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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

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COVER STORY

HOSPITALITY EDUCATION

BRIDGING THE

SKILL GAP

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The search for talent



Steena Joy
Editor

editorial@worldofhospitality.in

In a new Korn Ferry study that includes a sweeping country-by-country analysis, the biggest issue isn't that robots are taking all the jobs - it's that there aren't enough humans to take them! Indeed, the study finds that by 2030, there will be a global human talent shortage of more than 85 million people, or roughly equivalent to the population of Germany. Left unchecked, in 2030 that talent shortage could result in about \$8.5 trillion in unrealised annual revenues.

At the recently concluded HICSA 2024, a three-year alliance was announced between Indian School of Hospitality (ISH) and Sommet Education, both leaders in hospitality education in collaboration with Accor for the Indian Talent Development Initiative.

Pride Hotels Group and Symbiosis Open-Source Society have also come together in a partnership forged at the Symbiosis Centre for Leadership Development (SCLD) for cultivating and honing leadership talent in the sector.

Initiatives such as these will definitely help to ease the talent crisis in the industry. On the one hand, there has been a declining trend in admissions to hospitality institutes year on year and on the other, there is lack of interest among hospitality graduates to pursue careers in the industry, given that the pandemic opened up other more remunerative avenues in retail and allied service sectors.

The smartest organisations will not only take up the onus of training talent themselves but will also take up upskilling of existing talent.

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2024

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From 6 to 1500 students, speaks volumes about our journey

Dr. Nisheeth Srivastava | Principal/ Secretary, IHM Mumbai

70 glorious years of building the talent pool for the hospitality sector. Your thoughts on this milestone.

IHM Mumbai has completed its 70th year in 2024 which we celebrated as Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in February 2024. For any institution achieving this milestone is always a great achievement. It was an opportunity to honour the achievers of IHM Mumbai who excelled in their chosen field and many of them are trendsetters in the field of hospitality. Meeting such legends and bringing them back to the institute is always a moment to cherish. Their association with the institute keeps motivating our present students and inspires them to achieve milestones. Our Platinum Jubilee celebration was graced by Nakul Anand and his words of wisdom and experience really gave great insights to our present students to prepare themselves for the coming future. The icing on the cake was the presence of

Amitabh Kant, who not only encouraged our current batch of students but also appreciated contributions made by IHM Mumbai alumni in the field of hospitality. He presented the vision and the bright future of the hospitality graduates which was really encouraging.



“
By the time we introduce a subject, it automatically becomes outdated due to the process involved in upgrading of syllabus

So, from just six students in the outhouse of the army barracks at Andheri in 1954, to 1500 students per year in the campus at Dadar today, it speaks volumes about our journey.

For years we have been talking about the industry curriculum mismatch. What's

the reality check?

In my opinion, this mismatch is more a perspective than reality. Industry will always say that syllabus is outdated and does not meet the requirement of the industry. They forget that institutes prepare non hoteliers for the industry, and it is the responsibility of the institute

through various workshops, industrial trainings and various trade competitions. Those who feel that the syllabus needs to be updated are right to a certain extent, but the process of changing syllabus is very cumbersome and lengthy.

By the time we introduce a subject, it automatically becomes outdated due to the process involved in upgrading of syllabus. Hence IHM Mumbai invites subject experts so that our students can get updated information from industry experts like Chef Yaduwansh Mathur who conducted workshops for menu engineering, chefs from Japan who presented workshops on Japanese cuisine, a chef from Switzerland for a workshop on Swiss cuisine, 3D room model competitions etc. During these workshops, students get an opportunity to interact with the present departmental heads of hotels and get trained in the latest trends. By this method we are bridging

to provide basics of hospitality first, because without knowing basic grammar and words we cannot create fiction. So, hospitality schools prepare students for the industry by providing them basics and knowledge about latest trends



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The industry will require huge number of skilled workers not only in India, but also in foreign countries

the perceived gap between hospitality industry and academics.

AI and Big Data are today's buzzwords. How can institutes streamline curriculums to adapt to new age technology?

Yes, AI and Big Data are today's

buzzwords and all the hotel chains have adopted these norms but our industry requires human touch and personalisation, hence hotel operations will always require hospitality professionals for satisfactory guest services. For AI,

we keep organising workshops by industry professionals and hoteliers who are working in this field to give first-hand experience and information to our students.

skilled workers not only in India, but also in foreign countries. Demographically, India is going to be the youngest nation due to its young

There is the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the govt also plans to roll out a Skill India Digital platform. What can the government do to specifically drive the upskilling agenda in the hospitality and service industries? I feel these are very welcome steps as the industry will require huge number of

population whose services are required all over world. Hence, I believe that this initiative will certainly help our Indian students get more opportunities, not only in India but also overseas. ■



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Redesign curriculums to integrate Big Data & AI

Kamal Pant | Principal, IHM Pusa

For years we have been talking about the industry curriculum mismatch. What's the reality check?

As an industry, hospitality is always susceptible to a plethora of changes. If one gauges the history of the industry, both globally and domestically, it is evident that the thrust of the industry's development has been contingent on the evolving preference pattern of the guests, technological changes, frequent competitive disruptions and global events. The basis of efficient sustenance and growth ties into the nature of the hospitality industry which is to immediately respond to the changes in the environment by imbibing essential know-how, products or practices. This renders industry practices and standards fluid and subject to constant evolution. On the contrary, universities and other institutions of higher learning are some of the most bureaucratic

organisations carrying a lot of inertia. In such a situation, the scope of disparity between the current demands of the industry and the offerings in the curricula falling behind is bound to exist. At this point,



“
We are constantly revisiting our methodologies to improve our lesson delivery

the synergistic relationship becomes glaring - the industry challenges and trends inform curriculum development, while adept graduates contribute to industry growth.

Here, interactive development becomes an indispensable need. Setting the curriculum collaboratively with industry and

academia appears to be the obvious solution to the situation, but it hardly ends there. The ideal situation to address this issue would be the ownership of the offering in the curricula by academic institutions by the practicing managers. Being a former practising hotel manager

How can institutes streamline curriculums to adapt to new-age technology?

Technological advancements, today, are pervasively influencing both cognitive processes and corporate decision-making. Such disruptions have the unique distinction of not being fads but an intrinsic element of all value chains. Big Data has reasonably been incorporated in all aspects of the hospitality business, whether it has been in terms of data-orientation of guest reviews or the conception of marketing strategies - now entirely reliant on Big Data. Rational models of decision-making for managers have always been there as the guiding principle for hospitality leaders.

Thankfully, with the intervention of high-power computers, analysing large chunks of data has come within the reach of most managers, saving them from the clutches of bounded rationality, the most dangerous pitfall in managerial

myself, I know, it is easier said than done, but even if it needs a hard sell to the academia of emerging ideas or practices in the hotels, or persistence to make your voice heard, it must imminently and proactively be done to reap the eventual benefits of receiving industry-ready talent in their workforce.

AI and Big Data are today's buzzwords.



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decision-making.

In India, all major travel hubs have attained saturation and companies have started to target tier 2 & 3 cities, with new market segments. This is evident by the rise in average hotel brand offerings. Big data analytics is going to help managers and marketers to design and deliver customised products and services to discerning segments and to tackle niche markets more effectively.

