

HOTEL yearbook 2011

What to expect in the year ahead



Four Seasons CEO Kathleen Taylor
on the evolving concept of luxury

The post-crisis outlook in key markets:
20 exclusive situation reports from Horwath HTL

Best Western CEO David Kong describes the key issues
US hoteliers will have to tackle in 2011

The industry's most progressive approach to operations:
our interview with citizenM's Michael Levie

Plus ideas, expectations and insights for 2011
from the Chief Executives of 8 hotel groups

This excerpt from the Hotel Yearbook 2011 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.



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.



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.



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.

Something's missing...

INES KLEMM LECTURES ON HOSPITALITY CONCEPTS AND INTERIOR DESIGN AT THE **ECOLE HÔTELIÈRE DE LAUSANNE (EHL)** AND THE **INSTITUT PAUL BOCUSE** IN LYON. IN THE HOSPITALITY WORLD, HER WORK EXAMINES THE WAYS THAT SPACE, LIGHT AND COLOR ARE TIED TO A GUEST'S EMOTION AND MEMORY – AND HOW THIS IN TURN MAY ULTIMATELY AFFECT BRAND IDENTITY. WE ASKED HER HOW SHE SEES HOTELS USING THESE CONCEPTS IN 2011.

You know the feeling when entering a room: « This feels nice, but something's missing... » How often have you really tried to follow up this thought and find out what is missing? What is it that stimulates the sensation: « It feels good in here, somehow right »? What creates the coherent sensory perception of a room?

How can integrity of design, brand and emotions be achieved? Why and how can interior design support the activities that take place in a room, and bring about such effects as an increase in communicativeness, greater appetite, or improved brainpower... or stimulate relaxation, well-being or other atmospheres?

Coherence is the key. In a world full of information and choice, differentiation becomes more critical. Leaving traces and touching guests, staff and business partners on an emotional level creates meaning and intangible, deeply effective ties. Emotions are the key to success. They link memory and space and turn incidents into experiences. Sensory perception links body, mind and emotion to space – all at once and on an unconscious level. The question is which role space and place can play when it comes to transform emotions into interior design. This is when design becomes a tool. Colors, textures, materials, shapes and sizes

are melted into an overall look. The connection between these elements is a thread that has to be carefully woven by telling a story, exploring the needs of the users into the last detail and above all on an emotional level.

My initial questions when looking at a new space usually are: Who uses this space? Which activities would you like to perform in it? And most importantly: How do you want to feel inside it? Experience has shown that people have more and more difficulty expressing emotions verbally. When presenting a proposed scheme as mood and material boards, it suddenly becomes easy to say: « This feels right, » or « I think I would like it to be a bit warmer, lighter, and softer... maybe add a little red... » That is where discussion starts; a process is initiated that takes its time to develop. This extra time before choosing any products, and prior to defining the exact concept, is often neglected in reality. It can be because of time constraints, operational or design decisions that have been manifested before exploring the sensory aspects of a concept, or simply the urge to save money for this additional preliminary study. Yet, finding out where the heart, soul and story lie within a space determines its eventual success.



Soho House, New York



Questions to the client at this stage cannot be asked in the regular way as anyone can only give a response from the cognitive part of the brain. The added value lies instead in the emotional half. Which tools does a designer have to address emotions? The answer sounds simple, yet is difficult to achieve: Design has to speak on a sensory level. It has to find out where comfort and well-being have their roots. Colors play a crucial role in this quest as they define approximately 70% of all conscious and unconscious decisions. Each color has a specific profile and is linked directly to the various organs of our body as well as to our memories. It works very simply. When light hits the eye, an electromagnetic impulse is generated and sent directly to our brain. Only there, this impulse is transformed into information that makes us perceive a specific color,

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according to the physical properties (wavelengths). There is no randomness or chance involved in this process. By using colors according to their physical nature and energy profiles, one truly addresses well-being and changes something in the overall perception of ambiance and space.

It is exactly here that we also discover the connection to logos and branding. If a logo, on an unconscious level, does not communicate what the brand stands for, and if the actual space created around has yet another message, staff, clients and guests get confused and will respond with «Something's missing... (and I do not know what it is).»

Therefore one of the design trends for 2011 and the years that will follow will be to *take more time to develop the concept in the very beginning*. Identifying a story, telling it and addressing it passionately and emotionally will win hearts – and higher revenues. This is true for any kind of space, hotel, restaurant, office, residential area, and above all in spas. Spa as such is not a trend any more. It is a *must have*, just as sustainability is a must have.

To give an example: One does not argue that a shower has to provide water. The question is more, in which way the water flows. Is it gentle, hard, fine, as differentiated as rain, just a misty fog or perhaps even fragranced and changing color depending on its temperature? The function has to be there. The new extra is the sensory level and the link to story and brand that has to be established in a coherent way.

Technology permits the size of a hotel room to be shrunk without minimizing its well-being aspect. During a panel discussion at the first «Design Dialogue» at the Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne, the speakers all agreed: Function comes first, and design helps the customer to select. So for 2011 the second development to note is a piece of advice: Do not compromise on design. Spend your money on quality. Certain things cost money and cannot be produced at a lower price. So be ready to invest more money for certain elements in order to support the story and match design, function and well-being on a superior level.

This ultimately leads to a third trend: Be coherent and act on a level that embraces all five senses. Making a guest feel welcome, creating overall well-being and giving genuine smiles will always remain the biggest trend in hospitality. As one of the participants in the Design Dialogue put it, if we want to turn a client into a guest, «we have to relearn to think about space». ■