

HOSPITALITY[®] Talk



Technology
to drive new
NORMAL



WHALE WATCHING

IT'S MORE FUN IN THE PHILIPPINES



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Hotels combat

On offer are rigorous safety protocols, secure home deliveries, and entertaining online communication.



ITC LAUNCHES 'WEASSURE' INITIATIVE ON HEALTH, HYGIENE & SAFETY

ITC Hotels has announced the launch of its path-breaking 'WeAssure' initiative. In a first for the hospitality industry, the discerning guests of ITC Hotels will be reassured by an accreditation by National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) -- the leading standards organisation for sanitation, hygiene, safety and infection control practices. ITC Hotels is also partnering with DNV GL Business Assurance, one of the world's leading certification bodies, to ensure stringent clinical levels of hygiene and safety. Rigorous hygiene protocol is being put in place to ensure the safety of guests and associates at ITC Hotels, across India. "We are committed to delivering world-class luxury experiences that address the most important needs of well-being and safety through responsible practices. 'WeAssure' is a unique programme designed in collaboration with medical professionals and disinfection experts to further enhance the existing hygiene & cleaning protocols. The programme will offer guests' unparalleled comfort with peace of mind," stated Nakul Anand, Executive Director, ITC Ltd.

'MARRIOTT ON WHEELS' VIA SWIGGY

Marriott International announced that their 'Marriott on Wheels' home delivery service initiative will now be available in more cities through an agreement with Swiggy. This association would be the first-of-its-kind for Marriott International hotels across India. To start with, over 20 hotels in cities such as Bengaluru, Kolkata, Chandigarh, Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, Agra, Pune, Mumbai, Coimbatore and Goa will be listed on the food aggregator's platform. Each hotel has introduced a compact Marriott on Wheels menu consisting of their signature dishes, most suited for safe consumption and secure deliveries.



fabHOTELS

FABHOTELS LAUNCHES '100% SAFE PLACE TO STAY' INITIATIVE

FabHotels has launched a new initiative "100% Safe Place to Stay", under which it is implementing a host of measures at its 600+ franchise properties pan-India. The initiative focuses on all properties being 100% Disinfected, 100% Safe and 100% Convenient, and is the first-of-its-kind step taken by any Economy hotels brands in the country. Key promises under this new initiative include sanitisation every two hours, special housekeeping protocols, social and physical distancing, PPE kits at all FabHotels, contactless check-in & check-out, in-room dining, COVID information posters, to name a few.

ASCOTT LAUNCHES #STAYWITH CONFIDENCE ATASCOTT

Ascott has introduced some key initiatives and safety measures across its serviced residences in India, to take care of its guests during the lockdown. The Guest Services team is providing grocery shopping services to help guests stay indoors. The team has designed an innovative activity chart with recommendations



of free mobile apps and web-based activities that guests can access. The hotel management arranged for a mobile ATM to be parked at Ascott's properties for a day.



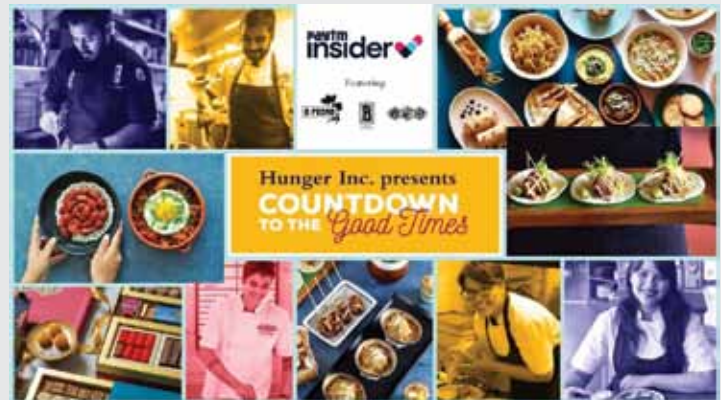
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT BY THE PARK HOTELS

THE Park Hotels has started LIVE entertainment for its guests and patrons sitting at home during the lockdown. THE Park Aqua Sunset is a mixtape series releasing every Sunday at 5 pm on MixCloud and SoundCloud. A specially curated track list of a music extraordinaire is introduced every week.

COVID-19

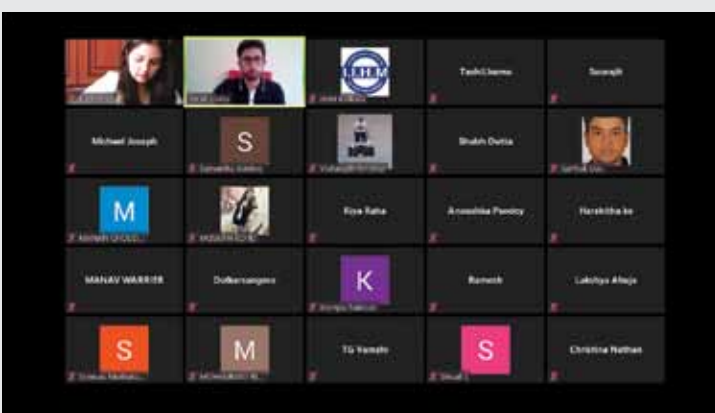
NOVOTEL AHMEDABAD LAUNCHES CLOUD KITCHEN

Missing eating out in the lockdown? Not anymore, as Novotel Ahmedabad has recently launched a Cloud kitchen 'Flying Plates' that endeavours to bring comfort and classic favourites to your homes. This restaurant brings out contactless dining at home to its patrons with a variety of hand-picked dishes including value for money Indian and Asian combos in veg and non-veg options. The menu also includes all-time classics such as Chicken 65, Kolkata Kathi Rolls, selection of Biryanis and Indian and Oriental preparations. A must try is the need of the hour, sumptuous and tasty yet healthy 'Aarogya Thali'.



HUNGER INC LAUNCHES 'COUNTDOWN TO GOOD TIMES'

Hunger Inc, the parent company to Bombay's restaurants, The Bombay Canteen, O' Pedro and Bombay Sweet Shop has launched 'Countdown to Good Times' on the Paytm Insider platform. Fans of its food, drinks and design philosophy can now learn from Hunger Inc's top chefs in online workshops, purchase its merchandise and even book future dining experiences that the team will create for customers at their homes. The team is also thinking ahead and providing a series of 'at home' experiences. These will be delivered once lockdown restrictions are lifted and the restaurant resumes full operations.



GRAND MERCURE BENGALURU CREATES VIRTUAL MENTORSHIP PLATFORM

Amidst the COVID-19 lockdown, Grand Mercure Bengaluru at Gopalan Mall is collaborating with hotel management schools across Karnataka to ensure that learning does indeed go on. The programme, designed as a virtual mentorship platform, takes the expertise of leaders to the young and budding hoteliers. Each session is headed by a departmental specialist and focuses on key takeaways that go beyond textbook knowledge. Sessions so far have included pressing topics from Revenue Management, Sales and HR.

LORDS HOTELS AND RESORTS UNVEILS 'SUHANA SAFAR INITIATIVE'

Lords Hotels and Resorts have unveiled the safe stay initiative, Suhana Safar, to give travellers peace of mind. This initiative will seek to change the hotel norms, behaviour and standards to ensure hotel guests are confident about the safety of the hotel once travel resumes. The group is adhering to guidelines set by WHO and FSSAI to protect guests and employees. It is following preventive measures like social distancing, temperature checks, sanitisation, to name a few.





DIGITAL CONCLAVE

Tech to drive 'new normal'

'Hotels in the age of social distancing: Where are the robots?' was the topic of discussion for the second session of TravTalk Digital Conclave, which saw industry experts discuss the changes in the post-COVID era.



Nisha Verma

The digital era is here to stay! In India, it came to the masses slightly earlier, when the government announced demonetisation and most Indians had to resort to e-payments.

Such is also the belief of **Dilip Puri**, Founder & CEO, Indian School of Hospitality (ISH), who claimed that demonetisation changed the way Indians spent money, now digitised to a great extent, and now is the time for e-learning. "The trend is creating a new social habit in Indians—consuming online learning. In terms of industry perspective, there is going to be a massive shift towards mandatory branded online learning for the workforce in hotels. If there is anything the industry can do to support its people, it's to encourage them to build upon this habit and upskill themselves. The new normal is going to be different. Technology will continue to change our world in different ways. In hotels, we were used to saying, 'high-tech leads to high touch', but now we are trying to imagine how high-tech would lead to low touch or no touch. I would urge hotels to encourage and invest in their people, to upskill them to meet the challenges of the new normal," he said.

For **Mandeep Singh Lamba**, President – South Asia, HVS ANAROCK, this pandemic has impacted us like nothing else before. He claims that social distancing is absolutely alien to Indians, and it is now going to become the new normal. "Customer behaviour is going to change and hotels will have to adopt to the new positioning that

we need to have inside our hotels. The hospitality industry is very resilient and almost cyclical. We've had disruptions every few years, but this time the difference is in the way demand has plummeted. In earlier disruptions, the supply was coming, and it became very difficult for the industry to come back quickly. However, this time, I estimate that the industry would bounce back much quicker, as soon as there is a reduction in the cases and we see a treatment or vaccine available. However, there are going to be some permanent changes in the industry, both in terms of operations and design. This is perhaps not the last time that we are seeing a disruption of this kind. We all need to be better prepared next time around," he said.

