

today's hotelier

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The Official Publication of AAHOA

THE SAFETY & SECURITY ISSUE

TODAY'S HOTELIER

AAHOA'S OFFICIAL PUBLICATION



Passing the Torch

“Honoring the Past, Creating a Bolder Future”

PAGE 10

BHARAT PATEL
2023-2024
AAHOA Chairman

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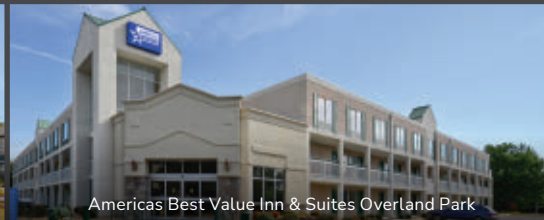
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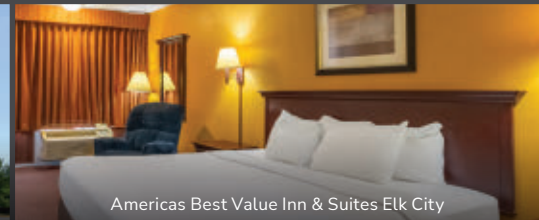
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contents

March 2024 | todayshotelier.com



14

Cybersecurity in the spotlight

Recent high-profile attacks illustrate the risks facing hoteliers

by NICK FORTUNA

20

Preparing for the silver tsunami

Embracing ADA compliance as an underserved market gap for hotel brands

by ADAM and LARRY MOGELONSKY

FOCUS: ADVOCACY IN ACTION

26

Pounding pavement

AAHOA Members head to D.C. for an industry advocacy push

by JODI SCOTT

departments

- 7 5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT AAHOA THIS MONTH
- 8 LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN
- 9 LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO
- 38 AAHOA VENDOR PARTNERS
- 44 AAHOA MEMBERS IN ACTION
- 46 AAHOA CLUB BLUE, PLATINUM, SILVER, AND BRONZE INDUSTRY PARTNERS
- 48 CLASSIFIEDS
- 49 ADVERTISERS INDEX

columns

THE C-SUITE

Passing the torch: AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel on his year as the leader of the world's largest hotel owners association and the legacy he wants to leave 10
by MELISSA ROSENBAUM

SPOTLIGHT

New opportunities: Looking back at AAHOA's inaugural HYPE Ownership Conference..... 29
by TEAM AAHOA

FINANCE

Safe(est) passage: In pursuit of the risk-free rate of return..... 32
by STEVE COKER and SUNIL LAD

INDEPENDENT HOTELIERS

Balancing independence: Adopting best practices from branded hotels in safety and security 34
by RONAK PATEL

THE GUEST EXPERIENCE

Vigilance is its own reward: The best defense against potential safety risks in your hotels 36
by MELISSA BERNARDO

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5 Things to Know

About AAHOA
This Month

AAHOACON²⁴
Edition

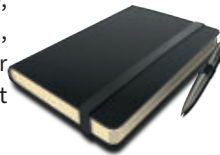
LARGEST TRADE SHOW IN AAHOA HISTORY COMING TO ORLANDO

AAHOA secured record-level booth sales for the Trade Show at AAHOACON24, April 2-5, making it the largest in AAHOA history. The trade show will be of historic proportions, and attendance is projected to be at a high level. AAHOACON24 will feature 30-plus must-see educational sessions, three General Sessions with world-class keynote speakers, and three nights filled with incredible entertainment and top-level networking. We know you will receive incredible value from AAHOACON24. See you in ORLANDO. AAHOACON.com

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Orlando

TOP-TIER EDUCATION SESSIONS, INCLUDING A PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP FOR INDEPENDENT HOTELIERS!

Education will take center stage at AAHOACON24. Attendees will have a front-row seat to world-class content that will empower them to be savvy, solution-driven, knowledgeable hotel owners. There will be 30-plus educational sessions, three General Sessions, a HerOwnership Women's Session & Luncheon, a HYPE Young Professionals Session, and three Master Classes. Some of the most influential voices in the industry will discuss key topics, including labor shortages, profitability, optimizing online presence, fair franchising, and more. You'll also hear from experts in hotel finance, development, technology, AI, operations, renovation, marketing, and more, including independent hotel owner visionaries. There truly is something for everybody at AAHOACON24. AAHOACON.com



GET READY FOR NEXT MONTH'S AAHOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS

As part of the festivities of AAHOACON24, we'll be electing new members of the Board of Directors, so make sure you're eligible to vote by checking your eligibility status on MyAAHOA.com. Ensure you have a unique email address and mobile phone number on file in MyAAHOA. This is important because this is the same information that will be used to verify your identity during the credentialing process. If you do not complete this step, you will experience delays in credentialing. AAHOA.com/2024Candidates



BLOCK PARTY AT ICON PARK

AAHOACON24 will include fun activities at ICON Park, the location of the AAHOACON24 Block Party, and they're FREE to all those who attend:

- Sea Life Aquarium
- Unlimited tickets to The Wheel
- Max Action Arena Arcade
- Madame Tussauds Wax Museum
- 7D Motion Theater
- Museum of Illusions

AAHOACON24 and ICON Park are teaming up to offer attendees fun attractions, world-class eats, live music, 20-acre ICON Park features, including the 400-ft Wheel, 10 distinct attractions, 15-plus restaurants, bars, shopping, an outdoor marketplace, promenade, and lawn.



AAHOA CELEBRATES WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Attention, women hoteliers. Are you ready to embrace your identity as a woman in a predominantly "other" environment? In recognition of Women's History Month, AAHOA is excited to announce guest speaker Rashmi Airan for the HerOwnership Women's Hoteliers Session & Luncheon on Wednesday, April 3, from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., at AAHOACON24. Rashmi will help the women in the room identify and demonstrate their personal values, beliefs, and pursuits. AAHOA is proud to equip women hoteliers with knowledge to help drive collaboration resulting in high performance. Make plans to join us. AAHOACON.com





BHARAT PATEL, CHO, CHIA
AAHOA CHAIRMAN (2023-2024)

“

Hoteliers are in a prime position to lead the fight against sex and labor trafficking, and waging that battle is precisely what AAHOA has been doing.”

Safety for all

“No safety, know pain. Know safety, no pain.”

– Author unknown

WOULD IT SURPRISE YOU TO LEARN HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND BED BUGS may become the next “ADA moments” in our industry? Sound practices, preparation, and partners can help all hoteliers mitigate risk when it comes to lawsuits.

Whether it’s drive-by and frivolous lawsuits, succession and estate planning, wills and trusts, risks of employee actions, natural disasters, commonly overlooked aspects of purchase and sale agreements, or franchise agreement clauses you should negotiate, AAHOA strives to keep its members in the know, while helping hoteliers stay profitable and stay out of court, and provides them with the knowledge to keep their guests and businesses safe.

While AAHOA doesn’t provide legal advice or representation to any individual persons or members, AAHOA goes to great lengths to ensure the information we provide is accurate and useful.

One of the biggest initiatives AAHOA has been working on over the years is human trafficking awareness. Hoteliers are in a prime position to lead the fight against sex and labor trafficking, and waging that battle is precisely what AAHOA has been doing. For years, AAHOA has long been at the forefront of the hospitality industry’s battle against human trafficking.

