

hospitality
INSIDE



SPECIAL

MARCH 2016 // ITB EDITION FOR EXPERTS IN HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

GENERATION ROBOT: GEN R CHECKS IN





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by Dr. Roesken

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Dear hospitalityInsiders and guests of ITB 2016,

ITB is celebrating its 50th birthday this year! Our congratulations on this brilliant achievement!! Even when focal points have changed, the largest tourism trade show in the world remains to be an exuberant, multi-cultural meeting place for old and new friends, those returning and newcomers.

For the 11th time, hospitality experts will hold discussions in the London Room, Hall 7.1b: The ITB Thursday is once again the "Hospitality Day" – and absolutely digitally this time around. The "Special Guest" of the day is named Mario and is currently the only active hotel robot in Europe. The hotel conference guests will not only be able to experience him during the opening, but also briefly at each of the talk rounds. Under the motto of all ITB conferences this year – digitisation – hotel experts will discuss the subjects of robotics, high-tech innovations, innovation labs, OTAs, digital natives and loyalty programmes.

A robot as a conference guest marks the turn of an era – just the same as the fact that we will welcome a Chinese hotel group for the first time – and the largest within the country to boot: The Plateno Hotel Group, part of Jin Jiang today. In spite of its 3,000 properties in China, it is still continuing to grow with terrific speed. And equally dynamic: The "Digital Duel" between Google and Booking.com (all details on page 12).

You can count on HospitalityInside to be among the ITB constants. This hospitalityINSIDE SPECIAL ITB will once again provide you with background knowledge on current topics: We have brand managers speak out and also present 3D holographic projections, the competition between the OTAs for holiday apartments, the difficult hotel situation in Switzerland, a tea farming village in China with a Facebook connection and a great deal more (from page 16). These professional articles are normally reserved for our subscribers only!

You can find us and our partners at the "World of Hospitality" joint stand in Hall 9 / Stand 109. Meet with the representatives of highly interesting companies such as Al Jazeera Media Networks, KOS International, Macnetix, Media Carrier, Motel One, Next Gen Opti, NFON and Private Palace Hotels. From page 6, you can read about which top-notch service providers from technology, eCommerce, media and the hotel industry are hidden behind these names!

This SPECIAL is also available online within our www.hospitalityInside.com website – in German and English (under "Digital+"). Feel free to send the link to your colleagues and business partners.

Our entire team wishes you a successful ITB 2016!

Yours, Maria Puetz-Willems
Editor-in-Chief

Visit us!
WORLD OF HOSPITALITY
ITB, Hall 9
Stand 109



Also available as
eMagazine at
www.hospitalityInside.com !

3,000 copies distributed.

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IMPRINT

Publisher: hospitalityInside GmbH, Paul-Linke-Strasse 20, 86199 Augsburg, Germany. www.hospitalityInside.com // **Editorial office:** Maria Puetz-Willems, Editor in chief, hospitalityInside.com // **Articles:** The articles published in this Special are written on the occasion of ITB 2016 or are extracts of articles published in the online magazine www.hospitalityInside.com // **Authors:** Sarah Douag, Maria Puetz-Willems, Baerbel Schwerfeger // **Cover:** The Mario Hotel Solution based on the Nao robot by Aldebaran Robotics // **Photos** were kindly provided by the persons and hotels/companies mentioned, also by Alibaba, Natalia Merzlyakova Fotolia.com, Kurt Hoerbst, HSDS, Marriott Ghent, Messe Berlin, NH Hotel Group, QBMT, Reality Tours and Travel, robot NAO by Aldebaran Robotics, Baerbel Schwerfeger, swiss image ch_Christof Sonderegger, swiss image ch_Markus Greber // **Advertisements:** This Special was supported by Next Gen Opti, Messe Berlin, Motel One, Quality Reservations, Ronnefeldt, Thalgo Cosmetic // **Layout:** Cornelia Anders, www.blueorangeblue.de // **Print:** Silber Druck, www.silberdruck.de // **Copyright:** hospitalityInside GmbH. This content is protected by law. Publishing this content or parts of it in print or online media requires the written permission of hospitalityInside GmbH. In case of violation we will charge current market fees. Beyond, we reserve the right to take legal action and claim damages.

ITB PARTNERS 2016

Partners of the joint stand "World of Hospitality" 2016 are (in alphabetical order): Al Jazeera Media Network, hospitalityInside, KOS Contract Textiles International, MACNETIX, Media Carrier, Motel One, Next Gen Opti, NFON, Private Palace Hotels & Resorts

ITB BERLIN CONVENTION: TRAVEL 4.0 – THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

The transformation is visible

Berlin. Robot services, emotions at the touch of a button: digitalization in the travel industry is the main topic of the global travel industry's leading think tank on every day of the show. Admission is free for trade visitors at ITB Berlin. ITB celebrates its 50th birthday this year.

The digital transition has taken giant strides forward in the travel industry. From 9 to 12 March 2016, under the heading of 'Travel 4.0 – the digitalization of the travel industry', the convention will examine a number of topics, including virtual reality, the digital transition and the use of humanoid robots in the tourism industry. Information on all the sessions on digitalization can be viewed at a glance at <http://www.itb-convention.com/digitalization>. Anyone unable to attend can follow the sessions of the ITB Future Day, ITB Hospitality Day and the ITB Marketing and Distribution Day via a live stream.

Wednesday at ITB: future trends

On Wednesday, 9 March, four individual tracks at the ITB Berlin Convention will focus on the opportunities and challenges arising from the mega trend of digitalization. Guenther H. Oettinger, the EU Commissioner responsible for the digital economy and society, will open the ITB Future Day with a keynote speech on 'shaping a mega trend in Europe'. In an ITB CEO interview Philip C. Wolf, the founder of Phocuswright, will be talking to Darren Huston, the president and CEO of the Priceline Group and Booking.com, about 'recipes for success in times of complex markets and rapid global expansion'.

In a keynote interview on the topic of 'Google View: from micro moments to a seamless travel search and booking process', Prof. Dr. Roland Conrady, the science head of the ITB Berlin Convention, will be talking to Dr. Oliver Heckmann, vice president of Travel and Shopping, Google Inc. Rounding off the ITB Future Day, ministers from countries which have pioneered the digital transition will be taking part in the ITB Ministers' round table on new business models in the age of digitalization. Dr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary General of UNWTO, will moderate the session.



Thursday at ITB: hotel robot Mario performing

On 10 March 2016 the digital revolution will be the main topic of numerous events at the ITB Berlin Convention. On Thursday at the ITB Hospitality Day four sessions alone will be dealing with this topic. The first humanoid robot to work in a hotel will be among those having their say. The most recent staff member of the Ghent Marriott Hotel in Belgium speaks 19 languages. His inventor and hotel manager will be talking about his origins and hotel duties. 'Mario' will be in action at every panel discussion. At a session on the 'turbulent world of OTAs', leading online travel agents Terri Scriven, industry head of Hospitality, Google, and Peter Verhoeven, managing director of EMEA, Booking.com, will be looking

for answers to the following question: 'How are mega distributors changing the hotel trade and how is competition among OTAs changing?' (for details see page 12). On day two of the ITB Destination Days at the Ground Transportation Executive Roundtable, the focus will be on innovative technologies for 'the new era of cars, buses and trains in the age of multiple transport modes'. 'Adapt or die – what does digitalization mean for travel and event management?' That is the title of the panel discussion at the ITB Business Travel Corporate Day. Comprising high-profile members, this discussion round will be asking whether the extreme availability of technology, often seen as suffocating, is simply exaggerated or whether it is a new factor influencing the success of travel and event management.

Friday at ITB: Toshiba's humanoid robot

On Friday, 11 March, visitors of the ITB Marketing and Distribution Day, will be able to see a live demonstration of Toshiba's ChihiraAico, they can make up their own minds about humanoid robots in the global travel industry. In an interview later on, one of Toshiba's experts will have more information about the technology giant's future plans. A global, representative and exclusive survey carried out by Travelzoo will also establish whether there is a demand for robots among customers. In his keynote speech Greg Webb, vice chairman of Sabre, will also be addressing digitalization issues. Afterwards, in an ITB CEO interview with Christoph Bornschein, CEO, Torben, Lucie und die gelbe Gefahr TLGG, Prof. Dr. Roland Conrady of Hochschule Worms, the science head of the ITB Berlin Convention, will be talking about the 'future of marketing and communication'. Examples of best practices will serve to show how companies must change in order to stay competitive in the digital age.

Details under www.itb-convention.com

THE "WORLD OF HOSPITALITY" AT ITB 2016 AND ITS CO-EXHIBITORS

Hotels, Technology, Media & more

Berlin. The joint stand "World of Hospitality" at ITB 2016 presents again renowned businesses from software, eCommerce and media, services and the hotel industry. Private Palace Hotels and NFON AG will join the stand for the first time and will place itself among a host of technology and eCommerce companies alongside Next Gen Opti, Macnetix and Media Carrier. The low budget design group, Motel One, will also be present again just the same as KOS International. Al Jazeera Media Network is back again, after 2014.



Planning as of Feb 16, 2016. Rendering: fliegendeBauten24.de

PARTNERS of the „World of Hospitality“ 2016

The co-exhibitors 2016 introduce themselves.



شبكة الجزيرة الإعلامية
ALJAZEERA MEDIA NETWORK

AL JAZEERA MEDIA NETWORK:

Al Jazeera strives to deliver content that captivates, informs, inspires and entertains. Launched in 1996, Al Jazeera was the first independent news channel in the Arab world dedicated to providing comprehensive news and live debate.

It challenged established narratives and gave a global audience an alternative voice—one that put the human being back at the centre of the news agenda—quickly making it one of the world's most influential news networks.

Since then, it's added new channels and services, with more than 70 bureaus around the world, while maintaining the independent and pioneering spirit that defined its character.

Each subsidiary follows the same principles—values that inspire it to be challenging and bold, and provide a 'voice for the voiceless' in some of the most underreported places on the planet.

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AL JAZEERA ENGLISH

AL JAZEERA DOCUMENTARY

AL JAZEERA MUBASHER

AL JAZEERA BALKANS

AL JAZEERA TURK

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DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

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www.aljazeera.com

hospitality
INSIDE

WORLD OF HOSPITALITY INFORMATION.

HOSPITALITYINSIDE is the initiator of the joint stand "World of Hospitality" at ITB Berlin.

The company based in Augsburg (close to Munich) publishes the online magazine www.hospitalityInside.com, the online trade magazine for the international hotel industry, launched in March 2005. The weekly magazine publishes in two languages (German/English) every Friday, focuses on pure editorial content (no advertisements) and geographically on Continental Europe and the Middle East. Of course, the publication includes all global players of the industry. It's no newsletter publishing (paid) press releases but a journalistic magazine focusing mainly on own research and background articles. The columns pick up topics like investment, financing, marketing, human resources, technology etc. – everything that keeps a hotel group alive.

Readers are spread over more than 20 countries: General Managers, Area Managers, Managing Directors, CEOs, consultants, designers, developers, bankers, investors, leading hotel chains as well as reputable private hotels belong to the "hospitalityInsiders".

