

THE OVERVIEW

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Millennials' healthy demands



**Tax relief - do you qualify?
Peter Hancock for HOSPACE**

Welcome to THE OVERVIEW

Dear members,

As I write, our politicians were easing themselves out of their lengthy summer break of walking tours and failing to understand how to book train tickets in advance.

As everyone girds their loins to find out what 'Brexit means Brexit' means, issues over staffing, which are likely to be affected by demands by many to change migration, are coming to the fore. Changes to free movement are likely to see a sudden drop in the workforce and, for those which remain, the fear that we could mimic the sector in the US, with its frequent sweeps for 'illegals' disrupting operations.

The sector has come under attack from Unite, the country's biggest union, which has accused global hotel chains of making London one of the most 'unethical' tourist destinations in the world. Unite is calling on all hotels operating in London to adopt an ethical code of practice.

Peter Kavanagh, Unite London regional secretary said: "The London hotel sector is failing its workforce. It has become a byword for low pay and exploitation. If these stories tell us anything, it is that shameful work practices, similar to those exposed at Sports Direct, have no place in 21st century Britain. Low pay, zero hour contracts and open hostility to trade unions have become standard practice, making London one of the most unethical tourist destinations in the world."

The findings have been vociferously objected to by the chains, many of whom have ethical employment policies in place. But the image of hotels as unethical, at a time when the sector needs to attract more employees, is troubling.

There is some good news - later in this issue Moore Stephens explains how the sector may be missing out on some tax relief. And there is no greater relief than less tax.



Katherine Doggrell

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Onwards to HOSPACE



HOSPA CEO Jane Pendlebury looks forward to HOSPACE and the Professional Of The Year awards

This month has flown by. We have made good progress with HOSPACE and we are delighted to have received many delegate bookings from varied and distinguished independent hotels as well as corporate chain hotels.

Hopefully you will have already seen the programme which is available at www.hospace.net. One of the main sessions will cover Brexit with views on how the vote has already affected hospitality and what the probable/possible outcomes may be. We also have a debate on the value of corporate brands and a panel discussion on attracting and retaining staff. The breakout sessions will cover important areas such as the upcoming Apprentice Levy and the old favourite Uniform System of Accounts.

If you haven't already booked your place - then please do by completing the booking form from the website.

I expect the majority of Overview readers are already aware that we are celebrating the Professional of the Year awards during the Gala Dinner at HOSPACE this year, along with a sponsorship award for the best entrepreneurial presentation to the IT community. The Professional of the Year awards in Finance, Technology and Revenue Managers are indeed prestigious awards. Not only does the winner feel the excitement of winning the trophy, but also the key members of their team, not forgetting those that have nominated the winners. We will also recognise the runners up - so please don't hold back - just submit those nominations now! See the HOSPACE home page - scroll down!

The annual Scottish quiz night was held at The Radisson Blu in Glasgow once again at the beginning of September. We were honoured to be sponsored by IP Solutions. Pete Melhuish and Rob Piper from IP Solutions added to the fun and entertainment of the evening. The winners this year were the Radisson Blu - who have steadily inched up the results board year-on-year. We had 10 teams representing many of the local hotels - plus one team from Guestline. Guestline had run a great event for their clients and HOSPA members that afternoon with interesting speakers from Google, ResDiary and GuestRevu. From HOSPA's side much of the Quiz Night organising is completed by Rob Maloney from Kerry Roberts, Rob is also HOSPA's Membership Secretary. He was - as ever - a great host despite him focusing his mind and body on his upcoming marathon rowing race. We are proud to report that his team of four came in seventh-fastest out of 165 boats breaking a new record for their category. Just under four hours of rowing sounds like a major achievement in itself - well done Rob!

October sees the Independent Hotel Show at Olympia on 18th & 19th October. HOSPA will be there with a stand - so please do pop by to say hello and have a cup of tea or coffee with us. We always enjoy welcoming members on to our stand and to meeting new ones too! The HOSPA stand is a great place for members to meet industry colleagues and to take advantage of our facilities.

I look forward to seeing many of you in the coming months!



Andrea Nicol
Madison Mayfair

How to bolster your social following

You walk out of a meeting and pick up your phone. You see 5 new messages, 4 app notifications, 3 recommended updates and an invite to a new social network. This is a quiet day. Communication today is loud, constant and ever-changing, so when it comes to connecting with your customers where do you start? This article looks at the ever growing social web, award winning Social Media efforts from our industry, and some tried and tested tips for good digital communication.

A Matrix of Communication Options

The ecosystem of digital platforms is growing rapidly. Alongside the best known heavyweights like Facebook and LinkedIn there are more niche platforms emerging to capture new markets.

One of the newest hospitality focussed sites is Trip n Howl, the product of a Bangalore technology start-up. Some other popular hospitality and leisure sites include WAYN (which helps you find top holiday places based on your interests) Steller (a travel specific Instagram style site), and HeyLet's

(which gives people a place to review their travel experiences).

Alongside these Social Media offerings are a plethora of Instant Messenger services such as WhatsApp and WeChat, which allow people to text and call for free over an internet connection rather than a mobile phone network. This is yet another reason that free fast WIFI is such a necessity. Without connectivity people find themselves completely isolated.

The consumer now has so much choice in how they want to communicate and it is all so easy for them to make contact. People have multiple social media and messaging sites

instantly accessible on their phone. They decide where to post their message largely based on whether they want to share a beautiful photo, a funny photo, a meme or a video, whether they want to reach a group, an individual, or the world.

Industry Influencers on Social Platforms

So which hospitality companies have a strong voice on Social Media and how have they achieved this presence?

The Marriott Content Studio has been running for a couple of years now producing high quality content for Marriott's digital audiences. Its debut film *Two Bellmen* was a success beyond expectation. The trailer and film drove a combined total of six million views on YouTube, and the film was worth approximately \$34M in ad value. It won the Hospitality category at the Shorty Awards, an awards event which celebrates the best of Social Media¹.

In the 18-minute short film, a pair of unsuspecting bellmen, 'the lifeblood of the hotel', get caught up in the plans of a crime ring and (spoiler alert) save the day! They really do go above and beyond for good service!

