upon the brand treating these councils as true advisors and not rubber stamps, and active owner participation is imperative to making this a reality. Associations such as AAHOA can also help owners work strategically with brands, identify common owner issues and interests across different brands, and facilitate open communication. In the end, you've both chosen each other for a reason, and success is achievable.

This month's issue of *Today's Hotelier* focuses on brand standards. There is a good feature on how brand standards are evolving to avoid cookie-cutter guest experiences and give hoteliers more leeway to showcase their personal touch. I also encourage you to check out the article on brand standards and emerging technologies. This is an important topic, especially given the speed at which technology changes. While brand standards can be a contentious issue, as entrepreneurs, we are always looking to improve our businesses. Working with brands to help provide the best guest experiences can yield a rewarding and, ultimately, profitable result. ■

GIVE YOUR GUESTS THE BEST IN ENTERTAINMENT

Get a DIRECTV HD Entertainment System on us!¹



Homeland on SHOWTIME®
SHOWTIME subscription required

Plus, offer includes:
(Conditions apply)

The DIRECTV Residential Experience offers premium entertainment benefiting your hotel and guests.

- Full residential lineup with access to over 100 HD channels²
- Technology that's easy, flexible and compatible with most TVs and wiring
- No Pro:Idiom TVs required
- Simplified, anti-microbial remote



2020 NFL SUNDAY TICKET
at no extra cost.³

ASK HOW!

Offer ends 1/31/21.

ADD

SHOWTIME®
AS A SECOND PREMIUM

99¢ per room per mo.⁴

Original Series such as **HOMELAND**, Movies such as **GREEN BOOK**, Sports and more.

Offer ends 12/31/20.

¹New and renewing approved H&I customers only. 3-, 5- or 7-year programming agreement required. Credit card required (except MA & PA). Early Cancellation Fee may apply. Local channels (\$90/room/mo.), if available in your market, required.

Call **Alvi Satellites** today at **877-233-1787**.



HD EQUIPMENT OFFER: Offer is available to new or renewing Hospitality and Institutions customers with a 7-year programming agreement. Maximum equipment subsidy of \$10,500 for DRE, HD COM System, COM System w/ NTSC-8 technology or Receiver-Less HD. Receiver-Less equipment is only for Institutions. Properties must subscribe to SELECT™ Package (\$625/room/mo) or above, with local channels (\$090/room/mo), if available in your market, and HD Access (\$139/room/mo) req'd in all units. Requires 75-room minimum for COM equipment and 50-room minimum for DRE equipment. If Customer uses DRE equipment, Customer must pay a "DRE Software Fee" of \$050 per receiver for all active receivers. Add'l equipment and fees apply for upgrades. **IN THE EVENT YOU FAIL TO MAINTAIN YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO THE REQUIRED PROGRAMMING PACKAGES, YOU AGREE TO PAY AN EARLY CANCELLATION FEE EQUAL TO \$10,500 FOR THE FREE COM EQUIPMENT OFFER PRORATED BY THE NUMBER OF MONTHS YOU PAID FOR THE REQUIRED PROGRAMMING PACKAGES DURING THE COMMITMENT PERIOD. Payment is due within thirty (30) days of receipt of a notice of failure to complete the commitment period. INSTALLATION:** Installation charges apply, is based on property size. Applicable use tax adjustment may apply on retail value of installation. Availability of DIRECTV service may vary by location. In certain markets, programming/pricing may vary. Make and model of system at DIRECTV's sole discretion. Offers void where prohibited or restricted. Hardware and programming available separately. Receipt of DIRECTV programming subject to terms of the DIRECTV Terms of Service for Hospitality Establishments and the DIRECTV Terms of Service for Institutions, copy provided with new customer information packet. Taxes not included. DIRECTV programming, hardware, pricing, terms and conditions subject to change at any time. ²To access DIRECTV HD service, HD equipment req'd. Number of HD channels varies based on package selection. **2020 NFL SUNDAY TICKET OFFER:** 2020 NFL SUNDAY TICKET will be delivered at no extra cost in all guest rooms for the 2020 season for all new DIRECTV Residential Experience (DRE) customers, COM System customers and DIRECTV Residential Experience Plus (DRE Plus); customers must subscribe to FAMILY™ Package (\$299/room/mo) or above, with a 3-, 5- or 7-year programming agreement. Other conditions apply. **Subscription will automatically continue in the 2nd year at a special renewal rate of \$99 and renew at regular rate thereafter provided that DIRECTV still carries these services and unless customer calls to cancel prior to start of the season. Subscription cannot be canceled (in part or in whole) after the start of the season and subscription fees cannot be refunded.** Commercial locations require an appropriate license agreement. Offer excludes University accounts. NFL, the NFL Shield design and the NFL SUNDAY TICKET name and logo are registered trademarks of the NFL and its affiliates. **SHOWTIME OFFER:** The SHOWTIME programming offer (\$099/room/mo) is available only as a 2nd Premium add-on. Offer available to qualifying new or existing Hospitality accounts with a 3-, 5- or 7-year programming agreement and must not have received SHOWTIME programming from DIRECTV or any other distributor during the 24 months prior to activation. Offer is available for accounts activated on or before 12/31/20. After the applicable promotional period 3-, 5- or 7-year ends, then-prevailing rate for SHOWTIME applies unless canceled or changed by customer prior to end of the promotional period. Offer may not be combined with any other SHOWTIME offer. SHOWTIME is a registered trademark of Showtime Networks Inc., a CBS Company. Homeland © Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All rights reserved. ©2020 AT&T Intellectual Property. All Rights Reserved. AT&T, Globe logo, DIRECTV, and all other DIRECTV marks contained herein are trademarks of AT&T Intellectual Property and/or AT&T affiliated companies. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.



CECIL STATON
AAHOA PRESIDENT & CEO

“

So far, I've only met a handful of our thousands of AAHOA Members, but I've been impressed with the dynamism of these hoteliers. Everyone's story is different, yet similar themes weave through each one. I look forward to meeting more of you this year, especially at the 2020 AAHOA Convention & Trade Show in Orlando, FL.”

The first 100 days

WITH ANY NEW JOB, IT TAKES TIME FOR ONE TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE role, the institutions, the people, and how business gets done. In U.S. presidential politics, there is a fixation with a new president's first 100 days in office. It takes some time to get into the groove, especially when that job is one of the most important in the world. 100 days. It just seems like such an arbitrary figure. Clocking in at a little over three months or a day or two over 14 weeks, it does not even line up neatly with how we typically measure time. Thankfully, I'm not saddled with the weight of the world as President of the United States. If anyone is counting, I'm also not quite past my first 100 days in my new job as AAHOA's President & CEO, but I wanted to share with you some of my insights, observations, and experiences from the past three months that I've been leading this great association.

I had the pleasure of meeting the AAHOA Board of Directors at their last meeting in New Orleans in November. Seeing their level of dedication in guiding the association to best serve our more than 19,600 members is inspiring, especially considering that they volunteer for these positions. I also met with the Past Chairmen Council and found it encouraging that this group of passionate leaders remains so active and engaged with AAHOA. They provided me with an important historical perspective on the association.

So far, I've only met a handful of our thousands of AAHOA Members, but I've been impressed with the dynamism of these hoteliers. Everyone's story is different, yet similar themes weave through each one. I look forward to meeting more of you this year, especially at the 2020 AAHOA Convention & Trade Show in Orlando, FL. I've also spent time working alongside every one of AAHOA's professional staff, and it is encouraging to have such capable individuals working on behalf of America's hoteliers.

January was National Human Trafficking Awareness month, and I was proud to speak at the No Room for Trafficking event in Miami, FL, where members of the hospitality industry, legislators, law enforcement, victims' rights advocates, and the NFL came together to affirm our commitment to stopping trafficking and raise awareness of the problem prior to the Super Bowl. As hoteliers, we can be the first line of defense in communities across the nation when it comes to stopping traffickers. AAHOA's Human Trafficking Awareness Training is an invaluable resource that we provide to members and their employees at no cost. I've completed the training, and I encourage you and your staff to complete it as well if you have not yet done so. Lives could depend on it. To learn more, visit www.AAHOA.com/HTAT. Last month, I also attended the ALIS conference where I met with several industry leaders and moderated a panel on development.

Our 2020 planning is in full swing, and we've organized a full year of Regional Conferences & Trade Shows, Town Halls, education sessions, webinars, advocacy at the state and federal levels, and much more for AAHOA Members. We have a big year ahead of us, and there is much we will accomplish together. I'm looking forward to it. ■



BRAND USA
Building on Success

Brand USA reauthorized through 2027

by PETER CLERKIN

THOMAS SOWELL NOTED, “THE first lesson of economics is scarcity: There is never enough of anything to satisfy all those who want it.” In Washington these days, it seems two of the things taxpayers want most from their government, bipartisanship and common sense, are indeed in short supply. Yet, in late December, Congress abided by Sowell’s first lesson of politics, which is to “disregard the first lesson of economics.” In a fleeting moment of cooperation and pragmatism, the House and Senate passed a spending bill that included the reauthorization of the vital tourism promotion program Brand USA. With the program’s dedicated funding stream set to expire at year’s end, the travel and tourism industry’s long and sustained reauthorization campaign came down to the wire. Fortunately, common sense prevailed, and Congress extended Brand USA through 2027.

“America’s hotel owners applaud the congressional reauthorization of Brand USA. This public-private partnership is vitally important to promoting America as a destination to the world. Brand USA helps attract international travelers to our shores by touting the best of what our country offers – and at no cost to taxpayers,” AAHOA President & CEO Cecil Staton said. “Over the past two years, AAHOA’s members initiated thousands of meetings with their lawmakers to help them recognize this program’s importance to job creation and local economies – and we are grateful to our lawmakers for listening. We

are also grateful to our partners at the Visit U.S. Coalition for their invaluable leadership in promoting this initiative. America has much to offer the world, and, thanks to Brand USA’s reauthorization, international travelers will continue to hear about the exceptionalism of American destinations,” Staton said.

The reauthorization advocacy campaign came about because of a budgetary glitch that threatened to divert the program’s revenue stream into a general fund, which put millions of dollars in matching funds from the private sector at risk. Brand USA draws its funding from two sources. Fees are collected from travelers using the Visa Waiver Program, which the private sector matches dollar for dollar. This allows Brand USA to operate at no cost to taxpayers.

This public-private partnership boasts a remarkable 25:1 ROI, which helps generate billions of dollars in international

tourism for the U.S. and supports tens of thousands of jobs in the leisure and hospitality industry.

Brand USA is crucial to promoting America as a destination for international travelers and enhancing the nation’s reputation abroad. The program is particularly beneficial to hoteliers in communities that do not have large tourism budgets or departments, for it promotes destinations throughout the entire country, not just large metropolitan areas. Destinations such as national parks and historic sites draw thousands of international visitors annually in large part thanks to campaigns by Brand USA.

With the program reauthorized through 2027, AAHOA will monitor its progress as Brand USA looks to increase America’s share of global travelers by showcasing the nation’s great destinations. ■

“

America’s hotel owners applaud the congressional reauthorization of Brand USA. This public-private partnership is vitally important to promoting America as a destination to the world. Brand USA helps attract international travelers to our shores by touting the best of what our country offers – and at no cost to taxpayers.”

– AAHOA PRESIDENT & CEO CECIL STATON

Brand standards

The intersection of guests, owners, brands, and staff

by TINA EDMUNDSON

WHEN A BRANDED HOTEL opens its doors, guests from around the world arrive with an expectation – that we in the hospitality industry will fulfill the promise of that brand in design, in service and customer experience.

As the brand and now marketing leader at Marriott International, I've had a hand in growing our portfolio to more than 7,200 properties under 30 leading brands. With an average of one million people staying at our properties every night, maintaining brand standards is critical to the guest experience. Whether or not it is Marriott International, having a range of brands enables owners and operators to tailor the hotel experience and satisfy what guests are looking for when they travel, ensuring they have options that will suit their trip purpose and travel needs.

To be successful, our industry must deploy a rigorous process of innovating, developing, executing, and auditing brand standards at hotels. This requires input from many stakeholders including owners, operators, guests, and associates and, when done well, ensures a seamless and memorable guest experience, whether they are staying at a full service hotel or a longer-stay select-service property.

FLAWLESS EXECUTION

Standards must be developed across every aspect of the hotel: operationally, experientially, and through design. Operational standards dictate how something will work and allow us to bring innovation to life at scale. This includes considering things

that a guest should never have to think about, such as the right density, age, and size of guestroom pillows. Brand design standards create uniformity across certain aspects of the hotel, such as whether a guestroom has a desk or where the right placement is for electrical outlets. Brands also require a unique design strategy with standards, tool kits, and guides to ensure the relevant physical manifestation of that brand. Beyond that, for some brand segments we have Experiential Audits to help the on-property staff develop the right ambiance and creative experiences for guests and locals alike. Everything from the appropriate lighting, botanicals, and music (both genre and volume) for each time of day to which scents should be infused throughout certain areas of the hotel should be considered.