Furthermore, the company connects executives of the industries during fairs, workshops, hotel conferences and own events by its grown information network. In the "Network" column at the website you will find announcements and reports about all events and fair activities.

Since 2006, hospitalityInside also organizes annual hotel conferences: the "ITB Hospitality Day" at the world's biggest tourism fair ITB Berlin and, since 2008 the "Hospitality Industry Dialogue" at Europe's leading real estate fair Expo Real in Munich; for both fairs hospitalityInside also initiates hospitality joint stands.

www.hospitalityInside.com

**KOS CONTRACT TEXTILES (KOS OBJEKT-TEXTILIEN International GmbH):**

A specialist in realizing any kind of customized flame retardant articles the company has been well known since almost 20 years. While working together with international interior architects, general contractors and interior decorators we have created a high confidence and we established ourselves as a reliable supplier in the textile Hospitality and Health Care market.

Plenty of excellent references are attesting our high experience and knowledge of the branch.

A fine selection of base-textiles meet the requirements for the most intended uses, as there are flame retardant sheers, decoration and blinding draperies (woven dimouts and coated blackouts), upholsteries, microfiber and artificial leather as well as shower curtain fabrics.

Our main focus is the knowledge of developing and producing customized fabrics by meeting all requirements the customer desires. As our most particular ability "we create textiles that comply with the customer's option and fulfill all qualitative demands". Along with visual appearance and surface-feel we give special attention to quality characteristics such as flame retardant properties, abrasion resistance, light fastness and easy-care performances.

In a constant dialogue with our customers the requested features as material, production type (e. g. if woven or printed), design and color-scheme are worked out. Following these will be implemented "in textile". This happens within a manageable time-frame and by meeting your budget – for sure!

Due to the cooperation with professional interior decoration and sewing-companies not only material sold by meter, but as well ready-made decoration and drapery can

be delivered. So the customer gets all from a single source.

The full concentration to the international contract market since 1997 distinguishes the company KOS Contract textiles as a renowned specialist in supplying customized textiles of all kinds- even within short time-frames and in line with your budget.

www.kos-international.de

MACNETIX

■ communicate with intelligence

MACNETIX: Since our foundation, our products have proven in the market and inspire largely thanks to the easy-to-use interface, customers in the hotel and gastronomy just as schools, universities, banks or retail. Our support thought corresponds to our own claim of services. Starting with free updates and upgrades, to the 24/7 direct support our service is exactly what our customers expect. More than 2,500 realized installations speak their own language, they represent experiences from 15 years and report on projects from all around the world. Our products have continuously been further optimized and survive in the market from day one.

With OpenApp.TV we created a solution that is flexible, which is the requirement of the hotel and catering industry, but also the clinics and rehabilitation centers over grown. Today OpenApp.DS is known as a top program on the digital signage market and shows its strengths both through ease of use as well as its stable system structure. To provide our customers with resource-saving solutions, we use our expertise as a licensed Internet and access provider to

offer IT infrastructure, cloud services and modular software solutions.

Macnetix consists of a strong team, builds partnerships and stands as a full service provider to the side of its customers. Projects are also accompanied on their completion and held out both customers and partners through free updates and upgrades on the pulse of time.

MArketiNg – We develop software solutions that are used for sales promotion, so for the marketing area, and are tailored to the needs of the customer.

Communication – Communication is not only an essential element in the exchange between people, it is also essential in the exchange between humans and computers. Our products create intelligent solutions for successful communication.

NETwork – Networks are more important than ever. For a company, it is also important to find the best partners and integrate them into a strong network.

Inter-eXchange – The efficient exchange between humans and computers is our driving force, and the challenge we face.

www.macnetix.com

MEDIA CARRIER

MEDIA CARRIER: Media Carrier is specialized in the distribution of digital newspapers and magazines. The company belongs to the MELO Group, which has arisen from the Munich-based press wholesaler Trunk. MELO as an international full-service-supplier in the fields media and logistics, currently employs over 2.000 employees at twenty locations in six countries.

Media Carrier has developed a digital library which offers digital editions of print media. These digital editions can be downloaded on any mobile device such as smartphones, tablets or laptops without any additional software installation.

Based on clients' requirements, Media Carrier buys digital editions of newspapers and magazines from publishing houses and composes individual portfolios using its own technical solution for distribution: the "Media Box".

Media Carrier already sources and composes tailor-made portfolios for international airlines, lounges and luxury hotel chains. Amongst others, passengers of Lufthansa, Germanwings and Airberlin and hotel guests of the Steigenberger, Mandarin Oriental and Dorint hotel chains already enjoy great benefits of the Media Box.

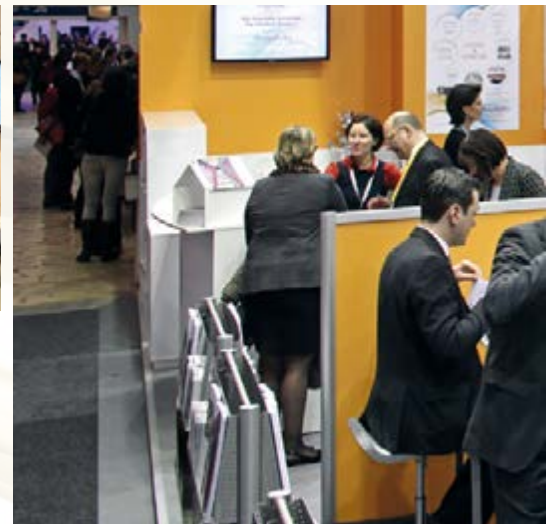
With Media Carrier GmbH as its subsidiary, the MELO Group is expanding its business to include marketing and distribution of digital content. The MELO Group not only entails the press wholesaler Trunk, but for example also the News-Log AG, which supplies airports, airlines and catering companies throughout Europe with print media, and is market leader in Germany and Switzerland.

www.media-carrier.de



MOTEL ONE

MOTEL ONE: The Munich based company Motel One was founded in 2000 and has currently 53 hotels with over 14,300 rooms across Germany, Austria, UK, Belgium, The Netherlands and Czech Repu-



blic. Guests as well as industry experts appreciate Motel One's concept of "Great design for little money", combining high service standards, quality materials and great design in prime urban locations. In the One Lounge, which is the breakfast café, living room and bar all in one, a local topic is chosen and reflected in the sophisticated and unique design. Room prices start from as little as 59 Euro. Motel One has been awarded with the German Marketing Award in December 2015. With this price a jury of 20 experts recognized the integral marketing performance of the European Budget Design Hotel chain. Also in 2015 Motel One received the award "Best employer" in Tourism by the news magazine Focus. For the first time Motel One leads the ranking of the TOP 5 of the middle class in the categories "Gastronomy, Accommodation, Entertainment, Fitness and Tourism". Furthermore, the German Institute for Service Quality awarded Motel One in the category Tourism with the German Service Prize 2015. Also in the real estate and investment sector, Motel One won various awards. Dieter Müller, CEO and founder of the Motel One Group, has recently been awarded with the Lifetime Achievement Award during the IHIF.

www.motel-one.com



NEXT · GEN · OPTI

NEXT GEN OPTI provides a large variety of cloud based Software Applications and Managed Services for the hospitality industry, being specialized in electronic

hotel room distribution and optimization of hotel revenue providing market intelligence solutions and managed services.

Next Gen Opti software has been offered to the hospitality industry over the last two decades and is sold to over 2.500 hotels in more than 20 countries.

The products and services build up The Platform, The Tool Box & Managed Services. The Platform is in fact a modern reservation and distribution platform that offers premium eDistribution (CRS & BE). The booking engine is flexible, available for web, mobile and facebook. The CRS is upgraded with market intelligence and rate optimization module.

The Tool Box is a module of tools that support revenue managers' activities. It offers powerful price recommendation and pickup benchmark tools, software that handle online reputation & feedback from guests, as well as operational reports with complex market research options.

The company also offers Managed Services, beyond the software support. The expertise of the NGO team extends through revenue management, pricing and distribution. Thus, the Managed Services are available either as a simple audit, ongoing consulting or even as outsourced service.

Next Gen Opti has a proven track record in hospitality: branded and custom built hospitality applications, white label applications for leading European Technology Suppliers and for leading European Hotel Management Companies.

www.nextgenopti.com



NFON
Cloud Telephone System

NFON: Welcome to NFON! NFON AG with headquarters in Munich is a leading global provider of high end cloud-based telephone systems. The company offers high-quality products and services as a complete single-source solution. NFON has a client base of over 10,000 customers, including companies ranging in size from 2 to 249,000 employees. NFON's telephone system meets the highest security standards. It is run in fully redundant high performance data centres and is therefore fail-safe. More than 150 intelligent functions are kept up-to-date and secure for future use through free updates. Furthermore, with the cloud telephone system, costs for a separate telephone connection and hardware for a telephone system no longer arise. And because of charges based on actual use of the extensions, up to 50 per cent of the costs can be saved compared to conventional telephone systems.

www.nfon.com



PRIVATE PALACE HOTELS & RESORTS

The successful German hotel corporation "Private Palace Hotels & Resorts" is looking to grow. Led by its owner Dr. Michael Hut-



ter and with headquarters in Malta, the company currently runs four vacation hotels on Rügen and one in Switzerland. These boast an occupancy rate of circa 80 percent across the course of the year. Dr. Hutter is also one of the few German hoteliers who as of now exclusively manages his own properties.

The Private Palace Grandhotel Budapest is being built and will open its doors at the end of this year as scheduled. As such, international growth is more than ever anticipated for Private Palace Hotels & Resorts. They are negotiating an increasing number of management contracts. In the near future, the company will take up management of the Grand Hotel Saigon and in light of concrete plans to open more Private Palace Hotels & Resorts Hotels, founded Private Palace Asia. Shortly, they will also begin building a luxurious holiday resort at the in-spot Mar-

rakesh. Dr. Michael Hutter developed the plans for this hotel with the well-known Austrian artist André Heller and among other things, they are envisaging unique well-being and cultural facilities. Together with his Development-Team in Malta, the hotel strategist and medical professional is always on the look-out for new attractive management offers to take on in Europe and across the world, including Poland, Cuba and Thailand. Even in Germany he is currently negotiating the development of new resorts. The most ambitious location would be "Neues Prora." Here, a lifestyle-resort that Private Palace will manage from February 2017 is being built on the historic grounds of the former ruin. Other locations along the Baltic coast are also planned in Usedom and Boltenhagen among others. But why are the Private Palace Hotels & Resorts such a success? The reasons vary.

On one hand we have the fantastic locations and on the other we have the sophisticated operational concepts for each house that all include Spas – usually even medical-Spas – that are up to par with the latest standards. To this we can add the appealing restaurants which range from down-to-earth fish restaurants to the Michelin-star-restaurant "Rugards Gourmet" where our guests are always spoiled. But more than anything else, it is the role of the host that Michael Hutter and his teams play so well in all of their hotels. In essence they aim to not only meet their guests' expectations but to exceed them by far. That applies to both the soft- and hardware. And if that is not a recipe for further growth...

www.privatepalace.com

10



Experience the world of hospitalityInside!