The film boasts distinct characters, stylised choreography, and comic moments that play on the crime action genre. There is attention to detail right down to the bloopers as the credits roll. This is much, much more than the link fodder that makes up so much noise on the social web.

This film is a genuine product that entertains first and foremost and intelligently points to the Marriott brand throughout. The studio is now working on *Two Bellmen 3* alongside other quite different products created for specific platforms such as YouTube comedy chat show *Do Not Disturb* and a series of long form articles on sustainable economic development initiatives.

Another great example of a hospitality company embracing the fun of Social Media is Hotels.com, which tailor made an advert for Facebook's silent autoplay function². The video features a hotel piano player. His silent performance could convince you that he was a skilled musician, but reading the captions or taking the leap to play the sound reveals a different story. This winner in the Shorty Awards' Facebook category proves the importance of making content with your platform in mind and maximising the opportunities at your disposal.

You don't need Marriott's resources for it to be worth going online. Working on a considerably lower budget, MotelOne has successfully grown its Social Media - adding 4,000+ relevant Twitter followers in 6 months and 4,000+ relevant Instagram followers in 4 months³. It did this through consistent relevant posting, hashtags such as #OneHappyGuest, and personalised responses to those who engaged.

How to make your posts successful

1. Make posts shareable

Keep posts short, clear and easily digestible. Images and videos should be impactful without explanation. You can't expect that viewers will see the post in the exact format you intended as people are likely to quote or screen shot and add their own comments when sharing.

This consumer itch to share content has the added benefit of reducing the number of sites you need to post on. For example, great Tumblr and YouTube content is naturally and frequently shared onto Facebook and Twitter.

2. #hashtageverything

There is no shame in adding multiple hashtags to increase the chances of your post being found. But the real power is in consistently reinforcing a central hashtag, and use it across multiple sites. Depending how people hear about the tag they may not pay attention to whether it has been launched on Twitter or Instagram, they will just hop on their preferred channel and see what has been posted.

3. Use tools to ease the process

Social Media managers like Hootsuite, Sprout Social and Buffer can help you manage multiple accounts, bulk create posts, and schedule them to go out at effective times.

Tools like Landscape can help take the confusion out of keeping up-to-date on picture sizes. It can crop an image to the right size for you when you select which site you want to post on.

4. Be timely

Keep up with the news and make posts that are not just about you but about the things going on around you. Adding your voice to an existing conversation will increase the chances of people engaging with your content.

5. Create quality content

Remember that quality content reigns supreme on the internet. Photos and videos should be high quality. Words should be in a consistent style and have something worthwhile to say. Volume alone is not enough. People will tune you out if you are talking nonsense or going too hard on a sell.

6. Interact

It's rude to start a conversation and then walk away. Follow how people are reacting to your post, talk back and share their contributions. If you are asking people to do something e.g. "post a picture of yourself with a beach ball", make sure you have your own examples to share and build excitement - why not get staff involved to get it rolling.

It's nearly 2017, and if you don't have a Social Media Plan in place for your business, why not commit to developing one during the remainder of this year? If you do have one, revisit it to make sure you are getting the most from the social universe.

For many brands, social can be a fantastic way to boost your customer acquisition and keep your brand in consumers' minds. Decide which platforms are most relevant to you and create a schedule of how often you want to post. Consider which upcoming events - internal or external - you want to relate your posts to. And make sure you have someone checking in to see how your posts are landing. Your digital audience awaits.

Andrea Nicol is a regular contributor to HOSPA, and a Consultant at Madison Mayfair, a business which focusses on recruiting managerial positions for the hospitality industry. Andrea specialises in Senior Operational and Commercial roles in the UK and internationally.

¹ <http://shortyawards.com/8th/two-bellmen>

² <http://shortyawards.com/8th/silent-ads>

³ https://gingerjuice.co.uk/portfolio_page/motel-one

'Not a star, but a reasonably priced raconteur' to host HOSPSPACE 2016



Julian Demetriadi introduces Peter Hancock

On 10 November, HOSPA's 11th annual HOSPSPACE Conference and Exhibition for hospitality finance, revenue management and IT professionals will be compered by an Institute of Hospitality Fellow, who by day is a top hotel businessman; and by night and the occasional lunch-time, an increasingly in-demand personality on the nationwide after-dinner speaking and business awards circuit.

The self-dubbed 'not a star but a reasonably priced raconteur', Peter Hancock leads a double professional life. His growing part-time career is rapidly becoming as successful as his full-time job as Chief Executive of Pride of Britain Hotels - a consortium of 48 privately owned luxury hotels that includes many of the finest establishments in the UK, such as The Goring Hotel in London, the Chester Grosvenor Hotel, and Lucknam Park Hotel & Spa in Wiltshire. Only in February, Peter hosted the Gold Service Scholarship awards at Claridge's in London, in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen; and he has just been invited to once again host the Independent Hotel Show awards on 18 October and chair both days of the Master Innholders General Managers' Conference on 16 and 17 January 2017.

Indeed, such is Peter's burgeoning reputation as an after-dinner speaker, conference chairman and master of ceremonies, that he is not just in demand in the hospitality industry, but also at major prestige events - such as the International Institute of Marine Surveying 25th anniversary dinner, the Institute of Highway Engineers awards dinner, and the Motorsport Industry Association dinner.

Earlier this year, he expanded his event skills repertoire by qualifying as a professional toastmaster.

In April, Peter's legendary quick wit, dry sense of humour and prowess as a raconteur led Boutique Hotelier magazine to honour him as an 'Unsung Hero', stating: "If you've ever been in the audience at an event where Peter Hancock has been on the bill, then you'll know just how much enjoyment, laughter and fun he brings to the stage. Peter has the ability to bring to life any occasion and now a professional after-dinner speaker alongside his full-time role with Pride of Britain, he offers tireless and entertaining support to many hospitality events and charities."

So how did his public speaking career begin? "Some years ago Dr Anne Pierce MBE FIH, Chief Executive of the Springboard charity, rang me out of the blue to see if I could compere her big awards dinner, just a few days' away, as a well-known TV performer had just backed out," explains Peter. "Despite my protestations that I wasn't up to the task, I was nonetheless persuaded. Armed with 10 minutes' worth of memorised funny stories, to my great relief I got the evening off to a flying start. I found hosting the awards both easy and exciting - with ad-libs, as if by magic, popping into my head at suitable moments. In short, I was hooked."