AI has seen exponential growth in R&D and application over the past two years. It is an imminent disruption that will redesign and reincarnate all aspects of modern civilisation - from learning to business delivery. As such Big data, artificial intelligence and machine learning are the concepts of profound interest to hospitality managers and educators alike. Illustrations and cases of how big data analytics contribute to revenue management in hotel accommodations, banqueting venues and airlines are the subjects of awe for the students. Institutions have to prepare to invest in developing the ecosystem to harness the power of these technologies to remain relevant and competitive in the marketplace. Curriculums have

to be redesigned to significantly integrate Big Data & AI. Such integration will be joyously welcomed by the generation next - that is tech-reliant. Many Fortune 500 companies have made it necessary for their mid to top-level managers to learn elementary coding with the sole objective of developing a problem-solving analytical and outcome-oriented thought process. As institutes, we must recognise this at the nascent stage of a student's development and incorporate relevant data-model learning in the curriculum. With the rapid rate of technological reliance, it becomes pertinent to move past merely studying the meaning and significance of data models, it is imminent to deep dive into learning such data-oriented courses to become effective VUCA-ready leaders in the hospitality landscape.

There is the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the government also plans to roll out a Skill India Digital platform. What can the government do to specifically drive the upskilling agenda in the hospitality and service industries?

Effective utilisation of digital technology has been the game changer in our country in ensuring effective governance and increasing the outreach of government schemes to the last mile. Skill India Digital (SID) platform offers industry-relevant skill courses, job opportunities and entrepreneurship opportunities to the youth. The SID aims to align the competencies of the country's unregulated workforce to the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF), which is a blessing for people who have



learnt a craft or skill by practice under a mentor, without enrolment in any training institution. This framework offers the option of recognition of prior learning by an accredited body to certify the level of competence of any person in a particular trade.

SID is also available in hospitality and other service industries. Tourism and Hospitality Skill

Council (THSC) has created an excellent framework for numerous job roles in the industry. It also has a system to train and certify the trainers in place and has several training partners across the country to take the skilling campaign further. Their efforts appear inadequate, primarily due to the explosive growth of the hospitality sector. Furthermore, there seems to be an emphasis on the quantity of enrolment rather than highlighting the quality of enrollees and sustained tenure for the enrollees to fulfil the roles that they have been trained for. In such a scenario, when the hospitality sector of our economy is showing robust growth, the dearth of skilled workforce would always be highlighted. In my opinion, shifting the focus of institutions in hospitality management towards skill education would also be helpful. But for providing a sustainable solution, enrolment of trainees from the right target market is going to be of utmost importance.

How do you balance practical knowledge vs theoretical learning for the new-age hospitality professionals at IHM Pusa?

With every new

cohort of Gen Z and, now Gen Alpha students, we record a notably diminishing attention span and concentration. Today's youth is adept at multi-tasking, taking lessons in the classroom and communicating on multiple devices at the same time. Additionally, in the age of instant gratification, students tend to focus on engaging in classes that have to sustain their interests.

We are constantly revisiting our methodologies to improve our lesson delivery. Students today weigh out the importance of a topic being taught and envisage the application of the topic before committing concentration towards it. As such, it becomes pertinent that every topic has to be reincarnated in terms of case studies and simulations that make the exercise cerebral.

At IHM, Pusa, the mantra is to put the students in the spotlight - they are deputed to the most prestigious institutions in town to assist in state banquets and other high-profile gatherings. Other initiatives taken at the institute are to bring domain experts or practising managers and professionals to impart skills to the students. ■

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Changing of curriculum is a tedious process

A.K Singh | Director, FHRAI Institute of Hospitality Management

The challenge of building a talent pool for the hospitality industry

There are several issues at present for creating a talent pool in hospitality sector.

- The crisis of getting young students willing to study and work in hospitality sector is a major issue today. The young generation is not keen to learn & work in this industry, as they feel that initial remuneration, working conditions and lack of defined career growth is not as per their expectations and market trend.

- Handling of the pandemic situation created a lack of faith in the hospitality industry among aspirants, as during Covid there were layoffs, which has created a negative impression about the industry.

Thus, getting requisite number of students in Hotel Management Programmes with dedication and zeal is a burning issue for institutes offering these programmes.

The reality check on curriculum

mismatch?

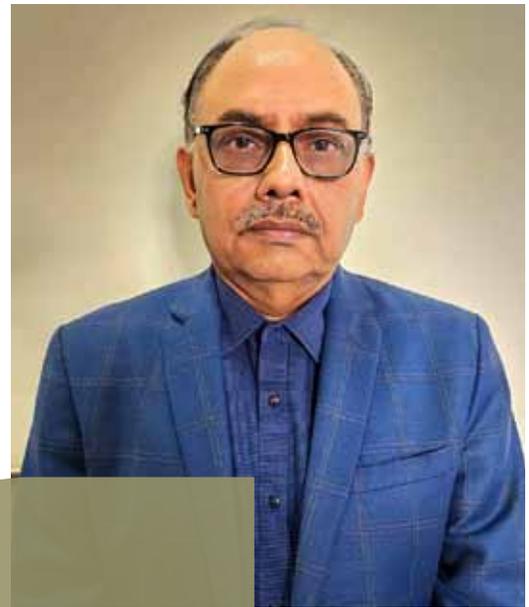
Changing of curriculum is a tedious process in our higher education sector and for a vibrant and even changing Industry like hotel management, it is crucial to have a re-look at the curriculum at least after every three years, and give emphasis not only to include current trends and knowledge, but also to exclude the content which is obsolete in the existing scenario.

AI and Big Data are today's buzzwords. How can institutes streamline curriculums to adapt to new age technology?

It will be a welcome step if we add new technological advancement in curriculum for imparting knowledge of latest advancements being adopted by industry. Students need to be updated and have reasonable knowledge about current trends and developments. Today, hospitality professionals at the management

level need to have knowledge and skill of all associated subjects so that they are aware and relevant while leading the industry.

There is the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the govt also plans to roll out a Skill India Digital platform.



“Getting requisite number of students in Hotel Management Programmes with dedication and zeal is a burning issue for institutes

from 2 to 4 months duration and training in these skill centres is good enough for providing trained manpower to the budget segment of hotels & restaurants, whereas in my opinion IHMs/FCI should continue to provide trained manpower to the luxury hotel segment and reputed restaurants, as these students undergo extensive training with suitable knowledge base. This arrangement will be good for students & industry as this will be helpful in providing standard service to guests. ■



What can the government do to specifically drive the upskilling agenda in the hospitality and service industries?

NSDC and skill centres associated with leading hotels are imparting skill training ranging

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Create awareness about the importance of skill devpt

Siddharth Savkur | CEO, Kamaxi Group

For years we have been talking about the industry curriculum mismatch. What's the reality check?

Unfortunately, there is still a significant gap between what is taught at most institutes and what the industry needs. I think one of the main reasons for this is that universities do not review their curriculum as often and as thoroughly as is required in today's fast changing business environment. Also, many academicians in hospitality colleges do not have recent and adequate industry work experience. As a result, what is taught to students can tend to be outdated and irrelevant.

AI and Big Data are today's buzzwords. How can institutes streamline curriculums to adapt to new-age technology?

Developments in science and technology will continue to influence how the hospitality industry works, and it is the responsibility of institutes to remain at par with this trend. Students

“

At Kamaxi, our focus as a culinary college is more on practical hands-on skill training than on classroom teaching



who imbibe the use of tech early in their learning years will find it easier to use it optimally in their

careers. This may be more relevant for functions like guest handling, accounting, sales and

marketing, revenue management and inventory control. However, for the more hands-on roles like culinary, housekeeping, and so on the institutes must maintain a balance so that the skill component is not diluted by tech.