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Today, **www.hospitalityInside.com** is established as the standard source of information in many management levels, nationally as well as internationally.

The magazine is only published online weekly, advertisement-free and with a 1:1 translation into the German and English languages.

Readers: The online magazine counts readers in more than 20 countries, all senior executives working in the hotel industry, in real estate and investment.

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11

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Every year hospitalityInside publishes special editions for important international and leading fairs, as ePapers and high gloss print magazines. Bi-lingually. The SPECIALS allow advertisements in German and English language (both included in the price).

hospitalityInside SPECIAL ITB:

3,000 copies for the world's biggest tourism fair in Berlin. Advertisements for the ITB SPECIAL cost between 950 and 2,800 euros net for 1/6 to 1 page in colour.

hospitalityInside SPECIAL EXPO REAL:

3,000 copies for Europe's leading property and investment fair in Munich. Advertisements for the EXPO REAL SPECIAL cost between 1,250 and 3,700 euros net for 1/6 to 1 page in colour.

The special editions include articles about current topics, articles of the online magazine, information about the fairs, the hospitalityInside joint stands and hotel conferences.

You will find the **printed SPECIAL** in many business hotels in town (Berlin, Munich) at the hotel conferences of both fairs and at the individual "World of Hospitality" joint stand. The **ePaper SPECIAL** can be downloaded any time at **www.hospitalityInside.com** ("Digital+").

11TH ITB HOSPITALITY DAY: A ROBOT, HIGH TECH, INNOVATION LABS AND MORE

Totally Digital

Berlin. The special guest at the ITB Hospitality Day will be Mario, a robot who works in a hotel. Visitors to the 11th hotel conference of the world's biggest travel trade show can witness him at the start of the event and briefly at every discussion round. On the subject of digitalization, the key topic at the ITB Berlin Convention, leading hotel experts will be discussing robots, hi-tech innovations and innovation labs. This is the first time a Chinese hotel group will be taking part. At Plateno Hotels, China's largest hotel chain, "totally digital" has become part of everyday life. There will also be a meeting of two senior executives from Google and Booking.com. A futurologist will be describing digital natives and three other experts will be discussing investment in hotel guests.

10.30-10.50 h

Digitalization I: Welcome, Mario! The First Humanoid Hotel Robot And His Fathers Discuss The Digital World

Mario is the youngest staff member at the Ghent Marriott Hotel in Belgium. He is 57 cm tall, weighs 6 kg and speaks 19 languages. His creator and his hotel director explain why he was created and why he now works at the hotel.

Moderated by: Maria Puetz-Willems, Editor-in-Chief, hospitalityInside.com

Panel guests:

Mario, Robot, Ghent Marriott Hotel
Roger Langhout, General Manager, Ghent Marriott Hotel
Fabrice Goffin, Co-Chief Executive Officer, QBMT/Zora Robotics

11.00-12.00 h

Digitalization II: What Impact Do Robots And Other High-Tech Innovations Have On The Future Of The Hotel Industry?

Will such "creatures" and ideas disempower staff members and hotels or will they lighten their burden? Experts discuss their studies and an online portal conducted a survey among travelers on the world of digitization.

Moderated by: Sarah Douag, Senior Journalist in Travel & Tourism

Panel guests:

Mario, Robot, Ghent Marriott Hotel
Stephan Demmerle, Director Business Unit Central Europe, NH Hotel Group
Roland Schwecke, Managing Director, DICON Marketing and Consulting
Richard Singer, President, Travelzoo Europe

12.15-13.15 h

Innovation Labs: Guests Become Fans

Where do the ideas for future-oriented hotel concepts come from and how are they

developed? Who is already living innovation today? Hoteliers and non-hoteliers discuss ideal framework conditions and big challenges.

Moderated by: Hansjuergen Klesse, Editor, Wirtschaftswoche

Panel guests:

Christoph Hoffmann, Chief Executive Officer, The 25hours Hotel Company
René Massatti, Head of Strategy, TrendONE
Dr. Jens Pippig, Managing Director Pro Sieben Accelerators, ProSiebenSat.1 Media

13.30-14.30 h

ITB CEO Interview: Totally digital? China's biggest hotel group rapidly expands and also benefits from the Chinese Internet passion. Its loyalty program counts 80 million members. The Group operates 14 hotel brands in 3,000 hotels covering 300 cities in China and 9 countries.

Interviewer: Maria Puetz-Willems, Editor-in-Chief, hospitalityInside.com

Interview Guest: Eric Wu, Chief Financial Officer & Executive Director, Plateno Group

14.45-15.45 h

The Turbulent World Of OTAs: How Are Distributions Giants Changing The Industry, And How Is Competition Among OTAs Changing? The Google search engine is turning into a booking engine and is thus becoming a competitor to its own customers – e.g. Booking.com. Is the hotel industry now at the mercy of the giants? Leading OTAs are facing difficult questions.

Moderated by: Wilhelm Konrad Weber, Partner, Swiss Hospitality Solutions

Panel guests:

Terri Scriven, Industry Head of Hospitality, Google UK

**„ITB Hospitality Day“
im LIVE Stream unter
[www.itb-convention.com/
livestream](http://www.itb-convention.com/livestream)**

Peter Verhoeven, Managing Director EMEA, Booking.com

16.00-16.30 h

An Interlude: Future Spirit. How Digital Natives Live And Work

In 2020 the generation born in 1980-1997 will make up over half of all employees. The hotel industry is just one of many industries which will have to adapt to these Co-, Cloud- and Click-workers, a mobile, flexible and internet-driven generation whose ideas are changing the ways we work and spend our free time. What can be learned from the digital natives' profile?

Redner: Andreas Reiter, Futurologist, ZTB Zukunftsbuero

16.40-17.40 h

Investing In Guests. Points & Miles, Social Media & Reviews...

Which customer loyalty tools still make sense? Who is winning the battle for old and new guests alike?

Moderated by: Gerhard Fuchs, Owner, fuchs Consulting

Panel guests:

Frank Astheimer, Director Retail Partnerships, Miles & More
Elina Zois, Director Marriott Rewards & CRM Europe, Marriott International
Benjamin Jost, Chief Executive Officer, TrustYou
Sarah Kennedy Ellis, VP Global Marketing and Strategic Development, Sabre Hospitality Solutions

PANELISTS (selection)



Christoph Hoffmann, CEO and co-founder of the 25hours Hotel Company develops tailored hotels for city nomads, daydreamers and night-owls looking for a grey urban sprawl to unwind in. The sales and marketing specialist, graduate of Glion and Cornell held managerial positions at New World Travel Inc. in New York, at Kempinski and Buergerstock Hotels. Designing the Fox Hotel for Volkswagen AG in Copenhagen made him fell in love with the lifestyle-hotel industry.



Roger Langhout started as a dishwasher in 1986... After a degree in Hotel Management he joined the Holland America Line as Sommelier, later as Bar Manager. Disembarked in Amsterdam he worked as F&B Manager for two hotels on Rembrandt Square. Then Roger owned a Brasserie but returned to the hotel industry for a transition to Operations Manager and finally GM. Six years ago, he started working with Marriott Hotels, two years ago with the Ghent Marriott.



Terri Scriven is the Industry Head of Hospitality at Google UK. She has been with Google for 5 years working initially with the largest global travel advertisers and now partners with European hotels, accommodation and online travel agencies. She has more than 15 years of online strategy and online advertising experience, having worked in consulting at Deloitte.



Eric Wu is Chief Financial Officer und Executive Director of China's biggest hotel group Plateno, today part of Jin Jiang. He joined Plateno in 2007, having graduated at Michigan State University and after 9 years work experience in PricewaterhouseCoopers in the U.S. and China. The CPA (Certified Public Accountant) is specialized in internal controls, risk management, corporate governance and audit support.



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ITB LIVE: 6TH "HOSPITALITYINSIDE INVESTMENT BAROMETER"
WITH UNION INVESTMENT

Location, location, location

Berlin/Hamburg. Why is the hotel industry so sexy, what criteria does the industry follow concerning its growth? What are investors and owners concerned about? Again, hospitalityInside.com and Union Investment are on the lookout for the sentiment in their "Spring Barometer" 2016. Please participate online or participate live during ITB at our Barometer box at "World of Hospitality" joint stand in Hall 9 / 109.



The international expert hotel magazine, based in Augsburg, and Germany's leading investment and asset manager with focus on international hotels want to capture the current industry mood more specifically.

Much has happened since the all-time high of the fall survey. On one hand, the current political developments have a direct impact on tourist flows and demand, on the other hand, all travellers realise that a growing number of (international) hotel brands are appearing in the market, even in smaller cities. Of course, the large chains are not only focusing on Germany, but on entire Europe, at minimum. And first, they analyse locations in key cities or at so-called important "secondary locations"... Following the famous maxim of Conrad Hilton: All that counts is "location, location, location!" Therefore, which location is the most promising one? Apart from the three standard

questions about the economic development, the new survey for the first half of 2016 contains the following trend questions:

Within the next 12 months, will the yield gap between gateway cities and secondary cities in Europe...

- increase
- decrease
- remain the same?

Which hotel investment location will become the top location, the outperformer in 2016?

- Barcelona
- Berlin
- Hamburg
- London
- Munich
- Paris
- Warsaw
- other/none

Log in! At the ITB stand or online – answer 5 questions with only a few clicks in multiple-choice mode... Everyone who participates will receive the complete analysis later!

LIVE: Participate in the survey at ITB 2016 Berlin at the joint stand of "World of Hospitality" in Hall 9/Stand 109. There, you will find a specially set-up survey terminal where you can vote live! And enjoy a drink.

The online survey, which continues until the beginning of April, can be accessed following the link www.hospitalityInside.com (see banner). Please register and you will receive a personal invitation for the online survey.

We look forward to your opinion!

WHAT DOES TOURISM HAVE TO DO WITH HOTEL PROPERTIES?

People who travel also need a place to sleep! The hotel industry is a large pillar in the tourist business; its services have a great influence on the travellers' satisfaction with their holidays. Therefore, hotel operators are always competing with new concepts to win over more demanding customers.

However, the chains are only "leaseholders", the hotel properties belong to third parties. Today, these might be affluent private individuals as well as funds or insurances, for example. A growing number of these investor types have become enthused with hotels in the meantime. They are able to conclude long-term agreements with one hotel operator, for example; this means, they communicate with only one "leaseholder" for 15 to 20 years – which makes life much easier compared to residential properties or commercial properties, where leaseholders change far more frequently.

Now, investors, just like hotel operators, are intent upon being represented in growth markets or at promising locations. The property has to fit the hotel concept and vice versa. The better these two harmonise, the more successful the hotel. In order to achieve this, both parties have to make many small adjustments to the parameters as competition is great and the customers are demanding.

Therefore, hotel investors are posing the same questions as other investors do: e.g. which locations in Europe are the most promising, and can I also earn money in secondary locations which price-conscious travellers may prefer?