Thanks to the Springboard dinner, Peter soon got asked to speak at other hospitality industry events, which boosted his own profile and that of Pride of Britain Hotels. One of these was at a banquet for the Master Innholders, after which a hotelier urged Peter to introduce himself to Bob 'the cat' Bevan - a hugely successful after-dinner speaker. Encouraged by Bob, he approached a couple of speakers' agencies - both of which have since put him on their books: The Right Address and Stand & Deliver. Through these, Peter has been engaged to speak at an extraordinary range of dinners and other events - both inside and outside the hospitality industry.

Peter has never been short of material for his speaking engagements. "I love sharing anecdotes collected during my time in the hospitality industry," he explains. "There has never been a dull moment in the often whacky world of hotel-keeping. This and various life experiences have given me a few stories to tell - whether they are entertaining is of course for others to judge. My toughest critic is my wife Michelle, who helps me enormously with my preparations for speaking engagements. Indeed, she will often cause me to drop whole sections of a speech if she doesn't deem them funny enough."

So when did his talent to entertain professionally emerge? Peter is not only a leading hotel industry practitioner, but also an expert on consumer guides to the hotel and tourism profession. Before joining Pride of Britain Hotels, he was Group Publishing Director for Johansens - responsible for the company's prestigious UK titles: 'Recommended Hotels', 'Recommended Inns', 'Recommended Country Houses', 'Business Meeting Venues', 'Historic Houses Castles & Gardens', and 'Museums & Galleries'. Whilst at Johansens, he did a good deal of presenting: to hoteliers, to the sales teams, to the board and at the company's annual awards ceremony at The Dorchester, London, which gave Peter invaluable practice at addressing audiences. Whilst doing this, he decided to follow the example of the company's erstwhile chairman, Adrian Bridgewater, by introducing a few funny remarks to keep everyone's attention. He really grew to enjoy being asked to speak, and began to recognise from the reaction of his audiences that he had a natural talent for it.

In fact, whilst with Johansens, he found an additional outlet for this gift. He joined a local amateur dramatics group in Neston, Wiltshire; and for ten years performed in the majority of the group's plays. Though he enjoyed it greatly, his eventual decision to pack it in was hastened by an unfortunate incident during a performance of 'The Importance of Being Earnest'. "Close to the end of the play," he explains, "I had to deliver the line: 'I always told you my name was Earnest, didn't I Gwendolen?' Instead, I heard myself saying: I always told you my name was Gwendolen, didn't I Earnest?"

Certainly on 10 November, delegates at HOSPA's 11th annual HOSPACE Conference and Exhibition are going to be in for a treat as Peter skilfully introduces - with his highly entertaining quips and observations, his customary charm, hospitality industry knowledge and wisdom - a top line-up of distinguished speakers on hot topical issues as diverse as: 'The Impact of leaving the EU on the UK hospitality industry'; 'The current state of the Hospitality Industry'; 'Attracting and retaining talent'; an expert look at 'Hospitality Sustainability - the importance of the world we live in'; an examination of the challenges faced by the accommodation industry from the likes of Airbnb and Onefinestay (handmade hospitality for stays in the finest homes), under the title 'Disruption within traditional hospitality'; and a branded versus non-branded hotel debate, based on the proposition: 'This house believes chain hotel brands tend to suppress value rather than create it'.

HOSPA and the UK hospitality industry in general are fortunate to have somebody of Peter's ability and calibre to enrich their major events; and it is a sobering thought that 17 years ago we could well have been robbed of his talent. Johansens' headquarters had moved from Cambridge to London and, ever more deskbound, Peter had become a frequent commuter from his home in Neston, Wiltshire. On 5 October 1999, he suffered a near-death experience. The carriage he was travelling in came adrift from the rest of the train in what later became known as 'The Paddington Rail Crash'. "It was the most frightening experience of my life," he says. "I was so lucky to walk away from the carnage, with nothing more than a couple of broken ribs. It was worse for my dear PA, Carol, who had to be sent home that afternoon suffering from shock."

Thank the Good Lord for sparing the 'not a star, but reasonably priced raconteur'!

To book for HOSPACE 2016 Conference & Exhibition at the Sofitel London Heathrow, Terminal 5 on 10 November 2016: Telephone: +44 (0) 203 418 8196 or email: bookings@hospa.org

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HOSPA Professional Development News

Leading industry endorsement for HOSPA Programmes

We are pleased to announce that the HOSPA courses in Revenue Management and Financial Management have been reviewed by People 1st, the workforce development experts for the hospitality, tourism, travel, passenger transport and retail industries, and we have received confirmation that both courses will receive the Quality Mark approval for the period 2016 - 2018. The Quality Mark award recognises and celebrates training programmes in hospitality, passenger transport, travel and tourism that help individuals develop and raise training standards.

The September intakes for both HOSPA programmes of study are now underway - to register your interest for the March courses, please email education@hospa.org or visit www.hospa.org/education

HOSPACE Career Investment Development Scholarships Open for applications

We are very pleased to announce this unique opportunity to provide career development for five upcoming young people working in Finance, Revenue Management and IT in the

Hospitality Industry and for a further five outstanding students studying Hospitality Management at University or colleges in the UK.

The HOSPA Award offers the lucky winners the opportunity to be noticed and publicly recognised for their outstanding achievements in the work place.

The prize comprises of a full day at HOSPACE on 10th November 2016 plus a place at the Conference Dinner, where their achievements will be recognised. Each recipient will be featured in a future edition of the HOSPA journal; The Overview.

The closing date for nominations is 21st October 2016.

All candidates will be notified before 28th October 2016.

The full details can be found on the HOSPA website at www.hospace.net or email education@hospa.org for the nomination forms.



HOSPA

Hospitality Finance, Revenue and IT Professionals

Join us for the HOSPA Annual Student Awards Ceremony on Wednesday 25th January 2017 commencing at 2.00pm in the prestigious Crystal Palace Theatre at the Hilton on Park Lane, London.

The event commences with a Panel Debate with distinguished expert speakers discussing 'Developing the Hospitality Professional - the Next Generation' chaired by Professor Peter Jones MBE. We will then be celebrating the achievements of all our highest achieving learners on the HOSPA Revenue Management and Financial Management programmes with a special Afternoon Tea followed by networking.

