

# HOTELyearbook2010

What to expect in the year ahead

Sir David Michels on the shape  
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The outlook for 20 key markets,  
from China and the USA  
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How the crisis  
will affect luxury in 2010

Editorial input from 25 hotel  
industry CEOs

# This excerpt from the Hotel Yearbook 2010 is brought to you by:



## **Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne**

The Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) is the co-publisher of The Hotel Yearbook. As the oldest Hotel School in the world, EHL provides university education to students with talent and ambition, who are aiming for careers at the forefront of the international hospitality industry. Dedicated to preparing tomorrow's executives to the highest possible level, EHL regularly adapts the contents of its three academic programs to reflect the latest technologies and trends in the marketplace. Since its founding in 1893, the Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne has developed more than 25'000 executives for the hospitality industry, providing it today with an invaluable network of contacts for all the members of the EHL community. Some 1'800 students from over 90 different countries are currently enjoying the unique and enriching environment of the Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne.



## **Boutique DESIGN New York**

Boutique DESIGN New York, a new hospitality interiors trade fair, will coincide with the 94-year-old International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show (IH/M&RS). Designers, architects, purchasers and developers will join the hotel owners/operators already attending IH/M&RS to view the best hospitality design offerings as well as explore a model room, exciting trend pavilion and an uplifting illy® networking café.



## **Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals (HFTP)**

HFTP provides first-class educational opportunities, research and publications to more than 4'800 members around the world. Over the years, HFTP has grown into the global professional association for financial and technology personnel working in hotels, clubs and other hospitality-related businesses.



## **Bench Events**

Bench Events host premier hotel investment conferences including the International Hotel Investment Forum; the Arabian Hotel Investment Conference and the Russia & CIS Hotel Investment Conference. Bench Event's sister company, JW Bench, is a benchmarking company that has launched the Conference Bench and the Productivity Bench. An industry first, the Conference Bench, measures performance data for conference space in hotels throughout Europe.



## **Cornell University School of Hotel Administration**

Founded in 1922, Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration was the first collegiate program in hospitality management. Today it is regarded as one of the world's leaders in its field. The school's highly talented and motivated students learn from 60 full-time faculty members – all experts in their chosen disciplines, and all dedicated to teaching, research and service. Learning takes place in state-of-the-art classrooms, in the on-campus Statler hotel, and in varied industry settings around the world. The result: a supremely accomplished alumni group-corporate executives and entrepreneurs who advance the industry and share their wisdom and experience with our students and faculty.



## **Hsyndicate**

With an exclusive focus on global hospitality and tourism, Hsyndicate.org (the Hospitality Syndicate) provides electronic news publication, syndication and distribution on behalf of some 750 organizations in the hospitality vertical. Hsyndicate helps its members to reach highly targeted audience-segments in the exploding new-media landscape within hospitality. With the central idea 'ONE Industry, ONE Network', Hsyndicate merges historically fragmented industry intelligence into a single online information and knowledge resource serving the information-needs of targeted audience-groups throughout the hospitality, travel & tourism industries... serving professionals relying on Hsyndicate's specific and context-relevant intelligence delivered to them when they need it and how they need it.



## **WATG**

Over the course of the last six decades, WATG has become the world's leading design consultant for the hospitality industry. Having worked in 160 countries and territories across six continents, WATG has designed more great hotels and resorts than any other firm on the planet. Many of WATG's projects have become international landmarks, renowned not only for their design and sense of place but also for their bottom-line success.

# elevation



WATG re-invented the resort to reflect the magic of Kaua'i by paying homage to the unique island and its culture.

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# Niches = riches

**JULIE KEYSER-SQUIRES** is the CEO of **SOFTSCRIBE Inc.**, a digital marketing and PR firm in Atlanta. Here she looks at the social media scene and explains how to stay on the leading edge of these increasingly influential – and quick-changing – marketing tools.

There are big changes in the world, and many of them impact the hospitality and tourism industry. This is especially true in social media which, in 2010, I believe will reach a tipping point of credibility and use in our industry, yield lucrative ROI operator strategies, and create niches that equal riches.

## Social Media Tipping Point in 2010

Forecast 2010: Management companies and independent hotels will embrace social media en masse, following the example of early leader brands like Marriott International, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, and indie properties like:

- New York's Roger Smith Hotel (@rshotel),
- The Bryant Park Hotel in Manhattan (@bryantparkhotel), and
- Los Angeles' Westin Bonaventure (@thebonaventure).

