

HOTEL NEWS & INFORMATION FOR TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS



PREMIER

An ABC Global Services Publication

Summer 2018



ABC ACQUIRES

GLOBAL MEETINGS
& INCENTIVES

2018 | 2019
**BUSINESS
OUTLOOK**

NEW HOTEL OPENINGS

AROUND THE GLOBE

HOTEL CHAINS EXPLORE
NEW MARKETS

SAVE YOUR
CORPORATE ACCOUNTS
REAL MONEY



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Uniquely
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OMNI HOTELS & RESORTS

EXCLUSIVE:
Save up to 15% off BAR, Free Wi-Fi
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AGENTS CHANCE TO WIN
4-night stay at any Omni Hotel or Resort + \$250 gift card.



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Americana
HOTELS & RESORTS

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AGENTS CHANCE TO WIN
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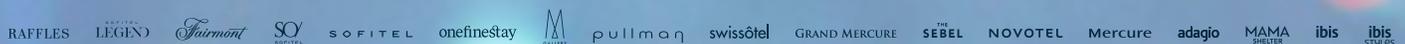
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ABC Global Services Expands into the Meeting & Event Planning Sector

Acquires Global Meetings & Incentives (GMI)

ABC Global Services recently acquired Global Meetings & Incentives (GMI), a leading provider of end-to-end meeting solutions, logistics, content management, sourcing, convention management and incentives for corporate clients and associations throughout North America and overseas. Founded in 2007, GMI quickly defined itself as a respected leader in the meetings and event space. GMI was nominated twice by Corporate Meetings & Incentive Magazine as one of the Top 25 most influential and respected companies in the meetings and events sector.

Both companies bring a long and successful history of best practices in strategic hotel sourcing and end to end meeting solutions. By combining resources on an international level, clients will gain from the combination of experience, leveraged purchasing power, innovation, creativity and infrastructure developed by these two highly respected organizations.

By partnering with GMI, ABC's agency and TMC partners will be able to compete for clients with meeting needs, as they can handle the travel aspects of meetings, while GMI manages the logistics of the meetings.

GMI will continue to operate under its own brand identity with Eli Sananes remaining as President and retaining its current organizational structure headquartered in Boca Raton, Florida with Regional Offices in Canada and Europe.

"We are excited to welcome Eli and the entire GMI team into the ABC family," said Eric Altschul, ABC's CEO. "ABC's growth in the meeting and incentive segment is a continuation of our commitment to provide additional strategic services to our clients, as well as our hotel partners globally. ABC and GMI share the same core values of surpassing customer expectation, making this union a great fit."

"For over 10 years, GMI has worked hard to create a one-of-a-kind brand and unparalleled level of service that our industry and customers demand" Eli Sananes added. "I feel Eric and his team share our vision, and I am thrilled to start this new chapter with ABC."

Contact GMI at 561-609-4266 or email info@gmimeetings.com



Hundreds of agents attended *UpClose with ABC Global Services* events this year, taking advantage of opportunities to network with ABC staff and preferred suppliers – and win fantastic prizes.

This year, we kicked off our live event series in April at the iconic **The New Yorker, A Wyndham Hotel**, from here came two more UpClose events throughout the summer. In June, Los Angeles' **Mr. C Beverly Hills** hosted our event with over 150 agents and hotel suppliers attending. In July, we closed out the series with our debut in the Mile High City at the **Grand Hyatt Denver**.

The support of partners like: **AccorHotels, Hilton, Hyatt, IHG, Marriott International, Wyndham Hotel Group, glh**, and many more, led to an enjoyable evening. Agents were treated to dozens of prizes, including hotel stays, chauffeured transportation, gift cards, rewards points and more.

Thank you to all the agents and preferred suppliers who made our UpClose events such a tremendous success once again.

The Caribbean Is Calling...

Caribbean charisma meets European boutique in this new ocean-side collaboration.

Perched 24 feet above sea level, with breathtaking views of Seven Mile Beach lies a 266-room modern paradise. Follow winding paths through secret gardens and discover a fusion of beach and bistro as you dine with your toes in the sand. Utterly unwind in the spa, with the Island's only traditional Hamman treatment and relax in the lavish co-ed jacuzzi. Then capture a sensational sunset, before taking your exclusive front row seat at our Chef's Counter, where you'll witness culinary expression at its finest.