Join our HOSPA learners, guest speakers, HOSPA Board members and invited guests for this celebratory networking event.

Tickets £50.00 per person to include Afternoon Tea, speaker presentations and the Ceremony. To book your place email education@hospa.org

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Healthy eating is increasingly on consumer's agendas



Healthy eating is moving up the consumer agenda thanks to increased media exposure, with millennials leading the charge, according to a new report from PwC.

The PwC report says that, over the past year, nearly half (47%) of the 18-34 age-group surveyed had changed their eating habits towards a healthier diet, as compared to just 23% of those aged over 55.

Further data also shows that 53% of those aged between the ages of 18-34 expect to change their eating habits in the next year compared to 19% of those aged over 55. Highlighted as a main factor for the enthusiasm amongst millennials to improve their eating habits is the increasing media coverage of healthy eating across social media, including bloggers and mobile apps.

Other findings show that consumer definitions for 'healthy eating' vary, with millennials attributing more trend-based meanings (e.g. high protein, high vitamins) versus older consumers' more traditional definitions (e.g. low fat). Food processors and retailers have acknowledged the increasing interest in healthy eating and are adjusting their menus and products to reflect these trends.

From a regional perspective, 59% of 18-34 year olds in the North-East consider themselves to be eating healthier compared to last year, whilst Wales had the highest percentage of 18-34 year olds (67%) expecting to improve their eating habits over the next year.

In terms of older generations, 43% of over 55 year olds in Northern Ireland expect to improve their diet over the next year

whilst Yorkshire & Humber has seen the biggest change over the last year with 42% stating that they have changed their eating habits for the better.

Commenting on the report, Eleanor Scott, Director at PwC said: "Most people want to mix and match, balancing healthy eating with the occasional indulgence."

"Consumers are more likely to have healthy meals out during the week, driven by these being more everyday eating out occasions, and are more likely to treat themselves at weekends."

"In terms of eating out, 47% of all consumers consider it important that a restaurant offers healthy options. You can see many restaurants addressing this trend by adding a healthier alternative to their menus, for example, a thin crust pizza or a bun-less burger."

Lisa Hooker, Partner at PwC added: "There are a range of 'healthy' food-to-go operators targeting the mid-week lunch occasion where people are more likely to focus on eating healthily."

"In addition, food operators are now focusing more on freshness and provenance given its importance to consumers when eating out."

Guestline's systems chosen for four new hotels



Guestline's systems chosen for four new hotels operated by leading hotel management company, Michels & Taylor

Michels & Taylor, the hotel management company with 18 hotels in their portfolio, have selected Guestline's property management and distribution solutions to manage and drive revenue in four boutique hotels that are now under their management. Along with the hotel owners Michels and Taylor decided Guestline's system was the best option to meet the needs of these hotels going forward.

With expansion plans in the pipeline, Michels & Taylor will install the fully integrated, cloud hosted systems into the Allerton Court Hotel in Darlington (soon to become a Best Western Hotel), Charlton Kings Hotel in Cheltenham, Hallgarth Manor Hotel in Durham and Chapters Hotel in North Yorkshire.

David Barton, New Business Sales Executive at Guestline added "Michels & Taylor wanted to consolidate their suppliers and have just one vendor to supply a system that would integrate with the Best Western Interface, that has multi property functionality and was PCI compliant. Having met with our customers and researched our products, Michels & Taylor were assured of the ongoing support and development we provide clients and that the systems demonstrate a swift return on investment."

Naveed Khan, Revenue Director at Michels & Taylor commented "Cloud hosted systems are the way forward - not only does it reduce our IT costs but it allows us to log on remotely - ideal for a group of 4 properties - so that the team can work at any of the hotels (or off-site) and still gain access to all sites.

We see Guestline as a long term stable partner for us and for our future properties - this represents the ideal partnership for us and sits well with our long term revenue strategy."

Bursting with functionality, the systems have a host of central management modules that will give the operators a consolidated view of all properties on one screen with easy access to sales, rates and occupancy levels across the portfolio. With clear and extensive financial reporting, Michels & Taylor's Central Revenue Manager can manage and operate one core revenue strategy across the portfolio. Easy to view dashboards and automatic uploading will speed up processes and streamline operations.

Each hotel will install Guestline's systems including Rezlynx property management system, Channel Distribution and EPoS software and PCI Manager.

David Roche appointed as Chairman of Guestline



Former Hotels.com President and Expedia Management Committee member joins Guestline Board

Guestline is delighted to announce the appointment of new company Chairman, David Roche. Roche joins Guestline, market leaders in cloud-hosted property management, distribution and digital marketing technologies for the hospitality industry, during an exciting expansion period for the company. Earlier this year, Guestline received investment from The Riverside Company, a global, mid-market private equity firm with extensive experience in its Software Industry Specialization.

Roche spent a decade at Hotels.com (a subsidiary of Expedia Inc.), initially building this business outside the US and then running the firm on a global basis. Under his leadership Hotels.com rose rapidly to become the world's second largest hotel booking website. In his last years at Expedia, he was also President of Expedia Inc.'s global hotel supply group serving over 250,000 hotel partners and transacting \$18bn in gross bookings.

He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in the hospitality industry and is well-placed to advise and guide Guestline in their next phase of growth.

Phil Davidson, CEO of Guestline, commented, 'We are delighted to announce the appointment of David Roche to the board of Guestline. David brings enormous skill and over 15 years' experience in Hospitality Distribution to Guestline that will complement the existing team going forward. We will work closely with David to help us develop new innovations and expand into new markets both here and internationally.'

Over the last 12 months, Guestline has increased its customer base across the various markets in which it serves, namely hotel groups, independent hotels, serviced apartments and pub companies. New innovations such as the room rate comparison tool, Price Assure (part of the Guestline online booking platform), the growth of their digital marketing solutions and an increase in clients across the Asia-Pacific region has resulted in Guestline growing revenue by 20% and increasing their employee base by 15%.

Roche, added, 'I am excited about the appointment and look forward to working with Phil and his team as we grow Guestline's client base internationally and continue to develop intuitive and sophisticated distribution solutions for all levels of the accommodation market.'

