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JULY 2023

VOL 16 | ISSUE 3 | PAGES 20



'We are exploring opportunities to expand our brand internationally'


PG 4 ▶

Indian Hospitality Industry Unlocking Ancillary Revenue Potential



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‘We plan to secure a significant market share in the Semi-premium whisky segment by 2024’



With a rich heritage spanning over 40 years since its establishment in 1983, the House of Khemani has become a prominent name in the alcoholic beverages industry. Through strategic acquisitions, key partnerships, and a commitment to innovation, the Khemani Group has achieved remarkable milestones, solidifying its position as a force to be reckoned with in the brewing and spirits market. **Asmita Mukherjee** spoke with **Amit Ghatak, CMO, Khemani Group** to know more about their future plans.

While speaking about their hero product Ghatak stated that one of the crown jewels in the House of Khemani’s portfolio is the esteemed Royal Special whisky brand, which holds a formidable position in Western India. The group’s long-standing master bottling agreement with industry giants Diageo and InBrew further underscores its influence, as it is entrusted to bottle their renowned whiskies in its state-of-the-art distillery.

One of its notable achievements is the acquisition of Blossom Industries Limited in 2000, which consolidated the group’s position as a major brewer, said Ghatak. He added, “This strategic move, coupled with a master bottling agreement with Diageo and InBrew, has significantly enhanced the group’s production capabilities and market presence. Blossom Industries, with its brewing capacity of 1 million cases per month, has become a cornerstone of the group’s success.”

While shedding light on the capacity of Khemani Group, Ghatak informed, “At the heart of the House of Khemani’s operations lies a cutting-edge facility known for its production of potable grade ethyl alcohol. Boasting a daily capacity of

71KL, this advanced facility emphasizes the group’s commitment to sustainability. Equipped with a Zero Discharge system, the company is dedicated to preserving and protecting natural resources, exemplifying its environmental responsibility.”

Ghatak pointed out that a major milestone in the House of Khemani’s journey was the acquisition of Blossoms Industries Limited (BIL) in 2000, a move that solidified its position as a significant player in the brewing industry. “This strategic step, combined with a subsequent partnership with UBL (United Breweries Limited), owned by Heineken, further enhanced the group’s standing in the market. With BIL’s brewing capacity reaching an impressive 1 million cases per month, the House of Khemani has firmly established itself as a force to be reckoned with in the brewing industry. The group has achieved several key milestones throughout its history. These include the notable expansion of Blossom Industries’ capacity from 50,000 to 300,000 cases per month in 2007, ultimately reaching an impressive 1 million cases per month in 2023. In 2014, the group forged a valuable partnership with FOGG, a significant manufacturer responsible

for over 90% of their national sales. The year 2015 witnessed our successful entry into the Silvassa market with its array of brands. Additionally, 2018 proved to be a momentous year as Royal Special Whisky achieved the coveted status of a millionaire brand.”

Looking towards the future, the House of Khemani aims to expand its reach beyond Daman, Diu, Silvassa and Gujarat (DDSG) for the first time, with plans to launch in other regions of the country. Ghatak added, “The first state of expansion will be Madhya Pradesh in 2023, with numerous brand and market initiatives slated for the next 12-18 months. This strategic move is poised to tap into the immense potential of these cities and leverage the growing aspirations of the middle-class consumers.”

Speaking about the new launches he said, “We are confident in our ability to achieve our objectives and secure a significant market share in the Semi-premium whisky segment by 2024. We would also look forward to first introduce the brand in our home markets of DDSG and then further work towards introducing in a few states in North and East over the next 12 months.” ■

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Andhra Pradesh CM lays foundation stone for Oberoi group’s seven-star hotel at Gandikota

HBI Staff | Hyderabad

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister NYS Jagan Mohan Reddy has virtually laid the foundation stones for the construction of three 7-star Oberoi Hotels at Gandikota, Visakhapatnam, and Tirupati in the state. In a ground-breaking ceremony in Gandikota, senior officials on behalf of the Government and Vikram Oberoi, Managing Director of Oberoi group, exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the presence of the CM. The MoU was signed during an international global summit in March

2023 at Vishakapatnam.

The Chief Minister, while participating in the Bhoomi Puja said, “The construction of the Oberoi Hotel and Resort would help Gandikota, known as the Grand Canyon of India, find a place on the world tourism map.”

“The project would provide direct and indirect employment to 500 to 800 persons, besides boosting development in and around Gandikota, and the Oberoi Hotel and Resort would play an anchor role in attracting more projects,” he added.

The CM has requested Vikram Oberoi to explore the possibility of setting up a golf course in Gandikota. ■

CG Hospitality Holdings Member Concept Hospitality, a leading player in the Indian hospitality industry, recently celebrated a major milestone with the launch of its 100th hotel. The brand has been strategically investing to expand its presence and venture into new regions. With seven hotels already opened in the current fiscal year and plans to add 13 more, Concept Hospitality aims to offer a total of 1,000 keys to guests. The Eastern and North-eastern markets of India will be the primary focus for these new additions, leveraging their significant growth potential and providing geographical diversification. Looking ahead, Concept Hospitality envisions a steady growth trajectory, focusing on expanding their existing brands and delivering exceptional guest experiences. Additionally, Concept Hospitality is contemplating its international debut in the near future, reflecting their ambitions for global expansion. In a conversation with **Asmita Mukherjee, Param Kannampilly, Chairman and Managing Director of Concept Hospitality**, sheds light on the brand's strategies for achieving sustained growth.



‘We are exploring opportunities to expand our brand internationally’

Eyeing MENA Region and Neighbouring Countries such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal

Q With the recent investment expansion, could you elaborate on the areas or regions where Concept Hospitality plans to focus its investments? Are there any new geographical areas or regions that Concept Hospitality is planning to prioritise for its future expansion efforts? What factors influenced these investment decisions?

We have been strategically expanding our investments to diversify our presence in different regions. In the current fiscal year, we have already opened seven hotels. Our focus for these

new additions will primarily be in the Eastern and North-eastern markets of India. We believe these regions offer significant growth potential and present an opportunity for geographical diversification.

Q Could you provide some insights into the target customer segments, specific markets that Concept Hospitality aims to cater to with its expanding portfolio of hotels?

Concept Hospitality caters to a wide range of customer segments through

our diverse portfolio of brands. The Fern Hotels & Resorts cater to the 5-star segment, Fern Residency offers a 4-star experience, Beacon serves the economy segment, and Zinc Journey by the Fern provides an upscale lifestyle experience. Additionally, we have Fern Habitat, which offers upscale service apartments. With this comprehensive brand portfolio, we aim to cater to various customer segments across different markets. While our recent expansion has focused on the Eastern and North-eastern markets, we strive to cater to customers in diverse locations across India.

Q As the industry trend leans towards being asset-light, Concept Hospitality has been following this approach from the beginning. Are there any other business models that the company is considering or planning to explore in the future? In terms of the business model, how does Concept Hospitality envision its future growth and expansion?

Concept Hospitality has been successfully implementing the asset-light model, which focuses on operations and maintenance. This approach has served us well, and we will continue to follow it. However, we are also exploring new management model strategies to gain more brand traction in the northern and eastern parts of India, where our presence is currently not as significant. We are considering the implementation of a variable lease and revenue share model, which will allow us to partner with discerning owners who seek brand tie-ups. This model presents a win-win situation for both the owner and the operator, providing higher upside rewards for the owner. We believe this strategy will support our future growth and expansion plans.