ATTRACTING NEW OWNERS

Beyond delighting guests, brand standards also attract new owners and reassure existing owners and developers who see enormous value in developing compelling brands that will entice new and repeat customers. When working with operators and owners to develop new or refine existing brand standards, we must analyze and seek to understand how a standard could drive the best guest experience, while also considering the operational and financial impact. This can be accomplished leveraging social media and a variety of other research methodologies to stay informed on consumer trends related to how they work, travel, and relax to ensure hotels remain relevant and inspiring to guests.

THE IMPACT OF SHIFTING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Let me give you a few examples of how we've brought this to life within the Marriott International portfolio.

Aloft Hotels

Our brand standards adapt, to be sure to reflect shifts in consumer behavior. When looking to evolve the guestroom for the next generation of music lovers and music makers, for example, Aloft Hotels' brand and design team consulted with the ownership community to ensure we were building a hotel of the future that met their guests' needs. We were delighted to learn that musicians were enjoying Aloft's public spaces as live-music venues. We knew consumers were spending more time in hotel public spaces than guestrooms. So, we created a brand standard that incorporates high-voltage outlets for musical equipment and soft lounge seating with intentional sightlines to the designated area for live performances. Now, owners and operators can create environments that attract locals, enhancing their lively bar scene while driving revenue.

Sheraton Hotels & Resorts

Sheraton Hotels is a brand where today we are reimagining the guest experience based on consumer behavior. We know more people are working in communal spaces, integrated with beverage and social environments. Dining is less formal and often mixed in with other activities.

We redesigned the public space experience in Sheraton Hotels, outfitting them

“

To be successful, our industry must deploy a rigorous process of innovating, developing, executing, and auditing brand standards at hotels. This requires input from many stakeholders including owners, operators, guests, and associates and, when done well, ensures a seamless and memorable guest experience.”



Tina Edmundson,
Global Brand Officer,
Marriott International

with product details and service elements that enhance the sense of community. A bevy of new standards have followed, including collaboration and meeting spaces that are now integrated into the heart of the lobby, bar concepts that equally prioritize coffee and cocktails, and a digital experience that expands the zone of ordering food and beverages to include most of the public spaces. All of these things allow guests as well as locals to mingle, gather, and work in an inviting space that just happens to be inside a hotel.

Moxy Hotels

For our Moxy brand, we wanted to provide experiences and attributes that “young at heart” travelers value. In 2014, we

launched the brand, which was created with a strong design point of view at an affordable price point.

At Moxy, the check-in experience is at the bar, where guests are greeted with a welcome cocktail. We’ve also incorporated fun and playful ways to monitor guest feedback through a design feature at all Moxy Hotels that displays social media feeds through a creative guestbook.

EMPOWERING YOUR TEAM

When the on-property team understands what a brand represents, they are empowered to deliver service excellence to guests through the brand promise. You would be hard pressed to find many hotel bartenders in the industry who check in guests,

but at Moxy, a fun and playful experience starts from the moment a guest walks in the door. Training and educating your team on brand standards ensures the experience delivers on guests’ expectations.

Brand standards also help owners maintain the consistency that guests come to love and expect, while enabling owners to better manage their business. Whether it’s a great spot for a grab-and-go breakfast in the morning or a live-music venue in the lobby, brand standards offer a playbook to help owners and operators succeed, and they are the bedrock upon which global portfolios are built. ■

Tina Edmundson is the global brand officer for Marriott International.

Support for Visit Florida and encouraging tourism

Common Ground profiles members of opposing parties who are working together to advance issues important to hoteliers.

THE ISSUE

For more than 22 years, the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Campaign Corporation, the entity behind the well-known Visit Florida campaign, has promoted the state to travelers across the United States and around the world. The state continues to post record tourism numbers, thanks in large part to this successful program. More than 1.4 million Floridians work in hospitality, and visitors have a significant impact on the state's economy. In addition to its extensive marketing plan, Visit Florida also works with local businesses and tourism councils to market themselves using grant programs. The program returns \$2.51 to taxpayers for every tourist dollar spent. Unfortunately, the Corporation is set for repeal on July 1, 2020 unless the legislature acts

COMMON GROUND

Visit Florida enjoys strong bipartisan support, and Democratic and Republican lawmakers in the Florida House and Senate introduced legislation (HB 213 & SB 362) that would extend the Corporation through 2028. ■

VISITFLORIDA®



SPONSORS AND COSPONSORS OF THE LEGISLATION

Sen. Ed Hopper (R-16)
Sen. Linda Stewart (D-13)
Sen. Gayle Harrell (R-25)
Sen. Dennis Baxley (D-12)
Sen. Victor M. Torres, Jr. (D-15)
Sen. David Simmons (R-9)

Rep. Mel Ponder (R-4)
Rep. Lorraine Ausley (D-9)
Rep. Javier E. Fernandez (D-114)
Rep. Delores D. "D" Hogan Johnson (D-84)
Rep. Cindy Polo (D-103)
Rep. David Santiago (R-27)
Rep. Charlie Stone (R-22)
Rep. Jennifer Necole Webb (D-69)

REIMAGINING HOSPITALITY



Enhanced by a partnership with AAHOA, **HX: The Hotel Experience Powered by AAHOA** offers unparalleled opportunities to experience today's must-have hospitality innovations, all in one of the world's premier cities: New York!

SAVE THE DATE!
NOV. 8-9, 2020

- **20+** educational sessions offering insights on how to navigate the evolving hospitality landscape
- **40,000** square feet of exhibit space showcasing **225+** of the industry's leading brands
- **5,000+** hospitality professionals doing business in one place



POWERED BY: **AAHOA**

Where trends, tech, and ops seamlessly merge
NOV. 8-9, 2020 | NEW YORK CITY
JACOB K. JAVITS CONVENTION CENTER

PRESENTED &
PRODUCED BY:



CO-LOCATED
WITH:



The taste of experience

The comfort of predictability in hotel stays gives way to the modern traveler's yearning for experiences

by LISA GORDON

"IN ORDER TO BE IRREPLACEABLE, ONE MUST ALWAYS BE DIFFERENT."

Those words, spoken by legendary French designer Coco Chanel, are as relevant today as they were when they first appeared in print back in 1972.

Being different isn't always easy, but for hoteliers looking to deliver a transformative personal experience to their guests, it's a must. In fact, defining what makes a hotel unique is the first step in creating a branding strategy that will live in the hearts and minds of all who stay there.

"There are a thousand places you can get a roof and a bed, but what will create loyalty and buzz is the experience people have," said Dustin Myers, Chief Executive Officer of Longitude, a Springfield, MO-based hospitality branding agency founded in 2010.

He told *Today's Hotelier* that Longitude helps its hotel clients identify the "guiding principles" that will influence guest interactions before, during, and after their visit.

"We define 'brand' as your reputation," Myers said. "In the same way a person develops a reputation, we try to figure out how that hotel will look, and what they will say and do to align with how they want to be perceived."

Perception is everything when it comes to today's savvy travelers. They, too, subscribe to Chanel's view that different is good, and they're expecting hotels to deliver a main course of personalized experience with a healthy side of local flavor.

HOSPITALITY SUPERPOWERS

Few things in life are as personal as the food we eat and the beverages we drink. Both fill a basic human need, and smart hoteliers realize the best way to that 5-star rating on social media may indeed be through a guest's palate.

"Food and beverage are superpowers of the hospitality experience," says Kenn Fine, partner and executive creative director of FINE, a Portland, OR-based agency that believes "the profit you take is equal to the brand you make."

He said creating a unique food or beverage experience is a "powerful enchantment" that should be considered by everyone in the hospitality sphere. But before rolling out that signature cocktail or house dessert, it's worth taking some time to figure out how the offering fits into your brand.





The Hotel Vandivort's restaurant, The Order, offers an eclectic menu from local suppliers such as Blackgate Farms and The Coffee Ethic.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LONGITUDE

“

If you met the hotel at a cocktail party, what would it dress like? What would the conversation be like? The main thing is having a clear position in the marketplace; a clear perspective on what you intend to be.”

– KENN FINE, PARTNER AND EXECUTIVE CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF FINE



FINE established a clear branding strategy with Hotel del Coronado.

“The stakes are higher if you want to play in the food and beverage arena,” Fine said. “This is something you’re putting inside your body, so it’s a rather intimate experience. Food and beverage is primal; it connects to the primal self. Being trite about its delivery will get anemic results for that reason. Humans feel that.”

FINE recently collaborated on the relaunch of Lizzie’s Starlight, a renowned rooftop bar perched on top of San Francisco’s iconic Sir Francis Drake Hotel. In an allusion to Queen Elizabeth I’s alleged affair with Drake, the bar is opulent with a rebellious air. Amidst high Elizabethan collars and extravagant makeup, servers deliver custom aphrodisiac-themed cocktails.

In San Diego, FINE is helping the Hotel del Coronado reimagine the entire guest experience. One of the primary tools in the arsenal is a new approach to food and beverage.

“By being extremely thoughtful in the diversity and exclusivity of the range of food and beverage offerings, we can ensure we have something to accommodate the mindset of any guest,” Fine said.

“That builds strong brand credibility – every time I need something, it’s right there – and the sense of being an omnipotent provider. There is a tremendous amount of experience engineering. It keeps them on the property and increases incremental revenue rather significantly.”

LOCALIZE THE EXPERIENCE

Gone are the days when travelers would gravitate toward national chains because they knew exactly what they were going to get. Nowadays, people are looking to breathe local air and taste local fare.

“Thinking back to creating that experience, historically, we’ve seen little touches like fresh chocolate chip cookies, or coffee and tea in the lobby,” Longitude’s Myers said. “I think the idea of having these things as part of the experience is excellent, but at times there isn’t a lot of effort. Instead of serving gas station coffee, maybe you could collaborate with a local roaster down the street or a local bakery.”

Tying what you’re offering into the local community or region makes for an experience people want to tell their friends about.

The Hotel Vandivort in Springfield “knocks it out of the park” when it comes to cultivating experience, Myers said. “They have a collaboration with the coffee shop down the street, so they’re doing custom roasts and offering really high-quality local goods in the hotel.”

Sometimes, a hotel’s architecture will provide the key to defining its exceptional brand.

Longitude works with one such property that has an ancient Chinese architectural motif, “so we look for ways to bring in pieces of the culture – maybe an imported tea – and try to help tell the brand story through all of the senses.”

In another example, Myers said Longitude is working with a hotel in Dallas to create beverages named after local places and things.

“If the hotel has a restaurant in it, that opens a whole new category of ways to surprise and delight the customers.”

UNITED VISION

Branding experts agree that it is crucial for hotels to take the time to thoroughly define their brand and their position in the marketplace.

One technique FINE employs when helping a customer solidify its brand is to assign it a human persona. In effect, the agency introduces a creative muse.

“If you met the hotel at a cocktail party, what would it dress like? What would the conversation be like? The main thing is having

““

There are a thousand places you can get a roof and a bed, but what will create loyalty and buzz is the experience people have.”

– DUSTIN MYERS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF LONGITUDE

“

Gone are the days when travelers would gravitate toward national chains because they knew exactly what they were going to get. Nowadays, people are looking to breathe local air and taste local fare.”



FINE and Lizzie’s Starlight ensure that the branding is in line with the menu and message.

IMAGE COURTESY OF FINE

a clear position in the marketplace; a clear perspective on what you intend to be,” explained Fine.

It’s evident that the manner in which a new brand is introduced has a significant impact on its chances for success. Both Myers and Fine agreed it’s essential to obtain input and buy-in from the whole team.

“We see so many of these projects happen in silos,” Fine lamented. “People are stepping on each other’s yoga mats constantly. You need the brand people up front so you know who you’re aiming for. Then, you have your kitchen director, general manager, corporate, etc., so there is a united vision for what is going to happen.”

It helps to simply write down your branding strategy, Myers added.