Jatin Khanna, Market Vice President – North India, Bhutan and Nepal at Marriott Hotels India, on the other hand, believes that there is still not a definitive new normal. "Today, one of the biggest problems for our industry is that we need to bring confidence back in our customers. Whenever demand bounces back, we need to ensure that our customers have complete confidence and faith in our hotels and brand in terms of safety. Today, it's a work in progress for everyone. When it comes to technology, we couldn't have been at a better stage than today and it is the only positive which is coming out of this phase of our lives.

The next wave of hotels' renovation will have too much of technology and design embedded in it. I believe that social distancing and technology will have a huge positive impact on our industry. We are a people-first industry, and technology is going to cut down on the mundane or low-level jobs, which will bring more efficiency to our people and help them create better guest experiences.



DILIP PURI
Founder & CEO
Indian School of Hospitality (ISH)



We were used to seeing high tech leading to high touch. Now we are trying to imagine how high tech will lead to low touch"

Future leaders of the industry should work towards creating a balance between robots and human guest interaction,” he shared.

HIGH ON TECHNOLOGY

With technology making headway in hotels, people now would be careful in handing out credit cards at the reception of the hotel. Lamba said, “The payments will continue to happen through credit cards, but we are going to have a contactless check-in and check-out over the phone. The guest will have the bill sent on the phone and he won’t have to present the credit card to anyone on entering the hotel. There are going to be permanent disruptors and I believe that it is now the death of the front office, as it will not be required any more. One can do all these things online very safely. Guests would have all the RFID stuff on their phones, and everything can be done from smartphones. The front desk, including concierge, will get converted into perhaps a contact centre, which can work from anywhere. You can dial a number if you need assistance in something you want to



Revenue managers must understand how to package rates. The smarter the package, the better they can make the customer see value”

do, but certainly these are some of the long-term changes at least I see will happen going forward,” he believes.

However, putting all these systems would require investment. Khanna explained, “Operational expenses would certainly go up. Depending on the facilities, anywhere between 175 and 250 touchpoints are there in the guest’s journey while staying in a hotel. To sanitise all those points and to keep the guests safe, hotels are going to invest, and there will be a lot of other operational expenses which will be there. I am sure that with time, these expenses would probably become a part of the P&L. Hence, there is all the more need to drive efficiency and invest in the future, which will make sure that we keep on bringing down our running cost, and as and when we all settle down, our P&L looks similar to what it was pre-COVID. And, if not, there is not a huge debt.”

Puri shared that many hotels have already started working with technology or proximity software. “With our loyalty programme, we wanted to recognise our platinum guests in and around the lobby, allowing us to go ahead and personalise their stay some more. In terms of policing in hotels, they need to understand the health condition of a customer and see if social distancing is being maintained. Technology would begin to take this over as well. Not only will the guests be thermally scanned and checked while entering a hotel, but there would be technology that would also allow hotels to recognise a guest’s health condition, like what the Aarogya Setu App is doing. How technology is going to play out in this new normal is going to be a very significant factor in how hotels operate in the future, whether they are new hotels, existing hotels or hotels under renovation,” he added.

IMPACT OF LOW INBOUND NUMBERS

Lamba claimed that they have around 11-12 million inbound





travellers and around 26 million outbound, which is almost 2.5 times the former. Hence, he said, “We should look at converting these 26 million outbound travellers into our guests, as they will be looking at alternate destinations within the country. I think the industry would look at domestic business, which is going to be a saviour. It is going to be a slow process and would wake up people to a new category in hotels. The first 12-18 months are going to be difficult. It’s going to take the industry three years to reach the numbers we had towards the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020. Hence, domestic business is key. We have 180 billion domestic visits taking place through bus tickets, train tickets or airline tickets. Even if a miniscule 0.5 per cent can be converted for our hotels, that’s a significant number of people who can come to our hotels. It is going to happen, and we are going to target domestic travel especially for the upper upscale or luxury hotels, where international travellers are over 50 per cent of their target.”

Sharing the corporate business perspective, Khanna said, “Today, corporate hotels have around 65-70 per cent Indian nationals. I think that while it will take around two to three years for us to reach pre-COVID occupancy, the domestic consumption would really play out. However, there will be more changes happening. Along with that, hotels will have to do a lot more product improvement and process improvement. In terms of pricing, we need to be patient. Let the machine rule the pricing instead of getting pricing run by emotions, so that we probably will not have such a huge debt where it will take us years to come back to the same price as before COVID.”

HOMESTAYS AND OTHER GUESTS

In this scenario, smaller enterprises, including homestays, might be jeopardised. Lamba said, “In the short-term, homestays are going to take a beating as everyone’s concern is going to be safety norms, which will be a

little challenging for homestays and they are going to be stressed. However, once the vaccine is out and this will be behind us, they will come back because people do want to get the local experience. It is not the end of this industry, but it will be a pause.”

Talking about the processes required for walk-in guests, he said, “I don’t think we are testing enough in India for everybody to have a test certificate saying they are COVID-negative. Hence, walk-in guests would follow the same protocol as in-house guests. They will be thermally scanned at the entry and follow the same norms as everybody else. There might be pre-registration for those who book in advance. There will be very little contact. Guests would walk into the hotel, go straight to the front desk to pick up their envelope for the key card, which will be lying ready, and go straight to their room. We might be seeing self-check-in kiosks in hotels very soon. Ultimately, even walk-in guests will be able to use their mobile phones to check-in.”

However, would the safety procedures allow leisure guests to roam around the hotel, pool and spa freely? Khanna answered, saying, “If you have proper safety procedures in place and you are following guidelines, whether it’s in the spa or pool, there is no harm. It’s very important to note that at some point, hotels will get patients who could be COVID-positive and have stayed and checked out of the hotel. It will happen despite hotels being on a standstill during lockdown. Hence, we need to look at all the safety and hygiene procedures. Also, hotels need to decide if they want to open everything or they want to contain or manage the crowd. They have to manage business, manage crowd and still create good experiences.”

CHANGE IN CURRICULUM FOR HOSPITALITY STUDENTS

Puri claimed that while things like hand safety and hygiene are part of the curriculum at hospitality schools, there would now be more focus on them. “We will try and bring in more content in understanding what the industry is doing. While all the big players like Marriott, Taj and Oberoi



MANDEEP LAMBA
President – South Asia
HVS ANAROCK



We are going to see a contactless check-in and check-out over the phone. The guest will not have to use the credit card“



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have already announced their safety SOPs and their health & safety programmes, the question arises as to what happens to the large unorganised budget, economy, midscale sector that doesn't have the resources or ability to make these programmes, and train and institutionalise them. We are doing something in this regard, and we will shortly be launching our packages and programmes for the same," he informed.

RATES AND LEGAL LIABILITIES

According to Puri, those with a longer runway of cash flow and working capital will survive this crisis. However, he said, "India has already tasted the big institutional private equity players, and the Merger & Acquisitions (M&A) space is going to get very active in the immediate post-COVID scenario. When it comes to rates, the revenue managers today must understand how to package rates.

going to be insured in the future, but I think there is going to be a whole new focus on disruption of business, what qualifies as disruption of business when you are getting your insurance done; public liabilities; what happens if something happens inside your hotel to a COVID patient or when somebody contracts an illness. All these are going to become new norms for people to discuss when they are talking about insurances and liabilities."

SURVIVAL MODE

Claiming that revisiting SOPs is one of the positives of COVID, Puri said, "I think most of the SOPs coming out today are largely focused on trying to meet the new MHA guidelines, based on how hotels must reopen and allow them to make health and safety as the priority. Through that, they will begin to derive efficiencies across all functions and my sense is that the overall cost structure of



JATIN KHANNA
Market Vice President – North
India, Bhutan and Nepal
Marriott Hotels India



Future leaders of the industry should work towards creating a balance between robots and human guest interaction"

The smarter they bundle and package the rates to put out the offering, the better they can make the customer see value. Those are the rates which are going to work. There is owner pressure to fill the rooms and lower the rate, but no machine is going to tell you that. Today, hotels can force a guest to take transport, claiming it to be a part of their safety and health requirement. One can immediately start packaging things like that. Whether it is branded or unbranded hotels, if one doesn't have the runway to manage cash flows for the next 12-15 months, they will be in stress."

Lamba, on the other hand, said, "There is going to be a lot of rebooting not only for hotels but, I think, one of the issues that is going to come up even for corporate travel is that companies globally would have to insure their executives when they travel. There is going to be some rebooting of insurance and liabilities, which now hotels will start looking at carefully. Based on learnings from across the globe, there would be a change in how hotel assets are



the hotels would drop by 400-500 basis points just by the learning, so long as hotels institutionalise these changes. The moment these new SOPs can be institutionalised permanently, hotels would begin to see more efficiency coming in. There is a need to keep the survival mode on. I think the management contracts will be re-calibrated. If ever there is a time for the owner and the operator to paint a common picture to the employee that will give them more confidence, it is now."

Khanna claimed, "We need to embrace the change with an open mind. It's very important to train and invest in people. We are in survival mode, but we also need to remember that it is the survival of the smartest today, not the fittest. I think, let's just get on with it in a very smart fashion." Forecasting the trends ahead, Lamba shared, "Hotels are going to see some big pain this year because occupancies are going to drop by almost 30-35 per cent for the year and RevPAR is going to drop by almost 60 per cent. The optimistic view is that it will take us two years to recover, while the pessimistic view is that it would take us four years to recover. However, the realistic view is that it would take us three years to recover and come back to pre-COVID levels. The resilient would survive."