Q How many new properties has Concept Hospitality introduced this year, and what are the company's future plans in terms of property growth in the long run?

This year, Concept Hospitality has successfully launched seven new hotels, with plans to unveil an additional 13 properties, resulting in a total of 1,000 keys being added to the portfolio. Looking ahead, we envision steady property growth in the long run. As for new brands, while we currently have a diverse portfolio of five brands, we are always open to exploring new opportunities. Our focus remains on expanding our existing brands and delivering exceptional experiences to our guests.

Q Have you observed an increasing demand from Tier-III cities recently? How does Concept Hospitality view the potential in these cities, and are there any specific strategies to tap into this market segment?

Tier-III cities have shown significant potential and emerging opportunities for the hospitality industry. We recognise the demand from these cities and believe in their growth prospects. Concept Hospitality views Tier-III cities as an important market segment to tap into. While our recent expansion has primarily focused on the Eastern and North-eastern markets, we are actively exploring opportunities in Tier-III cities across India. We aim to strategically position our brands in these cities, catering to the evolving demands and preferences of travellers in these regions.

Q What are Concept Hospitality's long-term goals and visions for the future? Are there any upcoming projects or milestones that the company is particularly

excited about?

Concept Hospitality's long-term goals and vision revolve around sustainable growth, delivering exceptional guest experiences, and maintaining a strong brand presence. We aim to expand our portfolio of hotels across various regions in India while upholding our commitment to quality and service excellence. We have made a significant stride this year by successfully inaugurating seven new hotels. The brand has an ambitious plan to introduce an additional 13 properties, thereby expanding its portfolio by 1,000 keys. These additions, particularly in the Eastern and North-eastern markets, will further strengthen our presence and contribute to our growth trajectory. Additionally, we are exploring opportunities to expand our brand internationally, with a focus on the MENA region and neighbouring countries such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

Q As Concept Hospitality continues to expand its presence, how does the company ensure maintaining high-quality standards across its portfolio of hotels?

Maintaining high-quality standards is a top priority for Concept Hospitality. We have stringent quality control processes and standards in place that are followed across our portfolio of hotels. Our dedicated quality assurance teams regularly assess and monitor each property to ensure adherence to our established standards. We also provide comprehensive training programs to our staff to enhance their skills and ensure consistent service quality. By maintaining a strong focus on quality control, we can deliver a consistent and exceptional guest experience across all our hotels. ■

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OF REAL MEAT AND TOFFEE

Industry meets need to step out of the usual routine and open up to proactively changing ground situations outside their usual domain.

Let's face it. On the best of our city roads speed limits are enforced not as much by laws as by sheer traffic congestion.

Tourism is all about perception. And let's get real- the perception of India is not good. How do we alter it- since tourism will be the direct beneficiary of better conditions of road driving?

If people behave better on the city metro trains it is because the rules are clear, unambiguous, and enforced strictly. There are similar rules for the highways and city roads but they don't seem to work. What prevents our travel associations and pressure groups from making presentations to police, and local governments and chalking out plans for stricter enforcement of laws?

Often during travel association meets and conventions the main focus is on extracting concessions, benefits, and support from government sources. There is, however, a sporadic and perfunctory effort to educate members about opportunities of business as well.

The essential element of community responsibility to ensure discipline in civic life remains distant on any agenda. In fact, it is seen as irrelevant and superfluous to the industry's domain, priority and focus. 'It's the government's job' is the usual refrain.

Perhaps the time has come when travel meets turn their attention to larger issues than mere bread and butter. The interesting thing is that by going beyond their brief, the chances of ultimately influencing larger and better outcomes that benefit the business grow exponentially. Such efforts are not a token toffee but it's the real meat on the table.

A disciplined nation on the roads directly becomes a magnet for tourists. The most important and relevant aspect of disciplined traffic is that it becomes the springboard for a sense of regularity and compliance in all other aspects of life as well. Now that real-time travel industry meets is happening once again I hope they set aside special sessions to explore these options.

Indeed, there are enough brains in the fraternity to determine how exactly.



Anurag Yadav
Industry Expert

Anurag Yadav is a travel author and columnist, writing on hospitality and design. An avid traveller, he has published five books and divides his time equally between Delhi and London.

The views expressed in the column are of the author, and may or may not be endorsed by the publication.

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Printed and Published by Sheldon Eric Santwan On Behalf Of Saffron Synergies Pvt. Ltd, Printed At Indigo Press (India) Private Limited, 1c/716, 21 Bharat Crown Compound, A.G. Pawar Marg, Dadoji Konddeo X Road, Ghodapdev, Byculla (East), Mumbai 400 027 And Published From Saffron Synergies Pvt. Ltd. 902, Cozy Apartments Chs Ltd. Yari Road, Versova, Andheri (West), Mumbai 400 061. **Editor : Sheldon Eric Santwan**

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'Our focus area continues to be the hills'



Onora Hospitality began its voyage in 2005 as a service apartments company, gradually evolving into small and medium-sized hotels across various formats. However, the COVID-19 pandemic brought forth unforeseen challenges, compelling the company to reconsider its business strategy and adapt to the new normal. **Ashish Vohra, Founder & CEO, Onora Hospitality Pvt Ltd.** recognised that domestic travel would be at the forefront for the foreseeable future, leading to a strategic shift towards catering to the domestic market. In a conversation with **Asmita Mukherjee**, Vohra discusses the company's journey, its response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the strategic decisions that have shaped its future.

Speaking about the deluge in domestic travel Vohra said, "The first realisation was that domestic travel would hold the pole position for the next couple of years. So, not only did we open new resorts in the hills, for the first time we also set up a domestic sales focused team.

To capitalise the opportunity we realigned our entire product portfolio from only city hotels to include hill resorts as well. We also expanded our portfolio with further openings in Goa and certain locations in South India in order to have a more spread out national footprint. The company profile, which had a balance between city and resort hotels, gradually tilted towards resort hotels and that has helped keep us in a good position in the last financial year.

As far as exiting six hotels is concerned, I think adversity tests your relationships. Things were not working out with some of our hotel partners during the pandemic and therefore we decided to exit those hotels."

Speaking about the company's strategic investments, Vohra emphasized Onora Hospitality's focus areas and target regions. "Our focus area continues to be the hills, certain religious pilgrimage focused locations, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Chikmagalur, Ooty, Coorg and the whole Nilgiri Biosphere. We are also open to specific territories such as Pondicherry and Goa. Now that we have entered Kerala with a hotel in Munnar, we are looking at an expansion in the state because it's a circuit-based destination."

"The way we look at an entry strategy is to work on a hub and spoke model. If we see a larger game plan over a period of 2-3 years, we start investing our money, time and marketing resources towards that hub and spoke model so that we are able to manage it properly and not expand anywhere and

everywhere," he explained.