In 2022, there were five new forced labor cases and 178 new sex trafficking cases across the United States. One hotel was charged with human trafficking. Ranked from highest to lowest, California, Texas, Florida, New York, Michigan, Ohio, Missouri, and Pennsylvania have the most human trafficking cases.

AAHOA’s partnership with Businesses Ending Slavery & Trafficking (BEST) has helped provide education and resources to hoteliers. In fact, AAHOA has trained nearly 7,000 people to recognize the signs of trafficking through our Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking (BEST) Inhospitable to Human Trafficking Training Sponsored by AAHOA program.

This training is a proven tool that improves hotel safety. Human trafficking harms victims and poses serious safety risks to guests and employees. It also can expose hoteliers to substantial legal and financial liabilities. The course is free of charge and helps hotel staff identify the crime, proactively prevents it from occurring, and protects hoteliers from legal liability.

Along with human trafficking training, AAHOA provides all sorts of education from in-person workshops to online webcasts, development days at hotel brands, the AAHOA Certificate in Hotel Ownership® (CHO), education sessions at regional meetings, and more.

AAHOA also has been engaging lawmakers on policies and issues most important to hoteliers. Our advocacy agenda aims to positively influence and inform elected officials at the highest levels of government, pushing for liability protections for hoteliers and AAHOA Members, advocating for effective legislation, and protecting business owners from frivolous lawsuits while holding bad actors accountable. ■



LAURA LEE BLAKE, ESQ.
AAHOA PRESIDENT & CEO

“

Empowering AAHOA members with a shield of safety and security, we strive to build a foundation where hospitality can thrive.”

Securing the future of our industry

“Safety has to be everyone’s responsibility... everyone needs to know that they are empowered to speak up if there’s an issue.”
– Captain Scott Kelly

SAFETY AND SECURITY ARE THE BULWARKS OF HOSPITALITY TO FORTIFY the guest experience and create a haven where comfort and trust welcome every visitor. At AAHOA, we stand firm with our members to build a foundation where hospitality thrives.

In recent months, for example, AAHOA advocated for Los Angeles hoteliers by pressuring the LA City Council to remove from the ballot an ordinance mandating that all Los Angeles hotels provide rooms to unhoused residents. The controversial ordinance, “Hotel Land Use and Replacement Housing Requirements,” would have forced hotels to report vacant rooms by 2 p.m. daily, so unsheltered individuals could use government vouchers to stay in the hotels without any wrap-around services – which would have placed an immense burden on the hotel industry, created serious safety concerns for hotel workers and paying guests, and significantly threatened the LA tourism and travel industry.

AAHOA took a strong stance against the original ordinance when it was introduced, and I joined more than 150 local AAHOA Los Angeles Members and association leaders, including Regional Director Naresh (ND) Bhakta, and NELA leader Ray Patel, at an LA City Council meeting in August 2022 and testified to raise awareness of the high impact this mandatory ordinance would have on the industry.

AAHOA also assisted with getting a North Carolina Hotel Safety Act signed into law. After years of advocacy, SB 53 – the *Hotel Safety Act* became law about a year ago. The North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association (NCRLA), alongside AAHOA, led efforts to clarify when a hotel guest has rights under the landlord-tenant act. The law now clearly states that occupants of accommodations provided hotels, motels, or similar lodging, do not have tenancy rights until they have stayed more than 90 consecutive days, creating safer conditions for hoteliers, their staff, and their guests.

And it does not stop there. At AAHOA, we are continually advocating to protect your business interests, your hotels, and your guests. This ranges from raising the alarms on widespread cyber security attacks, to identifying potential dangers arising from new AI check-in features that might lead to increased crime, and providing extensive training to prevent human trafficking in your hotels.

Empowering AAHOA members with a shield of safety and security, we strive to build a foundation where hospitality can thrive.

This is your AAHOA. And it is always a profound honor to advocate for you to change the industry for the benefit of all. ■

Passing *the* torch

THE TERM OF BHARAT Patel concludes at next month's AAHOACON24 in Orlando, FL. Before he passes the Chair's Gavel to Miraj S. Patel, we caught up with him to talk about a wide range of topics including the specific challenges he's faced this past year, the long-term importance of industry advocacy, as well as looking at where the industry is headed in the years to come.

WHO INSPIRED YOU MOST DURING YOUR YEAR AS CHAIRMAN?

My family and the AAHOA membership. I received unconditional support from my wife, Manisha, and my two kids, Dia and Sunny. Another example is my mother and father. Due to discrimination in the late 80s, they had a very difficult time getting insurance, which would have forced them to leave the industry altogether. Their passion and drive to keep going despite challenges is something they instilled in me, and I try to follow in their footsteps. They continue to be an inspiration through example. On another note, I find joy in providing service to others. Equipping our members with the tools to be able to provide for their families kept me going. In our native language, there's a saying called *Samaj Seva*, which means community service. I was inspired by my family and the membership to help as many people as I could in our industry.

AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel on his year as the leader of the world's largest hotel owners association and the legacy he wants to leave

by MELISSA ROSENBAUM

WHAT LEGACY DO YOU HOPE TO LEAVE AT AAHOA AND IN THE INDUSTRY?

Simply put, to have left AAHOA better and stronger for our members than when I began my term as Chairman.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU IN TERMS OF SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP?

I joke that I'm like George Washington. He was called up from his retirement at Mount Vernon to lead the Continental Army then dramatically resigned his commission and returned to his farm once he had fulfilled his duty and mission for which he had been elected. Hypothetically speaking, I will be "returning to the farm" – my family business – when my volunteer service is complete.

WHAT'S THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU RECEIVED DURING YOUR YEAR AS CHAIRMAN?

"Don't screw it up!" In all seriousness, I believe the best piece of advice I received during my year as Chairman is to use my

moral compass to make the best judgment. If you're a good person, and you mean well, it will only help your ability to discern what is right and wrong and guide you to act accordingly.

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR YEAR AS AAHOA CHAIRMAN, IS THERE AN ACCOMPLISHMENT OF WHICH YOU'RE MOST PROUD?

How far AAHOA has come on in the area of advocacy – that's what gives me the most pride. Advocacy matters and AAHOA is being recognized for its advocacy leadership. We're advancing our policy priorities by meeting with legislators and regulators regularly – with more than 200 staff and Members of Congress at one event alone recently – at our Spring and Fall National Advocacy Conferences in Washington, D.C.

AAHOA is helping ensure the sustainability of hotels and the broader American travel industry by supporting many issues

“

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If you're a good person, and you mean well, it will only help your ability to judge what is right and wrong and guide you to act accordingly.”

AAHOA Chairman
Bharat Patel

such as expanding access to capital by increasing SBA Loan Limit Amounts, protecting Main Street small business owners by supporting the *Credit Card Competition Act*, and addressing the workforce shortage. These are complex, far-reaching issues that AAHOA is impacting meaningfully through our advocacy.

ON A RELATED NOTE, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WEREN'T ABLE TO TACKLE THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE YOUR SUCCESSORS DEAL WITH?