Roche joined Expedia in 2003 responsible for Hotels.com and Expedia Affiliate Network for Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA). Prior to joining Expedia, he founded companies in the marketing and digital media spheres and is currently a director of one of the world's largest online travel firms.

Guestline's systems are used in 20 countries across 5 continents and enables properties of all sizes to achieve maximum occupancy at the most profitable rate. Fully integrated and cloud hosted, the end-to-end property management and distribution solutions are easy to install and quick to deploy with low cost of ownership.



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Research & development tax relief for the hotels & leisure sector



Less than 1% of all R&D claims submitted to HMRC originated from within the accommodation and food sector in 2014, so is a lack of awareness of the relief holding the sector back?

Research and development (R&D) tax relief allows companies to significantly reduce corporation tax liabilities for profit making companies, or, where they are loss making, to convert tax losses into valuable tax credits.

When R&D tax credits were originally introduced in 2002, most people understandably thought these were only applicable to businesses employing 'men in white coats'. The truth is that the government has struggled with that perception ever since.

Whilst it may be true that the life science, pharmaceutical and manufacturing sectors have embraced the relief on a larger scale than others, opportunities to submit an R&D claim remain available to businesses within all sectors that are able to identify eligible business activities.

To illustrate the extent to which the hotels and leisure sectors have failed to recognise the availability of these reliefs, you need only to look at HMRC statistics¹ that report that less than 1% of all R&D claims submitted in 2014 originated from within the 'accommodation and food' sectors.

Perhaps R&D would better be called 'technical problem solving' - a definition which could apply to all industry sectors as they all frequently face technical challenges, either as a result of the business they are in, or the tools they employ to carry out that business.

¹Research and Development Tax Credit Statistics, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) September 2015

Which business activities are eligible for relief?

The most common areas for R&D relief claims within the hotel industry are for:

- developing software for internal use e.g. booking systems;
- integrating different software systems to enable them to work together;
- developing websites and complex apps;
- improving sustainability/meeting new euro codes or legislation;
- using new or existing materials in a novel way;
- carrying out any work on listed buildings;
- developing processes or designs to accommodate health and safety concerns.

Depending on the size of the business and the extent to which developmental risks are outsourced, a hotel business can often claim for projects or part projects even where they are sub-contracted to specialists. It is not always necessary to employ in-house all the necessary skill sets although this does help with maximising the value of the claims.

How Moore Stephens can help?

Moore Stephens has delivered more than £150 million in tax credits back to our clients through R&D tax relief. Our dedicated R&D tax team is composed of qualified accountants, engineers and scientists that specialise in making claims - and has a 100% success rate gained from over 1,000 claims submitted.

If you can answer 'yes' to at least one of the following, you may have an R&D claim:

General questions

- Have you performed any form of technical problem solving?
- Are you using existing processes/methods/techniques in a unique way?
- Have you abandoned a project for technical reasons?

Software/IT

- Are you using existing software or applications, but in a new or innovative way?
- Have you tried to integrate two or more systems (whether off the shelf or not) that were not compatible with each other?
- Have you designed or written any unique software in your industry?

Architecture/civil engineering

- Have you had any technical problems with regards to installation of materials, structures or panels?
- Have you produced pioneering innovative designs – whether for materials or buildings or internal spaces?

- Are you using renewable materials but having to ensure they meet health and safety standards such as fire or acoustic standards?

Already claiming R&D tax relief?

Even if you are already claiming R&D tax relief, we often find that our specialist R&D team are able to identify additional qualifying projects.

We have reviewed a large number of claims and have submitted replacement claims to HMRC where we believe the original claims to be understated. Our second opinion service operates on a standalone basis, and we structure our fees dependant on success.

Contact us

Get in touch with us today to see how our dedicated Hotels & Leisure team can support your business.



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Payroll hits profit



A new study by hospitality intelligence firm, HotStats, identified that the pace of growth in payroll costs is hampering the ability of UK hoteliers to increase profit.

The study, Benchmarking Beyond RevPAR, which polled a consistent sample of nearly 45,000 hotel bedrooms across the UK over a 15-year period, revealed that payroll now comprises close to one third of a Regional hotel's cost base.

Profit per available room at hotels in the Regions has dropped by 26.8% in the last 15 years, to £30.49 in 2015 from £41.67 in 2000. During the same period, payroll levels have increased by 25.6% on a per available room basis, equivalent to an uplift of 4.6 percentage points, to 32.1% of total revenue in 2015 from 27.5% in 2000.

One of the key drivers of growth in payroll levels over the last 15 years has been the 80% increase in the national minimum wage, to £6.70 in 2015 from £3.70 in 2000, for the adult hourly rate (ie +21 years).

And alongside the introduction of the National Living Wage in April 2016 and prospective annual increases in this hourly figure, managing payroll levels will remain a challenge for UK hoteliers as the number of hotel staff employed on minimum wage contracts in the UK is projected to increase to 40% by 2020.

In the Regions, the 28.7% increase in payroll per available room in the Rooms department, played a significant role in the drop in departmental profit conversion to 69.2% in 2015 from 75.1% in 2000.

Increases in payroll as a proportion of departmental revenue were also recorded in ancillary departments at Regional hotels over the last 15 years, including Food & Beverage (+6.2 percentage points) and Leisure (+8.7 percentage points).

In London the picture is more positive as the pace of growth in revenue offset the 21.3% increase in payroll. That said, an uplift in labour on a per available room basis was recorded in Rooms (+27.2%), Food & Beverage (+11.7%) and Leisure (+143.2%) departments in the period from 2000 to 2015.

Pablo Alonso, Hotstats CEO said of the results "it is not hard to understand the acceleration in the development of limited-service hotels when it is 'the service' which is now the biggest cost of a hotel operation."

He added, "The ability of UK hoteliers to manage payroll levels could be further tested if the fall out from Brexit triggers a significant policy change regarding immigration to the UK."

Brexit Britain still eating out

Overall like-for-likes sales up 0.3% on July 2015. London outperforms rest of Britain.

Britain's managed pub and restaurant groups saw collective like-for-like sales grow 0.3% in July against the same month last year - the first indication that the country is not giving up on going out to eat and drink in the wake of the Brexit vote.