There is the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the government also plans to roll out a Skill India Digital platform. What can the government do to specifically drive the upskilling agenda in the hospitality and service industries?

The government, and specifically NSDC, can play a vital role in creating awareness about the importance of skill development versus traditional education, especially in smaller towns and villages. We may boast of the largest population in the world, of whom a large percentage are below 30. But if this demographic is not employable

then the numbers are of little use. The other area where the government can facilitate is to mobilise students for the various programmes on offer.

How do you balance practical knowledge vs theoretical learning for the new-age hospitality professionals at Kamaxi?

At Kamaxi, our focus as a culinary college is more on practical hands-on skill training than on classroom teaching. This helps to create



professional chefs who have learnt by seeing and doing, not just listening. Even in a classroom, faculty rely on videos, discussions and research to teach theoretical concepts more than on books and lectures. ■

There's a need for greater emphasis on soft skills

Atul A Gokhale | Director and Professor | Symbiosis School of Culinary Arts (Symbiosis International {Deemed University}, Pune)

Building the talent pool for the hospitality sector. Your thoughts on this.

A skilled workforce is the backbone of any thriving industry, and the hospitality sector is no exception. The entire hospitality and service industry sector relies heavily on competent professionals to deliver exceptional service and create memorable experiences for guests. However, several challenges persist:

- 1. Perception and Awareness:** Hospitality careers are often perceived as low-paying and lacking in growth opportunities. Addressing these misconceptions and raising awareness about the diverse career paths and advancement prospects in the industry is essential to attract talent.
- 2. High Attrition Rates:** The hospitality sector is notorious for its high employee turnover rates, which can hinder talent retention efforts and

disrupt operations. Implementing effective retention strategies, such as career advancement opportunities, competitive compensation packages, and a positive work environment, is crucial for retaining skilled professionals.

- 3. Quality of Training:** While various training programs exist, ensuring their quality and relevance to industry needs remains a challenge. Standardising training modules, accrediting institutions, and implementing rigorous evaluation mechanisms can help maintain the

quality of training programs and produce skilled professionals.

- 4. Infrastructure and Resources:** Access to modern training facilities, equipment, and resources is essential for

“

Embracing technology in training programs can enhance learning outcomes and prepare individuals for the digital advancements shaping the hospitality sector

.....

delivering high-quality education and training in the hospitality sector. Investment in infrastructure development and resource allocation is necessary to support skill development initiatives effectively.

For years we have been talking about the industry

curriculum mismatch. What's the reality check?

As someone deeply involved in the Indian hospitality industry for over 35 years and especially in the hospitality and service industry education for over 23 years, I can attest to the ongoing conversation regarding the need for alignment between industry needs and the

curriculum taught at hotel schools in India.

One of the most glaring issues is the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Many hotel management graduates often lack hands-on experience in crucial areas such as customer service, kitchen operations, and front office management. While theoretical knowledge is essential, it must be complemented by practical training to ensure graduates are truly prepared for



the demands of the industry.

There is one more significant shortcoming which is attracting good pool of faculty to teach the students. In recent years, hospitality and culinary educational institutions have been grappling with a significant shortage of good quality teachers. This scarcity poses a considerable challenge to the effective training and development of future professionals in these industries.

Furthermore, there's a need for greater emphasis on soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, and adaptability. These skills are invaluable in a customer-facing industry like hospitality but are often overlooked in traditional curriculums.

Another aspect that needs addressing is the evolving nature of the hospitality industry. With advancements in technology and changing consumer preferences, there's a constant need for innovation and adaptability. However, the curriculum at many hotel schools in India may not be keeping pace with these changes, leaving graduates ill-prepared to tackle emerging trends and challenges.

Collaboration between industry stakeholders

and educational institutions is crucial in bridging this gap. By involving industry professionals in curriculum design, providing

Interpretation: Offer courses on data analysis techniques, including predictive modelling,

The Skill India Digital platform can host online courses, webinars, and interactive modules tailored to the needs of the hospitality and service sectors

opportunities for internships and practical training, and fostering a culture of lifelong learning, we can better equip graduates to succeed in the dynamic world of hospitality.

AI and Big Data are today's buzzwords. How can institutes streamline curriculums to adapt to new age technology?

AI and Big Data are today's buzzwords which is also being spoken at length in the hospitality and service industry. These indeed hold significant potential to revolutionise various aspects of the hospitality industry. The curriculums in the institutes will need to be streamlined and adapt to these technological advancements in the hospitality industry, and should consider integrating the following elements into teaching programmes:

1. *Data Analytics and*

machine learning, and data visualization. Teach students how to extract insights from large datasets to inform decision-making in areas like revenue management and guest experience optimisation.

2. **AI and Automation:** Introduce students to AI technologies such as natural language processing (NLP), chatbots, and robotic process automation (RPA). Help them understand how these technologies can streamline operations and enhance customer service in the hospitality sector.

3. **Ethical and Legal Considerations:** Include modules on data privacy regulations, ethical implications of AI use, and responsible data management practices. Equip students with the

knowledge and skills to navigate ethical dilemmas and ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

4. **Industry Collaboration and Case Studies:** Foster partnerships with hospitality companies to provide students with real-world projects and internships focused on AI and Big Data applications. Incorporate case studies and guest lectures from industry experts to illustrate the practical implications of these technologies.

However, successful implementation requires careful consideration of factors such as data privacy, ethical concerns, and the unique needs of each hospitality business.



4. There is the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the govt also plans to roll out a Skill India Digital platform. What can the government do to specifically

drive the upskilling agenda in the hospitality and service industries?

Here are some suggestions on how NSDC can make a significant contribution in upskilling of manpower in the hospitality and service sector:

1. **Tailored Training Programs:** Develop specialised training programs specifically designed for the hospitality and service industries. These programs should cover a wide range of skills, including customer service, communication, problem-solving, and technical skills relevant to different roles within these sectors.

2. **Industry Collaboration:** Collaborate closely with leading players in the hospitality and service industries to understand their skill requirements and develop training modules accordingly. Industry partnerships can ensure that the training provided is aligned with the needs of employers, thereby increasing the employability of trainees.

3. **Technology Integration:** Leverage digital platforms and technologies to deliver training

programs more efficiently and cost-effectively. The Skill India Digital platform can host online courses, webinars, and interactive modules tailored to the needs of the hospitality and service sectors. This approach can reach a larger audience and provide flexible learning options.

4. **Certification and Recognition:** Establish industry-recognised certification programs to validate the skills acquired through training. These certifications

can enhance the credibility of individuals seeking employment in the hospitality and service industries and provide assurance to employers about their competencies.

5. **Soft Skills Development:** Emphasise the development of soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and interpersonal skills alongside technical skills. These skills are essential for success in the hospitality and service sectors, where interactions with customers



play a crucial role in delivering quality service.

6. **Focus on Quality Standards:** Ensure that training programs adhere to high-quality standards and incorporate best practices from the industry. This includes providing

practical hands-on experience, exposure to real-life scenarios, and continuous evaluation and feedback mechanisms to assess skill proficiency.

7. **Targeted Outreach Programs:** Reach out to marginalised communities, rural areas, and economically disadvantaged populations to ensure equitable access to upskilling opportunities in the hospitality and service sectors. Special initiatives such as targeted scholarships, outreach

programs, and community partnerships can help bridge the skills gap in underserved areas.