There is always more left to do. There is no quick method to getting legislation enacted, for example, or repairing brand relationships over disagreements on issues such as franchise agreement equity. AAHOA used to always play defense. So, whenever Congress or state legislators passed laws that could hurt AAHOA Members or the hospitality industry, we spent a lot of energy fighting them. We should actually be on offense. We should be advocating for laws that help our communities. In fact, just last month, AAHOA, alongside the leadership of Congressman Shri Thanedar (MI-13), introduced the *Loans in our Neighborhoods Act (LIONS Act)*, which, if passed into law, would amend the *Small Business Act* by increasing the maximum gross loan amount for section 7(a) loans. The *LIONS Act* seeks to raise the limit from \$5M to \$10M, thereby providing greater financial support to small businesses and

hoteliers everywhere. We've come a long way, but I think the sky is the limit when it comes to the durable, significant impact AAHOA can and will make.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL WAS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING YOU WHEN YOU ASSUMED THE CHAIRMANSHIP AND HOW DID YOU ADDRESS IT?

Communicating effectively with our membership, industry partners, and brands. We're living in the digital age; there are so many communication channels. Once upon a time, I used fax machines to send out messages. Before, you would get a fax once a week from AAHOA with a rundown of what's going on at the moment. Now, we've had to figure out how to get our messaging out quickly, whether it's through email, social media, our website, newsletters, the media – you name it. So, AAHOA has adapted to the needs of our members and industry partners.

ARE THERE AREAS WHERE YOU FEEL LIKE AAHOA NEEDS TO GROW AND DEVELOP MORE OF A PRESENCE?

Every market in America has a hotel – whether it's a small town, a medium-sized town, or a big metropolitan city. AAHOA Members own more than 60% of hotels across the country, so we have a hotel in almost every market. While AAHOA has

a large presence when it comes to owning hotels, there's room to grow when it comes to building influence. What I mean by that is, we can't just continue to build hotels and not be engaged in our local communities. If AAHOA wants to become the true powerhouse that it is, we have to continue to connect with local elected officials, invest in the communities where we own hotels, and participate in charitable causes in the communities we serve. As the old expression goes, you either have a seat at the table, or you're on the menu.

WHAT'S YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE OVERALL HEALTH OF THE INDUSTRY RIGHT NOW?

It is #AAHOAStrong, but we're facing a lot of headwinds. The workforce shortage continues to be a formidable challenge, in terms of acquiring talent, retaining talent, and the cost of that talent. A lot of people have left the industry. Supply chain issues also remain prevalent. In the past, if I needed shampoo next week, I ordered two days from now. Now, I have to stock up. Insurance rates are higher than they've ever been, and could even force some owners out of the industry. High interest rates are another issue; they're killing lending, which can hurt refurbishing and renovating hotels, and putting capital back. It's one reason why it is so important the *LIONS Act* get passed into law.

WAS THERE ANYTHING THAT SURPRISED YOU DURING YOUR YEAR AS AAHOA CHAIRMAN?

What surprised me most during the past year is the love and dedication of our members. I knew the feelings for the association were strong before I was Chairman, but now I fully understand what it means to "drink the Kool-Aid." I traveled all around the country this year and attended dozens of events, met so many people, who told me they feel like AAHOA is the only association that can advocate and fight for them. AAHOA makes them feel heard. The love and the intensity of their feelings about AAHOA, and the desire for it to succeed and flourish, is something I've never seen before.



DID SERVING AS AAHOA CHAIRMAN SHAPE YOUR OUTLOOK ON THE INDUSTRY?

It definitely has. It has given me a perspective that's unique to being the Chairman of the largest hotel owners association in the world. It's like being on the mountaintop looking out at the industry – a bird's eye view. It humbles you.

It's clear to me AAHOA is starting to hit its stride and is having a greater impact on the hospitality industry than ever before. This position helped me see the pathway forward, and I know we can do so much more when it comes to educating and informing our members, making sure they're prepared, and ensuring that we are keeping the AAHOA community connected.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THOSE WHO HAVEN'T YET PURSUED BOARD OR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS?

Do it. Don't be scared. Choose to serve. Yes, we're all busy, and we all have constraints because of our family or business commitments, but this is an opportunity to better

yourself. I believe that in serving AAHOA and serving the industry, you'll become a better operator, a better business person, but also a better family man or woman, even a better parent – better all around. In AAHOA's leadership positions, when you commit to board service, you learn skills that help you in other parts of your life, too.

If and when you choose to serve, you'll hit it 100 miles an hour, and you will do your best. But when your time is up, your time is up. If you really want an experience that can help transform your life, this is one of the places you can do it. Human capacity and human potential are limitless – AAHOA is one of the best places to put them to use. ■



AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel with his wife, children, and parents.



AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel and his wife, Manisha, during the opening reception for AAHOACON23 at the Los Angeles Coliseum.



AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel and his family.

FEATURE



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Cyber Security in the spotlight

Recent high-profile attacks illustrate the risks facing hoteliers

by NICK FORTUNA

IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY, WHERE time is of the essence, top employees work with a sense of urgency, and that makes them attractive targets for cybercriminals, who are counting on hotel employees to spring into action whenever a problem arises.

Take the recent phishing spree from hackers pretending to be with Booking.com, for example. During the winter, hackers targeted a number of hotels with fake emails saying former guests were leaving damaging reviews online, according to the cybersecurity firm Perception Point. The emails urged hotel employees to reply to the complaints and resolve the issues.

The link to reply provided in the email takes the hotel worker to a fake website that looks just like Booking.com. Unlike the real site, however, this website doesn't allow users to log in with linked services such as Facebook or Google. Instead, they have to input their Booking.com username and password.

In one variation of the attack, an email says Booking.com has changed a policy, and hoteliers must log into its Extranet periodically or risk having

their accounts deactivated. In another version, hotels receive fake emails from guests asking about their upcoming reservations. When they click on the link to reply to the guest, they're asked to log into the fake Booking.com website.

CONDITION CRITICAL

In every case, the goal is to obtain the hotel's login credentials to Booking.com, giving hackers access to guests' full names, emails, phone numbers, credit-card details, and the dates of their stays. Hackers then launch mass phishing campaigns against hotel guests, crafting individualized messages using customers' real information.

Victims may be instructed to provide their credit-card details within 24 hours to verify their reservations or risk having them canceled. The link provided takes users to a carefully crafted phishing page replicating Booking.com. Much of the victim's personal information has been pre-filled into the fields, making it look more legitimate. All that's missing is the guest's credit-card information.

These large-scale phishing campaigns are especially alarming for hoteliers because they're being delivered through the Booking.com platform, not a suspicious-looking email account. That adds another layer of authenticity to the scam, making it even more convincing to the average consumer, according to Peleg Cabra, product marketing manager for Boston-based Perception Point.

Hackers succeed by exploiting the desire of hospitality companies to keep their guests happy, "leveraging advanced social-engineering tactics to achieve their malicious goals," Cabra said.

"Responding to a guest complaint, maintaining their property-management portal, and addressing a future guest's concerns are all high-stakes scenarios that require urgent consideration from hotel employees," he said. "It's perhaps hotels' hospitality that makes them such hospitable targets for attackers."

STRANGE PHONE CALLS

In addition to fake emails, hoteliers face the threat of "vishing," or voice phishing, in which cybercriminals try to get hotel employees or vendors to give up sensitive data such as login credentials over the telephone.