According to the 2nd Benchmark Survey on Hotel Internet Marketing Budget Planning and Best Practices in Hospitality by Hospitality eBusiness Strategies, hoteliers planned these types of Web 2.0 marketing initiatives last year in 2008:

• A blog on the hotel website	47 %
• Photo sharing functionality on the hotel website	41 %
• Sweepstakes and contests on the hotel website	29 %
• Survey and comment card on the hotel website	60 %
• Subscribe to a reputation monitoring service	27 %
• Create profiles for my hotels on social networks (Facebook, MySpace, etc.)	43 %
• Actively participate in blogs that concern my hotel	26 %
• Advertise on social media sites	10 %

## Operators Execute Effective Social Media ROI Strategies

New platforms and services like Nevistas Connect and CoMMingle will facilitate the social media expansion in hospitality. Blogs, short-form video, Twitter, Facebook and Search Engine Optimization will continue to be favorite tactical tools among operators. New efficiencies will be achieved as entrants execute successful ROI strategies and use social media technology tools to boost occupancy and revenue. My favorite tools include:

- HootSuite to organize multiple time-released Twitter streams and view analytics;
- Twinfluence, which rates the social capital of a tweeter;
- Radian6 listening tool to show which social marketing channels deliver the biggest ROI, and for drill down into an instant response on Twitter or a blog.

To further quantify the ROI on your social media spend, KDPaine & Partners, communications measurement specialists, suggests these steps:

1. Use unique URLs for each channel. i.e. [www.kdpaine.com/facebook](http://www.kdpaine.com/facebook) so that you can track specific traffic over time in your web analytics tool (Softscribe uses both Google Analytics and Yahoo Web Analytics).
2. Collect all items that mention your company and at least one competitor. SocialMention.com is a free alternative to Radian6, but KDPaine & Partners likes Radian6 because it is so easy to export the data.
3. Export the data into a file, then analyze the data to determine the major subject or topic, and how close it comes to your « optimal content. » Does it recommend the brand; does the item leave a reader more or less likely to make a reservation; does it contain a key message?
4. Track those items over time for at least six months. Make sure your reporting intervals are the same for your web analytics, sales/reservation data, and your mentions. If you gather Web analytic data weekly, capture your content weekly as well.

A word to « bean counters »: do not expect to track a dollar for dollar return on social media. Return on Engagement is more slippery than a P&L; just ask the Banff Lake Louise Tourism destination marketing group which netted 82 million TV, print and online impressions in two weeks from its Banff Crasher Squirrel meme. As far as I know, BLLT has not yet counted revenue from its Banff Springs, Banff National Park, and Lake Louise destinations or the 800 area businesses it supports.

### Niches = Riches

The dominant social media theme for 2010 will be the continued separation of populations into niches, also called tribes, or your « 1000 true fans ». Just as the green trend influences all aspects of hospitality including operations and marketing, similarly, in 2010 the « niches equals riches » trend will drive many aspects of our industry. Can operators boost revenue through cultivating property-specific communities of guests? Will their success be more profitable than using third-party booking channels? It depends on the level of trust operators create with their communities, and may already be happening.

A recent article, which suggests how operators can win their independence from OTAs, hints at the benefits of using these two direct online strategies to build profitable communities:

1. « **Direct Online Channel**: Invigorate the push in the Direct Online Channel on unprecedented levels. A comprehensive ROI-centric Internet marketing strategy can help hoteliers continue to generate much-needed incremental revenues and out-smart their competition. »  
*Hospitality eBusiness Strategies (HeBS)*
2. « **Local Direct Online Channel Strategy**: Hotel brands and multi-property hotel companies should develop and implement a robust strategy to take advantage of abundant local revenue opportunities at the property level. »  
*Hospitality eBusiness Strategies (HeBS)*

Direct online channels could include your social media venues and your property's website. Examples of online guest communities already being cultivated include:

- Starwood's Preferred Guest social media portal: <http://bit.ly/qHLoO>
- Fairmont's <http://www.everyonesanoriginal.com/> (coming soon)
- Peabody Duck Facebook fan page: <http://www.facebook.com/peabodyducks>
- Sample of Facebook communities:
  - Grand Hyatt Atlanta: <http://bit.ly/3VCKsp>
  - Ritz Carlton: [www.facebook.com/ritzcarlton](http://www.facebook.com/ritzcarlton)
  - Sheraton: [www.facebook.com/SheratonHotelsandResorts](http://www.facebook.com/SheratonHotelsandResorts)
- Sample of Twitter communities:
  - Howard Johnson: @twitter.com/happyhojoworld
  - Ritz Carlton: @RitzCarltonPR
  - Best Western: twitter.com/TheBestWestern
- Blog communities:
  - [Bill Marriott's Blog](#)
  - [Dealbase blog](#)
  - [Hotel Check-in](#)
  - [Uptake Hotels blog](#)
  - [Hotels Magazine blogs](#)
  - [Hotel-Blogs.com](#)

A year from now, it will be informative to count the proliferation of niched guest communities in our industry and quantify their ROI versus revenue from third-party booking channels. Which brands will have developed the greatest degree of trust with their stakeholders? What are you and your company doing to participate in the social media trend?

### Resources

- Video: « *YouTube and Video Marketing An Hour A Day* » by Greg Jarboe
- Social media primer here: <http://bit.ly/2iJbO5>
- Search Engine Optimization: <http://bit.ly/wDzlo>
- Banff Crasher Squirrel: <http://bit.ly/16QFIN>
- « Finding Your Village of Customers »: <http://bit.ly/R0tl6>
- « The Pros and Cons of Using Facebook »: <http://bit.ly/4zFxVJ> ■

What are you and your company doing to participate in the social media trend?



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