8. **Continuous Learning and Upskilling:** Promote a culture of lifelong learning and continuous upskilling among workers in the hospitality and service industries. Encourage professionals to pursue further education, attend workshops, and stay updated on industry trends and advancements to remain competitive in the job market. ■



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for more
information

We must make our hotels ready for tomorrow, today!

Kush Kapoor | CEO, Roseate Hotels & Resorts

Building the talent pool for the hospitality sector. Your thoughts on this.

Building a robust talent pool in the hospitality sector requires a multifaceted approach. By integrating digital platforms like LobsterInk, offering specialised programs such as the Professional Development Programme and Back-To-Basics Programme, and prioritising language proficiency through Spoken English Training, Roseate Hotels & Resorts ensures that its associates are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their roles. Furthermore, initiatives like the Executive Development Programme and the Roseate Mentorship Programme demonstrate a commitment to nurturing future leaders within the organisation.

The idea behind setting up of Roseate Learning Centre is to bridge the gap in the industry, upskill our workforce and also create

new opportunities for them in the hospitality industry. By investing in our people, we are not just building a workforce, we are building a community of empowered individuals who are ready to take on any challenge and drive our industry forward.

For years we have been talking about the industry curriculum mismatch. What's the reality check?

There is a huge gap in curriculum and actual way of doing work on hospitality which needs immediate change. There must be industry interaction with hoteliers and students and faculty from the first semester itself.

AI and Big Data are today's buzzwords. How can institutes streamline curriculums to adapt to new age technology?

Here's how you can streamline the curriculum:

1. Introduction to AI and Big Data in Hospitality: Start by educating students on the significance of AI and Big Data in the hospitality industry.



2. Data Analytics and Revenue Management: Integrate modules focusing on data analytics tools and techniques used in revenue management. Teach students how to analyse large datasets to forecast demand, set pricing strategies, and maximise profitability.

3. Guest Experience Enhancement: Teach students about chatbots for customer service, AI-powered recommendation systems for personalised offers, and sentiment analysis for guest feedback.

4. Operational Efficiency: Demonstrate how AI can improve

operational efficiency in areas such as housekeeping, maintenance, and inventory management. Showcase examples of AI-powered systems for predictive maintenance, energy management, and supply chain optimisation.

5. Ethical and Privacy Considerations: Discuss the ethical implications and privacy concerns associated with AI and Big Data in hospitality.

6. Practical Training with AI Tools: Provide hands-on experience with AI tools and platforms relevant to the hospitality industry.

7. Industry Partnerships and

Case Studies: Collaborate with industry partners to offer real-world case studies and guest lectures on AI and Big Data applications in hospitality.

8. Continuous Learning and Adaptation: Encourage students to pursue certifications, attend workshops, and participate in industry events related to AI and Big Data.

What can the government do to specifically drive the upskilling agenda in the hospitality and service industries?

The Skill India Digital platform must focus on all the points highlighted in point # 3, as areas of specialisation. In line with our government's philosophy of Atithi Devo Bhava, skills that inspire our young students and future generations should be those that place India on the global map of hospitality, both in terms of immaculate service, sustainability standards and technology. They must make our hotels ready for tomorrow, today! ■

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Adapting curriculums in sync with new-age technology

Dr Edgar D'Souza | Officiating Principal, Goa College of Hospitality and Culinary Education, Taj - Cidade de Goa

In today's hospitality education vs professional scenario, the industry curriculum mismatch is evident. While many hospitality education programmes provide a solid foundation in traditional hotel management skills, they often fall short in addressing the emerging industry trends and evolving consumer demands. Graduates frequently find themselves lacking the specific skills needed for available jobs, attributable to various factors. Traditional programmes tend to prioritise theoretical knowledge over practical application, leading to a gap in graduates' skill sets. Moreover, slow curriculum updates contribute to graduates being ill-prepared for current industry needs, as the industry evolves rapidly. Additionally, limited exposure to new technologies such as AI, big data, and digital marketing further exacerbates this mismatch, highlighting the urgent need for curriculum updates



to bridge this gap effectively.

AI and Big Data are today's buzzwords

Institutes can streamline their curriculums to adapt to new-age technology by implementing several strategies and by incorporating AI and Big Data modules into existing courses. Firstly, they can integrate technology courses into their programmes, offering specialised training in areas such as AI, big data analytics, revenue management systems, and digital marketing. Partnering with industry experts is also crucial, as professionals can provide invaluable insights and real-world experiences

regarding the application of technology within the hospitality sector. Institutes should focus on teaching students how to make data-driven decisions, equipping them with the skills to analyse data effectively and optimise guest experiences and business operations. The utilisation of simulation tools, such as virtual reality (VR) or other simulations, can enhance their understanding and proficiency.

Upskilling is critical for success

The government can drive upskilling in hospitality. Firstly, supporting existing programmes like the National Skill

Development Corporation (NSDC) and the Skill India Digital platform is crucial, necessitating the allocation of resources and active promotion among hospitality institutes and professionals. It can facilitate the development of short, industry-specific programmes for focussed upskilling by offering micro-credentials and certifications. Furthermore, providing financial incentives such as tax breaks or subsidies

learning for new-age hospitality professionals involves a multifaceted approach. At Goa College of Hospitality and Culinary Education, we prioritise experiential learning opportunities such as internships, industry projects, and hands-on practical sessions to complement theoretical coursework. This hands-on approach allows students to apply theoretical concepts in real-world settings, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and industry-relevant competencies. Being attached to Taj, Cidade de Goa is an added advantage for our programme as we have developed a student-industry interface for effective learning. Incorporating case studies, guest lectures from industry experts, and collaborative projects with industry partners further enriches the learning experience and ensures that students graduate with a well-rounded skill set poised for success. ■



for businesses investing in employee upskilling will also encourage workforce development.

Balancing practical knowledge and theoretical learning
Balancing practical knowledge with theoretical

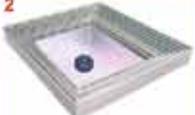


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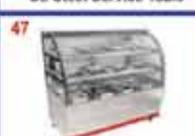
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37  SS Multi Functional Trolley	38  SS Goods Transport Trolley	39  St. Steel Onion Potato Trolley	40  St. Steel Serving Trolley	41  St. Steel Service Table	42  St. Steel Pizza Baking Oven
43  SS Commercial Refrigerator	44  St. Steel Table Top Refrigerator	45  SS Milk Cooler (Refrigerator)	46  St. Steel Water Cooler	47  St. Steel Display Counter	48  St. Steel Sandwich Griller
49  SS Commercial Pot Rack & Rack	50  SS Tray Racking Trolley	51  St. Steel Tray Racking Trolley	52  St. Steel Tray Racking Almira	53  SS Big Tray Racking Trolley	54  St. Steel Sink Unit (Basin)

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Novotel Imagicaa Khopoli goes eco-luxe

IWOH News

NOVOTEL IMAGICAA IS ACCOR'S one-of-a-kind hotel-resort property located in Khopoli, the heart of Mumbai and Pune. The 287 key property opened its doors almost a decade ago and over the years, the hotel has been evolving with time, climate, people, and related situations. In the past few years, the key changes the hotel adapted were towards being sustainable and promoting the same. Clever strategies, great investments, and manual efforts have led the hotel to be an eco-luxe property.

The hotel has taken a proactive approach to control water usage on a broader level. There is an in-built zero-water discharge unit that treats the wastewater and makes it clear for use again. The Khopoli area receives heavy rainfall for four to five months, so building a rainwater harvesting system has helped the process of saving water in an efficient manner. Installing aerators in the taps has also helped regulate the excess water flow. The hotel has eliminated all single-use plastic products and replaced them with biodegradable and reusable ones.