Book the ABC preferred rate code.



SAVE YOUR CORPORATE ACCOUNTS REAL MONEY

The ABC Premier Hotel Program which gives our agency partners special access to nearly 50,000 hotels in more than 7,500 cities around the world, is providing millions of dollars in savings via its “**Better Than BAR**” program.

While ABC offers the lowest, unrestricted, flexible rates across all properties in its Premier Hotel Program, a large portion of hotels in the program offer additional savings off the best available rate, a discount sometimes as high as 35 percent. ABC recently analyzed data to help quantify the savings those discounts can mean for its partners and its partners’ clients.

To do so, ABC looked at data from over 20 key hotel providers in the program including **Best Western International, Radisson Hotel Group, Choice Hotels International, Drury Hotels, NH Hotel Group, HotelREZ, Fiesta Americana Hotels & Resorts, Millennium, TravelClick Hotels and Sabre Hospitality**. The discounts available among those providers ranged from 5 percent to 35 percent off the best available rate.

Under the assumption that 30 percent of bookings made by ABC agency partners were made using the ABC rate code (which is the only way to access available discounts) when the savings rate was applied to those bookings, it revealed more than \$17.5 million in potential savings off best available rate at those providers alone.

As such, agencies and other travel management professionals who use the ABC rate code have an easy opportunity to demonstrate real savings for their corporate accounts. More than 20,000 hotels in the program offer a discount in 2018, and those hotels are marked clearly with the “Better Than BAR” icon in ABC’s online hotel directory. Those rates, like all rates in the ABC Premier Hotel Program, all are commissionable as well.

BAR discounts are just one of the numerous benefits offered by the Premier Hotel Program. Agents using the program also get access to **Premier Perks**—amenities such as breakfast and Wi-Fi access that are included with the rate—as well as **Premier**



Better Than BAR



Privileges by ABC, which features luxury 4- and 5-star properties that also include special amenities for VIP clients. In addition, the program enables agents to book hotels in sold-out situations with its **Premier Block Space** program, and the program’s Premier Desk is on call to answer client requests related to the Block Space Program and Premier Privileges.

Agents who do not use the ABC Premier Hotel Program and the ABC rate code are missing out on a wealth of savings, perks and services for their clients. **It’s as simple as ABC: Always Book on the Code!**



New York City
has over **230** hotels
that participate in the
Better Than BAR
program



2018 is more than half over, and the hotel industry continues to show strength across most global regions that are projected to last well into next year. In the meantime, some hotel companies are trying out new group business commission policies that could have a significant impact on agencies' bottom lines.

As forecasts for 2019 begin to take shape, here are some areas to watch.

Global Performance Update

As it faces strengthening demand and limited supply growth, the U.S. hotel industry is projected to remain strong through next year.

In its most recent forecast, STR said U.S. hotel demand would be up 2.4 percent year-over-year this year and increase an additional 2 percent in 2019. Supply, meanwhile, would grow 2 percent in 2018 and by 1.9 percent in 2019. As such, occupancy will increase slightly both years, and U.S. hotels will be able to push up average daily rates by 2.5 percent in 2018 and by 2.3 percent in 2019.

Those increases will be across all hotel tiers, most strongly in the luxury tier in 2018 and the upper upscale tier in 2019, according to STR. Similarly, revenue per available room—which measures combined impact of occupancy and ADR—will be up across most of the nation's 25 largest markets both years.

U.S. occupancy likely will see a year-over-year dip this coming fall, but that will be deceiving, as the comparisons will be against the active, destructive hurricane season last year, when hotels saw increased demand from displaced residents. Unsurprisingly, Houston, which was hit by Hurricane Harvey in August, is the only Top 25 market not projected to see RevPAR growth this year.

Elsewhere in the world, most major global regions are seeing growth in

occupancy and ADR so far this year. Year-to-date through May, all regions had RevPAR growth higher than 3 percent with the exception of the Middle East and Africa, where RevPAR was down year-over-year. Of course, performance varies wildly market by market.