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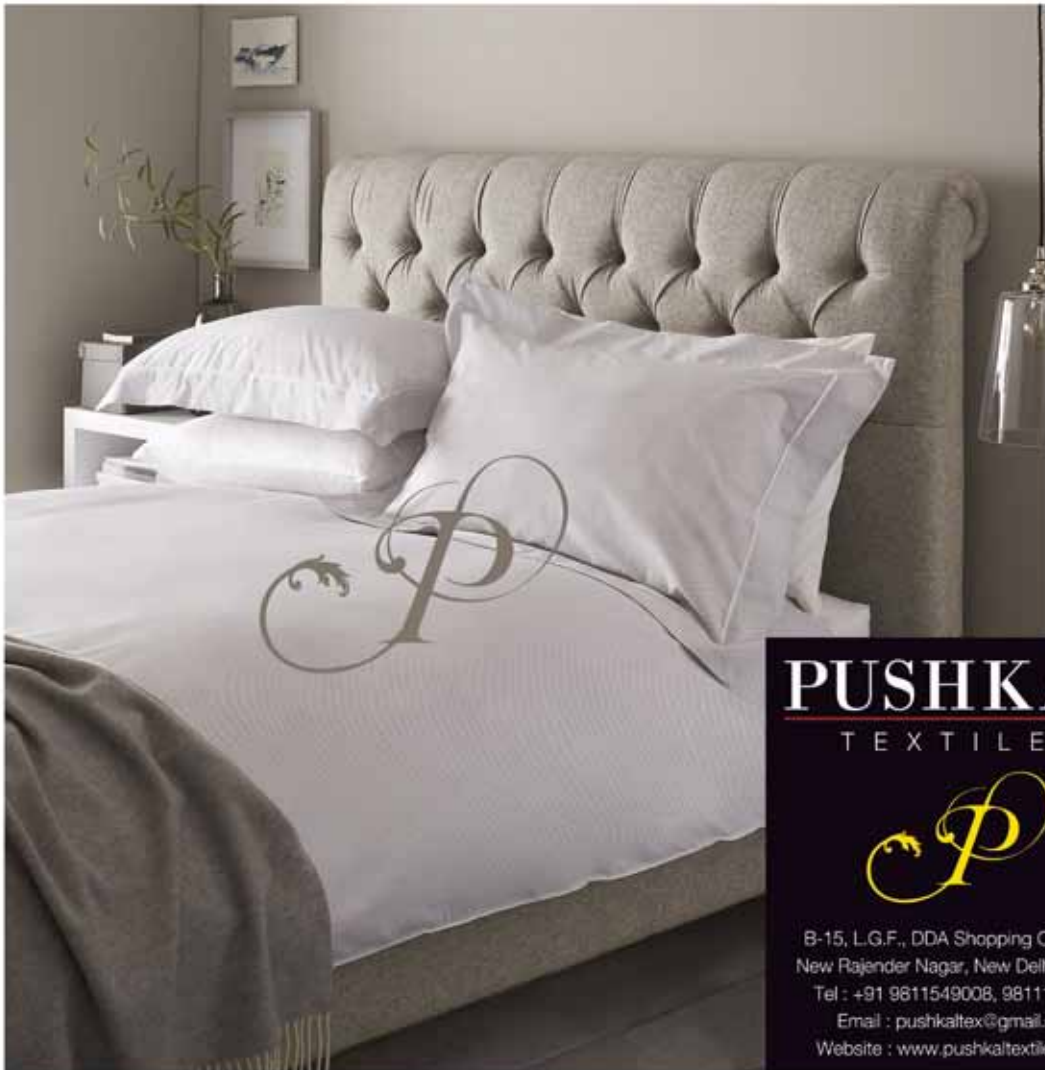
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Hotels' hygiene step-up globally

Hotels across the globe have introduced exclusive safety measures and hygiene protocols, because hotel industry is not going to be the same anymore.



ARNE M. SORENSON
President and Chief Executive Officer
Marriott International

Marriott International is set to roll out enhanced technology to help counter the spread of the virus; the new multi-pronged platform details increased safety measures for guests and associates. "We are living in a new age, with COVID-19 front and centre for our guests and our associates," says



Arne Sorenson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Marriott International. "We are grateful for the trust our guests have shown us through the years. We want our guests to understand what we are doing today and planning for in the near future in the areas of cleanliness, hygiene and social distancing so that when they walk through the doors of one of our hotels, they know our commitment to their health and safety is our priority."



CHRISTOPHER J. NASSETTA
President & Chief Executive Officer
Hilton



Hilton has announced a new programme to deliver an industry-defining standard of cleanliness and disinfection in Hilton properties around the world. Hilton will collaborate with RB, maker of Lysol and Dettol, and consult with Mayo Clinic to develop elevated processes and team member training to help Hilton guests enjoy an even cleaner and safer stay from check-in to check-out. "Our first priority has always been the safety of our guests and team members," says **Christopher J. Nassetta**, Hilton President and CEO. "Hilton CleanStay builds on the best practices and protocols we've developed over the last several months, allowing our guests to focus on enjoying the unforgettable experiences."



MARK S. HOPLAMAZIAN
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hyatt Hotels Corporation

Focusing on the safety and well-being of colleagues and guests during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, Hyatt's commitment includes Global Biorisk Advisory Council accreditation, hotel-level sanitisation specialists, and a working group of trusted medical and industry advisors. **Mark Hoplamajian**, President and CEO, Hyatt, says, "The world as we knew it has been fundamentally changed by COVID-19 and when we are all ready to travel again, we want to make sure that every Hyatt colleague and guest feels confident that each aspect of our commitment is designed with their safety in mind, and that we're putting their well-being first. To do this, we must critically examine the hotel experience from every vantage point – from our rooms and our lobbies to our spas and dining – bringing in the latest research, technology and innovation to make that happen. Hyatt's Global Care & Cleanliness Commitment is an important expression of our purpose to care for people so they can be their best – now and in the future."

**DAVID KONG**

President and Chief Executive Officer
BWHR

Best Western Hotels & Resorts was the first hotel brand to set a high level of cleanliness with the roll out of the I Care Clean programme in 2012. The programme was developed through a partnership with innovation and design firm, IDEO, and required its hotels to focus on guest high touch items and areas with standards such as usage of ultraviolet sterilisation wands and TV remotes that can be disinfected. At the onslaught of the global COVID-19 pandemic, BWHR immediately rolled out enhanced cleaning protocols and breakfast standards. BWHR is now launching the We Care Clean programme, which ensures an even higher level of cleaning standards and operational best practices at its properties. “The We Care Clean programme is the latest example of our commitment to our guests and associates,” says **David Kong**, President and Chief Executive Officer for BWHR. “We have always been an industry leader in our reputation for providing clean, well-maintained accommodations for travellers and we recognise that hygiene and cleanliness have never been more important. With the We Care Clean programme, we are proud to provide a safe and clean home away from home for our guests when the time comes to travel again,” he validates.

“

The world as we
knew has been
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Zubin Bilimoria
CEO & Managing Director
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FRANCK GERVAIS
CEO
Europe Accor

Accor and Bureau Veritas have launched a label based on sanitary measures to support the return to business in the hospitality and restaurant industry. **Franck Gervais**, CEO, Europe Accor, says, “Welcoming, protecting and taking care of others is the very DNA of Accor and at the heart of what we do. Today, more than ever, our employees, customers and partners need to be reassured of our ability to offer them the best welcome possible. As the European leader in hospitality, it is our duty to anticipate needs and respond to health and safety requirements by adhering to the highest standards. We are pleased to be pioneering this drive with Bureau Veritas and to extend it to all of our stakeholders.”



PAT PACIOUS
President and Chief Executive Officer
Choice Hotels

Choice Hotels enhances best practice guidance for cleaning, disinfecting, hygiene and social distancing to help protect the health and safety of guests, franchisees and their employees amid the COVID-19 pandemic. **Pat Pacious**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Choice Hotels, says, “The health and safety of our guests, franchisees and their employees are always top of mind for Choice. The ‘Commitment to Clean’ initiative bolsters existing best practice guidance, with enhancements advanced throughout the COVID-19 crisis, as our franchisees continue to provide accommodations for thousands of first responders, and frontline and essential workers. As our nation starts to re-open and the public resumes travel, we want guests to know that Choice-branded hotels are prepared to welcome them back.”



FEDERICO J. GONZÁLEZ
CEO, Radisson Hospitality AB and
Chairman of Radisson Hotel Group

Radisson Hotel Group has announced its Radisson Hotels Safety Protocol, a new programme of in-depth cleanliness and disinfection procedures, in partnership with SGS, the world’s leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company. “At Radisson Hotel Group, we are committed to delivering a clean and safe environment for our guests and team members. The world has been fundamentally changed by COVID-19, so it is key that we strive to protect all who work, stay and partner with us as we re-open our doors to a new era of travel. To do this we have thoroughly examined all areas of the hotel experience, and we are proud to have partnered with SGS to create our Radisson Hotels Safety Protocol programme,” clarifies **Federico J. González**, CEO, Radisson Hospitality AB and Chairman of Radisson Hotel Group’s Global Steering Committee.



DOUGLAS MARTELL
President & CEO
ONYX Hospitality Group

ONYX Hospitality Group enhances hygiene and safety across every step of the guest journey with ‘ONYX Clean’. This programme will impact every step of the guest journey from arrival to departure. “As one of the leading medium-sized hospitality players in the Asia Pacific region, we have always taken pride in our high levels of hygiene and our long-standing commitment towards the safety and well-being of our guests,



team members and the community,” says **Douglas Martell**, President & CEO, ONYX Hospitality Group. “With the impact of COVID-19 leading to new norms and heightened consumer interest in hygiene and safety, we would like to assure all travellers that we have their safety as our number one priority. Every property will adhere to an updated list of housekeeping, maintenance & service delivery protocols.”