Anil Chavan

The F&B manager and Executive Chef make sure to avoid food wastage as much as possible daily. The team segregates dry and wet waste separately and gains data on how much food is wasted and

calculates kitchen operations accordingly. The restaurant and bar have posters educating about mindful food consumption to all the guests.

The hotel key cards were made of plastic earlier where each key cost around INR 106. The Rooms Division Manager initiated a cost-efficient proposal where the keys were replaced with wooden ones costing INR 36. The hotel's Learning and Development Manager conducts multiple sessions for all the employees on adapting and practicing sustainability in daily chores at the hotel. The Marketing team makes sure to promote hotel's sustainability efforts online and create a positive engaging community. An EV



Charging station has been incorporated by the Engineering department as well fostering green energy adoption and understanding the needs of guests have been shifting towards electric vehicles.

The green highlight of the year 2024 has been the installation of an in-house glass water bottle plant. This has resulted in cost reduction of buying water bottles from the market. This activity helps in reducing excess wastage and environmental carbon footprint. The glass water bottles were a significant appreciated topic among all the guests.

Recently, the hotel was awarded the 'Emerging Sustainability Champions' Award. The hotel's commitment to sustainability surely is an aspiration to strive for the betterment of the planet and its people.

General Manager, Anil Chavan says, "I firmly believe that sustainability isn't a choice, but a responsibility. It's imperative for us as leaders to integrate sustainability as a key performance indicator. I personally oversee and delve into the details to ensure our practices align with this ethos. Currently, we are in the process of obtaining a Green Key Certification, a prestigious accolade that will not only recognise our efforts but also reinforce our commitment to a greener future." ■



We are in the process of obtaining a Green Key Certification, a prestigious accolade that will not only recognise our efforts but also reinforce our commitment to a greener future

Our product line is made entirely from pine needles sourced directly from the Himalayas

Agro Composites, a Vasshin Composites Brand, manufactures a one-of-a-kind range of sustainable, durable and plastic free. **Abhinav Talwar**, CEO and Founder, Agro Composites and The Himalayan Pine Co, shares more about this exclusive product range

BY SALONI BHATIA

What are the unique offerings of products by Agro Composites?

Agro Composites is the only organisation

Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. These pine needles are highly combustible and are primarily responsible for devastating forest fires, which leave destruction in their wake. Our product line is made entirely from pine needles sourced directly from the Himalayan mountains and actively helps prevent forest fires in the region.

What are the features of products by Agro Composites?

Completely plastic-free and non-toxic, yet washable, microwave, dishwasher and freezer safe, virtually



in the world to create sustainable yet durable products from pine needles that fall on the forest floor of the various Himalayan regions, mainly

A large advertisement for 'BHARAT GLASS & CROCKERIES'. At the top, the logo features a blue circular emblem with a white bowl and the text 'BHARAT GLASS & CROCKERIES' in a stylized font, with 'Since 1959' underneath. The background is a dark, blurred image of a kitchen. Overlaid on this are several diamond-shaped photo collages: one showing a plate of red chili peppers, another showing a black blender with red liquid, and a third showing various glassware and crockeries. Below the collages, the text reads 'ONE STOP SOLUTION FOR ALL COMMERCIAL USE KITCHENWARE, GLASSWARE, CUTLERY & CROCKERIES!'. At the bottom, contact information is provided: '+91 95919 93399', 'www.bharat-glass.com', and '7th Mile, A.M Industrial Estate'. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner.

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unbreakable, several designs and colours (even the colours are natural), can be used for years and, eventually when the end of product life happens and they are buried in the soil, they go back to the earth in less than 24 months (depending on the bacterial load of the soil).

What is your take on sustainability and its importance in today's hospitality sector?
It's so very important! The hospitality sector needs to seriously sit up and take notice and responsibility. Their contribution towards non-biodegradable waste and landfill load is considerable and needs immediate rectification. Sadly, this isn't so and many groups in the hospitality sector,



“
We are hopeful of seeing a policy/directive from the government with clear instructions for the adoption of non-plastic products

ABHINAV TALWAR

even those that call themselves Ecotels are so price-sensitive, that the ‘switch over’ from plastic to non-plastic biomass products seems well-nigh impossible and looks quite bleak overall.

What is the government doing to help initiatives like Agro Composites?
The government is now looking at these endeavours seriously. We are hopeful of seeing a policy/directive from the government with clear instructions for the adoption of non-plastic products and a leaning towards sustainability and eco-consciousness with penal implications for non-compliance, not only for the hospitality sector but across the board. ■



Enhancing customer experience and operational efficiency being the next gamechanger

Shilpa Murdeshwar |
Murdeshwar's Exotic Snacks and Meals

The hospitality sector in India experienced significant challenges during and post the COVID-19 pandemic. During COVID times, the sector faced disruptions in travel, restrictions on gatherings, and a general decrease in

picking up, albeit slowly, and some hotels and restaurants began to see an uptick in bookings and footfall.

Looking ahead, the scope for growth in the Indian hospitality sector remains significant. Additionally, the rise of technology and changing consumer preferences are driving innovations within the sector, with trends such as contactless check-ins, digital bookings, and enhanced sanitation protocols becoming increasingly important.

Next gamechanger

In our opinion, the next game-changer in the food business could lie in the integration of technology to enhance customer experience and operational efficiency. Here are



tourism and business travel. However, with time, there were signs of recovery in the hospitality sector. Domestic travel started

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Q&A

You won the 'Best Newcomer – QSR (Pune)' at the Food Connoisseurs India Awards - West India Edition! How does this recognition motivate your team and inspire you to continue innovating in the culinary space?

Thank you so much. Indeed, it's a big achievement, winning this prestigious award and it is our dream come true, it does motivate all of us at team Murdeshwar's, it just cements one's belief that innovation does get recognition. We were confident about our products and the kind of response it had been garnering from our customers as well as patrons... So, we believe that this recognition, this award, is to all our patrons and customer and those who believe in Murdeshwar's. It's a great honour to be nominated and receiving this award.

Could you share more about the inspiration behind Murdeshwar's Exotic Snacks and Meals, particularly the journey from conceptualization to the recent launch of your first outlet in October 2023? How did the idea of offering non-vegetarian versions of traditional Maharashtrian snacks come about?

The journey has been long and tedious. We were initially planning to start a restaurant. But everything was not gelling well. We were cash strapped and had limited funds, however we started participating in the events, where Misal sellers from across the state of Maharashtra came to showcase their Misals. It was during this event that we wanted to be different and stand out against 70 misal sellers who were selling vegetarian version of the misal. We thought over it and decided to go against the traditional way of making the misal, "why don't we make a nonvegetarian version of the traditional misal"? – that's how it started and rest as they say is history. The first day we sold 5 kgs, the next day we sold around 10 kgs, and the third day we sold around 15 kgs, we were sold out and earned huge profit. We got to know that people like this taste and people love to experiment with their taste buds. Of course, there were a lot of people who sniggered and today too we have people who snigger behind our backs, but we have tested or rather tasted the success of being different, of being standing up to what we believe that people will like. There was an acceptance to this and thus this motivated us. In 2020 when COVID happened we were close to launching our outlet in Pune, we had just received the keys to our shop and 5 days later there was a lockdown, it was almost 4 months of money that outflow without any income, we had to pay the rent though we did not start anything, no income from the outlet. Fortunately, we did not have any employees to look after, as we could not hire anyone during that phase. We somehow managed to pay the rent for almost 3-4 months and then gave up the shop as the lock downs were not lifted, it was just lockdowns after lockdowns and there was no hope in sight, so we gave up the shop. As they say, when God closes one door, he opens another one. During COVID times, we provided healthy home cooked meals to the families suffering from COVID, that presented us with unique opportunity of catering to families. Slowly and gradually as and when the lock downs were lifted, the same families who had bought meals from us started to give us daily meal orders, and they started to like our food, gradually we also did lot of party orders for birthday, small family get togethers,



“

We mortgaged, and entirely funded the venture through our own pockets as on date. Both our outlets have come up in a short span of time and are doing extremely well

SHILPA MURDESHWAR

families started to recognize us, and this was really motivating for us. Though we cooked all these meals from our home, we could sense that this was the time, it is now or never, and we had to take this plunge. We mortgaged, and entirely funded the venture through our own pockets as on date. Both our outlets have come up in a short span of time and are doing extremely well. We have a steady repeat customer base, and they love our products.