Last fall, the hacking group Scattered Spider used vishing techniques to breach the computer systems of Caesars and MGM Entertainment, disrupting hotel and casino operations at properties across the country. Once granted internal access, the hackers harvested the personal information of the companies' loyalty-club members, including their Social Security numbers and driver's-license information.

Caesars told investors it was the victim of a social-engineering attack on an outsourced IT vendor and paid tens of millions of dollars to regain access to its computer systems. MGM refused to pay ransom and went more than 10 days without functioning computer systems – everything from slot machines to reservation systems – losing about \$100 million in revenue, the company told investors.

MGM said its cybersecurity insurance policy would cover its operational losses, providing a lesson to hoteliers about the importance of obtaining cyber coverage. Still, for MGM and Caesars, the breaches will have lingering effects in the form of brand damage and class-action lawsuits from former guests seeking compensation for the theft of their personal data.

In both cases, workers voluntarily gave up login credentials to cybercriminals posing as IT experts, underscoring the importance of providing ongoing cybersecurity training. Employees should be reminded

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that cybercriminals often succeed by creating a sense of urgency that spurs workers to abandon normal procedures and cast their doubts aside.

Had the workers stopped to check with a supervisor or asked to call back the fake IT experts on their office phones, they likely could have staved off the attacks.

Likewise, emails urging immediate action should be viewed suspiciously, according to Anton Safonov, co-founder of Aquarius Hospitality Solutions. If an email is requesting sensitive information, pick up the phone and call the sender.

Besides their own employees, hoteliers should make sure any vendors with access to their data are following similar best practices and have cybersecurity training programs in place.

“Always be skeptical,” Safonov said. “Be cautious with emails, especially those requesting urgent action or containing unexpected attachments or links. Staying vigilant, informed, and proactive in cybersecurity measures is essential for protecting sensitive data and maintaining trust in the digital age.”

A TREASURE TROVE OF DATA

A resurgent hotel industry is a prime target for cybercriminals due to the high volume of transactions and the sensitive nature of the data involved, Safonov said.

“The magnitude of this problem is significant,” he said. “A breach in cybersecurity can lead to substantial financial losses, both in terms of immediate financial impact and long-term reputational damage. This is especially critical in an industry where trust and reputation play a pivotal role in customer choice and loyalty.”

The risk is amplified by the integration of digital technologies into hotel operations, from online bookings to smart room services. While these technologies enhance the guest experience, they also increase the potential “attack surface” for cyber threats, Safonov said. With rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, cyber threats will grow even more sophisticated, personalized, and ubiquitous.

To safeguard their data, hotel companies should establish a robust cybersecurity strategy that includes regular security audits, employee training, investment

in up-to-date security technologies, and adherence to international data-protection regulations, he said.

Weak passwords, poor authentication practices, and unpatched or outdated software make businesses more vulnerable to security breaches, Safonov said. Employees should be trained to change their passwords often and never reuse them, especially since reputable online password managers are readily available. Two-factor authentication provides an additional layer of security by requiring a fingerprint or a code sent by text message to gain access to systems.

Hoteliers should invest in firewalls, antivirus programs, data encryption, and intrusion-detection systems to help prevent and detect attacks. Software programs should be updated regularly, and data should be backed up frequently so if hotels fall victim to a cyberattack, they can recover their data without paying ransom to cybercriminals, Safonov said.

FIX YOUR LEAKS

To identify vulnerabilities, hoteliers should have their IT department or a vendor perform regular cybersecurity audits, taking a comprehensive look at all computer-based systems and their associated levels of risk, he added.

Addressing vulnerabilities is especially vital due to the emergence of ransomware as a service, which has made it easier for criminals without technical expertise to launch ransomware attacks, broadening the pool of potential attackers, Safonov said.

Additionally, the ransom demands of cybercriminals are increasing, “reflecting both the growing sophistication of attacks and the critical nature of the data being held hostage,” he said. Hackers will comb through a business’s documents looking for embarrassing information to leak to the public or proprietary information to give to its competitors. In many cases, businesses feel they have no choice but to pay up.

“
It’s perhaps hotels’ hospitality that makes them such hospitable targets for attackers.”

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“The first step is to understand the current security posture,” Safonov said. “Begin with the most critical areas identified in the security audit, and gradually extend the security measures across all operations. Regularly monitor the security measures in place and review them for effectiveness and compliance with emerging threats and regulations.”

All hoteliers should have an incident-response plan outlining the roles for various individuals in the event of a cyberattack, Safonov said. The plan should include steps to contain and mitigate the breach, assess the damage, notify affected parties, and restore operations.

LIMITING ACCESS TO DATA

One best practice businesses often overlook is to limit data access to only those employees who truly need it, according to Dr. Chris Spencer, group chief information security officer for GlobalReach Technology, which specializes in wireless internet service-provider software and services.

Each department in a hotel, and every worker within each department, doesn’t need access to the same sensitive data about the hotel, its workers, and its guests. Workers should have access only to the data they need to perform their jobs, and when they shift roles within the hotel or leave the company, access to that data should be adjusted or eliminated, Spencer said.

Data about customers and workers should be deleted periodically, Spencer said. If a guest hasn’t stayed at the hotel in five years, how valuable is that data anyway? The same goes for workers who left the company years ago.

An important rule of thumb is hackers can’t steal data if the hotel never has it. Spencer said many hotels ask for too much data from customers, particularly on their captive portals, or Wi-Fi landing pages, which allow guests to use the hotel’s Wi-Fi service. Rather than asking for just a valid email address, some hotels are asking for a full name, address, phone number, date of birth and even gender just to get online, Spencer said.

“They want all that data because they view it as a marketing tool, but you should ask yourself whether you really need all that data and whether it’s really useful,” he said. ■

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Preparing for the *silver tsunami*

THE HOTEL INDUSTRY HAS exploded with new brands and sub-brands during the past two decades, and this trend isn't going to stop anytime soon. While there are a variety of forces and incentives at play to account for this diversification, one prominent rationale is that emergent brands often can better appeal to niche interests, microsegments, or customer identities.

To wit, look no further than the growth of the extended-stay category (such as Home2 Suites by Hilton, Residence Inn by Marriott, Hyatt House) and serviced apartment or aparthotel brands. Others skewing more to the premium and luxury segments have excelled by homing in on a specific value system for communicating their brand equity, be it rigorous sustainability (1 Hotels), extravagant wellness (Aman, Hyatt Andaz, Mandarin Oriental, Six Senses), fitness (Accor's Pullman, IHG's EVEN, Equinox Hotels) or nightlife (Kimpton, Moxy, The W), in addition to the bevy of brands, soft brands, and associations tinkering in spaces like lifestyle, design, art, and culinary-forward.

While the list of hotel brands across the globe may now require a Ph.D. to effectively memorize and distinguish between each, we posit there's one major customer cohort yet to be properly embraced at the operational and marketing levels – those guests with disabilities. Of course, hotels within the United States must adhere to statutes inscribed by the *Americans with*

Embracing ADA compliance as an underserved market gap for hotel brands

by ADAM and LARRY MOGELONSKY

Disabilities Act (ADA), but this often comes down to doing the passable minimum insofar as design criteria, training, SOPs, or cultural appreciation.