The impact of COVID-19 is leading to new norms and heightened consumer interest in hygiene and safety”

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Leading in tough times

William E. Heinecke, Founder and Chairman, Minor International shares some insights on how they are faring during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Neha Rawat

What's your view on recovery post this crisis?

I'm bullish on recovery. Our lenders have been very supportive. However, as someone who has been in the hotel business for over 40 years, I think it's going to take a while.

Are you already engaged in restructuring discussions with lenders?

We are not looking so much at restructuring, but adding more equity. Currently we have about 50 billion in credit lines. The key thing is not availability of cash, but maintaining the various ratios that give us our credit rating and allow us to tap markets at a low cost. I have said many times, 'cash is king' and one needs to protect cash in the balance sheet.



WILLIAM E. HEINECKE
Founder and Chairman
Minor International

And, how has your experience been with the investors?

At this juncture, we are offering fair price points. I think investors are looking at investing in the next year. We remain optimistic that our investors will be supportive.

What is being done by way of having a more sanitised environment in Minor hotels?

Our campaign 'Stay with peace of mind' includes enhanced health and hygiene standards. For us, food safety is one of the most critical aspects.

What is Minor's growth plan going forward?

We have been spending most of our time trying to conserve cash and ensuring that we're going to be able to ride this crisis out.

We will be going all out to try and keep our balance sheet in such a position that when any good opportunities come along, we are going to be ready to move forward in the right direction.



MINOR
INTERNATIONAL

The key is maintaining the ratios that give us our credit rating & allow us to tap markets at a low cost"

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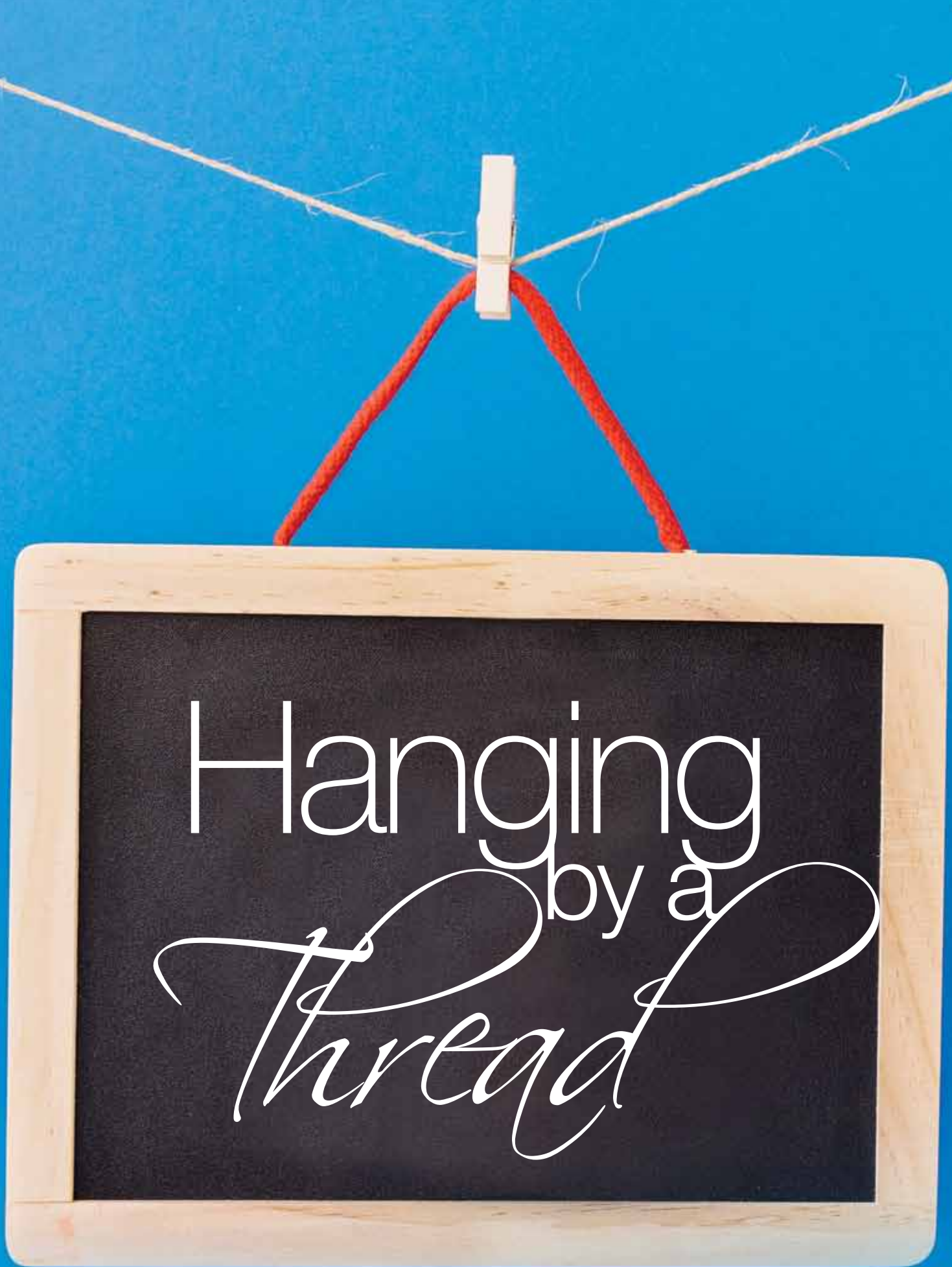
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Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, Vice President, FHRAI and President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) dwells on how sustenance has become difficult for the industry.



As the lockdown has been extended and no concrete relief measures have been given to the industry, what does your calculation say as far as damage is concerned?

It is extremely unfortunate that the governments at the Centre as well as in the State have not given the industry any indication of support. We have been submitting various recommendations over a period of time to the government for a stimulus package and are hanging by a thin thread hoping for some relief which has not yet even been hinted. However, if nothing comes through, the industry is doomed. I'm sure the government knows this; therefore, the industry is very confused at the inaction. This is the second month since all hotels and restaurants have been shut. There is no revenue but there are outgoings and this has already drained us out. In the next few months, at least 30 per cent of the total establishments may shut down. The industry is staring at Rs 1.6 trillion in losses in the first half of 2020. The hospitality and tourism industry contributes nearly 10 per cent to the Indian GDP of which restaurants contribute almost 2.5 per cent. If the situation does not change and in the absence or further delay of timely impetus and stimulus for the better, the hospitality industry will completely collapse.

What changes would this industry see post lockdown?

It is yet too soon to anticipate changes since there is no indication of improvement in arresting the virus. What is apparent now is that sustenance has become difficult. Many players are either winding up or considering winding up their businesses, especially the small and mid-market players. Not everyone has deep pockets and those that do, will only be able to sustain for so much of an extended period of time. Ultimately, they would also face the same outcome. On the far horizon, once the lockdown gets lifted, we may see some movement in domestic travel which will be very gradual. Foreign tourists will be apprehensive to travel anywhere in the world and FTAs will take a long time. Restaurants too will have subdued footfalls for at least eight to 12 months after business reopens. There will be a big lull period during which customers will be wary of eating out, which is also bound to get expensive with the levels of precautionary measures and directives.

Human touch that remained an integral part of this sector, do you see that fading away?

Hospitality is all about the human quality. It is about making the guest feel at home and is a home away from home experience. In the immediate future we may see social distancing reduce people interaction but in the long run; human interaction or touch will prevail as man is a social animal.

As airlines are planning to devise new strategies post lockdown (leaving one seat in the middle in the aircraft while travelling), what kind of safety precautions should hotels take post this?

Actually let's just wait for the measures to be announced. I would not speculate an answer based on hearsay. In the interim, we have initiated a nationwide series of training sessions for the hospitality sector which is meant to prepare professionals after the lockdown



GURBAXISH SINGH KOHLI
Vice President
FHRAI and President
HRAWI

gets lifted. This includes precautions to be taken and procedures that establishments should ensure implementing including receiving of raw materials, guest service, lobby management, and rooms maintenance post the lockdown. The sessions have been developed by the FSSAI under the FoStAC training and certification programmes. Other than this, at our end we are following the guidelines as specified by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare which advise the SOPs. When business resumes, our top priority will be guest health and safety and for which we will abide by all the necessary protocols to ensure the same.

Will industry really be thrown 10 years back into the time? Will recuperation take time or is it just a matter of time?

It is very hard to tell how much time will this lockdown set



us back by but it is evident that remaining in business is not viable as of today. The industry's biggest sore area is bearing expenses while generating zero revenues. There is a definite capacity that any business has in spending out of its reserves and when those reserves begin dwindling, the business has to make a decision of going bankrupt or shutting down. Right now, most small and medium size hotel and restaurant players are in this situation. Only and only if the government bails us out will hospitality be able to survive, and which too will take nothing less than a couple of years. We earnestly hope that the government does something before the industry goes completely down under. In the present scenario, we see ourselves back by at least 10-12 years.

Hospitality and manufacturing cannot be weighed on the same scale. We deal in the most perishable commodity, i.e. room nights and table bookings which if lost once, is lost forever. This is the basic differentiator between the service and the manufacturing industry. In manufacturing, commodities if not sold would be stored to sell on another day, but not in hospitality. One can't get the time back in which the rooms or table bookings are lost. Therefore, we say that deferment does not work here, there has to be a waiver instead. Deferment is like paying rent for April in September, when one was not even allowed to keep their business open in April.