Your menu features unique adaptations of classic Maharashtrian dishes like Chicken Misal and Chicken Vada Pav. How do you ensure that these innovative offerings stay true to their roots while offering something new and exciting for your customers?

Traditionally, the Misal has sprouts and the Vada Pav has potato as a base. Our recipe is the nonvegetarian version which uses chicken mince as base for both Misal and Vada Pav, instead of sprouts and potatoes. But it is not just a substitution but a careful orchestration of spice blends and elements such as crispy chicken, corn flakes etc., to ensure that customers don't miss the traditional crunch and crisp of a Misal or the crispy batter with traditional chutneys that clearly distinguish a Chicken Vada Pav from a burger. Thus, the introduction of the Chicken Misal and Chicken Vada Pav to the world elevates these beloved Maharashtrian snacks for the non-veg lover's delight.

Plans ahead...

Plans, as they say, are best kept secret!! Just wait and watch.



Integrating automation and robotics technology in kitchen operations can improve consistency, efficiency, and food safety standards

a few potential aspects where technology could revolutionize the industry:

Digital menu boards and self-service kiosks: Implementing digital menu boards and self-service kiosks in physical locations can streamline the ordering process, reduce wait times, and minimise human error. Interactive displays can showcase menu items with vivid images, detailed descriptions, and nutritional information, helping customers make informed decisions and enhancing their overall dining experience.

Data analytics and machine learning tools for personalisation: Leveraging tools and techniques of data analytics and machine

loyalty programmes, and menu recommendations that resonate with the target audience and drive sales.

Kitchen automation and robotics: Integrating automation and robotics technology in kitchen operations can improve consistency, efficiency, and food safety standards. Automated cooking equipment, robotic food preparation systems, and smart kitchen appliances can help reduce time, intensive labour costs, minimise food wastage, and ensure consistent quality across menu items, ultimately enhancing the profitability and scalability of the business.

Virtual and augmented reality experiences: Exploring virtual and augmented reality technologies to create immersive dining experiences can differentiate the business and attract customers seeking novel and memorable experiences. Virtual tours of the kitchen, interactive cooking classes, or augmented reality menus that overlay digital content onto physical surroundings can engage customers and elevate the dining experiences beyond traditional expectations.

learning tools to analyse customer preferences, purchasing behaviour, and gathering feedback can enable businesses like ours to tailor offerings and channelise marketing efforts more effectively. By understanding customer preferences and trends, businesses can develop targeted promotions,

By embracing these technological innovations and staying ahead of the curve, businesses in our industry can position themselves for success in an increasingly competitive and dynamic market landscape. ■

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6th National Housekeepers' Convention to be held in May in Bengaluru

IWOH News

THE PROFESSIONAL HOUSEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION (PHA) has announced the 6th National Housekeepers' Convention & 9th PHA Anniversary on May 25, 2024 at Clarks Exotica Convention Resorts & Spa, Bengaluru. This event promises to be a remarkable experience for the participants, featuring a dynamic lineup of industry experts, and professionals. This day will be full of insightful discussions, interactive sessions, and collaborative exchanges to have networking opportunities for all the attendees.

The event's theme will be: The role of AR, VR, AI, ML, Metaverse, Digitalisation, and Automation in Housekeeping Operations, Administration and Management. The participants will be able to gain valuable insights, share best practices, and explore the latest trends shaping the housekeeping industry. Key highlights of the event are mentioned below and they will further be the influencing factors to participate.

For tech-savvy guests

- # For modern housekeeping
- # For meeting the trends in the market
- # For enhanced work efficiency
- # For achieving a technological competitive edge
- # For sustainability
- # For a better Planet



PHA is a non-profit organisation that provides an active platform to holistically synergize the housekeeping workforce and budding housekeeping professionals by facilitating practical and innovative solutions, guidance, and knowledge dissemination through rigorous networking and interactive initiatives. The genesis of PHA YUVA, an offshoot of PHA, was constituted as a formal platform for the youth, aspiring to be a part of the hospitality industry in the core area of housekeeping. It offers a dedicated forum for academicians to network with industry leaders in the field of housekeeping and related endeavours.

PHA encourages professionals, enthusiasts, and anyone interested in housekeeping to join us for this unique opportunity to connect, learn, and grow. ■



Glimpses of 2023 Convention



HPMF announces new advisory board members



Raj Kumar Kuldeep Singh Rathore



Nasir Shaikh

IWOH News

HOSPITALITY PURCHASING MANAGERS FORUM (HPMF) announced recently the addition of the following stalwarts as its Advisory Board Members.

Raj Kumar Kuldeep Singh Rathore: He is a senior High Court Advocate at Jodhpur and from the Royal Family of Jodhpur Raoti province. He has been involved in several social and philanthropic activities and heads several committees within India.

Nasir Shaikh: He is a seasoned hotelier, an award winning professional, Group CEO of Lexicon Group of Institutes, Tedex Speaker, Associate Editor at Pune Times Mirror and Pune Civic Mirror.

HPMF is the largest consortium of Hospitality Purchasing Managers in the world with over 6000 members spread across India, Middle East, Srilanka, Nepal and Maldives.

Sharing the news, Dr Nitin Shankar Nagrale, Founder and General Secretary, HPMF also informed that HPMF will be celebrating its Annual Convention at Ayodhya in the month of September 2024. ■



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India will be one of the top markets for Turkish Hazelnuts in 10 years

At the recently concluded AAHAR show, **Hassan Osman SABIR**, Chairman, Blacksea Hazelnut and Hazelnut Products Exporters Association, spoke to **Saloni Bhatia**, on the unique flavour of Turkish Hazelnuts and its growing market in India

The last decade has seen hazelnuts evolving from the confectionary segment to the snacking industry. Its health benefits and nutty flavour are expanding its use in the HORECA sector. Highlighting how the unique production methods in Turkey add to the flavour of hazelnuts, **Hassan Osman SABIR**, Chairman, Blacksea Hazelnut and Hazelnut Products Exporters Association, informed, “Turkey is the number one country growing hazelnuts with over 70 per cent production in the world. It is unique because we do not produce it industrially but traditionally over 55000 growers contribute to the production making it more sustainable and

healthy. There are no machines and these traditional methods have a huge impact on the quality of the product. The farmers are well known in how to produce,

“**The beauty of the Indian market is that they want to try new things and therefore chefs develop new recipes**

and how to dry, so they deliver the hazelnuts to the crackers or the merchants with high standards. Therefore we ship more than 300,000 tons of hazelnut every year complimenting the production methods.”