Without targeting or insulting any operator in particular, corporate efforts in this area often amount to checking a particular box rather than thoughtfully programming with services, amenities, and team training that would make a hotel the brand of choice for disabled or handicapped guests. And yet, Pew Research Center estimated based on 2021 census data that there are more than 42 million Americans with disabilities, representing 13% of the civilian, noninstitutionalized population.

This is an untapped market. Not only are the trends indicating that there is a present and growing need for ADA-forward hospitality, but there are also strong opportunities to upsell and cross-sell to capture more total revenue from this cohort. And while this article began by implying change at the brand level, such ADA enhancements need not be corporately governed and can be executed at a specific property to realize many of the same benefits.

THE SILVER TSUNAMI

In the intro to this article, the word “cohort” was intentionally used to segment guests with disabilities rather than the more age-specific term “demographic” because such an impairment can strike at any time. Nevertheless, the latter word epitomizes the trend of all trends in the 2020s and 2030s wherein the aging out of the baby boomers indicates a clear need for hotels that can better cater to this market gap.

Namely, the boomer generation is in the process of entering retirement and





Equal-access checklist

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becoming “elderly” (this ageist word is merely being used as a heuristic), with age being the No. 1 risk factor associated with the onset of a minor or severe health condition that may lead to a disability. Yet unless for past generations, longevity advances during the past few decades have compounded to both extend the lifespans of elderly individuals as well as allow those with disabilities to no longer be housebound by their conditions.

To simplify the past century in reductive terms to get the point across, it used to be that you were healthy and active – that is, you traveled – until you became unhealthy and were immobilized. Life in this sense was a dichotomy with a steep and irreversible decline upon illness. While medical insurance for the elderly still acts as an obstacle for many to board a plane or go on a cruise, there are innumerable people who have benefited from modern medicine to live longer and continue exploring the globe well into their 60s, 70s, 80s, and beyond. Compounding being the eighth wonder of the world, these longevity advances are only going to get better and better.

This civilization-altering development is best encapsulated by the catchy term “The Silver Tsunami” denoting the coming wave of gray-haired individuals who will dot every corner of the world, with

With regards to providing access and catering to an aging population, here are 11 of the top ADA concerns hoteliers should identify and remedy:

1. Multiple hotel entrances and exits with only one having a ramp to accommodate a wheelchair, and yet this singular ADA entry isn’t clearly communicated on the website or prearrival emails.
2. Particularly for old hotels, the elevators and doors aren’t of the recommended width to adequately and comfortably accommodate wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistance devices.
3. Handicapped rooms aren’t next to the elevator and the guest floor corridor has a thick, soft carpet that resists smooth wheelchair motion.
4. Handicapped rooms aren’t equipped with critical features such as a bedrail, toilet grab bar, or shower seat, while the floor threshold from bedroom to bathroom is raised or uneven to the point where a wheelchair can’t roll into the bathroom – let alone roll under the sink.
5. Property management systems not properly demarcating which rooms are for wheelchair-bound guests versus guests with other disabilities, as well as having multiple bed configurations in each.
6. Certain hotel amenities such as restaurants, spas, meeting spaces, or club lounges aren’t easily accessible for handicapped guests, with no communication as such on the website.
7. Frontline staff aren’t trained to deal with disabled guests, often making errors when assigning rooms, giving directions around the hotel, or suggesting local attractions that aren’t compliant.

most of them alive, well, and actively traveling. Demographically speaking, the United States isn't quite there yet, but some more advanced countries like Japan, South Korea, and members of the European Union will soon have more than one-third of their populace aged 65 or older. Domestically, the United States Census Bureau estimates that by 2030, the approximately 73 million boomers will all be 65 or older.

Stop and think about that for a moment. With age as a leading indicator for practically all chronic diseases or physical impairments, this means that potentially one third of your future guests will be gracing your halls burdened by a myriad of mobility issues, bad knees, lower back pain, disrupted sleep, heart problems, hearing loss, poor eyesight, compromised immune systems, diabetes, or predementia.

VERIFYING YOUR HANDICAPPED SERVICES

"Having worked in hospitality for almost 40 years, I thought I understood the requirements for a compliant room, until my wife became handicapped and we grappled firsthand with how inadequate some hotels are," stated Mark Hope, senior vice president of development at Coast Hotels.

Hope detailed many of the design flaws and training errors he's encountered through the years while traveling with his wife. Those are issues that no able-bodied hotelier may really be of the mindset to consider until an actual handicapped guest arrives onsite.

Additionally, Hope remarked that exceptional service can conquer any fault. He can't expect a property to be perfect, but it's how the onsite teams respond to requests that helps earn his praise and loyalty. For instance, one Boston hotel's handicapped room lacked a bedrail, so rather than shuffle Hope and his wife into another room, a staffer was immediately dispatched to buy then install the device.

ELDERCARE SERVICES

From the above suggested actions, combined with a feasibility study to show the potential opportunity for your own local market, it would be relatively straightforward for an existing brand – especially those within the extended stay or aparthotel categories – to make the case for carving out whole floors or sections devoted to superior ADA compliance. Some destinations may even be able to support hotels with all rooms fully (and verifiably) accessible.

But this only speaks to the marketing prospects of building brand equity among



With age as a leading indicator for practically all chronic diseases or physical impairments, this means that potentially one third of your future guests will be gracing your halls burdened by a myriad of mobility issues, bad knees, lower back pain, disrupted sleep, heart problems, hearing loss, poor eyesight, compromised immune systems, diabetes, or predementia."

8. Foodservice areas like a breakfast lounge often don't have a proper accessible table.
9. Restaurant staff often don't read guest profile information or reservations comments to know an incoming diner is handicapped so that specific accommodations can be made in advance.
10. Wanting to do an excursion, few – if any – tourism operators offer handicapped transportation.
11. Hotels not having a compassionate error recovery SOP so disabled guests can feel valued whenever a problem arises – and they will.

These 11 points alone could amount to more than a year's worth of work to properly address – right down to the cultural adjustments necessary to ensure a hotel becomes regarded as the destination of choice for disabled travelers. Yet how would a hotel understand the impact of these particular changes without getting external feedback from an actual handicapped individual? Hence, some form of independent verification or scrupulous self-inspection is needed so that most, if not all, of these issues can be resolved during preconstruction or when planning a performance improvement plan, as well as through updated training protocols.

6 ideas

for upselling opportunities that are thoughtfully considered for disabled or dependent guests:

- 1 Online packages for adjoining rooms to merchandize family or multi-generational travel where a dependent is assigned the ADA room and the family member is next door
- 2 On-demand assess to caregivers with training specific to a particular condition
- 3 Dining and sundry options for specific dietary limitations such as keto-friendly foods for diabetes
- 4 Offering wheelchair-accessible transportation services
- 5 Sessions with physiotherapists or other rehabilitation practitioners who can guide guests with mobility issues or managing chronic joint pain
- 6 Developing wellness experiences with accessibility in mind regarding time, place, and activity



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disabled travelers; what about upselling additional services? For this, there must be services in place for disabled or dependent guests, blending the divide between short-term hospitality and assisted-care facilities or eldercare centers. Finding and maintaining specialized labor will perennially be the biggest challenge, but their services are ones that can be operationalized as an additional charge above the nightly rate.