Latest figures from the Coffer Peach Business Tracker show, however, that performance was not uniform across the market, with London operators seeing a healthy 2.9% like-for-like sales uplift against July 2015, while those outside the M25 saw like-for-likes fall 0.5%.

"Pub groups also did better than restaurant chains, but that was probably more to do with the good weather than anything else," said Peter Martin, vice president of CGA Peach, the business insight consultancy that produces the Tracker, in partnership with Coffer Group and RSM.

"The market will be relieved however that trade has more than held up post-referendum, as confidence among the bosses of pub and restaurant chains took a tumble after the vote, as our own exclusive CGA Peach research showed," added Martin.

"Interestingly, operators in London emerged as slightly more upbeat about business prospects in the wake of the vote than their colleagues outside the M25, in part down to an anticipation of increased UK tourism - and that seems to have been reflected in sales on the ground. The London market is looking more robust," he said.

Managed pub groups collectively saw like-for-likes up 0.9% over the month, compared to a 0.6% like-for-like decline among casual dining chains against July last year. But Martin put this down to the good weather during the month, particularly during the mini-heatwave of the third week.

"Sunny weather always favours pubs over restaurants, and that is particularly true during holiday periods," he added.

Total sales for the month among the 33 companies in the Tracker cohort were up 4.0% on July 2015, reflecting the new site openings over the past 12 months, especially outside of London.

The underlying annual sales trend shows sector like-for-likes running at just 0.8% up for the 12 months to the end of July, with restaurant chains up 1.0%, pub groups ahead 0.7%.

"It's been a fairly sluggish market so far this year and the Brexit vote doesn't appear to have altered that trend one way or another

- and July's performance was actually stronger than April or May's. The eating and drinking out sector remained fairly resilient during the uncertainty of the recession and it may not be too optimistic to expect that people will continue to go out to eat and drink during the current uncertain times," said Martin. "Where they choose to go is another matter and in an underlying flat market that means competition will remain fierce."

Mark Sheehan, managing director at Coffer Corporate Leisure, said: "These numbers show some resilience post-referendum. While we expect to see costs continue to increase and margins erode over the coming months, putting pressure on profitability for the hospitality sector, a weaker pound should be particularly helpful for attracting tourists to London and other mainstream tourist centres. The pub sector continues to outperform restaurants, where we do expect to see further pressure on sales outside London.

"From a transactional perspective, following the referendum we experienced an initial hesitancy from the market to make big property commitments, but now that the initial shock has passed we continue to see similar activity as we did prior to the vote. A weaker pound is again attracting certain overseas buyers to target the UK where they see value."

Paul Newman, head of leisure and hospitality at RSM, added: "While warnings of the UK entering into a recessionary period persist, these results suggest this is not something that operators in the eating and drinking out sector are yet experiencing en masse. Indeed, post Brexit many of our clients are now moving ahead to more effectively plan and refine business models with increased certainty.

"The overall environment for deals remains strong. In fact, we completed more corporate finance transactions in July than in any other month so far this year with banks and private equity both continuing to deploy capital. The UK is a genuine world leader in leisure and hospitality and operators have consistently proved themselves to be adaptable, agile and resilient in the face of change. One of the biggest benefits to come out of the EU referendum result was certainty - certainty that at least we now know the direction of travel."

The Coffer Peach Tracker industry sales monitor for the UK pub and restaurant sector collects and analyses monthly performance data from 33 operating groups, and is recognised as the established industry benchmark. CGA Peach is part of CGA Strategy.

Pub and restaurant group sales performance for last 12 months

	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
LFLs	0.6%	1.2%	2.5%	-0.2%	1.3%	1.9%	0.0%	0.6%	-0.8%	-1.4%	1.8%	0.3%
Total	4.3%	4.6%	6.1%	3.5%	4.7%	5.4%	3.2%	4.9%	3.1%	2.2%	5.7%	4.0%

Source: Coffer Peach Business Tracker



Profit growth at Eastern hotels

Year-on-year profit per room at Eastern region hotels increased by 5.5% this month, contributing to the 3.3% increase for year-to-date 2016 and the increase of more than 45.0% in this measure over the last three years, according to the latest data from HotStats.

The East has been one of the top performing post-recession regions, with RevPAR (Revenue per Available Room), increasing by 23.0% over the last three years on a rolling 12-month basis, to £56.69.

The RevPAR increase has far outpaced the growth in ancillary departments during the same period and the Rooms department now accounts for 54.1% of total revenue, against 49.8% of revenue in the 12 months to August 2013.

As a result of the increased contribution to total revenue from the highly profitable Rooms department, as well as astute cost management, hotels in the Eastern region are now more efficient than ever, with a profit conversion of 30.5% of total revenue recorded in the 12 months to July 2016, compared to 23.8% in the 12 months to August 2013.

London Hotels Record Largest Profit Increase of The Year

Hotels in London recorded a 9.0% increase in profit per room in July, which is the largest year-on-year margin of growth in this measure in 2016 and only the third month in which a profit increase has been achieved in a challenging year for hotels in the capital.

For hotels in London, July was a perfect storm of the biennial Farnborough Air Show, which typically drives strong demand for hotel accommodation in the capital, visitor demand being displaced to London from other key European destinations due to security threats and Brexit, which caused a crash in the value of Sterling, suddenly making the UK a much cheaper place to visit.

The associated volume of demand enabled hotels in the capital

to successfully leverage achieved average room rate and drive a 7.4% increase in RevPAR to £148.62, the highest RevPAR of the year so far.

In addition to the growth in RevPAR, revenue increases were achieved in ancillary departments, including Food and Beverage (+4.0%) and Conference and Banqueting (+6.8%), which contributed to a 5.8% TrevPAR (Total Revenue per Available Room) increase to £194.30.

Despite the strong increase this month, at £70.38 year-to-date 2016 GOPPAR (Gross Operating Profit per Available Room) remains 3.3% behind the same period in 2015.

Nottingham Hotels Enjoying Bumper Summer of Profit Growth

Hotels in Nottingham have recorded a 15.5% year-on-year profit per room increase in July, which is further to the 10.4% increase in June and underscores the summer of 2016 as a highly successful period of trading for hotels in the East Midlands city.