The answers to these questions are very exciting. / map



HOSPITALITYINSIDE LAUNCHING "BUSINESS COCKPIT": CHECK FROM THE CLOUD, NAVIGATE THROUGH AN APP

With real time data and as a Pay per Use model

Augsburg/London. The hotel industry is increasingly driven by numbers. There is no financing without meaningful key numbers, competitors cannot be observed without current market data and revenue can be missed when no solid forecast is generated. A new initiative by HospitalityInside addresses this point. A new platform will help small and large hotels alike as well as hotel chains with checking, controlling and guiding their business from the Smartphone. At the same time, corresponding editorial information will be made available through Intelligent Matching directly within the applications. Also new: The user only pays for what they use (pay-as-you-use principle)! The Hospitality-Inside business cockpit will be introduced – in its beta version – at the "World of Hospitality" ITB stand (Hall 9/109). Inquisitive visitors are welcome.

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Hoteliers are exposed to an ever faster growing technology jungle. And alongside this, everyone is searching for one thing: An adequate and affordable solution for the efficient management of their hotel or hotel group. Exactly this will be provided by the new platform with the name, "HospitalityInside Business Cockpit", under the new domain www.hospitalityinside.biz (also reachable through hospitalityinside.com/businesscockpit). The specialised Augsburg publishing company is serving up a new chapter with the "Business Cockpit". In addition to the editorial industry information, Managing Director Michael Willems wants to develop a platform that will support managers during their business day and at the same time, pave new paths to the publishing company for the distribution of journalistic content. "From the conversations with the industry over recent years, we have learnt that intelligent solutions are in demand – specifically those that assist individuals in their everyday business. We have now compiled such systems in the form of so-called 'cockpits' that are accompanied by corresponding editorial

content. The user can select which offers they need for their business and only pay for what they use. This absolutely new approach offers enormous potential for the hotelier who must operate flexibly and cost-consciously at the same time."

For this purpose, HospitalityInside has united with the software developer HSDS London within the scope of a strategic cooperation. The internationally active company produces IT solutions that are controlled from the Cloud and deliver real time data from the market. One of the HSDS locations for such developments is Cluj-Napoca in Romania, known among insiders as the "Silicon Valley" of Europe.

HSDS CEO Adriaan Kleingeld: "The hotelier should always have the customer journey in sight. Ultimately, all of the questions during the business day of a hotel/hotel chain are turned toward converting the user's behaviour into direct bookings. Every host can influence their revenue with the right information. The tools in the hospitality-Inside cockpit can help with this – simply, efficiently and need-oriented. And: The hotelier will receive the desired information

on a real-time basis (!) and can adapt this to their own hotel or hotel chain with a few settings."

To begin, the cockpit will provide these tools:

1. **"Market Informer"**: All Key Performance Indicators in overview – Benchmarks on real-time data basis regarding My Local Market, My Competition, My Price Position and Reputation as well as the market compression.
2. **"Price Optimizer"**: The tool for finding the optimum price – the data from the Market Informer connected to the internal PMS data. Trend analysis and price dynamism.
3. **"Price Auto-Audit Option"**: The tool for finding the best prices for My Hotel – the data from Market Informer + Price Optimizer compare my calculated prices with the current ones.
4. **"Price Autopilot Option"**: The fully automated tool for price optimization in connection with My Channel Manager. Automatic Listing/Recommendation of rates and restrictions for further distribution.



Ghent Marriott Hired a New Colleague: The First Humanoid Hotel Robot

Talk to Super Mario

Ghent. The Ghent Marriott Hotel in Belgium has a new employee. His name is Mario and he works at the front desk where he greets clients in 19 languages 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Where did the hotel find such a pearl one would ask? Well, in the robotic industry. Mario is actually a humanoid robot. The first ever to work in the European hospitality industry.

Mario is 57 cm tall, weighs 6 kg and costs the hotel 15,000 euros. Money well spent thinks General Manager Roger Langhout, who believes: "We haven't seen a more impactful change in our business since the introduction of smartphones."

Since last week, Mario is assisting the staff during check-in but also works for other departments. It can welcome guest (in 19 languages) sometimes with a glass of champagne, can provide room keys and answer any question regarding availabilities. It is also able to accompany business guests to meetings rooms and even host a power point presentation.

As it is equipped with a face recognition software and two cameras, the "humanoid employee" is also able to detect, record and store customer faces for 6 months. Additionally, since it has a build in program to work safely with kids, Mario serves as well as a "baby sitter" at the hotel's kids corner. More functionalities will follow according to the GM who closely works with QBMT, a Belgian com-

pany from Oostende, which designed the software (the robot is produced in France).

100-billion euro market

Next steps in development will allow Mario to call a taxi or read the news in the customer's language. No doubt, Mario will soon become the Employee of the Month. Head of HR at the hotel, Emmly Boddin, notes that employees are enjoying the interaction with their new colleague. However, she makes it clear: "Mario can never

replace any associate working with us. It can do a lot but doesn't have what we call our 'spirit to serve'".

On its first day, the hotel's new gadget was proposed and incorporated for a session at a conference scheduled for next October. One can bet that "super Mario" will steal the show that day.

According to the European Commission, the humanoid robot market will weigh 100 billion euro by the end of 2020. Robots like Mario are already used in the medical world and even in schools, in Belgium, Switzerland, France and the Netherlands. The collaboration between the Ghent Marriott Hotel and QBMT is a first test run to see if more humanoid robots could join the hospitality sector.

The Ghent Marriott is a premium 4-star hotel located in the historical heart of the Belgian city (50 km away from Lille in France). It boasts 150 rooms and suites as well as 8 meeting rooms worth 500 sqm.

/ Sarah Douag



Roger Langhout (Hotel Director) and Fabrice Goffin (Software Specialist).

Extract from *hospitalityInside.com*, July 3, 2015.

THE BRAND MANAGERS OF STARWOOD HOTELS AND IHG ON LIFESTYLE HOTELS

Thinking to the limit

New York/London. "Technology changes brands," Mike Tiedy says, Senior Vice President Global Brand Design & Innovation, Starwood Hotels & resorts, "and so communication changes in the brands. It's because of this that we're on our way to real global brands."

Starwood is considered one of the bravest and most creative brand inventors of all hotel chains: The success story of W proves it. But others too – such as IHG – also realised the potential of lifestyle concepts quite early on. With 62 Indigo Hotels in operation and a further 64 in the pipeline, IHG is one of the "first movers" in the lifestyle boutique hotel scene. What makes these lifestyle hotels different and how do you create that "concept that has that little something different"? Mike Tiedy, his Starwood colleague Brian McGuinness (responsible for the Select Brands) and Dina Soliman, Brand Director Europe for Inter-Continental Hotels Group (IHG) give their answers.

So much upfront: lifestyle hotels are today very attractive to the guest. And this promotes competition among hotel groups – to the benefit of the guest. "But", Dina Soliman from IHG added, "some terms in the industry are confusing. They confuse the customer and give rise to false expectations." She cites the term "lean luxury" here. "We have a duty to communicate clearly," she says. This point can't always be conveyed to designers and creative people active on the hotel landscape – something which is evident at Starwood Hotels in some of the very inventive descriptions used for well-known things. The lobby area, for instance,



Indigo Paris Opera: The interior design reflects the neighborhood.

is the "re:mix:lounge", the F&B corner with pre-packaged snacks the "re:fuel" and the fitness centre the "re:charge". Those who don't know the jargon are out. Mike Tiedy, Senior Vice President Global Brand Design & Innovation at Starwood, explains this from the design perspective: It's important to know the attitude of one's core customers. "In brand design, we give over lots of time at the beginning to our key customers," he says – "and we return later again and again to these definitions." Starwood designers split the brand world into three areas: Digital, Interior Design and Graphic.

The aim is to create a pure brand: "Purity is the target," Tiedy says, and this is approached via "right" or "wrong" in the evaluation. This requires open dialogue with colleagues – and "thinking to the limit, also to the standard limits".

For a little while now, brainstorming has taken place in Starwood's "Starlab", which was created last June. The creative "laboratory" prepares the digital stream of thought

by bringing 160 designers from six Starwood brands together in New York. The idea is that the laboratory allows these people to meet spontaneously and to begin to discuss their ideas in new, inspiring, open and bright locations and rooms. Some commute between their offices and the Starlab. It was in exactly this atmosphere that the current revitalisation concept was put together for Sheraton and Le Méridien.

The local environment sets the tone

How do you bundle creative ideas together to make a successful signature brand like W or Aloft? The luxury brand and its "little sister with the DNA of W" are the poster children of the hotel group. Tiedy gets to the heart of it: "We have to find the Zeitgeist of the customer!"

It sounds simple, but this involves a lot of work and empathy. For W, it involves a strict narrative process based on ten factors arising in the case of lifestyle hotels from

Dear Readers,

In this magazine, we focus on the content of the „ITB Hospitality Day“ and other hotel-related events taking place at ITB. Furthermore, you will find excerpts from the hospitalityInside.com online magazine.



The bar, billard and open spaces – this is typical aloft! Guests discover these design elements everywhere.

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history (environment), from the building itself and from architecture/design elements. All of that ultimately feeds into a story. And the story has to be different to that of other hotels.

Telling the "neighbourhood story" has become a core element of the lifestyle hotel. IHG tells this story in close connection with the hotel's respective location. "The location has to tell the neighbourhood story," is the Indigo principle. And one is strict here. In the first European Indigo in Berlin, opened 2012, the hotel focused on the artistic neighbourhood, in the city of fashion, Dueseldorf, it's fashion itself that is emphasised with six storeys each dedicated to a different decade. And in the Indigo Paris Opera, it's the theatre production that forms the story.

This link to the "local community" is more visibly apparent for Indigo than is the case for Starwood's aloft brand, for instance, whose lobby and rooms are all rather similar. For this reason, IHG tends to use the vocabulary of boutique hotels for its lifestyle hotels. This is also due to internal brand positioning. Indigo is to be clearly set apart from the other IHG brands which follow all the standards. Dina Soliman doesn't like the

word "standards" when she talks of the boutique brand though. Nor does she see Indigo as competition for the other brands, but rather as a "parallel brand".

Voyeurism is a driver

Starwood thinks more extreme. W and Aloft use strong references to pop culture which inspires all areas, whether it be F&B or lobby. The lobby is the runway for fashion shows, Tiedy explains. In plain English, this means: Voyeurism is the key for a successful W. One example here is the "Monumental Stairs" in W Verbier. Guests sit, chat and relax on the stairs themselves – not on sofas or stools. Anyone stopping to consider the hard floor or back pain, is out here. Everything is geared to the extrovert, communicative and lifestyle-hungry guest looking for rebellion in all areas – from cocktail culture to yoga teacher. The room is therefore not conceived as an oasis of peace, as is the case in other hotels, but rather as a place in which to continue hotel party life. Guests can mix their own cocktails there, for instance. One example of how the entire lifestyle concept breaks down into details.