“The first thing I’d do is really make sure your strategy is understood by the team and even created with other stakeholders involved. We see a lot of decisions made haphazardly and people

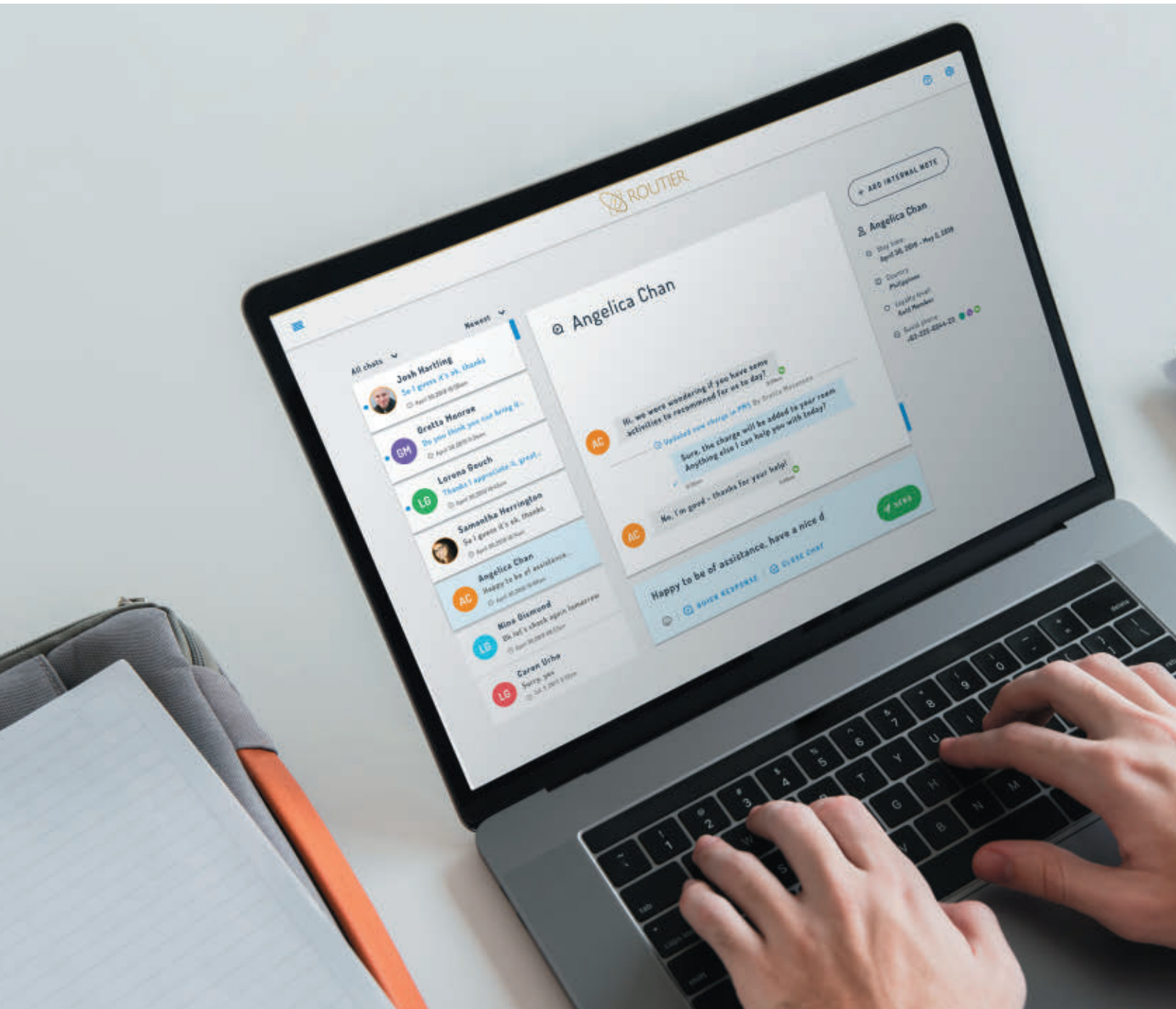
pivot all the time, and that leads to confusion for the customers and wasted time and resources.”

As for boutique hotels vs. chains, Fine said that while it’s easier for one-of-a-kind properties to roll out changes, they often have less funding to make them happen.

“Sometimes, systems don’t happen and you have brand drift. And so that’s the challenge with boutiques,” he said. “Although, some of the best successes are with boutiques, too.”

The main thing is to obtain buy-in from all stakeholders and then stay on course. Straying off the path can be costly, in more ways than one.

“The really sad thing about not being aligned around a united brand and experience intent is that ownership and management never get to see the incremental margin they’re missing out on because they didn’t do it right,” Fine concluded. “There is a lack of retroactive accountability.” ■



“

Smart hospitality providers understand that a solid foundation that addresses performance, reliability, and affordability will enable them to grow their business faster and more securely and position them to take advantage of future technology advancements.”

– CHRISTIAN NASCIMENTO, VICE PRESIDENT, PRODUCT AND PREMISE SERVICES, COMCAST BUSINESS

Routier allows hotel staff to communicate with guests in real time.



Connecting to the brand

Brand standards reach across all areas of a hotel, including – and especially – technology

by FIONA SOLTES

GUESTS MAY STAY AT A PROPERTY TO GET AWAY FROM IT all, but that doesn't mean they're willing to forgo connectivity. Hotel brand standards have continued to adapt with technology. These days, however, when it comes to options like high-speed internet access, some are finding that those "options" aren't so optional after all.

"Industry experts agree that for a guest's hotel stay, connectivity is now a standard amenity that has become as vital as the other basic needs like hot water, complimentary breakfast, and free parking, if not more so," said Christian Nascimento, Vice President, Product and Premise Services, Comcast Business. "Guests are now evaluating the availability and quality of connectivity as a factor when choosing a hotel."

It's not just that guests want "some" access, either. Regardless of the type of hotel, "Guests want the equivalent or better than their at-home connectivity speeds and, therefore, standards aren't specific to a type of brand or current/future properties," Nascimento said. "It's required of all. In some cases, we've seen differences/revisions in standards. For example, some luxury brands have backup or redundant circuits to ensure uninterrupted service and new construction hotels have updated standards for the cabling requirements of each room."

It's a lot to consider, and it's not a one-and-done. Brand standards are living and evolving, Nascimento said, and given the current rapid pace of technological change, he and others recommend revisiting standards annually to ensure relevance and alignment with the brand's long-term goals.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROUTIER

“If you can’t do something measurable, it’s hard to know whether you’ve done it right or wrong,” Bareket said.

LISTENING TO GUESTS, HEARING THEIR DESIRES

OK, so the clock is ticking for new brand standards in technology. Where to even start?

Diane Beecher, CEO and Senior Strategist, The Brand Consultancy, said that when it comes to aligning technology with a brand, for those wanting to drive growth, brand still has to come first.

“We define a brand as the reputation you want to earn,” she said. “If you’re Tru by Hilton, for example, and you’re putting your stake in the ground as a brand that is simplified, spirited, and grounded in value, then the technology you use and how you integrate that technology into your hotel has to align with the reputation you want to earn. If you put in the latest technology but it’s not intuitive and guests get frustrated trying to use it, then that’s not being simplified. Or if the latest technology costs too much and makes you raise your room rates – then how can you be a hotel that is grounded in value? It’s important to look at everything you’re doing across your brand with this filter in mind.”

Technology, Beecher said, is an enabler to the right guest experience. But many focus on the technology itself, “and I think that’s a miss.” With Tru by Hilton, for example, The Brand Consultancy’s research showed that guests would appreciate fast and free Wi-Fi, as well as DIRECTV with over 150 channels.

ZOOM OUT

- When looking at technology and your brand standards, it’s important to look at the big picture.
- Are the technology and accompanying brand standards:

Intuitive? Can the guest use the technology you’ve implemented simply?

Cost-effective? Will this investment have a direct impact on room rates?

“So that’s where we focused,” Beecher said. “Instead of offering everything, we offered 55-inch TVs in every guest room (much larger than comparable hotels), along with the fastest complimentary Wi-Fi in Tru’s hotel class. And this focus paid off: Tru is one of the fastest-growing brands in the mid-scale segment – ever.”

Nascimento, too, mentioned the importance of listening to guests and, of course, ensuring the right foundation is in place to meet their desires.

“While new technology offers unlimited opportunity in scope and results, it’s as good as useless without the necessary underlying infrastructure,” he said. “Smart hospitality providers understand that a solid foundation that addresses performance,

“

If you can't do something measurable,
it's hard to know whether you've
done it right or wrong.”

– GAL BAREKET, CEO, ROUTIER

reliability, and affordability will enable them to grow their business faster and more securely and position them to take advantage of future technology advancements.”

Comcast Business, for example, offers networking solutions that can help hoteliers better manage multiple properties, and the X1 for Hospitality video solution to provide a superior “free to guest” entertainment experience. Further, the recent addition of Deep Blue as a portfolio company now incorporates award-winning Wi-Fi network planning, design, and implementation, he said. Hoteliers are taking note; earlier this year, for instance, Comcast Business announced it had entered into a three-year agreement with Choice Hotels International to install high-speed internet access at its franchised hotel properties nationwide.

EXPANDING STANDARDS BEYOND WI-FI

It must be mentioned, however, that brand standards for technology can relate to much more than Wi-Fi, TV, or even room access. One company, for example, offers a ticket management platform allowing guests to communicate directly and seamlessly with staff through whatever method they choose – SMS, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, email, etc. – without having to download anything additional on their devices. The solution also can be used for marketing, promotions, and feedback surveys. That's a long way from the traditional phone call between the front desk and guest room through a landline not long after check-in.

Gal Bareket, Routier CEO, said hotels have long relied on post-visit “How was your stay?” emails, but those can be too little, too late – or can be lost in overburdened inboxes and spam filters.

Real-time access on the guest's own terms, on the other hand, improves guest experience, increases positive reviews, builds loyalty, and allows the hotel to optimize operations. Routier has developed a Unified Performance Index (UPI) using data from the platform to create benchmarks and business targets. The Pod Hotels, for example, announced in a release that working with Routier had enabled its staff to directly connect and engage with up to 63 percent of guests, respond to needs instantly, and increase guest satisfaction levels. Using the UPI had even bolstered healthy competition between the Pod Hotels properties, and the ticket management platform had helped staff save about 22 minutes per day per team member through the automation of processes and streamlined communication.

The right technology, then, can help guests receive the experience they hope for, help hoteliers deliver the level of service they desire, and help streamline the communications and processes in between. ■



**HAIRY,
CLOGGED,
CORRODED
TUB DRAIN?**

**UNIVERSAL
NUFIT®**

**MAKES OLD DRAINS
LOOK NEW IN
MINUTES.
NO TOOLS,
NO SWEAT.**



- Fits over old tub drain
- No removing strainer body
- Installs in minutes



Installs with pin...



...or with silicone

Grid strainer keeps hair and other items out of bathtub drain.



Watco
the bathtub drain
experts!™

Useful. Innovation.

816.796.3900 ■ watcomfg.com

Patent www.watcomfg.com/patents

The dos and don'ts of dual-branding

A decade's worth of data reveals dual-branding hotels may not be beneficial in the long run

by SUSANNA DANIEL

ALTHOUGH DUAL-BRANDING HAS BEEN AROUND FOR MORE than a decade, there's still a lot to be learned about which brands work best together and how to maximize efficiencies and reduce redundancies while enhancing brand identity. It might be years still until the recipe for a maximally profitable dual- or multi-branded hotel solution is finally perfected, but there's a lot we know now about what works and what doesn't.

According to Robert Mandelbaum, Director of Research Information Services with CBRE Group, it's become increasingly difficult for U.S. hotels to actually profit from increased revenue. This is mostly due to slow growth in daily rates, more competition from new supply, increased utility costs, and non-labor costs like technology, complimentary food and beverages, franchise fees, insurance, and credit card commissions. In 2017, Mendelbaum reported, these costs increased at a greater pace than did revenue.

DOES DUAL-BRANDING DELIVER ON ITS PROMISE?

In the face of narrowing bottom line, some seem to believe that dual branding might hold the key to unlocking greater profit margins, but so far, owners haven't seen the returns they'd expected. A four-year CBRE study tracked 23 hotels in three dual-branding configurations: 1) limited-service and select-service, 2) select-service and extended-stay, 3) and limited-service and extended-stay.

Overall, the study found no significant efficiencies in operated department expenses reservation systems, check-in, and management. In fact, in many cases, operated department expenses were greater than in a one-brand hotel. Rooms department efficiencies were found only at select-service/limited-service hotels.

Any increase in profit margins seen by the dual-branded hotels included in the study, across all three brand categories, were due to the increase in operating efficiencies.

"Our research has found that the majority of operating efficiencies within dual-branded hotels have been achieved in the back-of-the-house areas of hotels – administration, sales and marketing, accounting, maintenance,



Perceived benefits of dual-branding

- Doubled reservations systems, which potentially attract greater numbers of guests
- Flexible price points and experiences
- Enhanced ability to maximize land-density requirements
- Back-of-house efficiencies, including shared staff

What's in a brand?

- Mandelbaum recommends that hotel owners get a clear understanding of brand standards by considering the following questions:
 - Can you share a front desk?
 - Can employees wear the same uniforms?
 - Do you need discrete entrances and elevators?
 - Can you share amenities like a pool or gym?
- “The answers to these questions will have a significant impact on the operating and development efficiencies you are able to achieve,” Mandelbaum said.