As demonstrated by the ADA's stats on the aging boomer demographic, the so-called "Silver Tsunami" will remain a considerable market force for some time to come. By recognizing the ways this demographic is evolving, hotels can adequately position themselves to attract and cater to this untapped market niche by incorporating some of the relatively cost-effective ways to pivot a property or brand to better accommodate ADA guests. In comparison, the cruise industry is making great strides in this area, and their bookings remain quite strong with disabled and aging guests.

Ultimately, regardless of whether a hotelier feels compelled to create a property where the differently abled or aging guest feels catered to and welcomed, the end goal should remain the same, because being compliant and training your teams to empathize with these guests' individual needs is simply the right thing to do. ■



Together, Adam (left) and Larry Mogelonsky are the world's most published hospitality

writing team, with more than a decade's worth of material online. As the partners of Hotel Mogel Consulting Ltd., Larry focuses on the hotel operations and marketing, while Adam specializes in technology and wellness. Their experience encompasses properties around North America and Europe, with a focus on independent properties of all sizes. Their work includes seven books, the latest focused on increasing profits from wine sales in an environment of tight labor markets. You can reach them at adam@hotelmogel.com to discuss your business challenges or to book speaking engagements.

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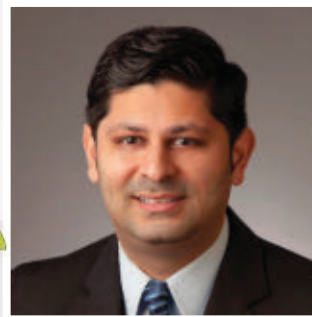
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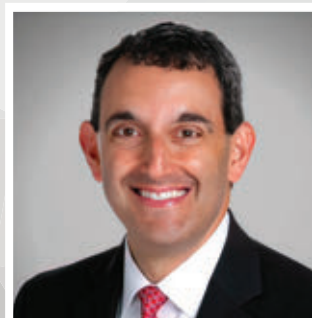


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Pounding pavement

AAHOA Members head to D.C. for an industry advocacy push

by JODI SCOTT

THIS MONTH, HUNDREDS of AAHOA Members are joining forces in Washington, D.C., to advocate for the hospitality industry as part of the two-day Spring National Advocacy Conference (SNAC) taking place March 12 and 13. The AAHOA Advocacy Conferences held in the fall and spring bring together industry leaders and hoteliers to make their voices heard on the issues that matter most.

SNAC 2023 drew some 200 AAHOA leaders to meet with more than 200 elected officials. AAHOA Members focused on gaining greater access to capital and addressing the severe labor shortages plaguing the industry. AAHOA leaders helped expand lawmakers' knowledge around the importance of hotels to their communities and the economy at large. When AAHOA Members receive assistance, their

local business communities see an uptick in employment rates, profitability, state and local tax contributions, and business sustainability.

"AAHOA provides a platform to voice our concerns by continuing to strengthen its position and influence in the hospitality industry, as well as in key political circles at the federal, state, and local levels," AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake said of SNAC 2023. "We are making a true difference for the benefit of our members, and it is fantastic to see the impact we are having. I know policymakers will remember us the next time they make decisions affecting the hospitality industry." ■

As the premier voice of hotel owners, AAHOA will partner with elected officials in Washington, D.C., to identify viable solutions to the biggest challenges facing the industry. The 2024 Federal Policy Priorities for AAHOA include:

- **Further developing strategic relationships with the SBA to improve access to capital**
- **Human trafficking awareness training and prevention**
- **Pushing for liability protections from frivolous lawsuits**
- **Retaining the hospitality workforce in a competitive labor market**
- **Credit Card Fees**
- **Working with the Federal Trade Commission to address transparency issues related to franchise fees and OTA market dominance**

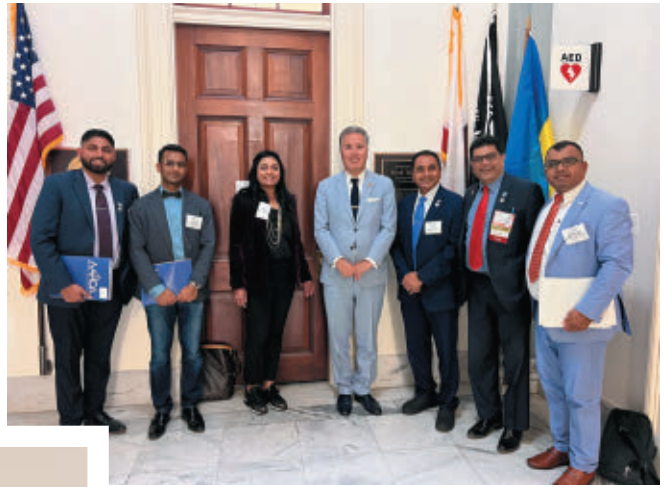




State and Local Priorities

The AAHOA Government Affairs Team also tracks laws passed by state and local governments. While issues can vary from state to state, AAHOA works to address the following consistently across the board:

- **Leveling the playing field with short-term rental platforms and online travel agencies**
- **Support lodging tax dollars only for tourism**
- **Clarifying and maintaining innkeeper/guest relationships**
- **Address the homelessness crisis**
- **Combatting unnecessary hotel taxes**
- **Pushing for liability protections**
 - ◆ Protecting business owners from frivolous lawsuits while holding bad actors accountable
- **Human trafficking awareness training and prevention:**
 - ◆ Promoting HTAT compliance, training, and engagement
 - ◆ Advocating for effective legislation at the state and local levels



New opportunities



Looking back at AAHOA's inaugural HYPE Ownership Conference

by TEAM AAHOA

IN EARLY FEBRUARY, nearly 200 of AAHOA's younger members convened in New Orleans, LA, for the inaugural HYPE Ownership Conference.

Serving as the launch of AAHOA's HYPE initiative (Helping Young Professionals Evolve), the event marked the inception of a platform dedicated to empowering and nurturing the next generation of young professionals in the hospitality industry, including educational offerings – panels, roundtables, keynotes, and discussions – extensive networking opportunities, and is exclusively focused on helping the next generation of hotel owners thrive in our ever-evolving industry.

“The HYPE Conference allowed us to hear firsthand from our young members about their ideas and concerns regarding the future of our industry,” said Tanmay Patel, Young Professional Director Western Division. “It was enlightening to hear from so many young people about their hopes and dreams for taking the work started by their parents, in many cases, and how they hope to better position the industry for future success.”

“The feedback we received from attendees and the interaction we saw illustrates there is a



great need for our industry to nurture our connection to future leaders,” said Dylan Patel, Young Professional Director Eastern Division. “Their commitment to elevate the industry to new heights is evident.”

The event provided ample networking opportunities within a supportive network of industry trailblazers, and connections were made within AAHOA’s diverse community of young professionals. AAHOA also had the pleasure of hosting the “Retro Rendezvous Reception: A Night of Networking Among Classics” at a private classic car museum.

“The energy and enthusiasm at our inaugural HYPE Conference exceeded expectations, and AAHOA Young Professionals are clearly eager to learn, grow, and excel in their careers,” said AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake. “AAHOA’s HYPE Conference is a first-of-its-kind initiative for our industry, and we are proud to lead the way in nurturing and shining a spotlight on the incredible talent of our next generation of leaders.”