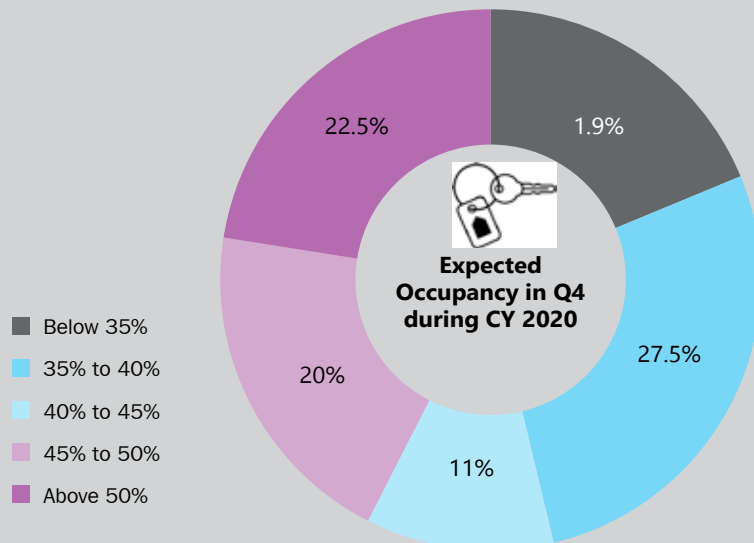


At least 30 per cent of the total establishments may shut down. The industry is staring at ₹1.6 trillion in losses in the first half of 2020"

What the GMs say

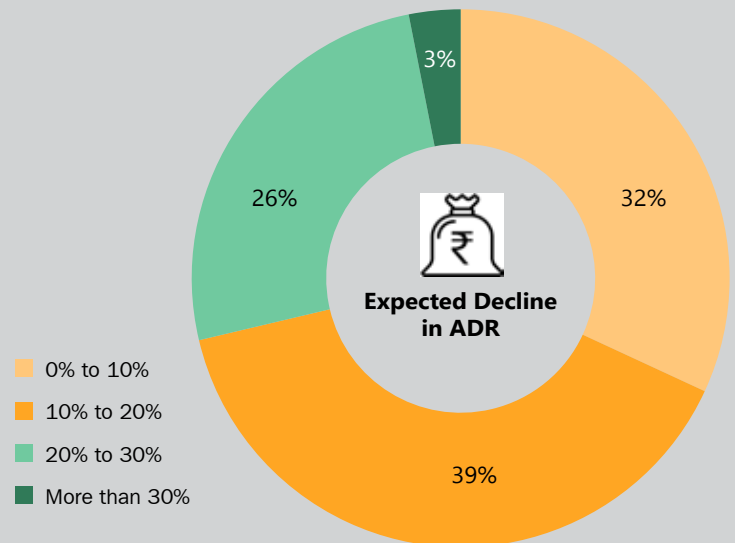
HVS ANAROCK conducted an anonymous online General Manager's Sentiment Survey which captured responses of 160 GMs across Branded hotels pan India.

Expected occupancy by Q4 2020



The survey indicated that most GMs expect demand to pick up by Q4 2020 – over 42% of the GMs believe that occupancy would be close to or higher than 50% while 46% of the GMs believe that occupancy will remain below 40%.

Expected discount in ADR



The survey showed that despite a drastic fall in occupancy, over 71% of the GMs were not in favour of discounting their rates by more than 20%.

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Hotels can be 'fun places'

Sebastien Bazin, Chairman & CEO, Accor Hotels shares insights on adapting and innovating while retaining customers' trust.

Neha Rawat

How do you find your relationship with owners during these changing times?

Probably stronger than ever, Accor has been spending a lot of time with its individual owners. This is the time when we need to be in constant dialogue with them, sharing information on safety protocols and subsidies, and preparing them for the reopening of business.

As far as your relationship with the French government goes, how has that played out for you in the current circumstances?

I have been asked by the French government to be the orchestrator on behalf of the industry and am trying to work on three fronts. First, all of us need to put together the sanitary protocols; Second, we must work on the calendar for the confinement and likely reopening of all



SEBASTIEN BAZIN
Chairman & CEO
Accor Hotels



our shops; and third, we should try to define what could be the rebound plan and subsidies.

When hotels reopen, how can they be 'fun places' again?

By probably being more thoughtful about what your clients want from you. If they were to travel, they want to discover a new face, a new culture, a new gastronomy, a new architecture, so provide them what they are looking for. At the end of the day, hospitality sector is a blessed industry, it has been blessed for the last 20 years and will be blessed for the coming 20 years. Be patient for the next 18 months but don't shy away from it.

ACCOR
When hotels reopen, they need to be more thoughtful about what their customers want"

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Ensuring pure

Hotel guests need assurance that they will be in a virus free environment in a place they call 'home away from home'. Let's see what hoteliers have to say on the same.



Kanchan Nath



ARUN RAJU
Vice President & Head of
Projects InterGlobe Hotels
STRINGENT HYGIENE
PROCEDURES

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a tough challenge for the entire economy, and amongst all the industries, travel and hospitality is by far the most impacted.

CLEAN INDOOR AIR QUALITY

In addition to health & safety protocols, we needed to maintain clean indoor



air quality in our hotels. The standards established by the Indian Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ISHRAE) on how organisations can control the spread of COVID-19 in public areas have been implemented brilliantly.

The guidelines that were issued clearly suggested that building owners should increase the fresh air intake as much as possible which can allow increased usage of the Dedicated Outdoor Air System units. Keeping this in mind, we used technology to upgrade our existing filtration on Air Handling Units (AHUs) to MERV 13 or above and recommend UV lights to disinfect the coils.



We upgraded existing filtration on AHUs to MERV 13 or above and recommended UV lights to disinfect the coils”



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SARBENDRA SARKAR

Founder and Managing Director
Cygnett Hotels and Resorts

HYGIENIC HOTELS

It has not been proven yet that COVID-19 is airborne. However, people have concerns around this, and they would want to be doubly sure when they resume travelling post lockdown. We very much appreciate the fact that guests will seek and prefer only clean and hygienic hotels. They would want assurance that they would be safe in the hotel.

For us at Cygnett Hotels, cleanliness and hygiene have always been a top priority. We are being extra cautious now and taking all precautionary measures as per guidelines outlined by WHO, ICMR, HRAIE, and FSSAI. Coming to the point of ACs, all our units have a centralised air-conditioning system and the treated chilled air comes from AC ducts through the AHU (Air Handling Unit). Every AHU has filters installed in it.



The air is pulled through the filters, where airborne particles such as dust, lint, and even microscopic pollutants are removed, and hence there is no chance of spreading the virus through air. To remove harmful nanoparticles we are installing air purifiers in all public areas and could provide the in rooms on request. We are also making masks mandatory for everyone.

We are in constant touch with our vendor partners and industry bodies to ensure that we are aware of any new developments in technology that could help our hotels to be as much safe from the virus as possible. We will continue to assess all our systems on a regular basis and keep making changes based on guidelines from health agencies.



To remove nanoparticles we are installing air purifiers in public areas and could provide them in rooms too”

MUKUND SAHASRABUDHE

Director --Technical Services, Sarovar Hotels and Resorts

TAKING MEASURES TO BE SAFE

The primary understanding today is that the coronavirus is transmitted through person-to-person contact which means that in the future it will be crucial to maintain the prescribed ‘social distancing’ norms between individuals in hotels and restaurants. It is also recommended that frequently touched surfaces and objects continue to be disinfected at regular intervals to ensure safety of guests and hotel staff. Having said that, airborne transmission of the virus is said to occur when microbes within droplet nuclei i.e. particles less than 5 μ (microns) in diameter remain in the air for a long time and can be transmitted over distances greater than 1 m. Using 3 μ filters will therefore ensure that air quality remains pure. Special precautions need to be taken

in order to address this issue. The conventional measures with respect to maintaining pure air quality in hotels include cleaning the FCUs (Fan Coil Units) and AHUs (Air Handling Units) coils and filters. Additional precautions will involve thoroughly disinfecting air-conditioned areas as well as replacing

the existing filter microns with 3 μ (microns) filters. Apart from that, installing UV filters for AHUs, TFAs and ozonisation of designated areas as well as installing UV bulbs is now going to be inevitable. This will ensure that the air-conditioned spaces remain free from bacteria.



Installation of 3 μ filters, UV filters for AHUs, TFAs and ozonisation of designated areas will be inevitable”

Planning & strategising

Rishi Puri, Sr. Vice President, Lords Hotels and Resorts talks about their short-, mid- and long-term strategies for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

What are your short-term plans to combat the crisis?

Short-term plans are made on many fronts, they may be for guests, employees, associates and partner vendors. The short-term focuses on ensuring high levels of hygiene, and making our guests feel a level of comfort during their stay. Right from pick-up of guests to entry at lobby level, the check-in process and ways of handling the key cards and the works till check-out, all has been planned, tried and tested. In addition to this, a concise menu, ensuring we do not splurge on basics while maintaining optimum



RISHI PURI
Sr. Vice President,
Lords Hotels and
Resorts

staffing and reducing costs are a priority.

If this crisis continues for six months how different your strategy will be?

Our strategy is based on various stages viz. Stages 1, 2 and 3. We will only move from one stage to another when we see desired occupancies, revival or business etc. happening. If the crisis lasts for six months, we will continue to remain in Stage 1 and ensure optimisation of resources while ensuring multitasking at all levels.