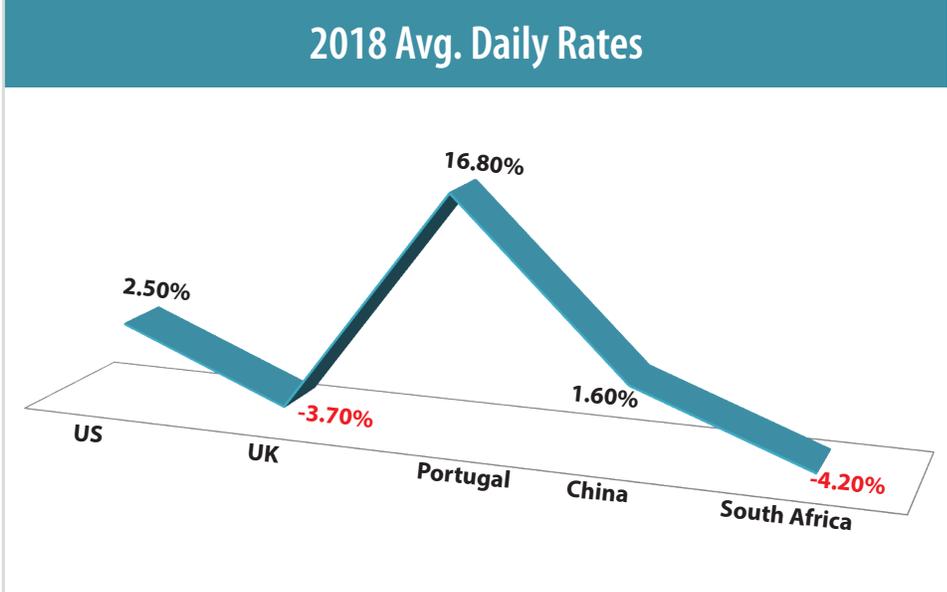
In Europe, for example, the United Kingdom saw its first year-over-year drop in monthly average daily rate in nearly two years this May, the most recent month for which STR data is available. In London, ADR was down 3.7 percent year-over-year in May, its largest May decrease in nearly a decade. Portugal, meanwhile, saw May ADR increase 16.8 percent year-over-year, the largest increase for the month that the country has seen in recorded history.

In the Asia/Pacific region, China has seen its monthly RevPAR on the rise for more than a year, with occupancy up 1.9 percent and ADR up 1.6 percent in May. Leisure business, especially on weekends, was strong in China for May, according to STR.

Japan, meanwhile, saw its second-highest occupancy for the month ever at 83.2 percent, and Vietnam also has been experiencing significant growth in both supply and demand.

Several markets in Central and South America have been seeing booming business as well. In Argentina, May occupancy reached its highest level for the month in a decade, and rates were at their highest level in about 18 months. Ecuador has been seeing a huge uptick in demand, though rates are not rising. And Panama saw its highest increase in demand in more than a year, boosted by the PIANC World Congress that it hosted in May.

Occupancy in the Middle East plummeted by 10.7 percent year-over-year in May, while occupancy in Africa was more stable, down 1.7 percent year-over-year. Average daily rate was up in both regions, however. Markets such as Egypt have been seeing continued recovery in tourism and hotel business. South Africa, however, saw



a 4.2 percent year-over-year decrease in demand, its worst decline in several years, and Cape Town in particular has been hurt by an ongoing water crisis.

Development Update

As of this summer, the Americas are leading the world in terms of hotel growth, with 6,268 hotels under development totaling more than 800,000 rooms, according to Lodging Econometrics. While the Asia/Pacific region has fewer hotels under development—more than 4,200—they are, on average, much larger properties, with more than 900,000 rooms in the region's development pipeline. In Europe, the Middle East and Africa, 2,241 hotel projects totaling 430,837 guestrooms are under development.

Globally, the lion's share of development is happening in just two countries: the United States, which accounts for 41 percent of projects under development around the world, and China, which accounts for a fifth of the global development pipeline, Lodging Econometrics reports. The next-largest development pipelines on a country-by-country basis are in Indonesia (394 projects), Germany (246 projects) and the United Kingdom (246 projects).

The cities with the most hotels under construction are New York, Dubai, Dallas, Houston and Shanghai.

Africa in recent years has drawn significant interest from major chains and hotel developers, though most of that development has been focused on a small number of markets with the continent, according to recent research by Knight Frank. South Africa alone accounts for almost a third of all the chain hotels in the continent, and much of the rest are concentrated in North Africa, major resorts, tourist islands such as the Seychelles and



The W Philadelphia / Element Philadelphia is Starwood's newest dual-branded development in the heart of Philadelphia and will open soon.