Furthermore, Turkish hazelnuts have a much different pattern and aroma as compared to other countries. They are a powerhouse

of nutrients supporting everyday wellness and disease prevention. Therefore, apart from just being used in confectionary, they are being promoted as a healthy snack. China is the latest consumer of Turkish Hazelnuts where major consumption is in the snacking form. He added, “Turkey is selling currently about 65 to 70 per cent to the EU majorly contributing to the

chocolate industry with Germany, Italy, France, and Switzerland on top followed by Canada and China expanding the demand. China has been the rising star in the last five years however, we see India as a big-capacity country because of its culture of sweets and snacking.”

Highlighting the various uses, he stated, “It is a healthy product that helps in weight reduction, lowers cholesterol, reduces inflammation and of course is a great companion with the chocolate. From being used in chocolates, cereals and bakery, only 30 per cent is used in snacking. Here at AAHAR, we are already seeing a great demand in comparison to last year as many



people are now using hazelnuts in their confectionary items which is great news for Turkish Hazelnuts. We believe that India will be one

ready for that.” Hazelnut as a dry fruit is priced at the higher end due to its unique production and quality standard. While India’s culture

is in favour of consumption, SABIR commented on the challenges of the growing market, “The increase in the price of cocoa is affecting the chocolate industry across the world and therefore posing a challenge. But when you add

hazelnuts to your product it brings in more nutrition creating a win-win



situation for the industry. We do plan to bring more knowledge to our industry players on how to use hazelnuts in India and have introduced new recipes through our stall at AAHAR. We can see a growing demand in the

confectionary and dessert segment from the India market.”

“The beauty of the Indian market is that they want to try new things and new recipes can be easily developed by the chefs. We also see great potential in the culinary

school segment in the coming years. I believe we should provide them with the right ingredients. Of course, it is an expensive ingredient but when it is being used with the right amount, it is great for health,” he concluded.” ■



of the top consumers in the next 10 years. We can see that the country’s culture is



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HAI elects new committee members, KB Kachru takes charge as President

IWOH News

THE HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF INDIA (HAI) elected KB Kachru, Chairman, South Asia at Radisson Hotel Group as President for a two-year term at the HAI's milestone 100th EC meeting held after the 27th Annual General Meeting (AGM) at The Park, New Delhi on the 18th of March 2024. Kachru takes charge from the outgoing President, Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, IHCL. The Executive Committee (EC) also elected Rohit Khosla, Executive Vice President - Operations, IHCL as Vice President of the Association for a concurrent term.

Hotel Association of India (HAI), the apex body of the Indian hospitality sector also unanimously elected. JK Mohanty, Managing Director Swosti Premium Limited as Honorary Secretary and Sanjay Sethi, Managing Director & CEO, Chalet Hotels Limited as Honorary Treasurer of the Association for a term of two years.

Welcoming the new members and congratulating the team, HAI Secretary-General, MP Bezbaruah thanked the outgoing committee members. "Over the last two years, HAI has achieved new heights under the stellar leadership of Chhatwal. As we embark on a new journey we look forward to taking the legacy forward and contributing further to take the Association to the next



KB Kachru



Rohit Khosla

creating a unified voice for the sector as it faced its worst crisis in recent times, KB Kachru, stated, "During Covid-19 HAI collaborated with other industry bodies, followed an aggressive advocacy plan that included launching a magazine, a newsletter and engaged actively with the media for a wider outreach."

In addition to adopting and approving the financial results for the year 2022-2023 and appointing auditors for the financial year 2023-2024, the AGM's agenda included elections of the Association's Executive Committee. The Association also elected two new members to the Executive Committee; Shashank Bhagat, Managing Partner Radisson Blu Marina Hotel and Sonali Chauhan, General Manager, IHCL Selections - who replaced Surinder Singh, Area Director - Haryana & Dwarka and General Manager - Taj City Centre Gurugram and Samir MC, Managing Director, Fortune Hotels on completion of their respective term.

Established in 1996, Hotel Association of India (HAI) has evolved as an integrated hospitality industry platform to keep pace with the growing buoyancy ushered in by the liberalisation of the Indian economy in the mid-90s. With its membership extending from major hotel groups; to boutique, heritage and small hotels, HAI represents the entire spectrum of the industry. Its Executive Committee is a potent combination of the commitment of hotel owners on one hand and the hard-core professionalism of hotel managers on the other. As the apex Industry Body, HAI works in the areas of Promotion of Regional Cooperation and Hospitality Research & Education in addition to taking Industry-centric initiatives. By launching Unprecedented 'Social Inclusion' initiatives, HAI also projects the 'Social Face' of the Indian hospitality industry." ■



Established in 1996, Hotel Association of India (HAI) has evolved as an integrated hospitality industry platform

level and create newer benchmarks for HAI. The industry has great hopes for HAI to be the driving force in achieving its goals. I am sure the new management team under Mr. Kachru will make all strides in ensuring the industry gets its due recognition in the times to come", he informed.

Thanking the outgoing president, Puneet Chhatwal for laying a strong foundation for the industry body and

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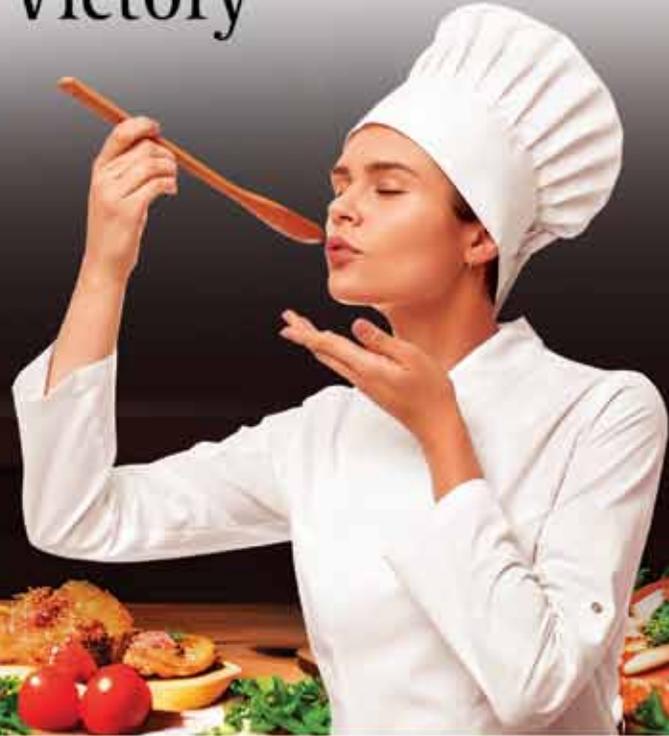


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Our ultimate aspiration is a product with human-empowering intelligence

Alphadroid India is an autonomous Robotics and AI Virtual Reality company offering cutting-edge autonomous robotic solutions designed to maximise efficiency and elevate service standards across various industries. **Sanjeev Kumar**, Founder & CEO, Alphadroid shares how technology holds the potential to take hospitality a step further

BY SALONI BHATIA



What areas of service can Alphadroid products be of assistance for the HORECA sector?

For years, robotics have existed in the back office of Hotels & Restaurants, from streamlining kitchen processes to POS systems for payment. However, many have struggled to implement automation technology as an end-to-end solution due to high cost and lack of technology expertise. This gap in the market is necessary to address, as many desire integrated technological solutions that encompass all processes from the moment guests enter to when they leave.