Among the notable brands under Onora Hospitality's umbrella, jüSta Hotels & Resorts has established a strong presence in India's luxury resorts market. Vohra attributed this success to their unwavering focus on brand development, digital marketing, and strengthening their sales force. "We must be on the right path because in a matter of almost two years, any agent or partners who are looking for a resort experience is definitely calling us at some touch point or the other. As the touch points increase, the relationships strengthen and hence the network strengthens. From a guest point of view at our existing hotels, the focus at each of these locations has



been on delivering great experiences. Be it children or adults, what the guests do that they haven't been able to do in a city situation is what the focus of all the resorts has been.

Currently, our focus is on how to open new markets and opportunities, to leverage our chain strength and enter the South India market and hold a pole position because there are very few chain hotels that have 10 hotels in the hills and the South would be our mainstay for a while."

The recent foray into the wellbeing resorts segment marks an exciting development for Onora Hospitality, as they introduce their brand, Bookmark Resorts. Vohra expressed the company's motivation behind this venture by saying, "We have recently

launched the first Bookmark Resort in Manali. We have also signed deals for two more Resorts in Mussoorie and Chail, which will open by the end of this financial year. We are also looking at expanding the Bookmark Resorts chain in Goa, Kerala, Coorg and other parts of India. Currently, wellbeing resorts in India are either at premium level and price points or at a very basic level of service. Given how people are focussing on wellbeing, we wished to bring a luxury, target oriented, holistic wellness offering to a larger audience. Through Bookmark Resorts, we will offer holistic journeys of healing and rejuvenation through practices like Yoga and Meditation as well as international Spa Treatments curated by domain experts, complimented by nourishing food and beverage and unique outdoor excursions."

Within their diverse portfolio, Onora Hospitality also features the NUO brand, which presents a unique concept in the form of a community-focused, modern business hotel. "The NUO brand is very unique. It's a community-focused, modern, cutting-edge concept. The whole vibe of the brand is very young and modern. At our existing NUO hotel in Delhi, we have noticed that it appeals largely to the youth. Hence, we are trying to put together an F&B concept there to make it more vibrant. We are in talks with some people in Amritsar and Gurugram for setting up NUO," he added.

Looking ahead, Onora Hospitality's focus is set on the upcoming opening of Bookmark Resorts in Manali, Vohra informed. "We have done a soft launch recently and will be formally launching it in October. So, all our energies are focused on ensuring that we have a fantastic opening and a successful first season," he concluded. ■

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'Nirula's intends to reach a larger customer base and compete effectively with other players in the industry'

In a bid to recapture its position as a pioneer in the fast food industry, Nirula's has announced an ambitious expansion plan to open over 250 outlets across India by 2023. The renowned fast food chain aims to reclaim its market share, which has been eroded by multinational corporations (MNCs) and new entrants in the industry. The brand currently operates 130+ outlets in the Delhi NCR region, all of which provide the complete ice cream parlour experience alongside a diverse range of food options. **Asmita Mukherjee** spoke with **Sumedha Singhal, Director of Marketing, Nirula's** to know their strategy for the rapid expansion.



and what percentage of them offer the complete ice cream parlour experience?

In the Delhi NCR region, Nirula's currently has 130+ outlets. These outlets are distributed across various locations such as clubs (NSCI, Friends Club, Delhi Golf Club, Delhi Gymkhana), physical outlets, and outlets within convenience stores (24/7 and Smart Bazaar). Importantly, all of these outlets offer the complete ice cream parlor experience to customers. Whether you visit a club, a standalone outlet, or an outlet within a convenience store, you can expect to enjoy the full range of ice cream parlor offerings that Nirula's provides.

Nirula's is expanding its presence through the shop-in-shop format in convenience stores and has about 8 outlets in such locations. The strategic focus of these outlets is to cater to late-night binge eaters. As a result, the menu at these convenience store outlets is limited to the ice cream parlor offerings and momos, a popular street food item. By targeting late-night customers, Nirula's aims to provide convenient and satisfying food options for those seeking a late-night snack or treat. This business model allows Nirula's to leverage the existing infrastructure and footfall of convenience stores to reach a broader customer base and meet the specific preferences of late-night diners.

What is the main objective behind Nirula's aggressive expansion plan with 250+ outlets in India by 2023?

The main objective behind Nirula's aggressive expansion plan with 250+ outlets in India by 2023 is to regain the market share that has been lost to multinational corporations (MNCs) and new entrants in the industry. Nirula's aims to recapture its position as a pioneer in the fast food industry in India, particularly among the residents of Delhi. As one of the first establishments to introduce concepts like fast food, pizzas, burgers, and ice cream parlors to Delhiites, Nirula's seeks to reclaim its significance and ensure that it receives its fair share of the market. By expanding its presence with numerous outlets, Nirula's intends to reach a larger customer base and compete effectively with other players in the industry.

In the Delhi NCR region, how many outlets does Nirula's currently have,

Apart from ice cream, what other food options does Nirula's offer in its outlets that serve both ice cream and food?

Apart from ice cream, Nirula's offers a diverse range of food options in its outlets that serve both food and ice cream. Approximately 70% of the outlets provide this combination. Nirula's aims to cater to families where each member may have different culinary preferences. To fulfill this objective, the menu includes a variety of cuisines. Customers can enjoy Italian options such as pizzas and pasta, American favorites like burgers and chops, Continental delights like momos and sandwiches, as well as Indian dishes like wraps, biryani, and meal bowls. This wide selection ensures that there is something for everyone, allowing families to dine together and satisfy their individual cravings at Nirula's outlets.

How is Nirula's planning to expand its presence through the shop-in-shop format in convenience stores? Could you please elaborate on your business model?

Which cities are currently undergoing expansion efforts by Nirula's, besides Goa, Kolkata, Jammu, Hyderabad, Pune, and Chennai? What are your future plans for further expansion?

In addition to Goa, Kolkata, Jammu, Hyderabad, Pune, and Chennai, Nirula's is currently undergoing expansion efforts in various cities. These include Bangalore, Mohali, Indore, Moradabad, Patna, Kanpur, and Lucknow.

Looking ahead, Nirula's has plans for further expansion in cities like Goa and Hyderabad, with the goal of launching these outlets by August. Moreover, Nirula's has started targeting airports as well and has already opened outlets in Banaras and Visakhapatnam. The company aims to continue this trend by opening outlets at Udaipur and Vadodara airports before the end of July. These expansion plans reflect Nirula's commitment to reaching new markets and serving customers in different cities and airport locations. ■

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In recent years, the Indian hospitality industry has witnessed a revolution in ancillary revenue generation. Ancillary revenue, which refers to the additional income generated from non-room sources, has become an essential component of the financial success and sustainability of hotels. To explore this revolution and its impact on the industry, **Asmita Mukherjee** spoke with key industry leaders who have implemented successful strategies to maximize ancillary revenue in their hotels.



Indian Hospitality Industry: Unlocking Ancillary Revenue Potential

DIVERSIFYING REVENUE STREAMS

Sarbendra Sarkar, Founder & Managing Director of Cygnett Hotels & Resorts, emphasizes the significance of ancillary revenue in the hospitality industry. He highlights that ancillary revenue allows hotels to diversify their income streams beyond room rates, mitigating risks associated with fluctuations in occupancy rates or seasonal demand. By offering additional products and services, hotels tap into new revenue sources, ultimately increasing profitability and financial performance. Sarkar also stresses the higher profit margins associated with ancillary services compared to room rates, making them a lucrative revenue stream.