Lastly, what is the strategy if this crisis lasts for an entire financial year?

If the crisis lasts for a year, our strategy will be constantly evolving. Compliance of hygiene levels as well as remaining composed will be key to success. We cannot let potential gains of a tough decision taken by our government, be botched by poor execution, hence planning and strategising would be key.



If the crisis lasts for six months, we will continue to ensure optimisation of resources”



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Sustainability will be key

Mehul Sharma, Founder and CEO, Signum Hotels and Resorts says their future plans will focus on a sustainable approach and technology for contactless experiences.

How will the sector change post the pandemic?

Safety and hygiene will be the top priority for every hotel. Hotels will be making use of advanced technologies to enable guests to carry out their pre-arrival, check-in and check-out procedures safely. AI, apps and robotics will be used for enhancing the experiences of guests and associates. Also, the hotels will be sales-driven and cost-driven.

Do you think the way guests and hotels interact will change given that it has always remained a core of this industry?

Yes, but it will continue to play an important role with tech support. Instead of the handshake, there will be other ways to greet which include the traditional 'Namaskar' or even a respectful salute or a nod.

How long do you think it will take until investors start looking at this industry the way they used to?

The hotel industry has been taking proactive steps to mitigate the challenges. In about 1-2 years' time frame, stability will start to come in as the hospitality industry has always been able to bounce back in dynamic situations.



MEHUL SHARMA
Founder and CEO
Signum Hotels and Resorts



Have you signed any new hotels amidst this crisis?

Yes, we signed three hotels in the South. This crisis is temporary and post that, it's going to be a great opportunity for the hotel industry. We look forward to the post COVID-19 phase.



Advanced tech will enable guests to carry out their check-in and check-out procedures safely”

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Value for money is crucial

TravTalk's second Digital Conclave focused on how domestic travel would be the main driver of tourism.

Kerrie Hannaford, Vice President Commercial, Accor (India & South Asia) talked about the current scenario.



Nisha Verma

At the outset, Hannaford said that before anything else, one needs to build the consumer's confidence on health and safety checks, and to let everybody know and understand what has been certified and what is the certificate of health. "We need to come together as an industry so that travel agents, who are the authority and the one source our consumers can rely on to get information, get everything they need. The hotels need to work very closely, as a community. Hence, anyone who engages with the consumer needs to have that certificate of health. That's our number one priority," she explained.

Once these health measures have been established, one needs to redefine the value proposition being offered to the consumer as well as the travel agency. "There is a perceived value that it's best to travel abroad rather than stay in your own backyard. What we need to do



KERRIE HANNAFORD
Vice President
Commercial, Accor
(India & South Asia)

even a four-star deluxe property in USA or Europe for a rate as nominal as \$40-50, this isn't the norm in India. One needs to understand if domestic tourism still stands a chance in this reality. Hannaford said that revenue management has a huge part to play in pricing. "Sometimes, this can also be about driving occupancy, wherein you will find that for a limited time, a hotel may have a price to possibly entice new customers to come, or they must be newly opened, or they might have gone through renovation. There are several governing factors as to where a price point sits, and it's been around for centuries. This again goes back to one's perception of value," she explained.

Furthermore, Hannaford said, it depends on the hotel, the situation and what market the hotel is in. She shared, "I believe that the travel agent community is of absolute experts and they should be paid for their



collectively, with our consultants, is to become absolute experts in offering something unique and bespoke. There must be those 'surprise & delight' moments for our customers. Here, the perception of value for money is going to be crucial. It is also important to know what unique experiences we can give to consumers, whether they are from the same city or have travelled from another end of the country. How the travel agent community helps us to establish that uniqueness is important, so that we can sell something to a consumer. As we step towards that level of recovery, that's what people are going to want. They want to be able to 'feel' the value and it doesn't matter whether it is a \$50 hotel or a \$100 hotel. They only want to ensure if they are getting that connectedness, that personalisation, and as an industry, we need to come together and build that confidence for consumers," she said.

PRICE POINT AND PERCEPTION

While it may not be difficult getting a hotel room of



TRAVTALK
DIGITAL CONCLAVE



If any country can pull itself up quickly, it's India. It is so resilient and optimistic that turning the corner is near. It's very impressive"

expertise. If you want to have low rates, you are starting to eat into the commissions of travel agents/consultants/ambassadors. We are in this industry together. The travel consultants put in a lot of hard work when they are making a package. Hence, they want to ensure a good remuneration when they finally sell that package. There will be a difference in commission levels between a ₹7,000 booking versus a ₹12,000 booking. Hence, we should always consider the supply chain."

Hannaford feels that rates are going to be very interesting because there is going to be a survival period and then a revival period. "In the survival period, we will be talking to our partners and working through what needs to happen. I have worked all over the world and my observation is that the Indian hospitality and tourism industry has shown such solidarity that I've never seen anywhere else. If any country can pull itself up quickly, it's India. It is so resilient and optimistic that turning the corner is near. It's very impressive," she said.



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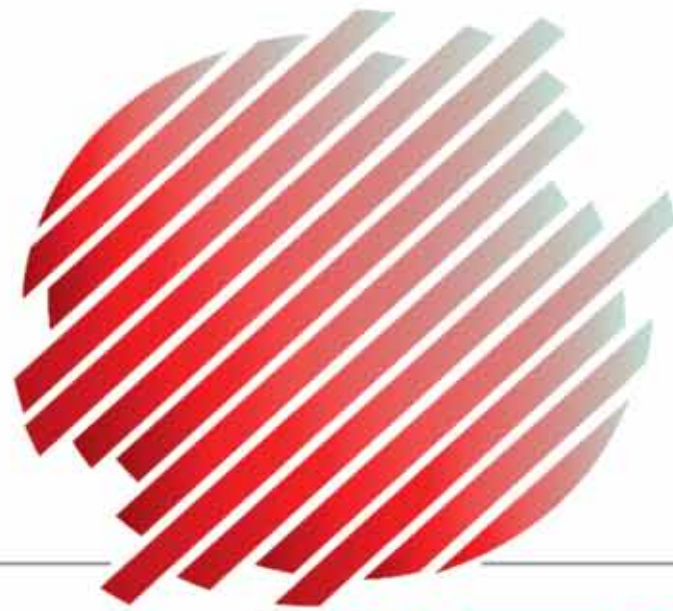
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Lot can be done **with less**

Anuraag Bhatnagar, COO, Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts, discusses how hotels can provide experiences with 'minimal' touch in a recently conducted webinar.



HT Bureau

How will the overall experience change for Indian hotels?

We are working on how a guest experience remains low-touch, exclusive and meaningful. These unprecedented times have also made us realise that a lot can be done with less and how fragile our business models are. As of now, we see opportunity in domestic travel. Also, the weddings business will pick up. We already see queries coming to our hotels and of course instead of having 'big fat Indian weddings' we will have 'mid-sized, semi-slim



**ANURAAG
BHATNAGAR**
COO, Leela Palaces
Hotels and Resorts

Indian weddings'. We will see most of this trend in Q4. So, I really think these two sectors will sustain us.

What are your estimates about recovery period?

I don't think we will have a V-shape recovery. In the best-case scenario, we will have a U-shape recovery, we will see some business coming in July and August, and a sense of normalcy in Q4.

Which segments of hotels will bounce back faster?

Both luxury and budget hotels would recover at the same pace. We are counting on affluent travellers who may not travel to Bali, New York or somewhere exotic right now but would come to one of our resorts. I don't think luxury hotels will miss this path of recovery. Resorts which are within four to five hours drive away from key cities would benefit a lot.



Instead of 'big fat Indian weddings' we will have 'mid-sized, semi-slim Indian weddings'"

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Perfect antidote to stress

Tea is the second largest consumed beverage in the world after water and will be the favourite especially at this time. Aman Dewan, India Head TGL Co. shares how they are keeping the mood upbeat amidst the pandemic.

At this time when health and immunity is paramount, what is unique about the TGL offering and how are you faring?

At The Good Life Company (TGL Co.) we have always believed that the world's finest teas and blends should be an everyday luxury that celebrates sophistication, tranquility and good health. And that is why we are devoted to bringing an articulate revival to the known tea experience by sourcing the best teas in the world, from where they grow best and masterfully blending them with innovative flavours and botanicals.



AMAN DEWAN
India Head
TGL Co.

for hygiene and sanitation at all levels. Most importantly, we are constantly working on ideas for launching new tea blends for hotels and fine dining as our new ayurvedic tea range, such as, Immune warrior tea which is a perfect antidote to stress. Packed with healthy Indian medicinal herb ingredients like Ashwagandha, Giloy, turmeric, tulsi, ginger, and liquorice, it has shown good online sales apart from our best sellers like Mogo Mogo, Lemon Detox, Matcha Green, Orange Mango Oolong, Kashmiri Saffron Kahwa, to name a few.



How are you managing at this time of COVID?

We at TGL have been able to do our best to internalise new practices of social distancing and self-isolation at our workplaces. Our warehouse and e-commerce teams are working overtime to make the products available for the customers while consciously adopting best-practices

“ We are constantly working on ideas for launching new tea blends for hotels and fine dining **”**



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Hitting the reset button

Bjorn De Niese, Director, Mayfair Spa Resort & Casino and Director, RightClique Hospitality believes it's time to look past F&B and selling rooms to make revenue during the lockdown period.

 HT Bureau

How are you dealing with the ongoing crisis? What kind of industry damage are you calculating?