So who or what limits the ascent of the Starwood designers? Tiedy laughs and answers soberly: "The budget, return on investment and practicability!" And he adds: "A good designer can deal with this. He knows how to marry two extremes with one another."

One thing Starwood would no longer do: It wouldn't incorporate expensive technology into its hotels. "Guests bring their own technology and their own content with them. All we do is creating the stage for them." Access to this stage is made easier by high-speed internet. "WiFi has already become a sort of fundamental human right," the IHG Brand Manager says with a grin. Like her colleagues, Dina Soliman adds: "Connectivity is key!" In the digital network, Indigo therefore has a much broader presence than other IHG brands.

F&B is relevant for lifestyle hotels

The stage is today a sort of café, living room, social room... The names are colourful, but the purpose is always the same. Guests are to interact. Strangers are to be made temporary friends, "Alone Together" as it were, a phrase also created by a Starwood manager. This "community fee-

ling" is more important in lifestyle hotels which offer little apart from the overnight stay. In the recently opened aloft Munich, guests can spend time in their rooms, in the gym or in the lobby.

Brian McGuinness, Senior Vice President Speciality Select Brands at Starwood Hotels (aloft, Element, Four Points), describes the impact of this feeling on F&B: "Yes, the growth in F&B revenue is higher than in the past." Though he specifies: A broader offering doesn't necessarily lead to higher revenues. Success depends rather on the use of the lobby (work, relaxation, play, food/drink) – and everything discreetly allocated to specific "spaces". In terms of food, there is just one secret to success. It has to be authentic, local and of exceptional quality. This is part of the local experience, and others read about it



Dina Soliman:
Connectivity is key.



Brian McGuinness:
Guests switch brands more often today.



Mike Tiedy:
on the way to real global brands!

beforehand in social media. Even the American in a US chain hotel in Istanbul doesn't want an American sandwich.

"Glocal" (Global + Local) is key.

"We see this phenomenon across all nationalities and brands," Brian McGuinness says. "Food is absolutely relevant for a hotel brand!" German beer, local champagne, organic salad from the region: "It's not about food, but about good food!" Organic tomatoes, goat's cheese and wholemeal bread score the points. A comprehensive campaigns can be spun on the back of such. At IHG too, F&B plays a big role. One Indigo doesn't just offer a Grab&Go, but also an in-house restaurant. And Indigo also launches food campaigns. / Maria Puetz-Willems

Extract of hospitalityInside.com, Sept 18, 2015.

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3D projections give products an overdimensional size and make them floating into the room, like this model of an heart.

IN AMSTERDAM NH DEMONSTRATED HOW THEIR 3D HOLOGRAPHIC TELEPRESENCE WORKS

Flying hearts and dancing ballerinas

Amsterdam. Maarten Markus, Managing Director for NH Hotel in Benelux, invited his best event partners to the Netherlands for them to witness the last innovation service available at NH: the 3D holographic telepresence technology. In a dark ball room, the audience was quickly amazed by the 3D full-sized objects floating in the air over the stage such as the inside details of a heart and an eye, all the small details of a new car engine, a globe spinning by itself and even a top model walking the runway.

All this was introduced by a host who wasn't even physically there. Not on stage, not in the room, not even in the country. Actually, a holographic version of her was on stage that evening, interacting with people. It looked real. How is that possible? Well, as NH explains, the technology is based on the projection of an HD image on a reflective surface, which rebounds to a transparent film where the hologram with 3D effects appears. It involves 21.000 lumen full HD projector, uncompressed video player, 5x2,7m life size projection, live transmission via satellite or high speed Internet (when available) and HD-SDI recording facilities.

This is a pioneering and revolutionary service in the hotel sector that can be applied not only to events and conventions of high impact, but also for presentations that want an innovative and surprising staging," says the Spanish group.

According to NH, it is the first hotel chain to develop a holographic telepresence system that allows being in multiple locations at the same time, in real time. "And we have the exclusivity for the next 5 years," reminds Maarten Markus who intends to make a difference during this period. Currently available at NH Collection Eurobuilding in Madrid (since October 2014), at the nhov Berlin, the nhov Milan, and the NH Collection Constanza in

Barcelona, this technology will soon be implemented in 9 others properties across Europe. Four hotels in the Netherlands will enjoy the new equipment shortly. Actually, three, since the NH

The Australian actor Hugh Jackman (left) as a virtual guest during Sony Pictures' presentation of the new movie Chappie in Madrid.



Conference Centre Leeuwenhorst just installed it. By the end of the summer, NH Schiphol Airport and NH Conference Centre Koningshof next to Eindhoven will be equipped. The NH Collection Grand Hotel Krasnapolsky, an iconic building located in the heart of Amsterdam, is also concerned. Currently under massive renovation, the 5-star property will offer the facility once the make-over is completed. "We already have bookings for next October at Leeuwenhorst" proudly mentions Maarten Markus who is also betting on loyal event agencies to spread the news and convince their customers to use it.

Overcoming physical distances

"This technology can bring any message, any graphic, or statistics to life in a way that will captivate the audience... at a cost six times cheaper than anywhere else. We are talking about 10,000 euros per event." This price includes the content (3D graphics or full-sized animated videos of a product with your own brand), pre-recorded messages and a full engineering team working on site behind the scene. The real time projection using satellite communication costs a bit more. However, this time, the hologram will interact live with the audience from a different part of the world. NH proved the technology works a few months ago when the group organized the first holographic press conference for Sony Pictures in Madrid. The entertainment company was introducing its new movie Chappie. Australian actor Hugh Jackman was virtually in the NH Collection Eurobuilding in Madrid interacting with journalists, while in fact he was physically at the NH Collection Berlin in Germany, 1800km away. Last but not least, it is important to mention that this futuristic service is also perfect for entertainment evenings. Let's say a customer is a fan of the Saint Petersburg Ballet Company. Well, instead of flying in the whole crew and paying for all expenses, the dancers could be performing at the famous Mariinsky Theatre in the Russian city and still appear on a stage somewhere else in the world. But this story doesn't say how much it will cost to book the ballerinas though. / SD

Extract of hospitalityInside.com, July 10, 2015.



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RAPID INTERNET SPEED WITH MANY OPPORTUNITIES

Interpreting emotional traces

Hanover. Society is adapting the internet – or is the internet taking over society? Innovation and dynamics continue to accelerate dramatically in online distribution, and new technologies will determine everyday lives of travellers and hotels directly or indirectly by 2025. A guest contribution by Carolin Brauer, Managing Director at Quality Reservations, Langenhagen near Hanover.

Nobody is able to predict exactly how people will be animated to make purchases in future or their consumption behaviour. Nearly half of all hotel bookings are done online today; 20 percent of them are mobile online via smart phone & Co.

Innovations cannot be stopped. Current forecasts say that the triumph of cloud computing will lead to the phenomenon that about 75 percent of all business and private data will be stored in the cloud by 2025. The internet of things, the intelligent interconnection of devices and machines via internet will continue to grow.

But the significance of innovation is not always seen instantly. An example is the Kindle e-book reader of the online giant Amazon. Despite weakening the book-selling trade sustainably, the e-book has become an established supplement instead – the successful combination of tradition and technological progress.

A mixture, which also has to be put skilfully into practice in the hotel industry in order to serve the four core areas of online distribution – guests, offers, hotel and bookings – well-balanced. How can host qualities be transferred to the guest in the digital age? This is about the necessary usage of technology on an emotional basis. Is this possible?

Guests are using the internet more and more, and they are leaving their traces, which have to be read and used in an intelligent way. This will become the most important job of the hotel's Guest Relation division. As opposed to mere reactions to their wishes, future guests will expect interaction prior, during and after their trips. The basis for the interaction will be the guest's saved data and interactions in the internet, which the guest makes accessible and shares in the public domain. This is where the emotional service starts for the guest.

Interpreting emotional traces

Due to their demands and technical habits, Gen Y, X, Z guests will not stay in any hotel – they will only stay in hotels they are able to identify with. Hotel brands will keep trying to gain additional market shares with target group-related (IT) concepts by winning over guests as fans. Fans want to have the "experience" in terms of selecting, booking and checking in, even if it all sounds very technical at the moment.

While the key card was a revolution in the nineteen nineties, the smart phone has taken over today. Apart from check-in and door opening via apps, temperature, light and music can be controlled via the guests' devices and the hotel bill can be settled easily via online payment. Also NFC (Near

Field Communication) technology will find a place in the hotel industry as beacons, and can be used through smart phones. Big data and the cloud make it possible! The access to hotel distribution is open and publicly accessible today. Travellers can choose among various booking portals, meta search engines and direct booking tools on the hotels' own websites. And there are new distribution channels becoming available every day – new ways for emotionally controlled offers and information. The updating of rates and availabilities for these various portals is no longer coordinated by a person but by the channel manager. But what about the creative and emotional content: the pictures, hotel descriptions in various languages and image movies? What about the data in social media? How will the hotel be able to keep track of everything and be able address potential customers with relevant content?

The cloud brings light

Here, the development in cloud computing will be helpful. According to the inventor of cloud computing, Werner Vogel, Chief Information Officer at Amazon, the cloud has already become the new normality today. As soon as the cloud contains data, portals and partners can be granted selected access or information can be provided specifically. Today, every second booking arrives online at the hotel; therefore, nearly all reservations will probably be carried out online in 20 years. The emphasis within the core areas of hotel distribution will probably change; new technologies will provide new potential. However, it is clear that online and offline trade are merging. This applies to all directions. Online retailers such as Amazon and Zalando are now moving to the city centres and opening shops. They want to be closer to their customers. The hotel industry is already there. But it (still) needs the emotional online kick.



Hyatt acquired the rental platform Onefinestay. An apartment in New York.



THE CURRENT AND FIERCE OTA DYNAMICS: CONQUERING RENTAL HOMES

The golden egg

Amsterdam. Airbnb belongs to the new, mighty OTAs in the market. The P2P platform apparently provokes hoteliers more than they are willing to admit. Airbnb has become a symbol of individual travel; therefore, the large OTAs are starting to go for holiday homes and apartments more often. Expedia acquired a suitable provider, TripAdvisor and HRS started their own platforms, Booking.com even went one step further: the giant recently partnered with the time-sharing division of Wyndham. Other hotel chains are also contemplating with the market of rental homes. Everyone wants to occupy every niche today. Because of this, some of them are losing sight of China and the giants from that country.

Hoteliers still refuse to admit it, but the success of **Airbnb** is driving them nuts. Only a few CEOs confess that the P2P platform is taking market shares from the traditional lodging industry and doing so at a fast pace. Most of them actually continue to say that Airbnb is no competition. Only a few have stepped into the rental homes segment just like Airbnb stepped into theirs. The "so-called Sharing Economy" is not incompatible with hoteliers and Sébastien Bazin, CEO **AccorHotels**, says he would have loved to invest in Airbnb. A few are actually doing it. Apart from its hotel activity, the Spanish group Room Mate for instance, rents out apartments just like Airbnb. **Hyatt** is also testing the niche

at a more luxurious level, investing a 12-million-dollar budget in the British upscale renting platform Onefinestay. Pat Pacious, COO at **Choice Hotels**, recently told us, that "they are looking at the renting segment as well". But none of them really went for it, leaving a clear open path for OTAs, which, once again, are the ones making bold moves.