In addition to the typical uplift in demand from the leisure segment, the strong performance in July was supported by a number of conferences in the city, which included the Health Services Research UK Symposium and the British Society of Criminology Conference, together attracting more than 700 delegates.

The strength of demand enabled Nottingham hoteliers to leverage price, the outcome of which was evident in the 7.7% increase in achieved average room rate for the month to £64.69, which was led by the 9.4% increase in the Best Available Rate segment, to £73.09.

The growth in Rooms revenue was sufficient to fuel a 6.5% increase in TrevPAR as year-on-year declines were recorded in ancillary departments. Despite a slight increase in both payroll (+0.2%) and overheads (+1.8%) on a per available room basis, profit conversion at Nottingham hotels in July was up by 2.6 percentage points year-on-year, to 32.8% of total revenue.

The month of July 2016

	Jul'16	Jul'15	Var b/w		
NORTH EAST	Occ %	83.8	82.1	1.7	▲
	ARR	79.68	77.05	3.4%	▲
	RevPAR	66.80	63.25	5.6%	▲
	TrevPAR	119.44	114.73	4.1%	▲
	Payroll %	28.8	29.4	0.6	▲
	GOP PAR	42.41	40.18	5.5%	▲

	Jul'16	Jul'15	Var b/w		
BRISTOL	Occ %	88.5	87.8	0.7	▲
	ARR	167.87	157.65	6.5%	▲
	RevPAR	148.62	138.34	7.4%	▲
	TrevPAR	194.30	183.73	5.8%	▲
	Payroll %	22.3	23.2	0.9	▲
	GOP PAR	96.44	88.51	9.0%	▲

	Jul'16	Jul'15	Var b/w		
CARDIFF	Occ %	79.3	76.1	3.1	▲
	ARR	64.69	60.10	7.7%	▲
	RevPAR	51.29	45.76	12.1%	▲
	TrevPAR	87.57	82.26	6.5%	▲
	Payroll %	28.1	29.8	1.7	▲
	GOP PAR	28.76	24.89	15.5%	▲

The Calendar year to July 2016

	YTD'16	YTD'15	Var b/w		
NORTH EAST	Occ %	72.7	72.3	0.4	▲
	ARR	76.95	74.82	2.9%	▲
	RevPAR	55.95	54.06	3.5%	▲
	TrevPAR	101.49	100.46	1.0%	▲
	Payroll %	32.6	33.5	0.9	▲
	GOP PAR	29.64	28.68	3.3%	▲

	YTD'16	YTD'15	Var b/w		
BRISTOL	Occ %	78.2	79.7	-1.5	▼
	ARR	149.11	147.44	1.1%	▲
	RevPAR	116.61	117.52	-0.8%	▼
	TrevPAR	162.79	165.04	-1.4%	▼
	Payroll %	26.0	25.6	-0.4	▼
	GOP PAR	70.38	72.81	-3.3%	▼

	YTD'16	YTD'15	Var b/w		
CARDIFF	Occ %	72.5	72.5	0.0	▲
	ARR	62.74	61.00	2.8%	▲
	RevPAR	45.47	44.20	2.9%	▲
	TrevPAR	80.60	78.79	2.3%	▲
	Payroll %	29.6	30.7	1.1	▲
	GOP PAR	24.94	22.89	9.0%	▲

The twelve months to July 2016

	Rolling'16	Rolling'15	Var b/w		
NORTH EAST	Occ %	73.8	73.0	0.7	▲
	ARR	76.86	74.08	3.8%	▲
	RevPAR	56.69	54.11	4.8%	▲
	TrevPAR	104.80	102.11	2.6%	▲
	Payroll %	32.2	33.7	1.5	▲
	GOP PAR	31.95	28.95	10.4%	▲

	Rolling'16	Rolling'15	Var b/w		
BRISTOL	Occ %	80.4	81.9	-1.5	▼
	ARR	153.74	148.56	3.5%	▲
	RevPAR	123.65	121.72	1.6%	▲
	TrevPAR	173.19	171.01	1.3%	▲
	Payroll %	24.7	24.7	0.0	▼
	GOP PAR	79.01	78.48	0.7%	▲

	Rolling'16	Rolling'15	Var b/w		
CARDIFF	Occ %	72.5	72.4	0.0	▲
	ARR	62.58	60.27	3.8%	▲
	RevPAR	45.35	43.67	3.9%	▲
	TrevPAR	81.90	79.37	3.2%	▲
	Payroll %	29.5	30.2	0.7	▲
	GOP PAR	25.10	23.31	7.7%	▲

Average Room Rate (ARR) - Is the total bedroom revenue for the period divided by the total bedrooms occupied during the period.

Room Revpar (RevPAR) - Is the total bedroom revenue for the period divided by the total available rooms during the period.

Total Revpar (TRevPAR) - Is the combined total of all revenues divided by the total available rooms during the period.

Payroll % - Is the payroll for all hotels in the sample as a percentage of total revenue.

GOPPAR - Is the Total Gross Operating Profit for the period divided by the total available rooms during the period.

For more information please:

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 email enquiries@hotstats.com
 visit www.hotstats.com
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Members' Events

27th September

Restaurant Tech Live

Location

ExCeL London

Event Details

Restaurant Tech Live is a major new European exhibition dedicated to the emerging technology and services that are forming the future of the restaurant business. It takes place at ExCeL, London on the 27th & 28th of September and it's free to attend if you register for a ticket

The show provides a view into dining of tomorrow and will offer restaurant owners the opportunity to find the latest products, apps, systems, and advancements from across the globe. Here, all from under one roof, visitors will be able to see, test, and touch the technology that will transform the way they run their business, attract customers, and set themselves apart from the competition.

It offers 150 free seminars, over 200 cutting edge suppliers, 1-2-1 advice, panel sessions, networking and much more!

Register for your ticket now and hope to see you at the show!

www.restauranttechlive.co.uk

4th October

IOH Webinar - How hospitality businesses can win

Event Details

How hospitality businesses can win

Julian Vaughan - Commercial & Partnership Director

Emily Tippins - Head of Strategy and Communications

Andrew Plant - Digital Marketing Manager

Learn how to increase traffic, drive revenue, reduce reliance on OTAs and deliver substantial ROI for your hotel. You can get more direct bookings and improved ROI for your hotel. Understand how hoteliers can fight back and navigate the fiercely competitive digital landscape to win more guests.