Currently it's a lot of e-learning, research and rest that's helping me through the ongoing crisis. I have been spending several hours a week on looking at alternate revenue streams and its viability that could supplement earnings for hospitality establishments in the days to come. The times when we focused on just accommodation and food & beverage sales for a hotel will need to change and look at all the ancillaries that could be amplified to ensure a hotel is able to earn some revenues even in a lockdown like situation. The hotel industry has taken and will continue to take a beating for a while in my opinion. The branded and organised



BJORN DE NIESE
Director, Mayfair Spa
Resort & Casino and
Director, RightClique
Hospitality

hotels clock annual earnings of around ₹38,000 crore (approximately USD 5 billion) and the unorganised hotels will account for nothing less than another ₹40,000 crore. We could expect damages at around 60 per cent on the annual industry earnings.

Do you think, domestic travel will drive demand for the next few years? Are hotels prepared for this?

For India, fortunately, the domestic and regional traveller has helped the industry tide over tough times in the past. Once again, we find ourselves looking at this segment to keep the industry afloat. However, the impact of market closure across industries, job losses and the cash crunch many are faced with would have an impact on the travel



TRAVEL SENTIMENT SURVEY IN THE TIMES OF COVID-19

To get a pulse of the current sentiment with a cross section of society, RightClique Hospitality conducted a survey, with over 80% of the respondents being in the 25-44 age group. DeNiese lists some revelations the survey brought about.

- It was found that 86% of the respondents would wear a face mask in future to travel
- Just 23% felt they would continue with their existing hotel choices
- 46% said it was okay to dine out with social distancing in place, while 31% will stick to home food for now

42% said it would take a year at least to recover from the crisis; 42.3% expected recovery to happen in two quarters. An optimistic 11.4% expected it as fast as it slowed down.



Branded, organised & unorganised hotels clock annual earnings of around ₹ 78,000 cr. We could expect damages at around 60% on the annual industry earnings”

plans of even this segment. With international source markets even worse off than India right now, many hotels will be forced to adapt to this. Hotels in India have been seeing a lot more domestic business in the recent years and have been welcoming this segment with open arms for a while now.

Human touch, that has remained the core of Indian hospitality, do you see that wearing off post COVID-19?

The trademark of Indian hospitality has always been its warmth. While you will have some restraint for a while, it will stay. Mandatory procedures such as temperature checks, more emphasis on cleaning and sanitisation will certainly improve overall standards for hospitality establishments across hotels, restaurants, spas, offices, etc. However, Indian hospitality was always felt in the warmth of our ‘Namaskar’, the tone in which we speak and the genuine smile that, if covered by a face mask, will be visible in our eyes when we interact with guests.

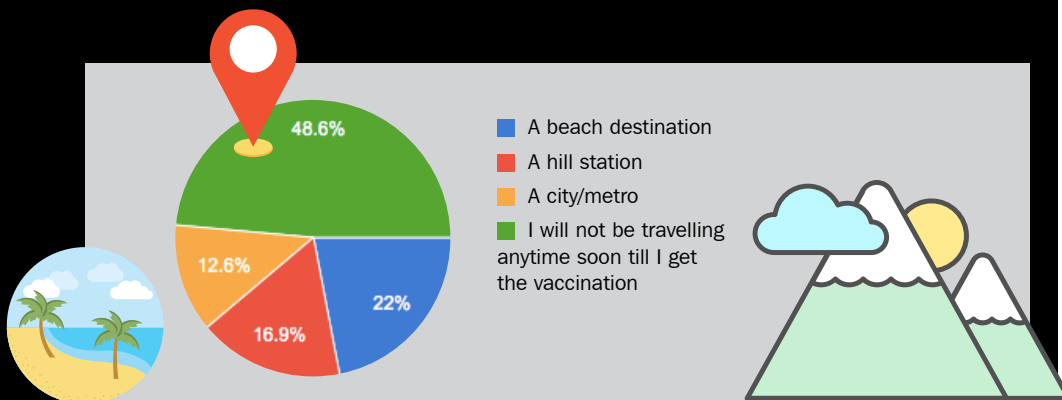
How will functioning of the hotels change post this crisis?

The short-term changes would involve rationalisation of manpower, relooking at marketing spends for the year, multi-skilling staff and interim changes in policies and procedures. Long-term, SOPs for hotels will also undergo significant changes. However, this also represents an opportunity for the industry to take a significant leap in terms of technology for guest services.

There have been speculations about industry being thrown 10 years back in time. Do you agree with this? If yes, how long will it take for the industry to recuperate?

The situation we are in presently is peculiar because its impact has been significantly felt globally. It has forced the world to hit the reset button. But things aren't that easy. Close to 5 crore jobs currently hang in the balance and FAITH (Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality) has already predicted a job loss of 3.5 crore. Each day the situation prevails means bleaker chances of jobs being held on to. However, 10 years later, we are also in a position to adapt and manoeuvre better than we were at the time. Revenue management, staff output optimisation & prudent purchase procedures will be vital in surviving these trying times. I think the industry will see some movement after another two quarters but if we're talking normalcy, optimistically, it will not be anything less than a year.

ONCE THE LOCKDOWN OPENS UP, YOU WILL FIND ME TRAVELLING TO...



THE BIGGEST CONCERNS ABOUT TRAVEL CURRENTLY...

- 53.1%** Crowded airports & Train stations
- 28%** Being in a closed environment such as airplanes & trains with strangers
- 5.1%** Hotel room sanitisation
- 4.6%** Preparation of food & drinks
- 3.4%** Affordability
- 1%** Others
- 4.8%** All of the above





Hospitality & tourism ignored again

With no mention of hospitality and tourism in the government's relief & reform package, the industry is looking at definite closure of at least 70 per cent hospitality establishments.

In her fifth and last tranche of relief and reform package, the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman concluded her speech with no mention of hospitality and tourism. The sector that contributes close to 10 per cent to the country's GDP was once again completely excluded from any kind of relief. Stakeholders have been continuously informing and updating the government about the distress the industry has been in since the lockdown came into effect. With not even the slightest reassurance, let alone any stimulus or relief package, from the government, the industry is decidedly looking at a major catastrophe including massive job loss, bankrupt enterprises and definite closure of at least 70 per cent of hospitality establishments across the country.

FHRAI has expressed deep disappointment and utter shock with the government's callous attitude towards the sector. It has called for the government to immediately action a stimulus package for hospitality for avoiding unfathomable consequences of failing the industry.

"The entire industry is confused, hysterical and in disbelief after listening to the FM's speech. There was no mention of hospitality and tourism at all. An industry that the Hon. PM has mentioned as being one of the five pillars of economic growth and country's pride was once again completely omitted from any kind of relief. The hospitality and tourism industry generates close to ₹17 lakh crores contributing roughly 10 per cent of India's GDP and supports over 43 million jobs translating to almost nine per cent of its total employment. Despite this knowledge the government has chosen to completely ignore us, yet again," says **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, Vice



GURBAXISH SINGH KOHLI
Vice President, FHRAI
and President, HRAWI

President, FHRAI and President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI).

In the fight against the pandemic, restaurants volunteered for feeding the needy by preparing and distributing lakhs of meals for workers, colonies, doctors, health workers, and essential services staff, among others every day and hotels across the country pledged thousands of rooms to aid the government in its efforts to quarantine people house doctors, healthcare workers and government staff which is ongoing even as of today.

Pradeep Shetty, Jt. Hon. Sec. FHRAI & Vice President, HRAWI says, "Since the lockdown came into effect, we have been keeping the government informed about the developments in the industry. We have been identifying and suggesting the possible ways that the government could intervene to help us get through this difficult phase. We have never shied away from going out of our way to support the government voluntarily and also whenever it called upon us.

We have been patiently waiting for it to throw us a line for the much needed support. But we are utterly flabbergasted to learn that we are not even in the consideration set. We are in a complete state of shock because of the insensitivity shown by the government."

The tourism and hospitality industry has no cash inflow and expects it to be next to nil for at least until the mid of next year. Everything hinges on the complete eradication of the virus and which at present does not seem to be anywhere on the horizon.



PRADEEP SHETTY
Jt. Hon. Sec. FHRAI
& Vice President,
HRAWI

Battling crisis with 'Pride'

Satyen Jain, CEO, Pride Group of Hotels, shares the survival and recovery strategy for navigating through the crisis and building the pipeline of business for the upcoming months.



HT Bureau

How is Pride dealing with the ongoing crisis?

We have taken several measures and have even launched few initiatives to navigate through the crisis. Keeping the safety measures at the forefront of our business strategies we are working around the clock to support and cater to our guests. We are trying to conserve cash in an uncertain environment while minimising our fixed costs and running more efficiently. And we are also maintaining a strong relationship with our corporates and trying to build our pipeline of business for the upcoming months.



SATYEN JAIN
CEO
Pride Group of Hotels



What is your survival strategy?

We have launched few initiatives to keep our operations engaged and running while supporting the government in the fight against COVID-19.

What is your recovery strategy going to be like?

In India, post lockdown MICE will play a vital role in the recovery process. Overall, Pride Hotels will ensure that at the beginning operational cost for each of its properties is low, then it will scale it up as and when required after analysing the market trends.



We have strategised few initiatives for the post lockdown phase; MICE will play a vital role in the recovery process”

Do you Heard about Red Wine Kheer? Savour@Desi Cafe Agra



A newly launched biggest rooftop Restro Lounge where you can dine with a selection of diverse range of food and drinks with a magnificent view of Taj Mahal and Itmad-Ud-Daulah while holy river Yamuna welcomes you with open arms.