Two weeks ago, **Booking.com** signed a global distribution agreement with **Wyndham Vacation Rentals**. Through this deal, Wyndham's global portfolio, which boasts



over 105,000 properties spread in more than 550 destinations, will now be able to utilize the Booking.com website and mobile apps as distribution channels. Over the past two years, Booking.com has worked individually with several brands of Wyndham Vacation Rentals, primarily in Europe. "Booking.com has been a great partner for us in Europe, and we're very excited to extend our relationship globally through this new agreement," said Gail Mandel, President and CEO, Wyndham Exchange & Rentals, the parent company of Wyndham Vacation Rentals. The division includes brands such as Landal GreenParks, Novasol, Hoseasons, cottages.com and Wyndham Vacation Rentals North America.

In a past interview with hospitalityInside.com, Peter Verhoeven, Booking.com's Managing Director EMEA, explained "just like Airbnb we list private homes, mostly houses but only with owner agreements." This deal certainly widens their range of offers for rental homes, but it remains a partnership.

Expedia went two steps further by actually buying a rental home company and not the smallest one at that. Earlier this month, the giant OTA acquired HomeAway for 3.9 billion dollars in cash and stocks. With more than 1 million paid listings in more than 190 countries, Expedia's (pending) acquisition of HomeAway is a game changer. The combined portfolio will allow Expedia to offer at least 1.3 million properties compared to Booking.com's 821,400 and in this way, snap away the first place as the world's largest lodging seller in terms of numbers of properties.

HRS is also surfing on the trend of rental homes. Following the takeover of HolidayInsider and the foundation of the portal destination HRS Destination Solutions, the OTA also wants to market resort accommodations more strongly. "Holiday homes are a heavily growing segment, but are quite fragmented," said HRS CEO Tobias Ragge a few months ago; he wishes to act as a frontrunner on that segment.



To achieve that, he can count on HRS Holidays, the platform with the biggest bookable offer for all kinds of holiday accommodations in Germany (online and app). It lists more than 200,000 holiday apartments and homes in Europe (more than 85,000 in Germany, Austria and Switzerland) and includes price comparisons and over 100,000 reviews. "Since starting in spring this year, the number of bookings has grown continuously. But we won't comment on any numbers or details regarding the bookings."

TripAdvisor is no stranger in this market neither. The online giant owns a 340-million-traveler data base, 25 international websites, an online booking tool and two listing platforms for guests and hosts to interact including FlipKey, its own rental vacation site. According to the TripAdvisor website, "100,000 owners have already enrolled" in the host recruiting program.

The headquarter of the Chinese Online giant Alibaba. A strong competitor for Ctrip and Qunar.



The Chinese tsunami

While Expedia and Priceline Group are gearing up to face new competition in the western world, they don't see the potential danger coming from the Far East where online giants are also getting bigger and more powerful. In China, the market has never been more dynamic than today and is expected to be even more fierce in the future. Both local and international tech-leader players are showing interest for the sector.

China's online travel market currently covers over 10% of its total travel spend, however, with China's internet penetration reaching almost 50% and the rising trends of online booking, the future growth in this sector looks promising. Though **Ctrip** is the undisputed leader in the sector currently (controls over 50% of the revenue share), Trefis.com analysts expect the growth of its rivals (**Qunar**, **Alibaba**) to provide stiff competition to the company in the future. In Q1 2015, China's online travel market

transactions reached 15.28 billion dollars reflecting over 50% growth year-on-year. Currently, China has 46% internet penetration. China's online travel market is expected to continue its double-digit growth and exceed 75 billion dollars by 2017.

Expedia and **Priceline** have also invested (with more or less success) in the Chinese market. Last May, Ctrip bought 40% of eLong's shares from Expedia and entered into a partnership with the latter to share inventory. Post this development, Priceline also increased its investment in Ctrip and currently owns an 11.5% share in the company. Trying to grow through acquisitions, Ctrip made an offer to rival Qunar last June. Not only the latter refused the proposal, but instead geared up with further investments (500 million dollars) and strengthened its alliance with **Baidu**, China's largest search engine, which might make it an even stronger OTA player.

Alibaba to chase Qunar

Qunar is the fastest growing OTA in China at the moment. But **Alibaba** hasn't spoken its last word yet. The listed online giant launched **Alitrip** one year ago and invested 457 million dollars to acquire 15% of the hotel technology firm, Beijing Shiji Information Technology, one of the largest property management system and central reservation system operators in China. Alitrip's platform includes more than 10,000 vendors providing flight tickets, vacation packages and services

Why book with Ctrip?

- ✓ **China's Leading Travel Agent**
141,000,000 members, 45,000,000 real user reviews
- ✓ **Biggest China Network**
Over 300,000 China hotels, 2,500 China flight routes
- ✓ **International Coverage**
Over 1,300,000 flight routes, 600,000 hotels in 210 countries
- ✓ **Great Savings**
Cheap China flights & train tickets
- ✓ **Award-winning Customer Service**
English-speaking service by phone & email



for hotel bookings, visa applications, and tour guides. In March 2015, the OTA also launched "The Hotel of the Future" program which

would use network and Big Data technology to provide better services to travelers and help hoteliers gain a loyal customer base. The model aims to provide facilities

such as online self-selection of rooms and digital check-ins.

The newcomer on the market is **JV**, an entity created last May by **Netease** (listed internet services business in China with a market cap of 19 billion dollars) and **HNA Group** whose conglomerate includes stakes in aviation and hospitality (450 hotels in China and abroad, showed interest in buying Starwood). HNA Group's revenue for 2014 reached 27 billion dollars.

This quick portrait of China's online travel market simply puts into perspective that the appetite for acquisition not only concerns western OTAs. Just like local hotel groups led by Jin Jiang are eyeing any opportunity to acquire western chains, one can easily imagine that Chinese online agencies will soon do the same in their own sector. Alibaba taking over Priceline, TripAdvisor or Expedia? Why not. At this point, any scenario is possible...even the Apple iTravel solution taking over the industry like a storm. / Sarah Douag

Extract of *hospitalityInside.com*, Dec 18, 2015.

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PRO TRANSPARENCY: THE COUNTER WEBSITE INSIDE AIRBNB ANALYSES THE OTA'S DATA

The website Airbnb hates

Paris. In November, Paris welcomed the "Airbnb Open", the annual meeting organized by the rental platform. Between 5,000 and 6,000 hosts from 110 countries gathered for the occasion in the French capital. During the event, Airbnb shared some figures, which praised its model and the positive impact it has on local economy and people's lives... However, since the P2P platform only shares what it wants, it's complicated to double check their numbers. But some people are trying hard to unveil the mystery: Murray Cox is one of them. Based in Brooklyn New York, he is the guy behind the counter website www.INSIDEAirbnb.com, an independent website which compiles all data and offers present on the Airbnb website. Airbnb hates him.

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For hospitalityInside.com, Sarah Douag interviewed Murray Cox to better understand his motivation and methodology to fight against the giant. Let's start with Airbnb figures. Nicolas Ferrary, Airbnb's Managing Director for France said: "The impact (we) have on the French economy reaches 2.5 billion euros over a year. It includes direct benefits, the money hosts are making, but also indirect benefits, which results in our guests spending during their stay, in local restaurants, bars, shops and attractions."

He also mentioned that Airbnb in France lists over 200,000 units, including 60,000 in Paris and its region, that 1.3 million guests visited the city between September 2014 and August 2015, which represents an envelope of 218 million euros in revenues for the hosts and 980 million euros of spending in the city, that 93% of hosts list one unit only and that the average stay is 4.3 nights while it's only 2.3 nights in hotels."

Let's switch now to Murray Cox, the man running www.INSIDEAirbnb.com collecting Airbnb data to create transparency: type of unit, address, price per night, average monthly revenue for a host, etc... These data allow people to discover how Airbnb is really being used in cities around the world and in your own neighborhood. It's free for everyone to consult and share.

Who are you, what is your background?

Murray Cox (photo): I am a 43-year-old Australian digital storyteller and activist,



living in Brooklyn, New York. I have a multi-disciplinary background – mathematics, computer science, data journalism, photography, and other digital media.

When did you start Inside Airbnb and why?

The seeds to the project were sown in August 2014. I had just completed a few community projects using statistics and maps, when I came across an article in the "San Francisco Chronicle" which presented some interesting statistics on Airbnb use in San Francisco. The data on Airbnb were revealing, and much of it was contradictory to my understanding of Airbnb at the time: a platform for renting out spare rooms in your home. I knew some of my neighbors were renting entire apartments on Airbnb, so I decided to see if I could get data for my own, rapidly gentrifying neighborhood – Bedford-Stuyvesant in Central Brooklyn. Once I saw the data for my neighborhood, it both confirmed my suspicion and surpri-

sed me. At least 1,224 Airbnb listings were on the Airbnb website for Bedford-Stuyvesant (it's now more than 1,500), with 633 (51.7%) of those being for an "entire home/apartment". Looking at the calendars and reviews for the entire homes/apartments, I found that many of them were available for much of the year and were being rented out frequently, more often than a regular person could be away from their home on vacation. In addition, 43.5% of the listings in Bedford-Stuyvesant were by hosts with more than one listing, and for these "hosts" that were renting multiple entire homes, it was impossible that they were living in all of them!

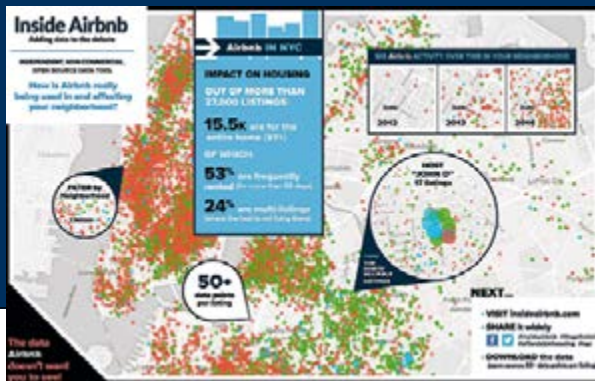
The picture and story that emerged from the data showed the commercial reality of Airbnb, namely that a large proportion of their "community" were not regular people sharing their own home in a city – effectively taking housing off the market in a city with a high proportion of renters, but historically low vacancy rates. From my neighborhood, I decided to collect data for the entire city, and saw that the same story was repeating itself across New York City. I then went about building a site that made it easy for anyone, even without a statistical background, to see how Airbnb was really being used; and released Inside Airbnb: New York City in February 2015.

Are your numbers trustworthy?

What's your methodology?

I collect the data via automated processes that mimic how a potential guest would

First the Inside Airbnb founder analysed his own district Bedford-Stuyvesant (right). Then he dived into the Airbnb world of figures. Microsite of Inside Airbnb (below): All information is public and can be shared and checked by everybody.



search the Airbnb website for a place to stay, recording the details of every active listing found in every neighbourhood of a city. The data I collect is made available for easy download on my website, allowing validation or alternate analysis; and on my maps, each listing has a link back to the appropriate page on the Airbnb website, so you can verify that the data are correct. All of the calculations and statistics on the site use high-school level mathematics, and the key assumptions and models are publicly documented and open to scrutiny.