Rahul Joshi, General Manager of Taj Hotel & Convention Centre in Agra, said “Our ancillary revenue serves as a means to enhance the overall guest experience and embodying our unwavering commitment to delivering a world-class stay that exceeds expectations.” He added that ancillary revenue plays a vital role in enhancing the overall guest experience, offering services

and amenities that create a personalized and memorable stay. The hotel focuses on various strategies to maximise ancillary revenue, including special F&B offerings, curated stay packages, tailor-made celebrations, unique dining experiences, and guided tours and city excursions. These initiatives contribute significantly to the hotel’s financial growth.

Kush Kapoor, CEO of & Resorts, Roseate Hotels echoes similar thoughts stating that, “Ancillary revenues are growing and an important part of our business mix.” Roseate Hotels & Resorts have implemented various initiatives to generate ancillary revenue, such as hampers for festive gifting, mithai (sweets) for celebrations and gifting, outdoor catering, in-flight catering to private jets, coworking spaces, short-term courses, tea, coffee, and fragrance appreciation sessions, summer camps, and lifestyle products. These initiatives have significantly contributed to the hotel’s financial growth.

Mainak Ray, Director of Sales, Sheraton Grand Bengaluru at Brigade Gateway recognizes the importance of ancillary revenue in maintaining top-line performance, especially during lean months and off-seasons.” It helps offset the impact of factors like reduced international travel and periods with low demand, ensuring financial stability and diversification beyond traditional revenue sources,” he said. The hotel implements strategies such as target-driven incentive plans to promote accountability and motivate staff to actively identify and capitalize on upselling, cross-selling, and additional service opportunities. Ancillary revenue streams that significantly contribute to the hotel’s financial growth include laundry services, room upgrades, F&B package upsells, and transportation packages.

Mandar Abhyankar, CRME Portfolio Revenue



Sarbendra Sarkar
Founder & MD
Cygnett Hotels & Resorts



Rahul Joshi
General Manager,
Taj Hotel & Convention Centre in Agra



Kush Kapoor
CEO & Resorts
Roseate Hotels

Manager – Southwest Asia, Holiday Inn Hotels, highlights the critical role of ancillary revenue in a hotel's overall revenue mix. "The revenue generated will depend on nature of ancillary revenue making opportunities the hotel has, especially in terms of facilities and services that the hotel can provide," he informed.

He also emphasised on the importance of considering both minor operating departments (e.g., laundry, spa, transportation) and major revenue-generating areas like meeting rooms and banquets when assessing ancillary revenue opportunities.

STRATEGIES FOR MAXIMIZING ANCILLARY REVENUE

At Cygnett Hotels & Resorts, the focus is on creating attractive package deals that bundle room rates with specific ancillary services or amenities. Sarkar mentions the importance of training front desk and reservation staff to upsell and cross-sell ancillary services during the booking process and check-in. By simplifying the booking process and allowing guests to add ancillary services directly to their reservations, the hotel aims to provide a convenient and seamless experience. Successful ancillary revenue streams at Cygnett Hotels & Resorts include spa treatments, room upgrades, and local sightseeing options.

To assess the effectiveness of ancillary revenue initiatives, Taj Hotel & Convention Centre tracks key performance indicators such as revenue per available room (RevPAR) for ancillary services, average spend per guest on ancillary offerings, conversion rates for upselling or cross-selling opportunities, customer satisfaction scores related to ancillary services, and repeat business and guest loyalty metrics. Balancing the need to generate ancillary revenue with providing a positive guest experience is essential for the hotel. By offering a range of add-on amenities and services, Taj Hotel & Convention Centre caters to guests' diverse preferences and needs, ultimately driving higher guest loyalty and positive recommendations.

To maximize ancillary revenue, Holiday Inn Hotels focuses on various strategies such as attaching non-room revenue services with room rates, offering value-add packages, and identifying upselling opportunities throughout the guest journey. Laundry services and transportation have been successful ancillary revenue streams for the hotel.

TRACKING SUCCESS

To assess the effectiveness of ancillary revenue initiatives, Sarkar mentions the use of key performance indicators (KPIs) such as Ancillary Revenue per Available Room (ARPAR) and conversion rates. ARPAR measures the average revenue generated from ancillary services per available room, providing insights into the overall effectiveness of ancillary revenue initiatives. Conversion rates, on the other hand, help assess the effectiveness of marketing efforts, sales techniques, and promotional strategies in driving guest engagement with ancillary offerings. Sarkar also emphasizes the importance of guest feedback in evaluating the effectiveness of ancillary revenue initiatives.

Abhyankar explains, "Tracking metrics like room upsell revenue as a percentage of overall room revenue helps gauge performance. Other KPIs include laundry revenue per available room, transport revenue per available room, and total other operating departments revenue per available room."

While on the other hand to assess the effectiveness of ancillary revenue initiatives, Roseate Hotels & Resorts focuses on guest feedback, repeat business, and referrals. Kapoor highlights the



Mainak Ray
Director of Sales
Sheraton Grand Bengaluru,
Brigade Gateway



Mandar Abhyankar
CRME Portfolio Revenue
Manager – Southwest Asia,
Holiday Inn Hotels

importance of providing a positive guest experience while generating ancillary revenue. The hotel strives to ensure that guests have a superlative experience, whether they are staying at the hotel or using its products and services.

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

Technological advancements play a crucial role in enhancing ancillary revenue generation efforts. Sarkar mentions the use of apps to monitor guest preferences and deliver customized services at their doorstep. Data capture throughout the guest cycle allows the hotel to monitor and record guest preferences, enabling the delivery of tailor-made services. Email marketing, personalized offers, and guest loyalty programs are also utilized to tailor promotions based on guest profiles and previous stays.

Looking to the future, Sarkar anticipates that technology-driven solutions, such as apps enabling doorstep delivery and customized services, will shape the evolution of ancillary revenue. By continuously evaluating guest data and closely following industry trends, Cygnett Hotels & Resorts aims to define a robust ancillary revenue strategy.

Ray highlighted the importance of technology, "Implementing a dedicated software platform that leverages data from frontline systems and focusing on key performance indicators (KPIs) drive revenue and deliver superior service."

FUTURE TRENDS

The future of ancillary revenue in the Indian hospitality industry is expected to be driven by technology and changing consumer preferences. Mobile apps for convenient service delivery, customization based on guest preferences, and capturing guest data to tailor offerings are anticipated to be significant trends.

Ray anticipates that "ancillary revenue will undergo changes with a focus on budgeting, in-house services, and being end-to-end service providers. Hotels will invest in expanding their own ancillary services to meet evolving guest needs."

Abhyankar expects that ancillary revenue will continue to be an integral part of total revenue optimization. The focus is on strategic approaches, involving stakeholders, and leveraging technology to drive ancillary revenue growth.

Ancillary revenue is no longer an afterthought but a strategic priority for hotels in India and beyond. As the industry evolves, embracing innovation and adapting to changing trends will be essential for sustained growth and financial success. ■

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in



In the realm of real estate and hospitality, Rhythm ResiTel stands out as a trailblazer, reshaping the landscape with its innovative approach to investment and guest experiences. With a clear vision and mission, Rhythm ResiTel strives to align the perfect capital structure with hospitality assets, enabling scalability and long-term success. In a conversation with **Asmita Mukherjee, Vaibhav Jatia, the Managing Director of Rhythm ResiTel**, shared insights into their unique offerings and future plans.