What the data actually says

- No significant efficiencies in operated department expenses reservation systems, check-in, and management
- Operated department expenses increased in dual-branded properties
- Efficiencies found in only select-service/limited-service properties
- All increases in profit margins of dual-branded properties due to increase in operating efficiencies

“Our research has found that the majority of operating efficiencies within dual-branded hotels have been achieved in the back-of-the-house areas of hotels – administration, sales and marketing, accounting, maintenance, and human resources. Two hotels can easily share these support services.”

– ROBERT MANDELBAUM, DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH INFORMATION SERVICES, CBRE GROUP



and human resources. Two hotels can easily share these support services," Mandelbaum said.

HOW FLEXIBLE IS YOUR BRAND?

Still, the dual-branding hypothesis hasn't yet proven true. What's keeping the efficiencies scarce and redundancies in place? The answer is: brand identity.

Strict brand standards can keep costs up. So, the question for owners looking to launch dual- or multi-brand hotels is how to maintain brand identity *and* translate back-of-house profit margins to the front of the house.

Atlantic Hotels Group has been grappling with the same issue. Chief Financial Officer Arzu Molubhoy reported the group found two check-ins, while one way to keep brand identity distinct in a shared situation, is redundant. Last year, Atlantic Hotels tested this theory by shutting down one check-in desk at a dual-branded hotel, and found that guests were no less satisfied but often less confused.

The group found streamlining back-of-house operations like housekeeping and laundry, and maintenance is only half the

battle: sharing reception and management is key to maximizing efficiency. Mandelbaum, too, recommends a single check-in as integral to increasing the profit margin in a dual-branded hotel. Brand identities can still be kept distinct by having discrete corridors and rooms, and by training staff to escort guests to their chosen brand after checking in.

WHAT DOES YOUR MARKET REQUIRE?

That said, Mandelbaum believes market needs, not efficiencies, should be the main driver behind the decision to develop a dual-branded hotel. If the market needs a variety of property types or price points, then those needs should, he said, determine whether a project is feasible.

There's more to maximizing margins than shared check-in, management, and facilities. Efficiency starts at the design stage. Since a dual-branded hotel is a custom enterprise, it's essential that designers maximize efficiencies right out of the gate so that the entire property is set up from the start to most effectively utilize the shared space. Designers must work from the start to build in efficiencies, such as shared fitness facilities, laundry, elevators,

“

If the two brands are too distinct, they might not be able to fully maximize opportunities for efficiency. If they're too similar, they might risk diluting their discrete identities.”

rooms, and other amenities. Reservation systems and other technology systems offer more opportunities to reduce duplicated costs, especially if efficiency is the priority from the start.

Rather than play defense with brand identity, owners might consider how to maximize brand flexibility and strengthen a guest's brand loyalty through the dual-branded experience. Ideally, guests might experience a streamlined check-in process, a quality experience with the brand of their choice, and an enhanced familiarity with the other brand or brands represented in the hotel, which could potentially strengthen the customer's relationship to more than one brand at a time. A dual-branded hotel offers a guest more flexibility in pricing and experience in one location, which can not only encourage repeat business but create new business that wouldn't have existed.

Where profit margins are concerned, the more that's shared in a dual-branded hotel, the better, which calls into question the

kinds of brands that might most successfully join in partnership. If the two brands are too distinct, they might not be able to fully maximize opportunities for efficiency. If they're too similar, they might risk diluting their discrete identities.

Dual branding may very well reach its full potential. Each brand must meet a need not otherwise met and offer guests a unique experience the other brand doesn't offer. The brands must provide an experience the guest might need or want in the future, while at the same time minimizing redundancy at the front of the house and maintaining cost savings at the back of the house.

“If dual-branded hotels prove over the long haul not to generate the operating efficiencies they're designed to provide, that will mute development activity,” Mandelbaum said. “But the initial decision to have multiple brands should be driven by market needs, not assumed operating efficiencies.” ■



karri

exceptionally versatile and elegant
www.hospitalitydesigns.com

hospitality
designs 

4 areas of focus, unlimited possibilities

How to discover your focus and maximize your AAHOA membership in 2020

by HEATHER CARNES

A new year brings a new season of change, and exploring what this looks like for you professionally is an important part of growth and reflection. At AAHOA, we serve more than 19,500 unique hoteliers across the nation, developing and cultivating programs, events, initiatives, leadership skills, and relationships that ultimately help you make money, save money, and protect your investments.

And your membership and involvement in AAHOA makes it easy to set goals, get involved, and reach your full potential – regardless of what you want to accomplish or where you’re at in your career. Because each of you has different needs or may want to focus on different parts of your own professional and personal development, it can be helpful to narrow your focus and determine where you can see the biggest point of return for the time you invest. To help you do so, we’ve created the four AAHOA Member Areas of Focus.

To help you discover your 2020 area of focus, ask yourself these important questions:

- ➔ What do you want to accomplish this year?
- ➔ What resources and tools do you need to get there?
- ➔ How will you maximize the value of your AAHOA Membership?
- ➔ How can you lean on the wisdom of others to learn and grow your business?
- ➔ Do you identify as someone who wants to get more involved in advocacy, creating systemic change for the industry at large, whether at the local or federal level?
- ➔ Can you develop your personal brand to expand your network, make better deals, and save money?
- ➔ How can learning and personal growth contribute to your broader goals?
- ➔ Do you need to better explore your business partnerships to save on the bottom line and make more strategic business decisions?

While the four areas of focus are meant to help you get the most out of membership, you may realize you relate to one of these more than others – or you may relate to them all. Read on to learn more about each focus and the resources that can help you maximize your investment in AAHOA.

“All AAHOA Members should look at the member benefits provided by the organization and take advantage of them. Also, participation – whether it’s on-demand webinars, Town Hall Meetings, Regional Conferences & Trade Shows, or our Convention & Trade Show – makes the member a better hotelier. Personally, having the ability to learn best practices and get certifications is an opportunity I’ve capitalized on from AAHOA.”

Hitesh Patel, Central Midwest Regional Director



“The most important advice I would give to a new AAHOA Member is to be involved and engaged. You get out of your AAHOA membership what you put in. Attend as many events as possible, and put in the time to get to know and network with as many people as you can. There is an abundance of knowledge to be gained – not only from the events, workshops, and webinars that AAHOA offers but also from the people you will meet at AAHOA Events.”

Mayur (Mike) Patel, North Texas Regional Director



“Experience is all about exposure, and AAHOA has many resources that all new AAHOA Members should become familiar with. These resources are crucial to help members protect and grow their business and get the most value out of their dues. Equally important is attending Town Hall Meetings and Regional Conferences & Trade Shows as they offer great opportunities to network with the key players in your area and learn about the latest developments in the industry.”



Mike Riverside, South Pacific Regional Director

“Please do not forget the importance of learning through the AAHOA HOTEL OWNERS ACADEMY™. It is your resource for all AAHOA education and professional development – from in-person workshops to online webinars. I personally have taken advantage of many online webinars and have learned a lot from them. As an entrepreneur, you know the importance of staying ahead of the game.”



Mike Patel, South Central Texas Regional Director

“There is no better platform for networking than AAHOA. Attending Regional Conferences, Town Hall Meetings, and, of course, the AAHOA Convention & Trade Show, will give you the best opportunity to meet fellow hoteliers to exchange ideas and learn best practices. Attending AAHOA’s abundance of educational workshops and webinars will also help you stay current on what is happening in our industry. AAHOA prides itself on being able to provide the best tools and information to be successful no matter where you’re at on your journey. Take advantage of all AAHOA has to offer because benefits and opportunities are limitless.”



Jagruti Panwala, AAHOA Chairwoman

1 The Advocate

Systemic change can only happen when you make advocacy a part of your long-term business plan. The Advocate wants to get more involved in ongoing advocacy efforts. As entrepreneurs, you may find government mandates and laws hindering your progress to grow your business and serve your community. Advocates want to build better relationships with lawmakers and share their story and voice as a hotelier. They also find personal satisfaction in representing the voice of all of America’s hotel owners, helping AAHOA advocate better with brands, vendors, and lawmakers.

If you find yourself drawn to make a difference, you may be an Advocate. Here’s how you can get involved.



CONNECT WITH OTHER ADVOCATES

- ➔ **Legislative Action Summit:** An event that takes place annually, it brings together industry leaders and hoteliers to make your voices heard on the issues that matter most in our nation’s capital. This year’s Legislative Action Summit is September 16-17, 2020, in Washington, D.C.
- ➔ **State Advocacy Days:** Many of the laws that most affect hoteliers are made in state capitals across the nation. AAHOA’s State Advocacy Days give you opportunities to meet your elected officials and bring to light the issues that you face in your particular state.
- ➔ **Brand Alliance Meetings:** Hosted at brand conferences throughout the year, these meetings give hotel owners the opportunity to hear from AAHOA Officers and the brand’s executive leadership about the partnership between the two and what AAHOA is doing for our members.
- ➔ **Brand Focus Groups:** Participate in an AAHOA Brand Focus Group to discuss specific brands, provide valuable insights from the hotel owners’ perspective, and share ideas as it relates to particular brands.

2020 PERSONAL CHALLENGE

- ➔ **Property and Hotelier Information:** The data behind AAHOA Members and your properties illustrates our powerful voice in the industry. Help AAHOA advocate on your behalf by confidentially updating your property information at MyAAHOA.com.
- ➔ **Back of the House Tours:** AAHOA Members across the U.S. have welcomed representatives to their properties to give them a glance at the ins and outs of what it takes to run a hotel. A Back of the House Tour is a great way for you to build lasting relationships between lawmakers and the small business community in your area.
- ➔ **Support the AAHOA PAC:** The AAHOA PAC gives AAHOA the opportunity to advocate on behalf of our members on Capitol Hill and in state capitals across the country, and the AAHOA PAC would cease to exist without continual contributions and support from our members.

To learn more about how you can get involved in AAHOA’s advocacy or franchise efforts, contact advocacy@aahoa.com or franchise@aahoa.com.

2

The Networker and Personal Brander



Key strengths of any entrepreneur is to build relationships, learn from others, and create a personal brand that serves both your personal and business interests. The Networker and Personal Brander wants to expand his/her network. They recognize the importance of connecting with like-minded individuals. They want to also elevate their personal brand and open opportunities for partnerships, growth, and business ventures. The Networker and Personal Brander may also want to earn a certification that will allow you to pursue new opportunities.

So if you want to grow your network, open up opportunities, and elevate yourself in the industry, you may be a Networker and Personal Brander. Here's how AAHOA can help.

BUILD YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

- **Participate in an AAHOA Committee:** Grow your network and make an impact by participating in one of AAHOA's Committees. Impact the decisions being made to AAHOA programming and collaborate with hoteliers who share similar interests in AAHOA. The application form can be found at AAHOA.com under About Us.
- **AAHOA Regional Conferences & Trade Shows and Town Hall Meetings:** These hyper-local events bring together area hoteliers for networking, and to discuss issues impacting them.
- **Industry Events:** AAHOA participates and has relationships with leading organizations that host some of the industry's most respected events, including The Lodging Conference, ALIS, NYU Conference, and brand conferences, among others. Oftentimes, AAHOA Members receive exclusive discounts to attend.
- **Charity Golf Tournaments:** In 2019 alone, AAHOA golf tournaments raised more than \$170,000 for charity and brought together hundreds of hoteliers for friendly competition, networking, and fun. With four events to choose from this year, find an event near you and participate (regardless of how well you play the game).

2020 PERSONAL CHALLENGE

- **AAHOACON:** AAHOA's leading annual event – and the nation's largest event for hotel owners – provides hoteliers the best opportunity to meet like-minded professionals, network, and learn. There simply isn't another event that provides similar opportunities to meet hotel owners. Register today to attend this can't-miss event in Orlando.
- **Get a certification:** To help build your personal brand, you may want to explore hotel-industry certifications. Explore AAHOA's Certificate in Hotel Ownership or Certification in Hotel Industry Analytics, and make a commitment to earning your certificate.
- **HX: The Hotel Experience Powered by AAHOA:** In partnership with Emerald Expositions, and co-located with BDNY, HX provides networking and learning opportunities for hoteliers and industry professionals each fall in New York City. This year's event is November 8-9, 2020.

To learn more about how you can grow your personal brand and networking opportunities, contact info@aahoa.com.

3

The Lifelong Learner



As Mahatma Gandhi said, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." Investing in learning and being exposed to new ideas is imperative for business owners and entrepreneurs. The Lifelong Learner wants to learn a new skill or tackle a business problem, but isn't always sure where to start. They are interested in new business opportunities and getting ahead of the industry's trends and challenges. The Lifelong Learner may also want to learn more in a particular aspect of their business, learning more about investments, development, operations, or the laws that impact the bottom line.