HYPE attendees heard from Keynote Speaker Michael Hyatt, a serial entrepreneur, investor, and executive chairman of DataStealth. Hyatt spoke about the evolution of technology, and how it has affected our way of life in the workforce by making us more efficient. He discussed how leaders of tomorrow in



any industry should embrace the changes, and explore how they can utilize the evolution of technology in their industry.

“AAHOA is thrilled to bring to the industry a game-changing initiative that will truly support and evolve the future of hospitality,” said AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel. “Our intent was to create a platform to give a stronger voice to young professionals, who play a crucial role in shaping and driving innovation within the hospitality industry. This week showed us that our future is in good hands with the next generation of hoteliers!” ■



For more info,
be sure to visit
AAHOA.com/HYPE-Conference.



Safe(est) passage

In pursuit of the risk-free rate of return

by STEVE COKER and SUNIL LAD

INTEREST RATES HAVE RISEN dramatically during the past two years. Higher rates have, of course, increased borrowing costs, but higher rates have also increased the return on low-risk investments, such as money market and short-term U.S. Treasuries. With U.S. Treasuries paying 5% or more with little to no risk, they become a viable alternative to higher risk investments. In this article, we'll explore the concept of the risk-free rate of return and why it's important to consider what a low-risk investment can offer before allocating time and resources toward a high-risk investment.

The risk-free rate of return is a theoretical benchmark based on the yield an investor can earn from an investment that has the lowest risk possible. While it's impossible to eliminate 100% of risk in any investment, many investors around the world consider U.S. Treasuries to be the most dependable and stable investment that is widely available today. The U.S. Treasury issues bills, notes, and bonds as a means of borrowing money from the public to fund the government's capital

projects. The U.S. government's historic ability to tax and print money effectively, provides assurance that U.S. Treasuries have an extremely low risk of default. If they ever do, there likely will be larger issues that investors will have to deal with.

BENEFITS OF U.S. TREASURIES

- 1. Security.** Treasuries are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government. Governments offer bonds backed only by their ability to collect taxes and other revenues in the future. Unlike CDs, which are only backed by FDIC insurance up to \$250,000 per bank, Treasuries are backed by the government in unlimited amounts.
- 2. Predictability.** These securities have fixed interest rates with a steady income stream with durations ranging from one month on the short end, to 30 years on the long end. This allows investors the ability to lock in high rates based on their time horizon.
- 3. Liquidity.** The bonds, notes, and bills are highly liquid, making them easy to buy and sell. Alternatively, you can buy and hold them until maturity for a guaranteed rate of income.
- 4. Tax advantages.** Treasuries are exempt from state income tax, whereas CDs are subject to both federal and state tax.

TYPES OF U.S. TREASURIES

The U.S. Treasury Department holds regularly scheduled auctions throughout the year to offer bonds of varying duration. Registered participants, such as large banks, submit bids to purchase bonds throughout the auction until all the bonds are sold.

- 1. T-Bills.** Issued at a discount and mature at par value, with the difference between the purchase and sale prices constituting the interest paid on the bill.
 - *Short-range maturities: 4-week, 8-week, 13-week, 26-week, 52-week*
- 2. T-Notes.** Issued at and mature at a \$100 par value and pay interest semiannually.
 - *Middle-range maturities: 2-year, 3-year, 5-year, 7-year, 10-year*
- 3. T-Bonds.** Issued at and mature at a \$100 par value and pay interest semiannually.
 - *Long-range maturity: 30-year*

ADVANTAGES OF TREASURIES FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

- 1. Risk mitigation.** By investing in Treasuries, small business owners can safeguard a portion of their assets against market volatility and economic downturns.
- 2. Benchmarking for loans and investments.** The risk-free rate helps compare and evaluate loans and other investment opportunities, ensuring informed financial decisions.
- 3. Efficient cash management.** With predictable returns, Treasuries can be a part of effective cash-flow management, especially for planning long-term financial commitments.
- 4. Time savings.** Given their predictability and low risk, Treasuries require less active management and monitoring, freeing up time for business owners to focus on their core business activities.

Understanding the risk-free rate of return and the benefits of U.S. Treasuries is crucial for small-business owners. These financial tools offer a blend of security, predictability, and efficiency, making them a valuable component of a well-rounded financial strategy. By incorporating them into their financial planning, small-business owners can mitigate risks, manage cash flow more effectively, and dedicate more time to growing their businesses. ■



Steve Coker, CFP, founded Cedarstone Advisors in 2014 after more than two decades in the finance and accounting industry. Steve set out to build a firm centered on the client

because he realized that good financial decisions begin with understanding a client's entire story. He began his career as a Certified Public Accountant with Deloitte in Los Angeles and later spent several years in corporate finance. Cedarstone currently has more than \$150 million in assets under management.



Sunil Lad, IAR, CHA, has worked in the hospitality industry for more than 17 years and currently operates limited-service hotels in California. He is registered

with FINRA and works with Cedarstone Advisors to help clients maximize yield for their hotel reserve accounts. He can be reached at Sunil@cedarstoneadvisors.com.



While it's impossible to eliminate 100% of risk in any investment, many investors around the world consider U.S. Treasuries to be the most dependable and stable investment that is widely available today."

Balancing independence

Adopting best practices from branded hotels in safety and security

by RONAK PATEL

WHILE INDEPENDENT hoteliers cherish their autonomy in crafting unique guest experiences, there's value in borrowing a page from branded hotels when it comes to safety and security practices. Branded hotels, with their greater liability exposure, often deploy specialized teams to assess and mitigate risks. In this column, we explore seven ways independents can enhance their safety and security measures by drawing inspiration from branded hotel practices, integrating technology, staff training, and community engagement.

1 Risk mitigation teams and technology: Independent operators should consider establishing specialized teams dedicated to assessing and mitigating risks.

This could involve adopting technological solutions such as surveillance systems, access controls, and even exploring the potential of robotic assistance in monitoring and securing the property. Embracing technology allows independents to enhance security without compromising the personalized touch that distinguishes independent hotels.

2 Training front desk staff for de-escalation: To address potential conflicts, independent properties can invest in training programs for front desk staff focused on de-escalation techniques. Empowering staff to handle tense situations calmly and professionally contributes to a safer environment for both guests and employees.

3 Comprehensive guest agreements: Following the example of branded hotels, independent operators can implement comprehensive guest agreements that include terms and conditions along with the registration card. This ensures guests are fully aware of the rules and expectations during their stay, reducing the likelihood of disputes and conflicts.

“

While independence remains a hallmark of operations in this segment of the market, there’s wisdom in incorporating best practices from branded hotels to elevate safety and security measures.”

4 **Vigilance against illicit activities:** Independent hoteliers can learn from branded hotels in identifying and preventing illegal activities on their premises. Implementing training programs to recognize signs of prostitution, human trafficking, or drug-related activities is crucial. Creating a “do not rent” list for individuals involved in such activities, along with their associates, helps mitigate risks and ensures a safer environment for all guests.

5 **Collaboration with local law enforcement:** Establishing strong relationships with local law enforcement is a practice independents can adopt from their branded counterparts. Regular communication with the police department fosters a cooperative approach to security, allowing for a more effective response in case of emergencies and enhancing overall safety.

