

BRIEFS: OMNI APPOINTS NEW PRESIDENT; ENNISMORE PARTNERS FOR SLS BARCELONA

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Omni announces change in leadership: Omni Hotels & Resorts announced that Kurt Alexander has been appointed as the company's president, replacing Peter Strelbel. Alexander will assume his new role on May 1, after having served as the company's CFO for the past five years. Strelbel will now take on the role of chairman and provide strategic counsel to the company. Both Alexander and Strelbel will report to Blake Rowling, president of TRT Holdings, the parent company of Omni Hotels & Resorts.



Rendering of SLS Barcelona

Ennismore partners for SLS Barcelona: London-based Ennismore and ActivumSG Capital Management, St. Helier, Jersey, have agreed on a long-term management agreement that will introduce SLS, Ennismore's lifestyle brand, to Europe with the opening of a 490-key hotel in Barcelona in the second half of 2024. The seafront hotel in Barcelona's 22@ district, previously an industrial area which was transformed under a regeneration program, will span 31,326 square meters. The project is an investment by ActivumSG's fifth real estate fund, as part of the pan-European strategy that the company started in 2015 in Spain. Currently, there are seven SLS-branded properties with additional projects in Puerto Madero, Argentina, and Scottsdale, set to open in May and 2023, respectively.

Robert Burg launches Avion Hospitality: Veteran hospitality executive Robert Burg has launched Avion Hospitality, a third-party hotel management company. He said the company has put infrastructure in front of growth, especially in operations, sales and revenue management. Before founding Avion, Burg was president, North America, for Aimbridge Hospitality and was in charge of 1,400 hotels. He is a founding member of Aimbridge since the company was formed in 2003.

Radisson accelerates development targets in Turkey: Radisson Hotel Group is expediting its development pipeline targets in Turkey to reach 50 properties by 2023 instead of 2025. In 2022, the group plans to expand its footprint in Turkey with 10 more hotels and launch two new brands — Radisson Individuals and Radisson RED. The company is also allocating additional resources with the expansion of its local support team to drive its growth. Since the start of the year, Radisson has confirmed 40 hotels and is on its way of achieving its target of 50 hotels by the end of 2023. The first Radisson Individuals-branded property will open in Istanbul this month and will offer 48 rooms and suites and two restaurants with views on the Bosphorus. Five more Radisson Individuals projects have been planned which are scheduled to open in the next six to 18 months.

Berlin's performance improves: The hotel industry in Berlin saw a month-over-month improvement in performance, based on preliminary March data from STR.

- Occupancy: 51.3%
- ADR: €84.98 (US\$92.53)
- RevPAR: €43.57 (US\$47.44)

The RevPAR and occupancy levels were the highest in the market since November 2021, although the levels were still 30% and 40% below the pre-pandemic figures from 2019, respectively. As per daily data, Berlin's weekday and weekend performance was more similar, indicating an increased business demand during the weekdays.

Expo 2020 drives Dubai occupancy: The hotel industry in Dubai recorded its first month of 90% or higher occupancy since 2007 driven by the concluding weeks of Expo 2022, according to preliminary March data from STR.

- Occupancy: 91.7%
- ADR: AED891.46 (US\$242.67)
- RevPAR: AED817.90 (US\$222.65)

Like the previous chapters of the Expo in Shanghai (2010) and Milan (2015), the end of the "mega event" was the busiest for Dubai. The last time monthly occupancy in Dubai reached 90% was March 2007 when there were around 90,000 fewer rooms in the market. Additionally, the ADR level was Dubai's second highest of the pandemic-era, behind December 2021 (AED948.56/ US\$258.21), and market RevPAR was the highest since December 2015. In terms of daily data, occupancy was higher than 90% for 25 days during the month with a peak of 96% on March 24.

Ascott targets 150 lyf properties by 2030: The Ascott Ltd., CapitaLand Investment's lodging business, has set a target to sign 150 properties with more than 30,000 units under lyf, its co-living brand, by 2030. Ascott also announced the launch of the lyf Innovation Lab, created in collaboration with Temasek Polytechnic's School of Informatics & IT, to encourage digital-enabled offerings. These announcements were made during the official opening of lyf one-north Singapore, the 324-unit co-living property which is owned by Ascott's sponsored hospitality trust, Ascott Residence Trust. The property opened in November 2021 and has achieved an occupancy rate of over 85%, the company said. lyf one-north Singapore will serve as a living lab for field testing the digital innovations created at the innovation lab. Successful pilots will be implemented at other lyf properties.

Wymara Resort and Villa's new ownership structure: Wymara Resort and Villas, Turks and Caicos, announced that long-time Managing Director Bruce Maclaren has purchased the shares of former co-owner Rob Ayer by partnering with Sterling Global Financial as an equity investor. The transaction follows the renovation and completion of the first phase of the Wymara Villas. The second phase of the villas is underway. The resort features 91 newly renovated rooms and suites. Seven four- and five-bedroom villas and a one-bedroom pool villa is set to debut in June.

Everwood assumes management of Troubadour Hotel: Everwood Hospitality Partners, Columbus, Indiana, has assumed management of the 184-key Troubadour Hotel New Orleans, Tapestry Collection by Hilton. The hotel has entered into the final stage of its US\$1.5 million renovation. So far, the hotel's lobby and bar space on the first floor has been refurbished, while finishing touches are being applied to the dining venues and fitness areas. Everwood is also finalizing plans to reimagine the rooftop bar as an elevated indoor/outdoor space.

Minor advisory board: Minor International Public Co. Ltd. has announced an advisory board with leaders across the hospitality, restaurant, property and banking industries. The advisory board will oversee the company's strategic decisions, including maintaining continuity between the portfolio of restaurants and hotels in the U.K. and Minor's investment and growth plans. The members include William Heinecke, chairman and founder, Minor International; Dillip Rajakarier, group CEO Minor International, CEO Minor Hotels; Ian Livingstone, co-executive chairman, London & Regional Properties; Evelyn Rowland Baring, 4th Earl of Cromer, former member of the House of Lords; Mohammad Syed, head of Asset Management at Coutts, private banking and wealth management; and Edward Hubenette, board of directors, Minor International.

HGV expands membership programs: Hilton Grand Vacations has expanded its membership offerings, including the addition of a new program, HGV Max, and an experiential events platform, HGV Ultimate Access. Through HGV Max, members can visit more properties in more destinations, access invitation-only special events and exclusive discounts across Hilton's network of properties. HGV Ultimate Access will allow members access to private concerts, chef dinners, interactions with celebrities and more. This platform will be available exclusively to members and invited guests, and over 4,000 events are planned this year at HGV properties. The company also announced the 30 for 30 campaign that will grow the company's CSR program, HGV Serves, and support organizations based on philanthropic areas.