AAHOA invests in our members by developing and delivering high-quality educational opportunities that serve you no matter where you are in your career, all developed for the AAHOA HOTEL OWNERS ACADEMY™. If you want to commit to lifelong learning more this year, here's where AAHOA can help.

INVEST IN YOURSELF

- **Webinars:** With 100 new webinars produced in 2018 and again in 2019, AAHOA's more than 350+ unique webinar offerings cover important topics in short 20-minute sessions, all accessible on-demand via MyAAHOA.com

- ➔ **AAHOA Events:** While you can expand your network at AAHOA's nearly 200 events a year, many of these gatherings also focus on issues, topics, and learning so hoteliers can stay ahead of new laws, hotel trends, and opportunities on the horizon. Of course, the AAHOA Convention & Trade Show and HX: The Hotel Experience Powered by AAHOA, offer plentiful opportunities to learn, grow, and expand your thinking. Learn more about AAHOA's events at aahoa.com/events.
- ➔ **Today's Hotelier:** Produced monthly, Today's Hotelier provides hoteliers and industry leaders with in-depth dives into industry topics and trends, legislative issues and advocacy initiatives at the federal, state, and local levels, and the latest AAHOA happenings. Read it from cover to cover to stay ahead of the topics that matter most.
- ➔ **In-Person Intensive Workshops:** AAHOA hosts one- and two-day workshops throughout the country on topics that matter most to hoteliers. Topics range from how to form a management company to successful multi-brand hotel development.

2020 PERSONAL CHALLENGE

- ➔ **Track Your Professional Development in MyAAHOA.com:** Created with you in mind, MyAAHOA.com is an online experience that puts everything AAHOA at your fingertips, 24/7/365. Pursue your professional development goals. MyAAHOA.com makes it easy to track your progress.
- ➔ **Certificate in Hotel Ownership:** An all-new program, AAHOA has reinvented the CHO in an all-digital format, allowing you to complete a customized certificate curriculum anytime, anywhere, and on your own schedule.
- ➔ **Certification in Hotel Industry Analytics (CHIA):** In partnership with the American Hotel & Lodging Education Institute, the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education, and STR, AAHOA offers our members the greatest discounted access in the industry for the only certification focused on analytics.
- ➔ **Human Trafficking Awareness Training:** AAHOA's free training on human trafficking prevention is available to all hoteliers and their staff, which allows you to make a difference, protect your business, and do your part to put an end to this hidden crime. Every hotelier should take advantage of this offering.

If you're a Lifelong Learner and want to engage more with AAHOA's vast educational offerings, contact info@aahoa.com to learn more.

4

The Deal-Seeker

One of the most crucial aspects of being a successful entrepreneur is to develop partnerships and relationships with vendors and providers who can help you run a more efficient and profitable business.

The Deal-Seeker wants to make the most of their business partnerships and investments. They want to see their hard-earned dollars go further. They might also want to re-examine their suppliers and business advisors to ensure they have great fit and alignment with their business partners and advisors. AAHOA connects you with the industry's top vendors and business partners who understand the business and the challenges hoteliers face.



MAKE YOUR HARD-EARNED DOLLARS GO FURTHER

- ➔ **Build Relationships:** Hoteliers who have a strong network have a strong business. AAHOA enables its members to be able to meet a variety of vendors and continue the conversation past the trade show floor. Building a strong relationship with vendors ensures you're on top of upcoming industry trends and always getting the best deals to boost your bottom line.
- ➔ **AAHOA Trade Shows:** From Regional Conferences & Trade Shows across the country to the AAHOA Convention & Trade Show, AAHOA provides more than 30 opportunities throughout the year for hoteliers to make deals, improve your bottom line, and learn about the latest product and services all in one place.
- ➔ **Exclusive Deals and Discounts:** One of the many perks of being an AAHOA Member is receiving exclusive discounts on the products and services you use in your business every day. From technology and healthcare to financing and human resources, you're sure to find a vendor offering that suits your needs.

2020 PERSONAL CHALLENGE

- ➔ **Subscribe to Vendor Deals:** AAHOA Vendors offer deals, discounts, and incentives throughout the year. Log in to MyAAHOA.com to subscribe to vendor deals, announcements, and emails so you can ensure you never miss an opportunity.
- ➔ **Join Us in Orlando:** Attend the 2020 AAHOA Convention & Trade Show – the nation's leading event for hotel owners – to see all the biggest names under one roof. With more than 600 exhibitors in attendance, you're sure to find what you're looking for on the trade show floor. ■

To learn more about AAHOA's vendor partners and exclusive discounts and deals, contact info@aahoa.com.

What role does brand play in a financing transaction?

by RUSHI SHAH

AS OWNERS GRADUATE TO higher-quality assets, brand has a greater influence on their decision-making, operations, and ability to secure financing. This is because sophisticated, institutional, non-recourse lenders such as debt funds, CMBS conduits, and life insurance companies strive to remove any uncertainty from asset quality or guest experience from their underwriting. Debt and equity investors often underwrite to the worst-case scenario. They favor assets that are backstopped by a strong brand and its marketing and reservation systems because they know the owner will be required to maintain high standards of service and amenities. This reduces the risk that the lender will have to take over the asset, or at minimum, ensures the benefits of the brand will remain in place in the case of borrower default.

BRANDING THE GUEST EXPERIENCE

Hospitality is all about keeping properties updated and fresh for guests. The brands know this and have employed tactics to attract newer properties to their flag and to weed out older product, even terminating agreements or refusing renewal. This reinforces why owners should avoid the uncalculated risk of allowing recourse on their debt. In non-recourse loan transactions, a tri-party agreement is typically executed among the brand/franchisor, the hotel owner/franchisee, and the lender. This agreement, sometimes called a comfort letter, is the most critical component after the franchise agreement and loan documentation. Within the letter, the



MR.DOOMITS/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

capital provider will typically require assurance that the hotel has no violations, and that if future transgressions arise it will be notified immediately that there is risk of the asset losing its flag before it is too late. A non-recourse loan ensures that your brand cannot just pull your flag because the lender has done the due diligence. And if unavoidable circumstances cause loss of flag, the owner's personal wealth is not on the line.

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

One of the Chicago debt funds with whom we have a great relationship shared this classic example of why lenders don't like any potential for loss of flag on an asset they are

financing. After closing, the fund discovered its due diligence failed to uncover that the full-service, Sheraton hotel in Wisconsin was in "red zone" per Marriott. The hotel was vulnerable to losing its flag with little room for error. When the owner failed the quality inspection, Marriott revoked the owner's license. Occupancy plummeted and the lender had to take back the asset and complete the necessary improvements to avoid losing the Sheraton flag permanently.

GOOD BRANDING, GOOD BUSINESS

Based on lenders' aversion to risk, a good brand seems necessary for securing favorable financing, however, there are



“Hoteliers have moved away from cookie-cutter brands and toward creating unique destinations that provide specialized experiences for the millennial and other travelers.”

BRAND VS. BOUTIQUE

GUMPANAT/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

exceptions. Recently, boutique hotels have started to gain popularity. Hoteliers have moved away from cookie-cutter brands and toward creating unique destinations that provide specialized experiences for the millennial and other travelers. The majority of boutique hotels still have some sort of reservation system insulating their revenue stream, as well as governing quality standards, and with a little creativity can still be financed. For example, we recently closed a loan for a mid-scale hotel in St. Augustine, FL. The property had been brandless for a long time, yet we were able to arrange a non-recourse loan. We underwrote 14 percent of revenue as a theoretical expense or placeholder

for industry standard franchise, marketing, and management fees. The property wasn't required to pay this amount; it was only calculated towards the expense of the hotel as if it were being paid. The lender was comfortable with the arrangement because in the unlikely case of default where the lender would need to hire a management company or secure a brand to stabilize the asset, the property would be able to support those expenses.

Owning a hospitality asset is already a risky proposition. Removing uncertainties and unknowns from the equation by securing a brand or not signing recourse on a loan can help hotel owners handicap their risk. ■



Rushi Shah is principal and CEO of the commercial mortgage and real estate investment banking firm and AAHOA Club Blue Member Mag Mile Capital. As a leader in hospitality financing, Shah specializes in structuring and placing high-leverage, non-recourse bridge and permanent debt with cash out for full – and limited-service hotels nationwide. Since joining the firm's predecessor, Aries Capital, in 2015, Shah has structured and closed hundreds of millions in financing for all property types. Shah has held previous positions at Northern Trust and has an MBA from the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business.

The small business brand

by ALFREDO ORTIZ

BRAND NAMES PLAY A PIVOTAL role in our economy. Businesses leverage these trademarks to create customer loyalty. Consumers, on the other hand, use brands to gauge product characteristics, including quality, price, and design. In the hotel industry, Marriott or Hyatt come to mind as distinct names of considerable value.

But not all companies command this level of brand awareness. In fact, a vast majority don't. Luckily, the popularity of a brand, although helpful, is not the definitive measure of a business' potential or value. Small businesses provide a good example.

Although small enterprises might lack nationwide, or even statewide, name recognition, many are well known at the local level – and for good reason. Local entrepreneurs frequently offer unique products and services that would be difficult to find at big box stores or retail chains. This is a hallmark of the so-called “small business brand.”

In my role with the Job Creators Network, I work closely with these small business entrepreneurs.

Take Susan Kochevar for example. She's the owner of 88 Drive In Theater, the last remaining drive-in movie theater in the Denver metro area and a business that she's poured her blood, sweat, and tears into for 25 years. While you or I might not recognize the business name, Susan is bringing the magic of an outdoor cinema experience to her community. Not only does it provide job experience for area youth but it's beloved and well known by local residents.

Rose Morris is another excellent example. Her entrepreneurial drive is not contained to the geographic community but is an innovative product that is both well known and well used by a global community of parents with special-needs children.

Her business, Abram's Nation, has developed and now produces an enclosure that keeps children with autism

“

Small business owners and entrepreneurs are always thinking of new ways to solve problems for consumers or provide them with experiences they would be hard-pressed to find elsewhere, no matter how small the niche.”

SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE U.S.

- More than 30 million in operation
- Support ½ of the U.S. workforce
- Responsible for 44% of economic activity in 2019

safely snuggled in their beds at night. It may not be as popular as McDonald's with the general public, but for the parents of special-needs children, it's undoubtedly more important and more appreciated than a Big Mac.

Susan and Rose are not alone.

Small business owners and entrepreneurs are always thinking of new ways to solve problems for consumers or provide them with experiences they would be hard-pressed to find elsewhere, no matter how small the niche.

What small businesses don't have in reach and popularity on a singular basis they make up for as a community. Regardless of whatever city, town, or street you find yourself, a small business is likely no further than a stone's throw away. Therefore, unsurprisingly, the economic power of the united small business brand is remarkable.

According to government data, more than 30 million small businesses operate in the U.S. and those entrepreneurs are responsible for supporting nearly 60 million employees, or half the country's workforce. Not only are these enterprises behind two-thirds of all new job creation, but it's estimated that 44 percent of economic activity in 2019 moved through their doors.

When applied to the \$20 trillion U.S. economy, these entrepreneurs are clearly an economic powerhouse.

Although small businesses might not receive the name recognition of a restaurant chain or hotel conglomerate, the national economy would fall apart without them. Brand awareness is important, but the most important brand of all might just be the small business brand. ■

Alfredo Ortiz is the president and CEO of the Job Creators Network.

Brand standards: The letter of the law

by RICHARD M. SALTZMAN

WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH elements of a brand standard: the color scheme in a hotel lobby or the particular type of shampoo and conditioner in a hotel room. Every hotel has a brand standard, whether it is a franchise or independent operation. Brand standards can become a point of contention between franchisors and franchisees. However, it is necessary to understand the importance of brand standards from a legal perspective.

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Brand standards are an integral component of the franchise agreement at the outset of the franchise relationship. When an existing hotel is converted to a franchised brand, a property improvement plan will be included in the franchise agreement. Depending on the brand, there may be an opportunity to negotiate specific requirements in the property improvement plan. This may involve outright waivers of these requirements or extended time periods for the completion of certain required items. Whatever the negotiated change, it must be clearly set forth in the property improvement plan to be legally effective. Failure to meet specified deadlines could result in a default under the terms of the franchise agreement which could lead to termination of the franchise agreement.

BRAND REQUIREMENTS

Once open, franchised hotels are required to meet operational brand standards throughout the term of the franchise agreement. These standards can run the gamut from equipping guest rooms and common areas to cleanliness standards and front and back office operational requirements. The list can be highly detailed and extensive. Thus, before entering into the franchise relationship the hotel operator is well-advised to



SPACEZEROCOM/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

understand these requirements and decide if they are equipped to meet them and incur the cost of complying with standards.