6 **Safety measures for housekeeping:** Equipping housekeeping staff with safety devices such as pepper spray adds an extra layer of protection. This proactive measure empowers staff to respond to potentially dangerous situations and enhances their confidence in ensuring the safety of the property.

7 **Guest identification and room monitoring:** Adopting the practice of always verifying guest identification and monitoring the number of people in each room contributes to security. This ensures the property maintains control over its occupancy and can respond promptly to any unauthorized individuals on the premises.

While independence remains a hallmark of operations in this segment of the market, there’s wisdom in incorporating best practices from branded hotels to elevate safety and security measures. By blending technology, staff training, and community engagement, independent hoteliers can strike a balance, providing a unique and secure experience for their guests. Embracing these practices not only enhances the safety of the property but also positions independent operators as leaders in the evolving landscape of hospitality security. ■



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The best defense against potential safety risks in your hotels

by MELISSA BERNARDO

AS HOTELIERS, THE SAFETY and well-being of your property and guests are of vital importance. It's an overarching commitment that extends beyond just accommodation, emphasizing the creation of an environment that's secure, comfortable, and conducive to an exceptional guest experience. In the following sections, we'll explore three essential strategies hoteliers can implement to fortify their establishments against potential environmental damages and the associated risks stemming from unauthorized parties. It's a multifaceted challenge demanding careful consideration and proactive measures.

Vigilance is its own reward



**ENVIRONMENTAL VIGILANCE:
MONITORING HEALTH RISKS**

In the ever-changing landscape of hospitality, staying vigilant against potential health risks within hotel rooms is essential. In-room sensors, equipped to monitor mold, air quality, humidity, and temperature, offer hotels a vital tool to preemptively identify potential risks. During extreme weather conditions, such as heatwaves, blizzards, and hurricanes, these room monitors allow hotels to ensure their thermostat systems are functioning optimally, maintaining a regulated temperature in guest rooms.

Beyond temperature regulation, hotels must proactively manage mold, air quality, and humidity to guarantee guest comfort and prevent exposure to toxic air. The occurrence of mold in hotel rooms can stem from factors similar to those that prompt its formation in residential settings. Primary contributors include elevated moisture levels in materials, instances of water damage, and the prevalence of warm and humid conditions. Monitoring humidity levels in hotel rooms is the key to ensuring your hotel room stays mold-free. By staying ahead of these environmental risk factors, hotels not only create a safer and healthier environment for guests but also mitigate potential damages, saving on repair costs and preserving their reputation.



**SOCIAL RISKS: CURBING
UNAUTHORIZED PARTIES**

Room monitors extend their utility beyond environmental monitoring to become a powerful ally in preventing unauthorized parties in hotel rooms. These monitors actively scan for loud noises and

crowds, triggering immediate SMS and email notifications to hotel staff when an unauthorized party is detected. This proactive approach not only saves hotels from potential damages to furnishings but also averts the negative impact on neighboring guests' experiences, reducing the likelihood of bad reviews. Furthermore, by swiftly addressing unauthorized parties, hotels enhance the overall guest experience, ensuring a higher likelihood of guests returning to the establishment.



**SAVING COSTS AND
FOSTERING GUEST LOYALTY**

Proactively managing environmental and social risk factors within hotels not only safeguards the physical integrity of the property but also yields substantial financial benefits. The ripple effect of staying on top of these risk factors is evident in the form of significant cost savings for hotels. By averting potential damages stemming from issues such as mold, poor air quality, temperature fluctuations, and unauthorized parties, hotels can sidestep the financial burden associated with extensive repairs and replacements.

Furthermore, the positive impact extends beyond the physical infrastructure to the heart of the guest experience. A well-maintained, safe, and peaceful environment contributes to a positive guest experience, reducing the likelihood of unfavorable reviews. Guest satisfaction is intricately tied to the condition of the accommodation, and by addressing environmental risks preemptively, hotels enhance the overall quality of the stay. Satisfied guests are more likely to leave positive reviews, thereby bolstering the hotel's online reputation and attracting a broader audience of potential customers.

The financial benefits extend beyond individual bookings to the establishment of a loyal customer base. When guests experience a consistently safe and enjoyable stay, they are more inclined to choose the same hotel for future visits. This heightened rate of return customers is a testament to the hotel's commitment to quality and safety, translating into sustained revenue streams over time. Therefore, preventative measures, facilitated by noise monitors, become an investment in the safety of your property and the satisfaction of your guests.

**A HOLISTIC APPROACH
TO HOTEL SAFETY**

Adopting a comprehensive approach to safety in hotels involves not only safeguarding against environmental risks but also staying vigilant against the potential social risks associated with unauthorized parties. Utilizing room monitors with advanced features enables hotels to proactively address these challenges, ensuring a secure and enjoyable experience for guests while fortifying the longevity and reputation of the property. By investing in these preventive measures, hoteliers can navigate the dynamic hospitality landscape with confidence, knowing they've implemented the best defense against potential safety risks in their hotels. ■



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AAHOA MEMBERS



Fly high at 400 feet when you ride the Wheel at ICON Park, FREE to AAHOACON24 attendees!



Strike a pose in Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum at ICON Park, one of the many attractions that are FREE to all AAHOACON24 attendees!



Vendors at AAHOACON23 on the Trade Show floor.



Immediate Past Chairman Neal Patel (2022-2023) and AAHOA Chairman Bharat Patel announcing winners of the AAHOA election at AAHOACON23.



AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake participates in the "United We Stand!" fair franchising education session at AAHOACON23.

IN ACTION



Rahul Patel celebrates being elected the new AAHOA Secretary with friends and family at AAHOACON23.



The room was packed for the AAHOACON23 “Landslide Victory” women’s luncheon, led by communications coach Denise Thomas.



Rachel Humphrey (left), founder, Women in Hospitality Leadership Alliance, and Past AAHOA Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala (2019-2020) during their session, “Leading with Impact: Harnessing the Power of Executive Presence,” at the 2023 HerOwnership Conference.



The AAHOACON23 Trade Show floor entrance.



Attendees at the 2023 HerOwnership Conference gather for a photo on the last day.

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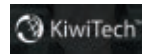
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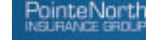
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enterprise.spectrum.com/	
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www.chase.com/	
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www.leaddesignsllc.com/	
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www.matrix-furniture.com/	
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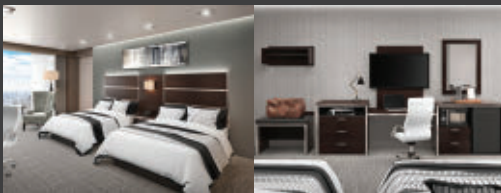
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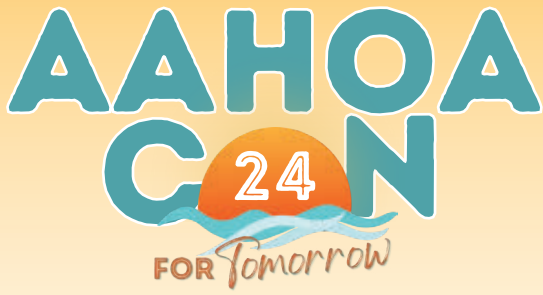
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