Rhythm ResiTel: Pioneering Hospitality Investments and Experiences in India and Beyond

He emphasised their vision of creating a scalable future for hospitality assets by attracting the right capital structure. Recognizing that hospitality assets require patient and long-term capital, Rhythm ResiTel taps into the retail network of High Net Worth Individuals (HNIs) and Non-Resident Indian (NRI) investors. By offering individual suites within hotels and resorts, Rhythm ResiTel not only attracts the right capital structure but also provides individuals with a lucrative property investment opportunity, yielding higher income compared to residential apartments or commercial assets. This approach enables Rhythm ResiTel to transform the hospitality asset class into a sustainable and profitable venture.

Rhythm ResiTel's current portfolio boasts unique resort properties located in picturesque destinations across India. Elaborating on their portfolio Jatia said, "Currently we are owning and operating properties in Lonavala, Kumarakom in Kerala and in Gurgaon. We look for destinations with good demand – supply fundamentals for hospitality going forward. ie markets where the demand for hospitality outstrips supply of current inventory. So these would be well known tourist destinations near major metros, hill stations or alternatively regions where the commercial / business growth (such as Gurgaon) ensures good long term demand for hospitality assets." He also added that their existing Rhythm brand focuses on the affordable luxury segment, offering 4-star and 5-star hotels and resorts equipped with excellent banqueting spaces, delectable dining options, rejuvenating spas, stylish lounges, and engaging activity areas for children.

Looking ahead, Rhythm ResiTel is actively involved in developing upcoming projects in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and beyond. Jatia highlighted their ventures in Matheran and Ganpatipule in Maharashtra, as well as Coorg in Karnataka and Udaipur in Rajasthan. "Currently we are developing resorts in Matheran and Ganpatipule in Maharashtra and in Coorg and Udaipur in other states of India. Project in Matheran is in partnership with the State Government's

tourism department i.e Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC). Ganpatipule is an upcoming tourist attraction in Maharashtra's coastal belt given improved connectivity via road, rail and air travel as well. Coorg and Udaipur and both well-established leisure locations in Karnataka and Rajasthan respectively and are both popular destinations for family leisure, destination weddings and corporate MICE activities," Jatia stated.

Investing in Rhythm ResiTel properties ensures a hassle-free and enjoyable experience for individuals. Jatia explained the process, stating, Individual retail buyers buy individual units on sale and lease back basis. "They are becoming owners of individual suites via clear property ownership documents. Further through the lease back arrangement with Rhythm they have an opportunity to include their units into the rental pool of the resort, giving them regular income and ability to enjoy their property in a hassle free / maintenance free manner as a convenient vacation home option."

In terms of expansion, Jatia said Rhythm ResiTel envisions an exciting future within India and potentially on the international stage. Leveraging its unique ResiTel business model, Rhythm ResiTel is well-positioned to address the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic by assisting with stressed, financially overleveraged, and non-performing hospitality assets. He said, "The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in several stressed / financially overleveraged / non-performing assets. These are ideal situations for Rhythm to get involved in and help resolve the financial stress for asset owners / lenders and other stakeholders through our differentiated ResiTel business model. Rhythm is an active participant in Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) situations for hospitality assets and companies through the NCLT courts. Rhythm invests capital through its balance sheet in such situations (both in the form of debt and equity) . Rhythm also partners with international / domestic private equity funds and institutional investors looking to invest in India's hospitality sector across special situations." ■

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VBev Foresees Double-Digit Growth in the Thriving Alco-Beverage Market of India

The Alco-Beverage industry in India is undergoing a remarkable evolution propelled by shifting consumer preferences, rising income levels, and a heightened consciousness of international developments. This transformation presents a myriad of opportunities and challenges due to varying regulations and duties prevailing in different states. VBev, a prominent player in the Indian alco-bev market, is poised to achieve impressive growth in the next five years. During a conversation with **Asmita Mukherjee, Sumedh Singh Mandla, CEO of VBev India**, unveiled the company's visionary strategy for expanding its presence in the dynamic and constantly evolving Alco-Beverage industry in India.



Discussing the thriving Alco-culture has been rapidly increasing in India's metros and Tier II/III cities, Mandla stated that they have experienced a robust growth in demand for premium quality Alco-Beverages from these cities. The major reason behind this is the rising disposable income and better awareness among consumers has led them to seek a quality experience in food and beverage. Consumers are increasingly following global trends, resulting in a significant demand for segments like Cocktails, Tequila, Gin, and Malt Whiskies.

Mandala highlights that the market for imported liquor in India is shaped by current consumer trends and preferences. Although high taxation and entry costs lead to comparatively higher pricing in many states, the premium segment is growing rapidly. "However, the growth in the premium segment is driven by the consumer base of the young and affluent consumer between 21-45 years with higher spending power. Digital connectivity and international travels further add to their knowledge set and hence they are always looking for the new trends and experience in alco-bev space. That is where we play a key role as an importer," he added.

According to Mandala, infused alcohol beverages, such as flavoured vodka and gin, have gained popularity in recent years due to growing nightlife culture. However,

Whisky remains the leading category in the Indian Alco-Beverage market, followed by Brandy and Rum. "Consumers are now open to trying new categories. However,



these have been a growing awareness and demand for Wine, Gin, Tequila, Vodka, Shooters and Cocktails. Infused Whiskey is another growing category and finding some patronage. The growing cocktail culture led by Cocktail bars, lounges is trendy, and the skilled bartenders are now getting their overdue recognition and credit. The

overgrowing Cocktail festivals, growing nightlife, premium lounges are all driving this culture," he said.

Mandala said that VBev understands the importance of staying attuned to the evolving market landscape in India. With a dynamic portfolio that caters to a wide range of products, the company is constantly adapting to meet consumer preferences, emerging trends, and demands. "Looking ahead to 2023, VBev plans to introduce premium categories such as Cognac, Whiskies, and Tequila, carefully curated to deliver unique and memorable."

Recognising the significance of a robust distribution network, brand development, team strength, and strategic partnerships, VBev has developed a large network across the Indian subcontinent. "We have developed a large network across the Indian subcontinent with a strong focus on On-premises, Off-premises and Travel Retail channel."