In the industry, we often hear complaints of “amenity creep” or overreaching brand requirements. Those complaints may be warranted, although franchisees have little recourse in these situations. However, franchisees can make their concerns known to their franchise advisory councils who often have input in creating brand standards. Many times, the requirements that franchisees object to existed when they signed the franchise agreement. Therefore, it is critical that a prospective franchisee understand their specific agreement and the franchise’s brand standards before entering into the franchise relationship.

Brand standards can significantly impact the sale of a franchise property. In the event of a requested transfer, franchisors can condition the granting of the request on a requirement that the franchisee or new owner adopt an extensive renovation or modernization plan for the subject property. Although the parties can attempt to try and negotiate these terms, the franchisor does not have to agree to such modifications.

PLAN AHEAD

Failure to include a clause in the agreement making the proposed transfer of a franchised hotel contingent on franchisor approval, including the acceptability of the punch list, by all parties can have negative consequences. More importantly, the expense of a punch list destroys the commercial viability of a proposed sale, making it essential that prospective buyers and sellers address this issue as early as possible in their discussions.

Finally, if brand standards are not being met, franchisors and franchisees can enter into “workout plans” to allow the franchisee bring their hotel into compliance with brand standards. Every effort should be made to avoid the consequences of termination of the franchise agreement. ■

Richard M. Saltzman is an attorney specializing in franchise matters at Giambrone and Saltzman, LLC in Fairfield, NJ. Prior to establishing the firm he was in-house counsel and a franchising executive with Wyndham Worldwide and its predecessors for over 20 years. For more information about his law firm, visit www.giambronesaltzman.com or contact him at (862) 210-8137 or at rs@giambronesaltzman.com.

How to react in the face of ADA litigation

by MARTIN H. ORLICK

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) is one of the most important civil-rights laws ever passed by Congress, and it is critical for all hoteliers to understand their responsibilities and to respect its requirements. Many visitors to American hotels have disabilities and expect hoteliers to appreciate the importance of laws enacted to protect and accommodate them. Over the past several years, hoteliers have become subject to lawsuits claiming violations of the ADA and often do not know where to turn.

Should your hotel find itself the target of a lawsuit alleging you are in breach of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), your first impulse may be to panic and throw money at the problem. After all, the ADA was passed to benefit disabled travelers, and your hotel may be facing steep fines and a damaged reputation if these accusations hold any weight.

It is important to understand the motivation behind any lawsuits targeting your hotel. Some plaintiffs and their lawyers are on a mission to test whether a hotel is accessible to disabled travelers and will be satisfied with appropriate steps taken to improve the property. In other cases, they are driven by prospects for quick settlements, having no desire to truly identify any barriers to access at the property. In some states, states like California, plaintiffs may be awarded monetary damages in ADA lawsuits,

meaning these accusations are often an expensive proposition.

FACING THE FACTS

We recommend hiring skilled legal counsel to assist you in fighting a meritless ADA lawsuit, particularly someone with extensive experience successfully navigating ADA cases.

In addition to physical barriers, hotels must also be aware of accessibility concerns lying dormant on their websites. Websites must include appropriate accessibility for seeing and hearing impaired guests and display requisite content to describe the facilities and accommodations. Hoteliers must also provide an option to reserve accessible guest rooms in the same manner in which persons without disabilities reserve rooms.

Hoteliers ought to pay close attention to this requirement to ensure your guests can access your services and to protect your business. Disabled travelers often contend with uncomfortable conditions in airports and during car rides to your property. When they arrive on site, they expect to check into the accessible room they chose when booking, just like every other guest.

This brings us to the aspect of ADA lawsuits that is most often glossed over or forgotten amid hiring legal defense, which is the potential damage to your reputation. In the current social-media climate, a noncompliant hotel may wind up with a

lawsuit, a meeting with the Department of Justice, a bad Yelp review, and a spot on a blacklist by disabled travelers who share information on the Internet.

DEFENDING AGAINST ADA LAWSUITS

So, how do you mitigate this risk? First, you should do everything you can to ensure your property complies with the ADA. Next, if you do face a lawsuit, hire a capable lawyer and an experienced access specialist to survey your property and website. Assess your options and compare reports with a variety of sources, if possible. Without the research and input from trusted experts,





NIROWORLD/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

it can be difficult to defend your business and livelihood.

Hoteliers should also create a detailed list of policies and procedures for your property to follow to remain compliant with the ADA. If the Department of Justice comes to visit you regarding an ADA violation, this will be the first thing investigators ask for, and it should be written down.

Ultimately, you are responsible to ensure your hotel complies with the ADA and your guests will appreciate your consideration of this important responsibility. If you are sued however, you can rest assured that there are experienced professionals who can help protect you and your business. ■

If you find yourself the target of an ADA lawsuit, remember to:

- Take a deep breath.
- Take the accusations seriously.
- Hire a skilled lawyer who knows his field and will hire great experts.
- And, most of all, don't ignore these issues, or they will get worse.



Martin H. Orlick is chair of the ADA Compliance & Defense Group at Jeffer Mangels Butler & Mitchell LLP (JMBM). His 30+-year practice focuses primarily on real estate transactions and litigation. He is experienced in counseling and defending clients with respect to ADA claims and defending against Department of Justice investigations and complaints. His ADA practice includes counseling businesses on the full spectrum of ADA compliance, including policy and procedure manuals and website accessibility. Marty has represented the nation's largest financial institutions and hotels in corporate real estate litigation, class actions, and ADA cases. He is a member of JMBM's Global Hospitality Group.

HX: *Form follows function*

AAHOA leaders shared industry wisdom at HX: The Hotel Experience Powered by AAHOA

by GENEVA TODDY



The trade show floor at HX: The Hotel Experience Powered by AAHOA.

H X: THE HOTEL EXPERIENCE POWERED by AAHOA and Emerald Expositions was co-located with BD|NY to bring the aesthetic and business sides of the hotel industry together at one massive conference in New York. The Javits Center was transformed into a trade show floor for vendors across the hospitality industry to meet and mingle.

The discussion panels provided a wealth of information. Panels such as We Said, They Said: What Hotel Owners and Designers Can Learn from – and Teach – Each Other on the BD|NY side provided varying perspectives of one process, such as designing a hotel.

“We will continue to work with design firms to ensure our hotels are unique,” AAHOA Secretary Nishant (Neal) Patel said.

Other panels focused on what is usually considered the more “practical” side of the hotel business, such as Budgeting

for New Development. AAHOA Treasurer Vinay Patel reminded hoteliers that new development is risky and planning is key, but to also expect the unexpected.

“When you dig, you never know what you’re going to get into,” Vinay Patel said.

Networking is valuable in any industry, so industry leaders gathered to discuss

the topic in the panel How Successful Women Network. Varying personalities communicate and, therefore, network differently, so understanding your own habits and tendencies was a significant part of the discussion.

“Take that moment to say you have to be OK with this role you have voluntarily



AAHOA COO & VP of Franchise Relations Rachel Humphrey (second from right) discussed networking tips and opportunities during her panel.



Franti is trained to sniff out and locate bed bugs. As demonstrated, Franti could survey a property the size of the trade show floor in about 90 minutes - a task that would take a team of humans approximately five hours.



Congratulations to the winners of the Editors' Choice Awards for excellence in exhibiting!



AAHOA Senior Director of Conventions Akshar Patel conversed with Jody Mosely, VP of Operations, Emerald Expositions during the Top 5 Things Event Planners Want in Your Hotel panel.



AAHOA Secretary Nishant (Neal) Patel and AAHOA Director of Marketing Heather Carnes both asked competitors questions during the HX TECHPitch Competition.



assumed,” said Rachel Humphrey, AAHOA COO & VP of Franchise Relations.

AAHOA Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala interviewed Wyndham President & CEO Geoff Ballotti on the best leadership practices and how he manages Wyndham – and his life.

“Identify the young leaders because you’re not in front of them all the time,” Ballotti said about managing corporate staff. “I’m always asking people I respect – the people I trust – who those young leaders are.”

College students studying to enter the hotel industry flocked to New York to learn, network, and make deals with the successful professionals they will likely join soon in the industry.

News in the industry has been shaky. Stories about the labor shortage and constant talks of an industry-wide slowdown have made hoteliers anxious. However, the overall feeling at the show was energetic. From the students entering the industry to all the education and discussions, hoteliers are ready to take 2020 in full force. ■



AAHOA Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala interviewed Wyndham President & CEO Geoff Ballotti.

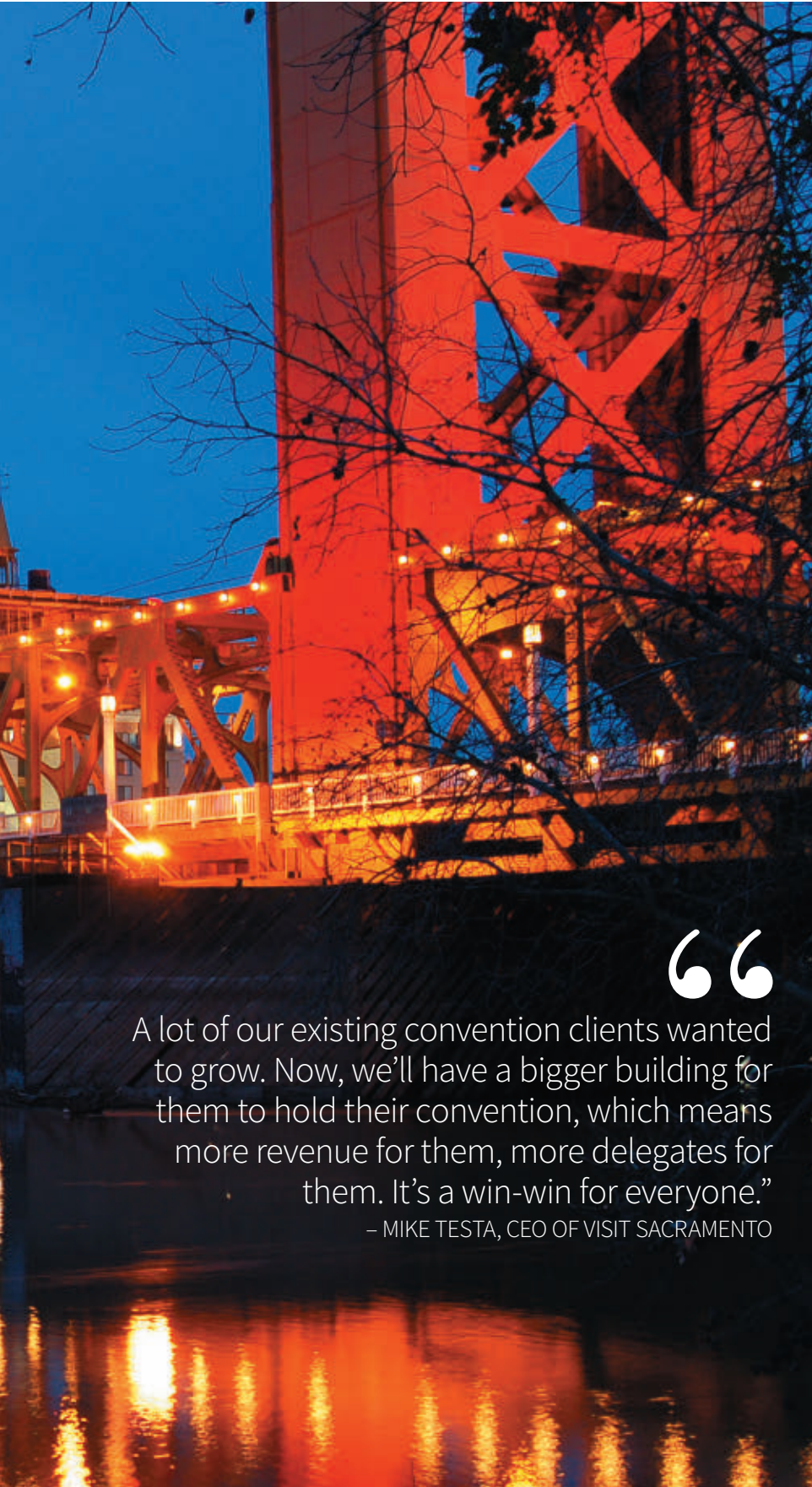


16,000 ROOMS in the Sacramento area

*Hotels contributed **\$50 MILLION** to convention center expansion*

\$303.5M state and tax revenue in Sacramento County (2018)

\$4.1B in travel spending (2018)



Sacramento

by ASIF LAKHANI

CALIFORNIA'S CAPITAL CITY HAS a plethora of investment opportunities for hotels and hospitality. With a total of 16,000 hotel rooms in the region, Sacramento has plans to expand in 2020 and beyond. Of the 4,000 rooms in downtown, more than half are within walking distance of the Sacramento Convention Center, while the rest are in a 3-mile radius. A 12-percent Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) is charged to all hotel stays of less than 30 days in the city of Sacramento. In 2018, Sacramento County collected \$303.5 million in state and tax revenue while travel-related spending totaled \$4.1 billion, according to Visit California's economic impact report.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Two key conversation points about Sacramento's tourism and hospitality industry are its limited supply of hotel rooms, which is actively being addressed with optimistic development, and the renovations currently taking place at the Sacramento Convention Center, the main catalyst for the industry locally.