City agencies, academics, journalists, international equity, and hospitality analysts all place trust in my data and use them in their own work which requires high levels of trust in their sources.

What do you answer to Airbnb who says your numbers are inaccurate?

It's unfortunate, but expected that Airbnb would be dismissive of data that contradict their core marketing. To date, the only concrete claims Airbnb has made about my numbers are around the ambiguity of their own calendar – a listing might appear to be available but for a variety of reasons, the listing is not really available.

I am quite open about this ambiguity in the data, and I highlight and promote the other unambiguous data points to the users of my site: the number of listings and where they are, number of entire homes and how many reviews they have over time, and how many listings each host

has. The tools are simple but allow sophisticated questions to be answered, all which extend beyond any concern for the availability of statistics.

Also, the data are available for download from my site, so anyone with spreadsheet skills can interpret the data in any way they like. Thousands of people have downloaded the data, and independent analysis and visualizations appear almost every day, and all add to a community of truth around the data.

Why do you think Airbnb is so secretive about data?

Data show the true shape of Airbnb's business which contradicts the message that Airbnb persists in putting forward – that its hosts are for the most part "sharing the home in which they live". Data also empower cities and the public as they negotiate appropriate regulations and enforcement, so Airbnb keeps the data secret to maintain an advantage in negotiations and in an attempt to control the public debate.

Do you think Airbnb is dangerous to local social housing and zoning?

By social housing, I assume you mean housing where the rent is regulated? I think Airbnb is a threat to both social and market housing, but of course social housing is more important to protect. Because the public data don't identify the exact address of Airbnb listings, it's harder to identify the type of housing stock that is being affected.

There have been a number of court cases in New York City and Amsterdam involving rent-regulated, or social housing tenants using Airbnb, journalists report on landlords in San Francisco evicting rent-regulated tenants and then offering the entire apartment on Airbnb. Zoning laws are designed to protect the nature of residential communities, and exist in most cities.

Conducting a business, or a hotel, is usually not covered under the zoning laws. We see even in cities that allow short-term rentals with appropriate permits, inspections or other requirements, compliance by Airbnb's community is very low (10%).

Do you think they are disruptive and direct competition to hotels too?

In terms of the service that Airbnb offers, the more commercialized Airbnb hosts offer a comparative and competitive service to hotels. The smaller Airbnb community of true "home-sharers" offer an alternative, and you could say, "disruptive" product compared to hotel accommodation. Where I think the word disruptive should be used more often in an analysis of Airbnb, is on the supply side. Airbnb is "disrupting" residential housing to provide tourist accommodation.

Extract of hospitalityInside.com, Nov 27, 2015.



Visitors from new markets: Jungfrau Railway takes more and more Asians up to the mountains.

HOTELLERIESUISSE CEO CHRISTOPH JUEN ON LAST YEAR IN SWITZERLAND

Only solidarity will help now

Bern. One year ago today, the Swiss economy was struck by a financial earthquake. Without any previous indication at all, on 15 January 2015, the Swiss National Bank (SNB) took the country off the euro peg and in one fell swoop made everything 20 percent more expensive for euro guests. Since then, the Swiss hotel industry has lost ground. For the service industry, the move left a deep and painful wound. A wound which caused particular hardship in mountain regions. Christoph Juen, CEO of hotelleriesuisse, looks back on the SNB decision one year later. Following the move, the Swiss hotel industry had to reinvent itself, and fast. Did it manage?

On the day of this interview, the Swiss franc cost EUR 0.92 respectively a bit more than 1 USD. Yet the small difference in value to the euro and to the dollar is unable to describe the turmoil and upset that followed in the wake of the SNB decision. "From a Swiss perspective, we have a euro problem, not a franc problem," Juen says. "Switzerland is caught in the midst of a global financial balancing act. And tourism is caught in a whirlwind of currency-dictated price competition and is suffering from a high domestic production cost basis," he explains. Over the last twelve months, hoteliers, funicular railways and ski schools have offered one discount or upgrade after the next in an attempt to attract euro guests back into Switzerland. Thanks to the "specials" and bookings already made, at least some hotels have been able to pull through, at least in

February and March in the skiing season. "The real impact was felt in summer," Juen recalls of the development at the time. Overnight stay figures for 2015 are currently only available up to October 2015. But according to hotelleriesuisse, so much is already clear: Up to now, a fall of 0.8 percent has been recorded. This translates to a fall in roughly 350,000 overnight stays.

3 Chinese guests to compensate for 1 German guest

Juen's outlook for 2016: "We will not have a good winter 2015/16," he already fears, "but the coming summer and guests from new segments should bring a bounce," he says confidently. With the new segments, he means new source markets with guests from Asia and Arabia, as well as from the US, which has regained some of its economic strength.

As per the end of 2015, the Swiss hotel industry recorded close to a 20% increase in overnight stays made by non-European guests from the US, Korea, India, China and the Gulf States. "Russians, on the other hand, are clearly still in savings mode. Demand from Latin America shows highs and lows, and the euro zone is a source of massive losses." The latter is especially painful as "for each German guest we lose, we need three Chinese guests to compensate," Juen reports.

The hotel expert also comments on costs. On average, a guest from the new markets stays 1.5 nights in Switzerland and spends the other 1.5 in other European countries. Also, they don't come in winter – high season in Switzerland when higher rates are achieved. Another important difference is that they head for the cities – and not the mountain regions. The short stays and the

many arrivals and departures means permanently high costs for the hotelier as well as lower summer rates. Although the funicular railways benefit as a result of more day trips, Alpine hoteliers lose out as guests then return to the cities for the evening. The Alpine hotel industry was therefore among the losers of last year, and presumably there will be a number of hard years ahead yet. The situation is even darker when looking back: "The Alpine hotel industry has revealed a downward trend in overnight stays since 1971, whilst city hotels have improved their figures," Juen reports. 45 years ago, when the US dollar was worth CHF 4.37, hotel capacity underwent massive expansion. The number of overnight stays has stagnated since around 2006 at around 35 million overnight stays, Juen continues.

Further efficiency savings are impossible

In 1971, the Swiss hotel industry counted 8,700 hotels, Juen reports. In 2015 it was only 5,000. This means: Every year, Switzerland lost roughly 60 to 80 hotels. And hotelleriesuisse expects this structural change to accelerate. "A virulent structural change is underway," Juen says with unmistakable clarity. "And our main focus of attention over the coming years is Alpine tourism." Of the 5,000 remaining hotels under hotelleriesuisse's radar, around two thirds are Alpine hotels. Their share has contracted as many of them were or are too small to survive. The amended Second Homes Act, which took effect on 1 January 2016, will also not help (see link). "Swiss legislation on second homes impairs finance for investment and also makes it difficult for the hotel industry to rid itself of properties which prove unprofitable," Juen

adds soberly. "The regulation therefore opens up more problems than it solves." The persistent down-drift of the Alpine hotel industry prompts hotel representatives to ask whether Switzerland (like Austria, Germany and Northern Italy) will see a renaissance in winter sports over the next few years? Resources for entire school classes are no longer obligatory, young people are heading off to the slopes less and less – would employing a few Chinese ski instructors help there? The discussions as to what to do are intense. Can hoteliers push down their rates further? "That's certainly been the response since the financial crisis of 2008. Meanwhile though, prices have been squeezed to the limit," Juen answers. Should the hotelier – as was stated a year ago – focus ever more closely on high Swiss quality and unique products?

But if this question is to be asked, it immediately raises another: Are Swiss hotels really unique and do they offer such high quality? Images of the hordes of Swiss tourists holidaying across the border in cheaper European hotels and the shopping tours made weekly by those Swiss families who live close to a border appear to be evidence against.

hotelleriesuisse and colleagues in the tourism industry have long-since identified Switzerland's real assets: it's beautiful landscapes and its clean air. Italians and guests from the Arabian Gulf states already enjoy these two things in higher numbers. There's also the authentic culture with attractive events, as well as a unique understanding of democracy with freedom and security and valuable attributes. "We must exploit these assets to the full. We are well equipped for the future with these assets," Juen stresses.

Development of overnight stays in Switzerland since 2005:

| | |
|-------|---|
| 2015: | Figures for the full year not yet available |
| 2014: | 35.93 million |
| 2013: | 35.62 million |
| 2012: | 34.77 million |
| 2011: | 35.49 million |
| 2010: | 36.21 million |
| 2009: | 35.59 million |
| 2008: | 37.33 million |
| 2007: | 36.36 million |
| 2006: | 34.85 million |
| 2005: | 32.94 million |



Christoph Juen:
in the midst of a financial balancing act.

Only solidarity at all levels will help

But when will this future begin? How long can Swiss Alpine hoteliers afford to plan their future? How flexible and ready are Swiss Alpine hoteliers when it comes to changing existing structures and patterns of thinking? Even the generally

upbeat hotelleriesuisse boss pauses here for a moment. He has always put forward proposals as to how this negative development could be countered, and he still believes in these. "We must act together more," he says to hoteliers. / Maria Puetz-Willems

Extract of *hospitalityinside.com*, Jan 15, 2016

Traditional snack ("Brotzeit") at a typical Swiss Mountain Inn: this is the perfect holiday. But the mountain hotels are about to die.





Reduced in its design,
but spacious: bedroom
of a Village Villa.

SPOTLIGHT CHINA: ONLY THE RICH LIVE IN AMANFAYUN – FOR A NIGHT

Tea farming village with a Facebook connection

[-] [.]

Huangzhou. In China, near the city of Huangzhou with 8.7 inhabitants, the Amanresorts luxury hotel group has transformed an old tea farming village into an elegant resort. However, while the hotel collection is established on the preservation of tradition and culture, above all, the Chinese are coming because it is fashionable to be able to inform their Facebook friends that they have just spent the night at the most expensive hotel in the area. 90 percent of the Amanfayun guests are Chinese – all rich citizens who escape to the refined resort on the outskirts of the city to celebrate their lifestyle there and to mingle with others showing up in hotpants and silver stilettos in the temple.

The journey from the Huangzhou railway station through the West Lake and the expansive gardens and tea plantations lasts nearly one hour. On the 14 hectares of countryside there, Amanresorts has converted an old, traditional tea farming village into a hotel with 42 rooms and suites. From the modest reception house, one goes along a narrow path and over a bridge up to the Fayun Pathway, a public path that leads through the resort and directly to the Lingyen Temple, one of the most significant Buddhist temples in China. On the left and on the right, paths paved with pointed stones lie partially hidden in the thick bushes only through which the rooms and suites housed within the traditional property can only be reached. Especially in the morning, when fog hangs above the ground and the moisture turns the moss-covered paths into a slippery course, one feels as though they are in an enchanted place. "The properties are mostly more than 100 years old," recounted Vaipanya Kongkwan-yuen, General Manager of the Amanfayun. Around 90 percent of the structures

are still original. Tea farmers once lived here. When the Longjing tea growing in the surroundings became very well-known as the noblest and most expensive green tea in China in the middle of the nineties and brought wealth to the inhabitants of the village, many built new homes elsewhere and the village was threatened with ruin.