Zanzibar and key commercial cities such as Cairo and Casablanca, according to the report. Even many of the continent's major cities, including Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Khartoum, Sudan, have only a small number of branded hotels. Chains with the largest preference in Africa include **Marriott International, AccorHotels, Radisson Hotel Group**, Tsogo Sun, City Lodge and Louvre Hotels Group.

Globally, the largest hotel companies are continuing to get even larger. Marriott International in the first quarter of this year added about 15,000 rooms to its portfolio and reported a global pipeline of 2,700 hotels totaling 465,000 rooms. **InterContinental Hotels Group** as of the end of the quarter reported 1,718 hotels totaling 252,451 rooms in its portfolio.

Some companies are seeking partners to venture into new markets. **Choice Hotels**, for example, earlier this year announced plans to expand its footprint in Europe and Latin America by working with Spanish company

Sercotel Hotels, which has mid-scale and upscale properties in more than 100 markets in the regions.

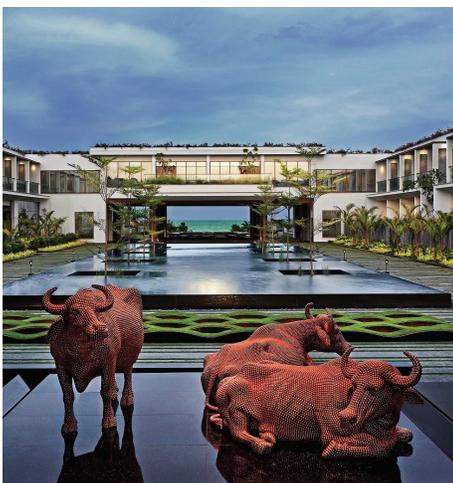
Commission Changes

Several major hotel companies have been changing their commission payment levels related to group business, a trend that is likely to continue into the new year.

At the end of March, Marriott International cut the commission rate for group business bookings from 10 percent to 7 percent across its managed and franchised properties in the United States and Canada. **Hilton** is set to do the same this October. These changes apply to business booked after those dates, not business that was already booked prior to those dates and occurs after those dates.

These commission levels are a potentially lucrative area to cut for hoteliers, as they have become a rising and significant expense. A report by Kalibri Labs indicated that about half of U.S. group business is sourced by a third party, and those commissions cost the industry about \$1.3 billion last year. However, those commissions also are crucial revenue streams for agencies and other third parties, who will need to find other sources to make up the shortfall.

Of course, every action can cause an equal and opposite reaction. Several boutique hotels and smaller chains have announced they will be upping group commissions in an effort to woo new business. **Dream Hotel Group**, for example, in April said it was offering a 12 percent commission for groups and meetings that are booked and occur this year. Individual hotels that have recently offered commission-boosting promotions include **Eden Roc Miami Beach, Nobu Hotel Miami Beach, Nobu Hotel Los Cabos, Eldorado Hotel & Spa in Santa Fe and Plaza Hotel & Casino** in Las Vegas, according to *Meetings Today*.



Marriott International added about 15,000 rooms to its portfolio and reported a global pipeline of 2,700 hotels including the new Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel Convention Center in India.

PREMIERE

Openings

INTRODUCING NEW HOTEL OPENINGS AROUND THE GLOBE

SLS Baha Mar - Nassau, Bahamas



An irresistible Bahamian retreat for the most discerning global traveler. Book ABC for 10% off BAR.

Hotel Figueroa - Los Angeles, CA



A former women's hostelry re-emerges inspired by its original Spanish Colonial aesthetic. Book ABC for 10% off BAR & more.

San Francisco Proper Hotel - San Francisco, CA



A rich pastiche of colors, textures and styles at the intersection of Market, McAllister, and Jones streets. Book ABC for 10% off BAR & Free Wi-Fi.

Drury Hotels - Pittsburgh, PA



From historic to modern, discover two new hotels at 10% off BAR with free best-in-class amenities.

Freepoint Hotel - Cambridge, MA



An exciting departure from the ordinary hotel experience in captivating Cambridge, Massachusetts. Book ABC for 20% off BAR & Free Wi-Fi.

Bianca Sands on Grace Bay - Providenciales, Turks & Caicos



Full service luxury oceanfront resort with \$100 resort credit, free full breakfast and more.