The Sacramento Convention Center closed for construction and renovation in July 2019 and will re-open in November 2020. Additions include a new 40,000-square-foot ballroom and 15,000 square feet of outdoor space, exhibit space, and meeting rooms.

"A lot of our existing convention clients wanted to grow," said Mike Testa, CEO of Visit Sacramento. "Now, we'll have a bigger building for them to hold their convention, which means more revenue for them, more delegates for them. It's a win-win for everyone," he said.

Both hotels in the immediate vicinity of the convention center were running at 90-percent occupancy two months after the building closed, according to Testa. "Convention and group business [are] valuable in Sacramento, but the demand from transient is huge," he said.

“

A lot of our existing convention clients wanted to grow. Now, we'll have a bigger building for them to hold their convention, which means more revenue for them, more delegates for them. It's a win-win for everyone."

– MIKE TESTA, CEO OF VISIT SACRAMENTO

“

Other Sacramento notables include the 1.5 million acres of farmland surrounding the city that grow roughly 165 crops. As the undisputed “Farm to Fork” capital of the world, it should come as no surprise that the city’s dining scene is making a strong impression on the people who know food best.”

Arguably even more impressive, Testa estimates that he and his team were able to keep roughly 90 percent of the groups who were scheduled to use the convention center during the renovation period in town and host their events at alternate locations. Some of the groups are annual visitors, which helps, but the retention is undoubtedly a huge win for the city, hotels, businesses, and restaurants. The added benefit of recurring retreat and convention groups having something to look forward to upon returning to the convention center has been beneficial from a relationship-building standpoint as well, Testa said.

HOTELIERS GETTING INVOLVED

As it stands now, the convention center expansion wouldn’t have been possible if it weren’t for the local hoteliers, who agreed to contribute \$50 million toward the build-out via the creation of the Sacramento Tourism Infrastructure District, which is essentially a 1-percent tax on hotel stays. The initial plan included the second ballroom to be added later. Two ballrooms and additional halls allow Visit Sacramento to attract and execute more events simultaneously, Testa said.

However, the success of the convention center expansion and other developments

is partially dependent on an increase in hotel room supply. So far, all of the area’s hotels have benefitted from the low-supply, high-demand situation. For example, when a new 250-room Kimpton Sawyer Hotel opened in downtown across from the Golden 1 Center, where the NBA’s Sacramento Kings play, none of the surrounding hotels lost any of their market share. In fact, Kimpton has seen occupancy rates of 70-80 percent since opening, Testa said. Ultimately, a plan is in place to create more than 4,000 hotel rooms in the region, according to Atlas Hospitality Group. Just over 1,000 rooms across nine hotels are currently under construction.

BEYOND BUSINESS

Sacramento isn’t just surviving off or relying on business travelers. The city has a wealth of diverse cultural offerings that only add to its mystique. One such event is the Aftershock Festival, which highlights hard rock and heavy metal music, and brings to town annually 40,000 people a day for three days. More than 60 percent of the attendees do not live in Sacramento, according to Testa. The festival committee and Visit Sacramento are currently in talks to establish two other music festivals that will serve an anticipated audience of 360,000 people over a three-week period.

Other Sacramento notables include the 1.5 million acres of farmland surrounding the city that grow roughly 165 crops. As the undisputed “Farm to Fork” capital of the world, it should come as no surprise that the city’s dining scene is making a strong impression on the people who know food best. The renowned Michelin Guide system awarded The Kitchen, a staple in the city’s dining scene, its first star in the summer of 2019. It was a first for the city, where a number of restaurants also received Michelin distinctions. Furthermore, Golden 1 Center will be the site of the World Butcher Challenge in September 2020.

REDEFINING THE AREA

Testa understands and readily admits that Sacramento isn’t as high on travelers’ “bucket lists” like other California cities such as San Francisco, San Diego, and Los Angeles. However, Sacramento represents all the best that California has to offer, he says. Whether it’s food, views, culture, or other, there’s a reason that the city is California’s capital. Sacramento initially came to prominence during the Gold Rush in early 1848. While new hotel rooms and development may not have the same flair as precious metals, there is an undeniably golden opportunity in Sacramento waiting to be encountered. ■

#AAHOACON
'20



ONE OF
THE LEADING
HOSPITALITY
INDUSTRY
GATHERINGS
IN AMERICA

SAVE BIG!

EARLY-BIRD REGISTRATION ENDS FEB. 13

One of the largest hospitality industry gatherings in America, AAHOACON20 is the leading event for networking, education, and the latest products and services all under one roof.

Join nearly 8,000 industry professionals and more than 600 exhibitors for four days of networking, education, inspiration, and sunshine in Orlando, FL, April 13-16, 2020.

Register today at
aahoa.com/convention



AAHOA CLUB BLUE, PLATINUM & SILVER MEMBERS

The following companies provide generous ongoing support to AAHOA and its members. A heartfelt and sincere thank you is extended to every one of our vendor partners for their contributions to AAHOA and the industry at large. When searching for a provider, consider doing business with the following members.



AAHOA CLUB BLUE MEMBERS



ADP, Inc.

Thomas Bell: (973) 510-0196



Chase

Faheem Khan: (800) 727-1872



Dell

Mobolaji Sokunbi: (800) 624-6145



Ecolab, Inc.

Michael Pfister: (317) 250-5189



Home Box Office

Brian Venable: (404) 239-6695



Lowe's ProServices

Anthony Ruiz: (704) 589-6939



Mag Mile Capital

Rushi Shah: (312) 640-7430



United Health Group

Kimberlee VanderVoorn:
(800) 328-5979



Zonetail

Mark Holmes:
(416) 583-3773 x228



AutoClerk, Inc.

Mohammed Hansia:
(925) 284-1005



Avendra

Mara Radis: (301) 825-0311



AAHOA PLATINUM MEMBERS



Amana PTAC

Byron Cortez: (800) 647-2982



G6 Hospitality

G6 Hospitality Franchising, LLC

Mike McGeehan: (972) 360-9000



Best Western Hotels & Resorts

Michelle Zajac: (800) 847-2429



Choice Hotels International

Tim Shuy: (301) 592-5000



Diversey

Deniz Alpaslan: (980) 221-3235



Extended Stay America

Linda Trexler: (980) 345-1600



InterContinental Hotels Group

Karen Rogow: (770) 604-5379



Marriott International

Christie Patterson:
(301) 380-3200



Onity, Inc.

Mark Lewitt: (800) 248-6189



OYO Rooms & Technology, LLC

Marcus Higgins: 91 (700) 363-7401



Radisson Hotel Group

Terry Sanders: (800) 336-3301



Red Roof Inn

Phil Hugh: (888) 473-8861



RLH Corporation

Paul Sacco: (509) 777-6468



Travel Media Group

Dana Singer: (407) 673-6123



TV Asia

Pradeep Hegde:
(732) 650-1100 x26



Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

Kevin Brickner: (973) 753-7158



Access Point Financial
Rhonda Loerzel: (404) 382-9592



AccuLock, Inc.
Dan Brown: (866) 222-8562



Alvi Satellites
Prashant Ajmera: (678) 466-7868



Amato Insurance Agency
Joe Amato, Jr.:
(732) 530-6740 x412



American Express
Merchant Services:
(800) 528-5200



American Hotel Register Company
Nancy Mikels: (847) 743-1258



Argeo Hospitality
Anthony Melchiorri:
(917) 295-1628



Atlas Concorde
Michael Sautner: (615) 661-7200



Coast to Coast Computer Products, Inc.
Kyle Kurtz: (800) 231-4553



Cox Business
Alea Riley: (404) 269-3057



Credivia
Trusha Patel: (833) 777-2733



Curve Hospitality
Sargent Khan: (713) 819-7296



Dickson Furniture Manufacturers
Paul Mougel: (713) 747-0341



DIRECTV, Inc.
Jeff Fox: (310) 560-0323



DISH Business
Tyler Floyd: (303) 723-1854



Ferguson
Brian Winterble: (954) 597-3163



Foliot Furniture
Mahesh Parekh: (702) 278-7380



Fresh Air
Matt Hanson: (603) 643-7181



Friedrich Air Conditioning Company
Dave McDonald: (210) 546-0500



Frontline Performance Group (FPG)
Nichole Campbell: (407) 592-2626



Gillis Consulting and Training
Tammy Gillis: (800) 296-2962



HD Supply Facilities Maintenance
Stratton Michaels: (800) 431-3000



Hodges Ward Elliott
Clint W. Hodges: (404) 233-6000



The Home Depot Pro
Susan Wright:
(866) 412-6726 x105540



Hospitality1
Dhar Patel: (714) 473-9813



Hospitality Designs
Ruben Cohen: (877) 468-3588



Hotel Brokers, Inc.
Subhash Naik: (661) 808-4998



INFINITI HR
Daniel Mormino: (623) 455-6234



Just In Time Communications
Justin Jones: (855) 565-1432



Lodging Concepts
Jinesh Naran: (714) 694-5980



Marcus & Millichap
Alexis Hummel: (630) 570-2225



Margaritaville
Rick Cunningham: (470) 698-2273



Mass Mutual
Ana Lucia Divins: (980) 293-8124



Matrix Telecom
Ashu Upa: (800) 283-0539



Meridian One
Yancey Burgess: (703) 461-5200



My Place Hotels of America
Terry Kline: (605) 229-8684



Nimble Accounting
Rahul Kumar: (576) 870-9131



O'Connor & Associates
Andrew Choy: (713) 375-4224



P&G Professional
Maria Early: (904) 591-8644



PMC Commercial Trust
Kristi Lewis-Hodge:
(972) 349-3200



Prem Sales
Deepak Panchmia:
(806) 745-6651



Primrose Schools
Blair Burdette: (404) 423-4247



Rheem Water Heating
Dave Hanley: (817) 680-4117



Rinnai
Dipesh Parekh: (800) 621-9419



Shaw Hospitality
Robert Stuckey: (888) 448-7878



Showtime Networks, Inc.
Doug Markott: (770) 698-6937



Simmons Hospitality Bedding
Andrea Hochwarter:
(770) 353-0122



Sonu Satellite
Neil Doshi: (877) 999-7668



Spectrum Enterprise Solutions
David A. Fitts: (212) 379-5826



SurferQuest
Kathryn Konig: (814) 342-3120



Tara Energy
Ashar Jafri: (713) 890-2222



Ten-X
Anthony Falor: (973) 727-0314



Tyson Food Services
Dennis Bell: (513) 284-0485



Universal Financial Consultants
Vincent Munno: (727) 669-0109



USA Digital, Inc.
Aaron Gomez: (909) 200-5445



Vertically Integrated Projects
Trela Hendrix: (303) 552-8814

AAHOA Members in Action



1A



1B

1A. Members of Regional Director Imesh Vaidya's Southwest Region and their families served meals to the homeless at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Phoenix.

1B. The holidays are a time for giving back to the community and AAHOA Members in the Southwest Region took to heart by serving Thanksgiving dinner to needy families.

2A. Washington, D.C. Area Regional Director Sandip Patel and his family got into the holiday spirit by serving Thanksgiving dinner in Charles County, MD, to families in need.



2A

2B. Giving back to their community they serve is important to Washington, D.C. Area Regional Director Sandip Patel and his family.



2B



3A

3A. The Cradle of Liberty Council recognized AAHOA as 2019's Hospitality Industry "Good Scout" for its tremendous commitment to improving the lives of those in its community. The award was presented to AAHOA Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala, who was joined by AAHOA Past Chairman Bhavesh Patel, who chaired the event.

YOU'VE GOT A MEETING WITH CONGRESS.



2020

LEGISLATIVE ACTION SUMMIT

We're coming together on Capitol Hill and you're invited!

Each year, **AAHOA** and the **American Hotel & Lodging Association** unite the hotel industry to show lawmakers the strength of our industry.

LAS is a unique opportunity to join hundreds of your colleagues to meet congressional representatives from your home state, share your story and the story of our industry, and educate Congress on the important issues affecting the hotel business.

During the course of two days, you will learn about the latest developments in the most pressing issues that are impacting hoteliers. You will educate your elected officials on Capitol Hill on issues that impact our industry, our workforce, and your bottom line.

Help lawmakers make decisions that benefit the hospitality industry and small businesses by sharing your story!