Learn how to:

- Embrace the role of OTAs
- Reduce the commission you pay
- Adopt an OTA strategy where you're in control
- Invest wisely in your hotel website

18th October

IOH Webinar - Food Allergens and Customer Excellence

Event Details

Food Allergens and Customer Excellence

Julian Edwards - Director
Allergen Accreditation

The Food Allergen HACCP and due diligence framework not only helps protect your business but WILL also appeal to a critically wary customer base, which above all want transparency and deserve service excellence like any other customer!

Visit hospa.org for more details.

19 October

Cost Control for F&B Operations

Location

London

Venue

The Caledonian Club, 9 Halkin Street, Belgravia, London

Event Details

Cost Control for F&B Operations is designed for all those involved with the management of food and beverage operations, from head chefs to food and beverage controllers. No prior knowledge of finance and accounting is required.

What is this course about?

This one day course has the purpose of assisting businesses with the effective management and control of food costs, staffing costs and menu pricing; all of which have a direct impact on profitability.

Taking a practical approach, the course is highly interactive and uses a series of worked examples, case studies and discussions.

Divided into seven key topic areas, the course covers:

- Best practice in purchasing and stock control
- Menu planning, standard costing and gross profit management
- Impact of sales mix
- Wage and salary scheduling control
- KPI's for food and beverage control
- Break-even analysis for F&B outlets
- Action plans for profit improvement
- What does it cost?

This one-day course is priced at £300 + VAT per delegate and includes lunch and course notes, plus 14 days access to the online classroom. The course runs from 9.30am until 4.30pm.

How do I register?

To register your place at this event, please email education@hospa.org or call the Professional Development team on +44 (0)1202 889430.

For more information please email education@hospa.org

22nd November

Finance for Non-Financial Managers in Hospitality

Location

London

Event Details

Structured into three main topic areas, the course includes:

Introduction to the P & L account:

- The basic principles
- Explanation of financial terminology including the USALI
- Business controls to manage revenue and cost
- How to trade and make a profit
- Calculation and interpretation of industry ratios such as REVPAR, GOPPAR and REVPASH
- Brief overview of the difference between CAPEX and operational spend

Introduction to the Balance Sheet:

- Long term vs. short term assets
- Working capital
- Profit measurement in relation to investment

Introduction to the Cash flow:

- Planning for cash requirements
- Controlling cash and other current assets
- Working capital controls
- Simple KPI's to measure performance

'Finance for Non Financial Managers' has been written by Debra Adams, author of the highly acclaimed textbook 'Strategic Management Accounting for the Hospitality Industry' and is delivered over the course of one day.

The course is delivered through workshops, case studies and discussion. Delegates are encouraged to bring examples of their own internal reports. The course content can be adapted to suit the needs of your individual organisation, using internal reports and accounts for discussion and analysis.

The course cost is £300 + VAT - call us to reserve your place on 00 44 (0) 1202 849691 or email education@hospa.org

24th November

Budgeting for Better Operational Performance in Hospitality

Location

London

Event Details

An important method of financial control is the comparison of planned income and expenditure with the income received and the expenses incurred.

This course focuses on budgets and forecasts, what they are, how they are formulated and how they are used within a business.

Divided into six key topic areas, the course covers:

- The purpose of budgeting
- The purpose of different operational budgets - profit and loss and cashflow
- Producing simple operational budgets
- Comparing budgeted performance with actual fixed and flexible budgets
- Rolling forecasts and beyond

The course cost is £300 + VAT - call us to reserve your place on 00 44 (0) 1202 849691

25th January

Professional Development Awards

Location

Hilton on Park Lane, London

Event Details

Join us for the HOSPA Annual Student Awards Ceremony on the 25th January 2017 commencing at 2.00pm at the prestigious Hilton on Park Lane, London

The event commences with a Panel Debate with expert participants discussing 'Developing the Hospitality Professional - the Next Generation' chaired by Professor Peter Jones MBE. We will then be celebrating the achievements of all our highest achieving learners on the HOSPA Revenue Management and Financial Management programmes with a special Afternoon Tea.

Join our HOSPA learners, guest speakers, HOSPA Board members and invited guests for this prestigious celebratory networking event.

Tickets £50.00 per person to include Afternoon Tea, speaker presentations and the Ceremony. To book your place email education@hospa.org

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Surname					
Date of Birth				Nationality	
Job Title					
Company Name					
Parent Company					
Work Address					
Postcode					
Work Email					
Work Telephone					
Work Mobile					
Home Address					
Postcode					
Home Telephone					
Mobile					
Home Email					
Correspondence Address (Please tick)	Home <input type="radio"/>	Work <input type="radio"/>			

Which grade of membership are you applying for?

You would normally be granted Ordinary status, but if you wish to be considered for a higher grade then please indicate which and ensure you submit a CV to support your application. Corporate membership is available for 5 or more colleagues. Please call +44 (0)203 4188196 to discuss or email hospa@hospa.org.

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Your Signature				Date

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HOSPA is a Community of Professionals - Promoting the highest professional standards in Financial, Revenue and IT management in the hospitality industry.

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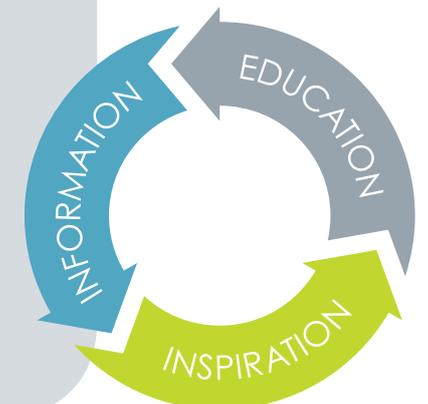
HOSPACE is also home to an Industry Specialist Solutions Exhibition - covering all aspects of your Hospitality business.

Who should attend this event?

- Senior Hospitality Business Directors
- Hospitality IT Professionals
- Financial Controllers and Accountants
- Revenue and Distribution Managers
- General and Commercial Managers
- Young aspiring employees wanting to develop their skills & meet with industry specialists

And all those interested in keeping up to date on innovations and trends in the hospitality sector and mixing with the experts!

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