See our Premiere Openings and Grand Opening Offers at www.ABCGlobalServices.com

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INN

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SUITES

PROTEA HOTELS

moxy
HOTELS

spg
Starwood
Preferred
Guest



ST REGIS

THE
LUXURY
COLLECTION

W
HOTELS

WESTIN

Sheraton

MERIDIEN

TRIBUTE
PORTFOLIO

DESIGN
HOTELS

aloft

FOUR
POINTS

element

HOTEL CHAINS EXPLORE NEW MARKETS

Some of the biggest names in the hotel industry are stretching beyond their usual boundaries with their business plans. With projects underway including home-sharing ventures, an overhaul of an iconic brand and worldwide expansion through new licensing, here are a few hotel companies that are trying a little something different.



Marriott's Plans for Sheraton:

Marriott International has announced an ambitious plan to revamp one of its largest brands, **Sheraton Hotels and Resorts**, centered around transforming lobbies into more communal spaces.



Sheraton Hotels and Resorts Transformation Vision

Features of those lobbies will include comfy seating, tables with lockable drawers for guests to temporarily store personal devices and areas for small meetings bookable through Marriott's mobile app. The lobbies also will feature a bar that serves both coffee during daylight hours and alcoholic beverages at night.

Marriott's plans include new amenities for guestrooms as well, such as adjustable desks that can accommodate guests who want to work while either sitting or standing, and larger bathrooms with an LED-lit vanity.

So far, about 25 percent of Sheraton hotels around the world have committed to the redesign, and some already have begun work. Marriott estimates about \$500 million in renovations across Sheraton's U.S. hotels already has been pledged.

Sheraton, which Marriott took over as part of its acquisition of Starwood Hotels and Resorts, currently has about 450 hotels across 70 countries.



Caesars Bets on Non-Gambling:

Known worldwide for its casinos, **Caesars Entertainment** has begun branching out into

non-gaming projects, offering up four of its brands for global licensing.

The licensing will include Caesars Palace as an "approachable luxury" brand, The Cromwell as a boutique-style luxury brand, Flamingo as a "vibrant retro-chic" upscale brand and LINQ as an upscale select-service brand.

Even before the licensing announcement, Caesars had already announced its first non-gaming resorts were in development. In April,

the company said it was developing two hotels in Dubai as well as a luxury beachfront resort in Puerto Los Cabos, Mexico, via a partnership with Grupo Questro.

"Our commitment to these two exciting projects demonstrates the demand for Caesars brands in five-star destinations," according to Caesars Entertainment CEO Mark Frissora. "This is only the beginning of what we believe will be continued progress against our strategy to expand the company's non-gaming and gaming businesses presence in a capital-efficient manner."



IHG Gives New Upscale Brand Details: InterContinental Hotels Group

has launched a new upscale brand, **voco**, which it promises will "combine the informality and charm of an individual hotel with the quality and reassurance of a global and respected brand."

With its name deriving from the Latin for "come together" or "to invite," voco is focusing its branding on client experiences in a stay. They include a simple check-in featuring a locally influenced treat, comfortable bedding and high-quality amenities to encourage guest



Voco fireplace

"me time" and exciting bar and lounge spaces. The brand largely will focus on converting existing hotels.

Earlier this year, IHG announced an agreement with **Covivio** to rebrand and operate 12 of its hotels as well as one under development across the United Kingdom, which it will use to boost the voco brand. In addition, it has signed the 388-room Watermaker Hotel & Spa Gold Coast in Surfers Paradise, Australia, to open under the voco flag later this year.

In all, IHG expects to open more than 200 voco hotels around the world over the next 10 years.

Hotels Embrace Home-Sharing:

As Airbnb's popularity grows, several major hotel companies are taking the home-sharing service on directly by investing in the model.



AccorHotels jumped into the segment in 2016 with its acquisition of luxury rental brand **Onefinestay**. It boosted that portfolio last year with the acquisition of **Travel Keys** and **Squarebreak**, which it folded into Onefinestay. Earlier this year, it announced its new "Higher Living" loyalty program, which it describes as a butler-like service that can help arrange photographers, catering and other key services during a stay.



Hyatt last year made its own investment into **Oasis**, which is a collection of high-end home sharing that includes hotel-like features such as concierge services and in-person check-in. In recent months, Hyatt announced that members of its World of Hyatt loyalty program could earn and redeem points with Oasis.

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