LEARN MORE AT AAHOA.COM/LAS

SEPTEMBER 16-17, 2020 | WASHINGTON, D.C. | MARRIOTT MARQUIS





4A



4B



4C



4D



4E

- 4A. AAOHA Past Chairman Buggsi Patel (2000-2001) sat on a panel that provided an industry update at the 2019 RLH Conference, Brand Showcase & Expo in Las Vegas.
- 4B. Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala used her personal success story to inspire other hoteliers at the RLH Conference.
- 4C. The AAOHA Officers were panelists and guest speakers at the conference.
- 4D. COO & VP of Franchise Relations Rachel Humphrey and RLH's Amanda Marcello urged women to seek leadership positions during the Women in Leadership & Learning session.
- 4E. Arkansas Regional Director Girish (Gary) Patel was honored with the RLH Humanitarian Award for his charitable works.



PREFERRED VALUE MANUFACTURER OF HOSPITALITY
FLOORING FOR OVER **35 YEARS**

FREE SAMPLES: CALL US AT 1-800-225-2948 OR AT
OUR WEBSITE: WWW.KINSLEYCARPETS.COM

- 100% WATERPROOF -
LUXURY VINYL PLANK



- HIGH VALUE -
GUEST ROOM CARPET



KINSLEY CARPET MILLS UNDERSTANDS THE IMPORTANCE OF
AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE FLOORING.

JOIN THE *750+ HOTELS* THAT HAVE UPGRADED THEIR FLOOR-
ING WITH KINSLEY CARPET MILLS IN 2018.

AAHDA MEMBERS RECEIVE AN EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNT!



TIME TO REPLACE? VISIT US AT WWW.KINSLEYCARPETS.COM OR CALL 1-800-225-2948.



Ponce D. Moody Funding

Alternative Financing Solutions For Commercial Real Estate

"IF THE BANK SAYS "NO," GIVE US A CALL"

OUR FUNDING ABILITY:

New Projects Worldwide: Up to 5 Billion Dollars

Bridge Loans: Up to 250 Million Dollars

- ✦ Large Real Estate Development Projects
- ✦ Large Construction Projects
- ✦ Large Alternative Energy Projects
- ✦ Asset Based Loans
- ✦ Purchase Order Financing
- ✦ Corporate Expansion Loans
- ✦ Ground Lease Programs
- ✦ Equipment Finance and Leasing
- ✦ Supply Chain Financing
- ✦ LED Light Bulb Supplier

SBA Financing: Up to \$10 Million – Property must be Owner Occupied (51% Minimum)

Creative Non Debt Funding: You can access Pre-Tax Funds (i.e. 401K, IRA, SEP, 403b, 457, TSP) – Penalty Free and without taking a Taxable Distribution – This can then be used as your Non Borrowed Cash Injection for a Loan – This is for ANY Type of For Profit Business!!!!

Accounts Receivable Leveraging: Leverage your Accounts Receivable and let us WAIT the 30 to 90 DAYS for PAYMENT.

Merchant Credit Card Processing: We are confident that we can offer a Better Program than your Current Processor. In order to give you a "QUOTE," we will need your Most Recent Month's Merchant Statement.



Ponce D. Moody
Cell: 919.771.3230

Email: ponceloans@poncemoody.com

Website: www.pdmfunding.net

FIRST CHOICE SPC FLOORING

Advantages of SPC Flooring over Carpet:



SPC Flooring is 100% water proof. SPC Flooring is cigarette burn resistant. SPC Flooring will NOT mold, mildew, absorb stains or retain offensive odors!

Introducing
7.5 mm SPC
with attached
pad

- 2 mm glue down, 12 mil wear layer
- 2.5 mm, 20 mil wear layer
- 7.5 mm SPC, 20 mil wear layer, attached pad

Featuring our very own patented Gator Grip anti slip

**Floor Score
CERTIFIED**

Save thousands on your renovation projects, buy straight from the manufacturing First Choice, the most recognize and preferred name in the hospitality industry.

CALL NOW for Samples & Prices
706-695-1504 | 706-271-8023
www.firstchoicelp.com • firstchoicelp@gmail.com



DECORATIVE CEILING TILES
from plain to beautiful in hours



DecorativeCeilingTiles.net
1-866-297-0380

Photo Credit Pipa Bradbury Design & Savaza Photo

7-YEAR WARRANTY



FROM Hotel Safes \$95

**Our Safes Are In Every
Major Hotel Brand In The U.S.A.**

Custom Colors Available



GLOBALSAFE

**1-800-545-4947
www.hotelsafes.com**

**20TH
YEAR
ANNIVERSARY**



**5 Years
Warranty
Easy
Financing**

5000+ HOTELS-MOTELS WORLD-WIDE TRUST

MATRIX COMMUNICATION & SECURITY SOLUTIONS FOR EFFICIENT FUNCTIONING

- Hospitality IP Phone System
- Time-Attendance and Access Control
- HD IP Security-Camera System



MATRIX
TELECOM | SECURITY

Call: 1-(800)-283-0539
Fax: (888) 717-7472
sales@matrixhotelpbx.com
www.matrixhotelpbx.com

DO IT ONCE, DO IT RIGHT!

ARTISTIC
BATH AND KITCHEN REFINISHING INC.

24 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE & PROUD MEMBER OF THE B.B.B.

**Refinish your bathtubs!
Volume pricing starting at "\$99"
includes a non-resistant bottom!**

REFINISHING OF:
FIBERGLASS TUB & SHOWER ENCLOSURES,
TUB & TILE, CULTURED MARBLE SINKS & VANITY TOPS

**888.707.9297
artisticbathrefinishings.com**



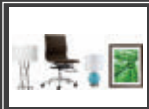
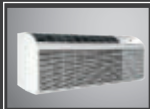
Best Hotel Products™

Best PTAC & TTW Pricing

Furniture from \$620/room!

Hotel Accessories

Franchise Mattresses



Save on franchise approved products!

Everything you need for your hotel...nationwide!

847.440.5562 | www.aahoa.besthotelproducts.com

BATHTUBS REGLAZED

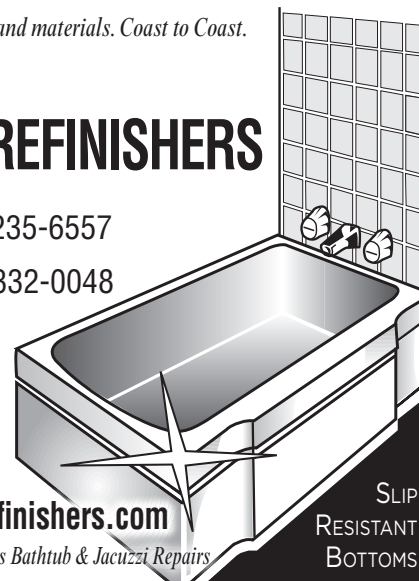
Don't Let Amateurs and "Fly-By-Nights" Ruin Your Bathtubs!

Unique Refinishers is the nation's oldest and largest bathtub repair, reglazing and restoration company. You can be assured of the highest quality workmanship and materials. Coast to Coast.

UNIQUE REFINISHERS

Detroit 1-800-235-6557

Atlanta 1-800-332-0048



www.uniquerefinishers.com

We specialize in fiberglass Bathtub & Jacuzzi Repairs

**SLIP
RESISTANT
BOTTOMS**

FRANCHISE LITIGATION



Legal assistance in reviewing/
negotiating franchise agreements
and liquidated damages settlements.



Mahesh I. Patel
Patel & Associates, Attorneys at Law
Phone: 972-643-1813
Fax: 972-231-0104
Email: mpatel@patellaw.net

BMC Cabinetry Inc

We treat our customers the way we want to be treated.

Specializing in Providing Kitchen Cabinets, Vanities and Stone Countertops to Hospitality Industries.

Cell: 737-212-2767 (Shirley Choy) | Email: bmccabinetry@gmail.com
Office: 713-380-2921 | www.bmccabinetry.com

Address: 1450 Brittmoores Rd., Houston, TX 77043

HOSPITALITY LAW FIRM

RICHARD M. SALTZMAN, ESQ.

Former Fortune 500 Hotel Attorneys ♦ Senior Franchise Executive

- Liquidated Damage Settlements
- Dispute Resolution
- Franchise Agreement Negotiations
- Acquisitions and Sales
- Development

GIAMBRONE & SALTZMAN, LLC
ATTORNEYS

862-210-8137 ♦ rs@giambronesaltzman.com ♦ www.giambronesaltzman.com

THANK YOU TO OUR ADVERTISERS

for their ongoing support of
Today's Hotelier magazine and AAHOA.

Alvi Satellites.....	7
www.alvisatellites.com	
Artistic Bath Refinishing.....	49
artisticbathrefinishings.com	
Best Hotel Products, Inc.....	49
www.aahoa.besthotelproducts.com	
BMC Cabinetry Inc.....	50
www.bmccabinetry.com	
Chase Merchant Services.....	Inside Front Cover
merchants.chasepaymentech.com	
Decorative Ceiling Tiles, Inc.....	48
DecorativeCeilingTiles.net	
Embassy Carpets.....	5
embassycarpets.com	
First Choice Luxury Vinyl Plank.....	48
www.firstchoicelvp.com	
Giambrone & Saltzman, LLC.....	50
www.giambronesaltzman.com	
Global Safe Corporation.....	49
www.hotelsafes.com	
Hospitality Designs.....	25
www.hospitalitydesigns.com	
Kinsley Carpet Mills.....	47
www.kinsleycarpets.com	
Matrix Telecom.....	49
www.matrixhotelpbx.com	
Motel 6.....	Inside Front Cover Gatefold
motel6franchise.com	
Patel & Associates.....	50
www.patellaw.net	
Ponce D. Moody Funding, LLC.....	48
www.pdmfunding.net	
Red Roof Inn.....	Outside Back Cover
redrooffranchising.com	
Unique Refinishers.....	49
www.uniquerefinishers.com	
Vanities International.....	50
VanitiesInternational.com	
Watco Manufacturing Company.....	21
watcomfg.com	



today's hotelier

Recently, *Today's Hotelier* received the 2019 Gold Award in the Association Magazine category of MarCom Awards. The teams at AAHOA and Naylor are honored and excited to have been recognized by one of the largest, most-respected creative competitions in the world. Published monthly, *Today's Hotelier* is an invaluable resource not only to AAHOA Members, but also to hoteliers throughout the nation.

For more information on *Today's Hotelier* and AAHOA's publication program, please visit bit.ly/AAHOA20

NAYLOR ASSOCIATION SOLUTIONS



AAHOA ASIAN AMERICAN HOTEL OWNERS ASSOCIATION

“

The fact Red Roof owns and operates over 100 hotels themselves means they see the business through the same lenses I do.

”

Paul Patel

Red Roof Franchisee
Bowling Green, KY, Somerset, KY,
Greenwood, IN & Knoxville, TN

(left–right) Matt Hostetler, SVP Franchise Sales & Development; Bill Hall, SVP Franchise Operations; Paul Patel; Phil Hugh, Chief Development Officer



NextGen® Renovations Generate Results

69.3%
OCCUPANCY*
(INDEX 118.6%)**



\$59.37
ADR*
(INDEX 100.9%)**



\$41.07
REVPAR*
(INDEX 118.5%)**



“Red Roof isn’t the only brand in my portfolio,” says Paul Patel, “but it is the one brand I’ve stuck with for 15 years.” He goes on to explain, “Because they have skin in the game, they understand the operational experience and day-to-day challenges. That’s why upgrades and brand standards are so well thought out.”

And perhaps that explains why Red Roof has an 90% franchisee satisfaction.¹ Paul continued, saying, “The people I work with have tenure. Like me, they’ve been with the brand and in the business for quite some time. After some 15 years, I equate working with Red Roof to working with a best friend.”



Genuine Relationships. Real Results.®

GET IN ON THE UPSCALE ECONOMY® VISIT US AT REDROOFFRANCHISING.COM OR CALL 888.473.8861.

*Average Occupancy Rate, Average Daily Room rate and RevPAR for Red Roof Affiliate Managed and Affiliate Owned hotels in the U.S., open and operating for at least two full years, started renovations in 2011 or later and have implemented either the complete NextGen renovations or specific standard design elements for the period of January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018, 57 properties. ** Average Index based on Smith Travel Research 2018. ¹ 2019 Red Roof Franchisee Survey. This is not an offer. No offer or sale of a franchise will be made except by a Franchise Disclosure Document first filed and registered with the applicable authorities. For New York: An offering can only be made by a prospectus filed first with the Department of Law for the State of New York. Such filing does not constitute approval by the Department of Law. For Minnesota: #F-5824. Red Roof Franchising, LLC, 7815 Walton Pkwy New Albany, Ohio 43054. © 2019 Red Roof Franchising, LLC