With a vision of strong double-digit growth over the next five years, VBev aims to establish itself as a leading player in the Indian Alco-Beverage market. "We are focusing on a strong double-digit growth over the next 5 years. The same will be backed by our focus on distribution, brand development, team strength, and strategic partnerships will serve as the pillars supporting our success," Mandala concluded. ■

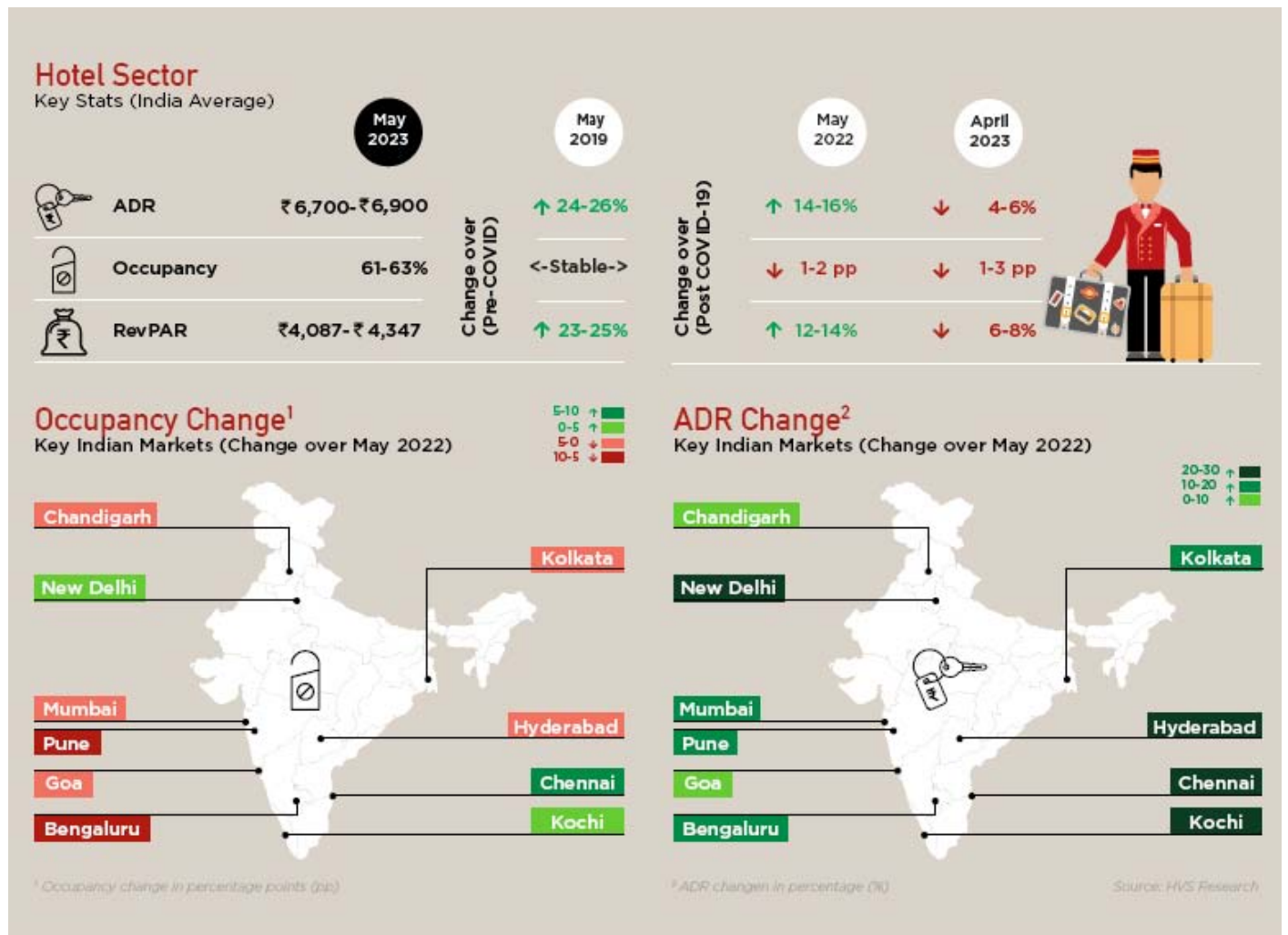
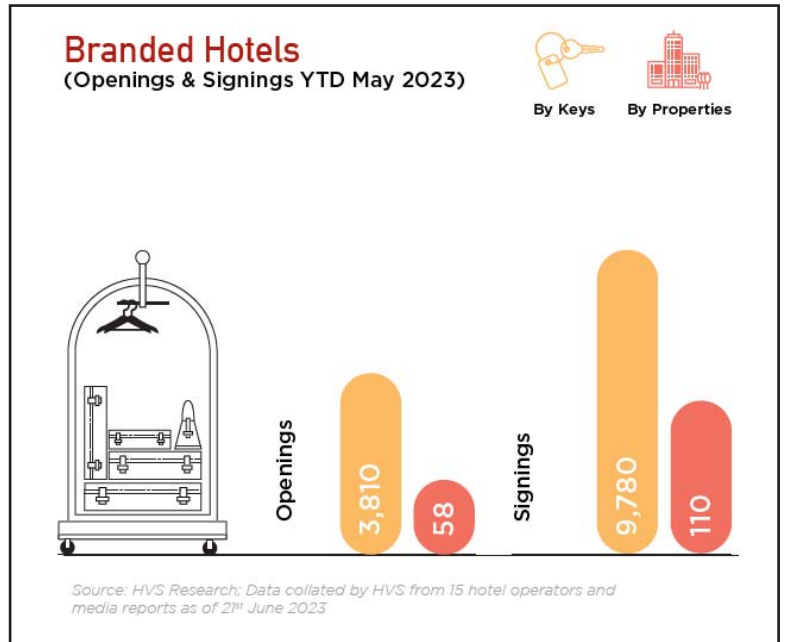
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Domestic Air Travel and Hotel Occupancy in India on the Rise, Signaling Recovery: Report

HBI Staff | Hyderabad

Despite Go First Airlines temporarily suspending operations, domestic air travel in India has rebounded strongly, said June 2023 edition of the HVS ANAROCK monthly industry update, Hotels & Hospitality Overview (H2O). In May 2023, domestic air traffic increased by 15% year-on-year, crossing the 1.3 cr mark for the first time since December 2019. The occupancy rates in the country have witnessed a minor decline year-on-year indicating that demand is normalizing.

However, average rates have continued to rise, surpassing pre-pandemic levels. This indicates a strong recovery in the hospitality sector, highlighting the resilience of the industry and the growing confidence of travelers in India. ■



India Hotel Market will reach USD 31.63 Billion in 2030 from USD 9.02 Billion in 2022, says report

HBI Staff | Hyderabad

India Hotel Market will reach USD 31.63 Billion in 2030, according to the India Hotel Market 2023 report by Research and Markets. The hotel industry in India has witnessed moderate growth in recent years and shows significant potential for even more tremendous growth in the future. Furthermore, with its rich culture and diversity, India attracts many tourists worldwide, particularly as a destination for spiritual tourism. As a result, India's position in the World Economic Forum's (WEF) travel and tourism competitiveness index has improved from 65th in 2013 to 54th in 2021, reflecting its growing prominence in global tourism.

India's robust economic growth has resulted in a thriving middle class with higher disposable income fuelling domestic travel and heightened demand for high-quality hotel accommodations. Additionally, India's favourable business environment is evident through its inclusion in the top 100 clubs for Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), underscoring its appeal as an attractive destination for investment and development.

INDIA'S HOTEL MARKET SHALL EXPERIENCE A CAGR OF 16.98% IN THE COMING YEARS 2022 TO 2030

The Indian government proactive initiatives, such as the renowned 'Incredible India' campaign and the development of robust tourism infrastructure, have attracted more tourists.

As a result, Market Development Assistance (MDA) scheme guidelines were revised to incentivize tourism stakeholders, expanding its scope and reach, including online promotions, and increased financial assistance to maximize stakeholder benefits. These modifications aim to enhance the scheme's effectiveness and support stakeholders involved in promoting domestic tourism.