The Cafe's name has been inspired by the soul and heart of a person that's always biased with the Native of which he/she belongs. A concept by Chef Ashish Singh Chandel and Alok Pandey, this place offers profound sense of calmness and notches up the romantic quotient too high with it's impeccable ambience. With its aesthetically constructed interiors, variety seating, sky DJ floor, Dome cabanas, Live bar, Private party area, coloured in beautiful blues, this is the best hangout place in the City of Love.



Red Wine Kheer Eat this unique dessert at only place in the entire world. Introduced by Chef Ashish Singh Chandel, it's smells better than any kheer with the fragrance and taste of Rose, including the pinch of the best Red Wine.



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Teaching goes high tech

The long-term effect of the lockdown will impact how hotel schools function. While, the pandemic has not deterred students, hotel schools buckle up for how the future training is going to be like.



HT Bureau



CHRISTINE DEMEN MEIER Managing Director Les Roches Global Hospitality Education

At Les Roches, following the restrictions imposed since mid-March due to the global sanitary crisis, classroom teaching for all study programs has been replaced with online distance learning allowing our international students to connect regardless of their time zone. With the use of digital textbooks accessible 24/7, videoconferences, live sessions and online assessments supported by artificial intelligence tools, our faculty keeps on generating academic content of 100 new videos daily and until now, almost 3,000 videos have been created for students to access via Moodle, a Learning Management System. We have also implemented online Q&A sessions for small groups



accessible several times a day so as to support the theoretical teaching.

Moreover, to help students prepare themselves for the new world after 2020, together with our sister brand, Glion Institute of Higher Education, we have created an exceptional new series of live online classes entitled "Leading Hospitality Through Turbulent Times" allowing our

students to be present study methods, while effective, shall in no way replace our traditional way of teaching, known for its high level of excellence worldwide. While we are providing our students with the best tools available to pursue their studies during this difficult time and with the support of our incredibly engaged and dedicated faculty, we are greatly looking forward to re-opening our campuses in July to welcome our students back and provide them with the environment they are used to strive in.



Our faculty keeps on generating academic content of 100 new videos daily and until now, almost 3,000 videos have been created for students"



IRFAN MIRZA Director/Principal V.M. Salgaocar Institute of International Hospitality Education (VMSIHE)

We have created a WhatsApp group headed by our counsellors and they are in touch with the students on a regular basis. Though we have completed 90% of the teachings before the lockdown, teachers keep the students occupied with online teaching/coaching, quiz, NSS activities etc. We also have to make some modifications with the internship in India and abroad. It is a



very difficult time for everyone, and it is important that our student's safety is our priority at this moment. We will be identifying a good software for online coaching and training and all our teachers will be trained to conduct online coaching. Hospitality education consists of lectures, demos, practicals, group discussions and assignments including class presentations, theme nights, banquets, cultural nights, and mega events. The solution that we have found is only temporary and it is not an alternative option.

We have created a WhatsApp group headed by our counsellors and they are in touch with the students on a regular basis"

GARIMA PARKASH**Dean-Vatel Hotel and Tourism Business School
Ansal University, Gurugram**

As far as the delivery of course curriculum, the conduct of classes, the class tests and the evaluation thereof are concerned, these activities were carried out in the same way as is usually done during the days of normal functioning at the college premises. The academic rigour was not lost as the time table as originally planned at the beginning of the semester was adhered to with precision and exactitude.

Practical sessions on bread-making and egg cooking were held straight from the well-equipped domestic kitchens of Chefs Sunil Kumar and Chef Saurav Arora. What's more, a few guest lectures by external resources and live demonstrations were also conducted online in which the students took a lot of interest and asked relevant questions. Two Faculty Development Programmes were held wherein the faculty members themselves became students of our own resources and learnt a lot. The faculty members' performance appraisal was also done

online – quite to the satisfaction of the team members. Students were quite at ease as they studied within the comfort of their house. Though, as is a pre-requisite of a hotel management course, they had to attend these classes formally in a state of full grooming and hygiene.

Being optimistic, about the pedagogical activities being carried out as laid down in the course structures, we do sincerely hope, as long as the things are completely eased out, would work out very well. We have not experienced loss of any amount of academic objectivity and consistency as all the academic



The academic rigour was not lost as the time table as originally planned at the beginning of the semester was adhered to with precision”

processes were time-bound and had to be completed on the prescribed dates. In addition, the recruitment of new HM students for the Academic Year 2020 – 2024 is also taking place regularly as they are being interviewed online. The existing students, on their part are submitting their semester fees as per the stipulated dates.



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SHRI SHAKTI

Lucaris launches fine crystal barware

Lucaris, the luxurious crystal ware brand of Asia, have launched their new barware range – The RIMS Collection. The collection has been co-developed by Lucaris and Thomas Anostam, the famous creative hospitality consultant for leading bars in Asia. RIMS has recently won the prestigious world-class design awards as well as Good Design Award (GMark) and Design Excellent Awards (DEmark) in 2019. RIMS has also been selected to be used in Asia's 50 Best Bars. Lucaris RIMS Collection is available across India including Home Center, Home Stop, Danube Home, and Amazon.in.



IR Contactless Thermometers

Eagle Forgings, a three-decade old company providing the hospitality industry long-lasting certified equipment, in association with Bittel, one of the world's largest manufacturers of hotel phones, have launched Infrared Contactless Thermometers. These thermometers are fully certified and come with 18 months warranty support in India. The product is accurate and safe. Eagle Forgings and Bittel have been partners for over a decade, offering technologically good equipment with efficient service back-up.



Gourmet coffee within seconds

Coffeeza recently announced the launch of their flavoured gourmet coffee capsules, namely in-demand flavours like Chocolate and Hazelnut. Coffee capsules keep the coffee grounds fresh for as long as 24 months unlike ground coffee, which loses its aroma within a few days. Coffeeza addresses the innate desires of coffee lovers who want to enjoy great-tasting barista-style coffee such as Espresso, Lungo, Cappuccino, Americano and more in a matter of seconds, in the comfort of their home or office. The product range comprises of Italian & Belgian coffee in the form of capsules and best quality coffee machines.



Earthy shades

IDUS has recently launched the Earth Colour Furniture Collection, which comprises furniture in different earth tones such as brown, coffee, camel & tan shades. The furniture is in leather & fabric supported with different materials such as wood, stainless steel in different finishes and shades. Lisa Revolving Chair is made with palm wood and nubuck leather upholstery which ensures comfort with its extra lumbar support, while Explorer Leisure Chair is wrapped in pure leather supported with stainless steel legs and full foam seating.



Hand tufted carpets

Beautifully hand tufted in 100 per cent bamboo silk, each carpet of the new Forma Collection is an elegant expression of luxury, brought alive through an infinite interplay of pile height variances, colours, textures, and patterns. This collection goes beyond construction, technique, colour, material, or design type, to boldly play with the shape of a carpet, thus adding a distinctive character to the space each adorns.



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< THIEN KWEENG

**Chief Executive
Sentosa Development
Corporation, Singapore**
Thien Kwee Eng has been appointed as Chief Executive of Sentosa Development Corporation (SDC) and as a member of SDC and Singapore Tourism Board with effect from June 1.



< SANJAY RAI

**Sr Vice President Sales & Marketing
Sarovar Hotels**
In his new role, Rai will be responsible for overseeing the planning and implementation of sales, marketing and product development programmes for each brand targeted towards existing and new markets.

DINESH DAHIYA >

**Vice President Sales
Sayaji Hotels**
Dahiya has over 20 years of experience across verticals in hospitality and travel industry. Prior to this, he has worked with The Fern Hotels and Resorts, Mumbai, Al Nahda Resort & Spa, TUI Travel PLC, Accor Hotels, and many more.



SUPRIYA MALHOTRA >

**Area General Manager
Ascott, Chennai**
Malhotra has been with Ascott since 2013 and was previously the City Manager for Chennai with direct operational responsibilities of Somerset Greenways Chennai. She has a vast experience of over three decades in hospitality operations.



< MANSUR AHMED

**Deputy General Manager
Somerset Greenways, Chennai**
Ahmed has been with Ascott for over nine years and was previously the Director of Sales and Marketing for Chennai cluster. In his new role, Ahmed will be responsible for managing the operations of Somerset Greenways Chennai.



< VIJAY KESAVAN

**Director of Sales and Marketing
Jalesh Cruises, Mumbai**
Kesavan's responsibilities will encompass sales team leadership, expanding Jalesh's presence in new markets, development of new channels, and contributing to the company's marketing and business strategies.

PHATSALAWADEE PIMPILA >

**Director of Sales and Marketing
Meliá Koh Samui, Thailand**
Pimpila has two decades of experience in sales and marketing and a passion for building strong business relationships. Prior to joining the new 159-room and 41-suite five-star luxury resort she worked as Director of Sales for Kanda Residences.



MAYANK TUTEJA >

**Director of Sales
One Rep Global**
Tuteja has over 12 years of experience across global luxury hospitality brands. At One Rep Global he will expand the customer base while fostering relationships with existing partners across luxury travel agents, MICE companies, and forging new tie-ups.



< VAIBHAV GUPTA

**Hotel Manager
ibis Kolkata Rajarhat**
Gupta's journey with Accor started in 2015 as a Front Office Manager at ibis New Delhi Aerocity. Since then, he has successfully spearheaded ibis Styles Goa and ibis Bengaluru Hosur Road in various managerial roles.



< INGO STONEBERG

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