Luxury behind the clay plaster

After 900 families had resettled, the government had placed the village under the protection of monuments and historic buildings in 1998. The restoration works began in 2003. In 2008, Amanresorts took over the further development and furnished rooms, suites, restaurants and a spa in the village houses. The resort was opened in 2010.

All properties were restored following handed-down drafts and using traditional materials. Thatch-covered walls from a traditional clay and straw mixture surround small inner courtyards. The roofs are provided with curved clay bricks, the walls from plastered brick and finely carved apertures

can be found in the dark wooden facades. Each room is different. Wood dominates the interiors. Modern-age comforts such as air-conditioning, an Internet connection and sound system are cleverly hidden.

Sombre rooms and wooden bathtubs

The furniture is minimalistic. The open bathroom that is only separated from the bedroom by two wardrobes is antiques trimmed. The taps and shower heads of dark metal appear as rusted. The shampoo and body lotion must be scooped from a pot with a wooden spoon. The lighting is a true challenge. It takes time to find all the light switches, but always remains quite sombre. "The rooms made are of wood," explained General Manager Kongkwan-yuen. "Their charm is only properly effective with dim lighting." And moreover, the lighting should be reminiscent of old times. At that time, they only had candles and oil lamps. But of course, additional lamps will be provided to the guests upon request and beside that, the lampshade can be removed...

Five restaurants along the Fayun Pathway provide for the bodily welfare. The spa is situated above the Fayun Pathway and is not so easily found. Ascending several steps, one reaches the complex with five houses in the midst of thick bushes and bamboo shrubs. The guest can expect a library and lounge and of course, treatment rooms: Three for couples and two for individual use. The Bath House disposes of three rooms with a wooden bathtub and a rain shower as well as a steam room with double showering. Alongside this, there is the fitness

West Lake had been appointed as a World Cultural Site in 2011. Hangzhou is considered as the cradle of Chinese civilisation and belongs among the seven antique capital cities in China. The city was founded more than 2,200 years ago in the Qin Dynasty, rose as a significant commercial centre in the 12th century and was referred to by Marco Polo as the "most beautiful and majestic city in the world". Today, Hangzhou is a mega-million metropolis, the location of many IT and software companies and should be developed as the Silicone Valley of China in the

He describes himself as very affable and will also make up the beds when the need arises. "As in a family, my job is to be a role model," The Thai gentleman explained. Around 90 percent of the guests are Chinese. They primarily book through Internet platforms such as Ctrip.

A photo for Facebook and hotpants during the morning devotions

Nevertheless, the culture and ambience lure the Chinese less; it is rather the image and high price. The room prices from 800 Euro might be the highest in Hangzhou where hotel groups such as Four Seasons, Shangri-La and Banyan Tree are also represented. In China, it is considered as chic and trendy to have once spent the night at the most expensive hotel. "They frequently only come for one night, put a few photos on Wechat – the Chinese Facebook – and then depart again," said F&B Manager Eduard Ruppel. Chief Butler Eileen has also said he must frequently explain to guests what is special about Amanresorts and that here, it is about the preservation and the experience of culture.

Foreigners or expats from Shanghai only 200 km away only rarely stray into there even though the location surrounded by seven temples and more than a thousand year-old Buddhas chiselled in the cliff faces is unique. While most temples are primarily tourist attractions today, the Faxi Temple is particularly visited by the locals. A visit to the morning service is impressive. In the darkness of four o'clock in the morning, one goes to the temple from the hotel by foot and through the thick bamboo woods. Passing the congested parking lot, one reaches the great hall where there are 70 monks in yellow robes, some equipped with microphones and earphones, reciting holy texts accompanied by drumbeats and cymbal sounds.

The crowd is enormous and one is surprised that there are so many people here so early – in a country in which turbo-capitalism has long ago become the replacement religion for many. Young women with hotpants and a smartphone around their neck, others with glittering mini-dresses and silver stilettos who look as though they are just coming from a nightclub, young men in jeans or shorts and bath slippers make their turns around the altar, bow several times to the godly figures – and then they are outside again ... A morning service in Chinese. / Baerbel Schwerfeger

Extract of hospitalityInside.com, Oct 9, 2015.



The tea house, a place for ceremonies and communication.

centre with rooms for Tai Chi, yoga and meditation as well as fitness equipment and a Pilates studio. On a path halfway between the Fayun Pathway and the spa, there is a pool hidden by surrounding trees in such a manner that the leaves are always floating on the water.

Magic service under smog clouds

"The most expensive thing is the maintenance of the old structures," Hotel General Manager Kongkwanyuen explained. On account of the high air humidity, the air-conditioning must run continually in order that the rooms remain somewhat dry. Although this costs an amount of energy, a great deal of equipment would break down otherwise. Particularly in the summer, the climate with 40 degrees and extremely high air humidity is intolerable. The government and UNESCO have agreed to support Amanfayun in the preservation of the old buildings since the landscape surrounding

future. Even when the thick smog clouds hang over the many parks with their numerous pagodas and temples today, Hangzhou is still called one of the most beautiful cities in China.

The Hotel General Manager is especially proud of the "Magic Service". 156 staff members (3.4 staff per room) exclusively look after the welfare of the guests. "We know exactly when the guest goes for breakfast and we can clean the room," he stated. Nevertheless, it was striking that people were standing on duty everywhere and registering exactly who goes where. The staff members have been instructed to cleverly adapt their behaviour to the guests, the GM explained. If guests are possibly speaking too loudly, the staff member will speak more quietly with them. "Then the guests will also automatically become quiet," Kongkwanyuen knows. As in all Amanresorts, the General Manager in particular moulds the character of the property.

SLUM TOURISM IS EXTREMELY CONTROVERSIAL, BUT BOOMING: SEE THE REAL LIFE

Social Bungee Jumping

Munich. The longing of travellers for the "authentic life" in their destination has evoked a new trend in recent times: Slum tourism. Slum tours in Johannesburg, Rio, Mumbai or other cities are becoming increasingly more popular. This trend is controversial, but can nevertheless be a cause for the positive. A supplier of slum tours in Mumbai, Reality Tours & Travel, was distinguished with an award during ITB 2015 for socially responsible tourism.



Up to now, 15 guides work either full-time or part-time for Reality Tours.

Pay attention to the lines," warns Balaji. "They sometimes hang rather low." Then we enter the barely more than shoulder-wide walkway. A sewage channel takes up one-third of it. The rest is covered with ramshackle stone slabs. It is sombre and the daylight from above barely penetrates into the narrow shaft. The view on the left and on the right falls into tiny rooms that are no larger than ten square metres. Women are sitting on the ground and cutting vegetables while babies crawl amongst them. Balaji leads the five-member group from Canada, Singapore and Germany on a two and a half hour tour through Dharavi, probably the largest slum in Asia. Penned up here between two railway lines, around one million live on a surface area on just two square kilometres. This corresponds to approximately 500 football fields on which 2,000 people live and work on each respective field. As a result, the slum counts among the most densely populated surface areas on earth. However, Dharavi is also an important economic centre with more 15,000 small busi-

nesses that earn more than 665 million dollars annually. There are pottery and embroidery shops, leather needleworks, bakeries and above all, recycling. More than 100 tonnes of garbage is produced in Mumbai daily, 80 percent ends up in Dharavi and is processed there for further use. Tour guide, Balaji, grew up here and still lives here with his wife and his small son. Actually, the 25 year-old works as a flower arranger, but also additionally guides tourists through Dharavi for Reality Tours & Travel.

Dip in briefly, but do not touch

During the ITB tourism trade show, the tour supplier was distinguished with the "TO DO! 2014" prize in the Socially Responsible Tourism Competition. "Reality Tours has worked out routes that are highly informative to the guest," as is said in an explanatory statement. "The inhabitants feel that they and their Dharavi are increased in value by the guests." 80 percent of the profits from Reality Tours & Travel and its welfare organisation, Reality Gives, flow back into the slum. The offerings

are health programmes, English and computer courses and educational programmes as well as sport. Up to now, 15 guides work either full-time or part-time for Reality Tours and from April, 2013 to March, 2014, 15,000 visitors from all over the world took part in the walking tours. However, slum tourism is controversial. This was also apparent during the special tour operator Studiosus Talk during ITB on the subject: "Tourism in Slums: Making Money On Poverty Or Helping People Help Themselves?" Malte Steinbrink with The Institute for Geography at University of Osnabrück had even referred to the penetration of tourists into the impoverished districts as "Social Bungee Jumping": One looks upon the misery briefly without being heavily impacted their self. But the market is indeed booming today. More than one million people worldwide already take such tours annually and new cities are joining each year. Poverty tourism had begun in South Africa in the nineties and was then



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About one million people of the slum Dharavi make their living out of waste recycling.

followed by the tours through the Favelas in Rio de Janeiro.

Slums marketed as local colour

"There are very strong moral doubts and the suppliers must react to this," says the slum researcher. There are three strategies in particular for this. The tours can be sold as a cultural trip during which one gets to know the real life of the inhabitants. It can be drawn up as an assistance project for the slum inhabitants or it can be seen as a means with which one can correct the often incorrect media image of the poverty districts. Moreover, Steinbrink views the particular trend toward the culturalisation very critically. "This is a depoliticisation of poverty," said the scientist. "The slum is no longer an expression of global injustice, but rather is sold as an authentic local colour." Antje Monshausen, Director of the Tourism Watch post, sees the particular danger that

with the growing popularity of slum tours, more and more mass organisers will also invade the districts of the poorest. Therefore, a protection of the inhabitants is also required. This is why there are clear rules with Realit Tours. The maximum group size lies at five people, the tourists must be dressed appropriately and a strict ban on photographs dominates.

A very interesting development is how the city politicians have been circumventing the offers up to now, said slum researcher Steinbrink. They were initially against showing the shady sides of the city to the tourists. But now, however, the politicians – in Rio, for example – are even attempting to be active themselves and render "the Favela image compatible with the festival image of the city".

Seeing and learning

Tour operators such as Studiosus also send their guests in Mumbai to Dharavi with Rea-

lity Tours. "Nevertheless, the city centres worldwide are indeed becoming increasingly more similar and also more dull as a result," observed Peter Strub, a member of the Studiosus management. "Our guests want to see how one truly lives in India and they want to know how people are working toward an escape from the poverty." Asim Abid Shaikh, Operations Manager with Reality Tours & Travel likewise emphasised this. "We would like to show the tourists what the people have brought about here," he explained. "Yes, there is poverty, but there is also a strong communal sense." And in fact, the tour through Dharavi is not only harrowing, but also extremely instructive. Hence, hotels could also benefit from this when they draw the attention of their guests toward the tours by responsible suppliers. / Baerbel Schwerfeger

Extract of *hospitalityInside.com*, April 24, 2015.



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