Improvements in transportation infrastructure have made travel more accessible and convenient, while online travel platforms have increased market visibility and accessibility. International hotel chains have also invested in the market, improving the quality of accommodations and boosting overall growth.

Additionally, the diversification of hotel offerings, including luxury hotels, budget hotels, boutique hotels, and homestays, caters to different preferences and budgets of travelers, further stimulating market growth. India's hotel market grapples with upholding consistent quality standards across diverse accommodations, from luxury hotels to budget options.

CHANDIGARH SHALL THRIVE IN THE COMING YEARS IN INDIA HOTEL MARKET

India hotel market comprises Agra, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Goa, Gurugram, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kochi, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi, Pune, Udaipur, and other cities.

Chandigarh urban development and modern infrastructure, with its thriving industries and prestigious educational institutions,

attract business travelers and visitors, driving the demand for hotel accommodations. The city's well-planned architecture, gardens, and tourist attractions also draw domestic and international tourists, increasing the need for hotel rooms.

Furthermore, Chandigarh's excellent connectivity and proximity to popular destinations make it a convenient transit point, further fuelling the hotel market. Additionally, the local government's proactive efforts in promoting tourism and enhancing hospitality infrastructure contribute to the growth of the hotel market in Chandigarh.

However, New Delhi's dominance in India's hotel market stems from its role as an economic and political hub, attracting business travellers and corporate events. As the primary international gateway



to India, it receives many foreign tourists.

In addition, the city's cultural and historical significance, a diverse range of accommodations, and the hosting of business conferences and trade fairs contribute to its thriving hotel market. Government support, an established hospitality industry, and cultural events and festivals further enhance New Delhi's position as a preferred destination for travellers.

KEY PLAYERS

The demand for accommodations fuels competition in India's hotel market, as players compete to offer competitive pricing, superior services, and unique experiences. Price sensitivity drives the competition, with hotels aiming to balance affordability and quality. Differentiation through distinctive services, amenities, and a strong brand reputation gives hotels a competitive edge.

Prime locations and proximity to popular destinations are advantageous, while technology and innovative features enhance the guest experience. Effective marketing strategies, such as targeted advertising and collaborations, are crucial in attracting guests and increasing visibility. ■

Career Counselling | From Aspiration To Imagination

By Prof. Satish Jayaram, PhD – Ideator | Innovator | Incubator

Hospitality and tourism career choices, continue to invite much debate and deliberation in all quarters. Our means of motivating young talents to choose this sector, needs enhancement by empathizing with their aspirations. The method involved, requires the matching of their imaginative expectations to realistic deliverables. This piece is for all stakeholders involved in career counselling process, to renew thoughts on future potential of talents, to conceive and run many future business models. Futuring is in fact, the field of using a systematic process for thinking about, picturing possible outcomes and planning for the future. And hindsight provides us perspective today, since admission realities, continue to unfold into an elaborate talent juggernaut, that we will all contend with in time.

And while the answers may appear narrow today, it is precisely at that point of inflection, as past experiences restrain us. Admission counsellors need to stretch the limits of their imagination to begin with, without using earlier career models as a benchmark. The unconstrained imagination of our next generation, has truly led to the emergence of new innovations that we could not have imagined. Taking a leaf from their pages, let us guide their raw energy into a structured thought process, where resulting aspiration, can co-exist in a non-judgemental realm. If opportunities and possibilities are plotted accurately right in the beginning, mapping of career journeys can become more meaningful.

New age careers can champion more meaning, if you structure a typical student's queries in a structured manner. The reality check for a student - who is battling indecision and uncertainty, must be seen in the light of their growth potential. This is where possibility thinking, allows you to inventively consider the creation of new-age solutions. Newer generations have greater exposure and connectedness to our Universe, largely on account of technology and access. They have lofty ideals and a desire to create impact, in a manner that we may not be all too familiar with. Here is a modelled structure to re-align your thoughts, values and ideals to achieve the results that one could anticipate.

1. Job-Seekers: A clear focus on skilling, development of nuances to become employed, is a realistic aspiration for one demographic. Creating this interface with learning resources, is a deliverable result. The advice required to be provided to this audience, is a realistic estimation of the time, energy and dedication required to develop new skills, which can provide access to a multitude of jobs in the sector. Conservative advice with existing patterns will work here.

2. Career-Seekers: Another demographic that ingeniously maps careers in their minds, require basic skills exposure to migrate effectively into desired functions, that are attractive. A structured pathway



must be clearly articulated to build knowledge, skills and abilities, to make the necessary transitions from one level to another. Progressive career planning for growth will potentially require ongoing education and will work for this audience who have resources.

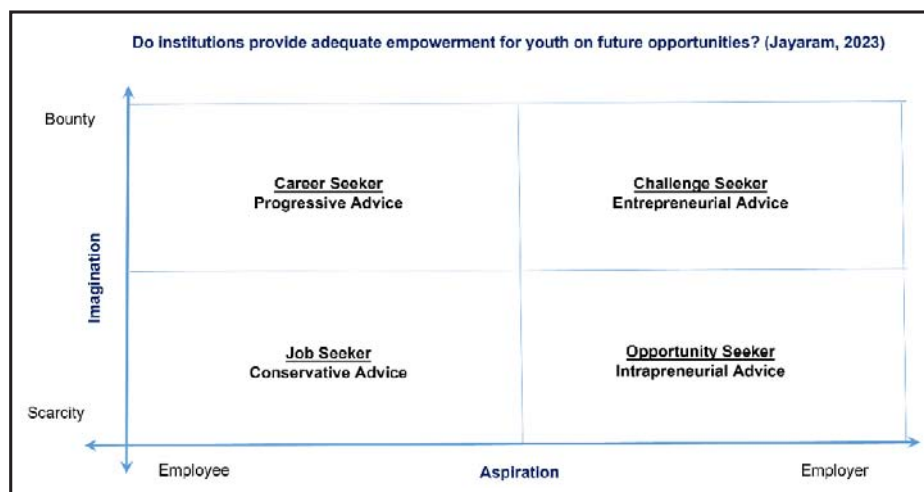
3. Opportunity-Seekers:

This demographic exposed to some enterprise activities, is familiar with work processes on account of close influences or a family business. This audience seeks to infuse modernism, change and contemporary methods in staid situations. These enthusiasts seek the means, techniques and opportunities to develop. While many leave jobs, they have immense potential to be employers. Intrapreneurial advice to family groups will work here.

4. Challenge-Seekers: While this demographic seeks to create new approaches, have the resources, will and wherewithal, they need direction. Passion and enthusiasm need to be channelized, to bring about a coherent method to achieve their dreams and aspirations. These enthusiasts are likely to be experimental in their orientation. Entrepreneurial advice from existing businesses can guide them, on the grit and determination required to succeed here.

It is important not to be bounded by the limitations of a short-term line of sight or even be too anxious about long-term possibilities. While immediate recall may remind many of job debacles being discussed in the context of the pandemic, multiple new options open must be a part of the thinking heat map. It is realistic for some youth to express aspirations to be functional job-seekers or career seekers. Other young minds are able to visualize their worth as opportunity-seekers or challenge seekers. Skills and competences empower job seekers, commitment develops career-seekers while enterprises can make way for opportunity-seekers and challenge seekers, as harbingers of change. ■

The views expressed within this column are the opinion of the author, and may not necessarily be endorsed by the publication.





Citadel Sarovar Portico Bengaluru

The hotel offers par excellence and elegantly designed 125 rooms and suites including Deluxe rooms, Executive rooms and Executive Suites. Multiple meeting and board rooms can host small and mid-size gatherings and conferences. For large weddings and conferences, the hotel offers 10,000 sq. ft. of divisible banquet space that can host up to 650 guests.

The hotel houses a lobby level 44 covers multi-cuisine restaurant Flavours that serves Café style menu and a contemporary bar, The Chill.

Vivanta Jammu, City Centre

The 90 keys Vivanta Jammu, City Centre is strategically located at Residency Road, in close proximity to the famous Raghunath temple. In addition to the elegant rooms and suites with a contemporary design, the hotel offers a range of eclectic culinary offerings including Mynt – the all-day diner offering international and local favourites, a speciality restaurant – The Grill, and bar – Wink. The hotel features state-of-the-art health and wellness facilities, including a rooftop pool crafted for rejuvenation. The over 3,800 sq. ft. of versatile banqueting space, is ideal for meetings and social celebrations.



Radisson Hotel Sonamarg

The hotel features spacious and modern rooms and suites, each thoughtfully designed for comfort and convenience. Guests can choose from multiple room categories: deluxe rooms, junior suites, and executive suites that offer views of the surrounding mountains and valleys. These rooms are equipped with individual climate control options to keep the room at a comfortable temperature during freezing weather outside.

The Fern Resort & Spa, Ganpatipule

Blue Ocean The Fern Resort & Spa has 55 tastefully appointed rooms, suites and villas with panoramic sea views. All rooms are fully air-conditioned and equipped with tea/coffee makers, wardrobes, ergonomic work tables, Wi-Fi connectivity, LED TVs, hair dryer, in-room dining, eco-friendly lighting and eco-friendly bathroom amenities. The resort facilities include a swimming pool, a spa, children's play area, all-day dining restaurant, and a top-notch banquet. Additionally, the in-house multi-cuisine restaurant Atlantic offers a delicious buffet, a la carte options, and indoor and outdoor seating for guests to indulge in an outstanding culinary experience.



Puratos India introduces the Tegral Satin Cocoa Plant based Cake Mix

In response to consumer needs and the increasing trend for plant based baked products; Puratos India is pleased to launch Tegral Satin Cocoa Plant based cake mix. The Tegral Satin cocoa plant-based cake mix is 100% Plant Based and is available in 1kg ready-to-mix packages with real Belgian chocolate, a rich taste of cocoa with a soft and moist texture. It perfectly caters to the needs of vegan diets, and can be customized to satisfy varied dietary restrictions or preferences, making it an inclusive choice for a wide spectrum of customers.



Maya Pistola Agavevura launches in Gurugram

Maya Pistola Agavevura, the pioneering craft spirit brand, proudly announces its launch in Gurugram, bringing its renowned smoothness, premium quality, and expert craftsmanship to the discerning consumers of the city. Pistola Agavevura offers an aged agave spirit that embodies the essence of craftsmanship and authenticity. Handcrafted with care, our spirit is meticulously distilled to deliver a smoothness that captivates the palate, leaving a lasting impression on every sip.

Action Tesa BOILO: Redefining Safety for Homes & Businesses with Fire Retardant Technology

Action Tesa, India's renowned and largest business house has a life-changing product in the market, BOILO – BWP HDF BOARD that is "Boiling Waterproof High-Density Fiberboard (HDF)". Action TESA is the first company to introduce this sort of product globally. The BOILO board is produced using cutting-edge technology and an inventive process. It has low-flammability features thanks to its nano-engineered particles. It has been flame-treated to lower the likelihood of fire mishaps in your home or place of business. The fire-retardant Boilo board reduces flammability and reduces the likelihood of a spark or ignites burning down furniture or other woodwork. BOILO Boards are available in Plain and Pre-lam BOILO, both.



ACCOR HOTELS



Nidhi Verma, Director of Marketing & Communications for India and South Asia, Accor

As Director of Marketing & Communications – India and South Asia, Verma will be responsible for driving the development and execution of integrated public relations campaigns that align with the brand's marketing strategies, alongside leveraging a 360-degree approach across various media platforms.



Sheel Jadeja, Director of Sales, Renaissance Bengaluru Race Course Hotel

Jadeja is a result-oriented and passionate sales professional with a wealth of experience in enhancing sales streams. As an individual with over 13 years of experience in the hospitality industry spanning across India, Jadeja boasts an impressive resume. Through astute planning, account management, market and

customer insight, and the identification of innovative solutions, he has created a portfolio with a proven track record of outperforming market-leading competitors.



Monica Edara, Director of Marketing, Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre (NHCC) and Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC)

In her current role as Director of Marketing NHCC & HICC, she will be responsible for strategizing, budgeting, planning, and implementing marketing and communication activities for the property. Monica is skilled at creating and putting into action plans for internal and external communications and set

the right processes for delivery. She will focus on strategies to enhance market penetration and increased brand recall, by creating strong and impactful frameworks, leading tactical marketing initiatives.

IHG HOTELS & RESORTS



Stephen Jones, Executive Chef, Six Senses Fort Barwara

In his new position at Six Senses Fort Barwara, Stephen will oversee the varied dining experiences at Six Senses Fort Barwara, offering a perfect amalgamation of world cuisine, local Rajasthani and pan-Indian cuisine. He will play a pivotal role at the resort, for his extensive knowledge of global culinary trends, expertise in developing unique dining experiences and the sustainability approach that

resonates with the 'Eat with Six Senses' philosophy.

HYATT GROUP



Ridhima Nagpal, Marketing Manager, Hyatt Regency Pune

In her new role, Nagpal will collaborate closely with the hotel's marketing team to implement the marketing communications strategy. She will ensure that all marketing communications activities align with the corporate marketing strategy and provide valuable insights by monitoring guest feedback and reviews on different platforms. She will also contribute to

establishing annual communications budgets, developing integrated marketing plans, and evaluating the effectiveness of marketing communication activities.

MARRIOTT HOTELS



Abhilash Matam, Director of Operations, Kochi Marriott Hotel

Matam is an all-round highly motivated and accomplished hospitality professional, with extensive strategic operations expertise in Luxury, Midscale and Budget Hotels, leading international hotel management teams, and is proficient in Rooms Division related to the daily successful running of a hotel. Prior to this role he has been with IBIS and Adagio (Doha),

also worked with chains such as Accor, Oberoi and Marriott International.



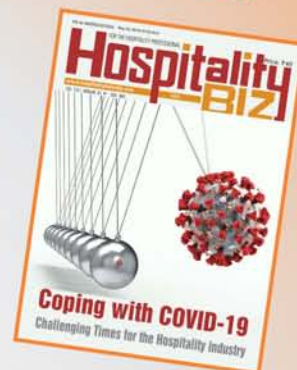
Vikas Kaushik, Director of Sales, The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi

In his new role, Kaushik is committed to demonstrating his ingenious approach towards executing market-appropriate sales strategies, leading the hotel to excel its key revenue budgets, working closely with the Director of Sales & Marketing. With a focus on business expansion and collaboration with other departments, he will be responsible for enhancing

sales and revenue streams as well as elevating the brand presence with strategic partnerships.

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