The products of Alphadroid are incredibly versatile in the hospitality, healthcare and public sector. They offer advanced solutions, facilitating seamless check-in processes, handling bookings efficiently, intelligent customer service, and warmly greeting guests. These robots also assist guests in navigating the premises, ensuring a seamless experience. Plus, they excel in

taking orders and delivering food and beverages promptly, enhancing overall service quality and guest satisfaction.

How does it elevate the dining experience in restaurants and hotels?



Taking a holistic approach, Alphadroid revolutionises the dining experience in restaurants and hotels by seamlessly integrating technology, operations, and guest interactions. Their autonomous robotic technology ensures swift and precise delivery of food and drinks, efficiently multitasking, Alpha can serve 4x tables and carry 4x plates compared to waitstaff. This efficiency minimises wait times and reduces human errors, resulting in

improved service quality.

With Alphadroid handling routine tasks, waiters can dedicate more attention to enhancing the overall dining experience for guests. Additionally, Alphadroid's AI-powered 3D Conversational Interactive Avatar engages guests dynamically, creating memorable interactions. The ability to display promotions and personalised messages further allows dining establishments to tailor the experience and reinforce their brand identity, enhancing guest satisfaction and loyalty.



Has the device been launched at any property, please share some details.

Our journey began with a pioneering trial at Maricham restaurant - Noida, which quickly captured the attention of the media and public relations. This initial foray culminated in a spectacular demonstration day, vividly highlighting our robot's capabilities, and resulting in our very first sale to Maricham. This milestone was swiftly followed by another significant achievement: our robot, affectionately dubbed Alpha, was warmly welcomed into the Radisson group. There, it has been making substantial contributions to elevating guest experiences and assisting service teams.

We're also thrilled to announce that Nazeer, a key player in the DLF food court scene, has embraced our cutting-edge robotic technology. In addition, Rameez, a distinguished hotel in Kerala, has joined

the ranks of our satisfied customers, further solidifying our foothold in the region. These successful deployments underscore our dedication to innovation and

“With Alphadroid handling routine tasks, waiters can dedicate more attention to enhancing the overall dining experience for guests

SANJEEV KUMAR

our unwavering commitment to service excellence.

Our collaborations with esteemed entities such as Maricham, Radisson, Hampton, and Nazeer highlight the deep trust and confidence they place in our technology and its potential to transform the hospitality industry. We are incredibly grateful for the chance to



work alongside such respected partners and are eager to continue broadening our influence and presence in this vibrant sector.

Excitingly, we are also in the midst of conducting trials and engaging in discussions with several leading five-star hotel chains and various government bodies. Due to non-disclosure agreements, we are unable to share the specifics of these collaborations. However, this phase of our journey is a clear indicator of the growing interest and confidence in our technology from some of the most prestigious names in hospitality and governance. It demonstrates our potential to meet diverse and

exacting demands, further amplifying our commitment to revolutionise the industry with our innovations.

At Alphadroid, our vision is to weave our technology into the fabric of hospitality across the nation. As we forge ahead, we're witnessing our influence grow within the national industry landscape. With each step, Alpha evolves, increasingly tailored to meet the ever-changing demands of our clients.

experience exceeded all our expectations. Embarking on this journey on a positive note, we received an overwhelmingly positive response from the sector, validating our commitment to innovation. Over the five days, we showcased our cutting-edge service robot and interactive 3D conversational avatar, captivating attendees and demonstrating the seamless integration of technology into hospitality.

What is Alphadroid's vision?

Our ultimate aspiration is to develop a product which holds human-empowering intelligence to make the service industry more efficient & productive through new-age technology. We aim to revolutionise and optimise the process of delivering goods and services, and on-ground solution in complex environments while minimising human intervention, benefiting the entire service industry and society. Alphadroid's vision is to empower humanity & society through AI & machine learning, striving for an affordable, efficient, hygienic and secure world.

Alphadroid services were recently launched at Radisson Gurugram Udyog Vihar. ■

FACTS ABOUT ALPHAROID SOLUTIONS

- Efficient Multitasking: 4x carrying capacity, 4x guests served.
- Improves Service: 10 minute reduction in wait time, Fewer Errors
- Increased Efficiency: Integrated experience, cost-effective innovation
- Guest Satisfaction: Increase footfall and customer loyalty



How was your experience at the AAHAR show, the response from the sector?

As a startup, we were elevated to have the opportunity to make a significant impact in the hospitality industry, and our

We plan to introduce unique Persian and Indian fusion dishes

Anas Nouman | Owner, SheeshKebab

Last year, SheeshKebab has experienced tremendous growth and success. Our commitment to exceptional Persian and fusion cuisine and an unparalleled dining experience has resonated well with our patrons. We expanded to a new branch in Central Bengaluru at St Marks Road, catering

to the increasing demand from customers all over the city. The love and support from our customers have

been overwhelming, making us a beloved brand in Bengaluru. Our vision to become a legendary restaurant is taking shape, and we are grateful for the recognition and acceptance from our guests. Looking forward to continued success and delivering excellence in the coming years.

we believe a balance of resilient operations and strong marketing is crucial. Resilient operations ensure consistent quality,



“Our vision to become a legendary restaurant is taking shape, and we are grateful for the recognition and acceptance from our guests

ANAS NOUMAN



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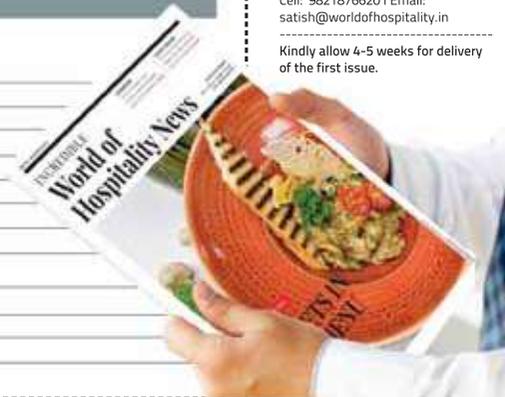
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exceptional service, and a positive dining experience. This creates satisfied customers who are likely to return and recommend us.

On the other hand, strong marketing helps us reach a broader audience, creating awareness and attracting new customers. Both

elements work hand-in-hand - resilient operations build loyalty, while strong marketing expands our reach, collectively winning



We constantly innovate our menu, ensuring each dish contributes to a unique and delightful culinary journey

customers and fostering a thriving business.

Plans ahead

This year, SheeshKebab aims to explore exciting opportunities to enhance our culinary offerings and customer experience. We plan to leverage innovative menu additions, introducing unique Persian and Indian fusion dishes. Embracing technology, we aspire to enhance online ordering and delivery services for greater convenience. Collaborations with local events or festivals are on our radar to expand community engagement. Additionally, we look forward to strengthening our sustainability initiatives to explore eco-friendly practices in packaging and sourcing. These endeavours align with our commitment to continuous improvement and delivering an exceptional dining experience to our valued customers.

Redefining food business

At SheeshKebab, our philosophy in redefining the food business is encapsulated in the mantra 'Love the food, live the experience'. We believe in offering



more than just a meal; it's about creating a memorable experience through authentic Persian and Indian fusion flavours. Quality is our cornerstone, from meticulously sourced ingredients to exceptional service. We constantly innovate our menu, ensuring each dish contributes to a unique and delightful culinary journey. This philosophy reflects our commitment to making SheeshKebab not just a restaurant but a cherished destination where patrons can truly love the food and live the experience. ■



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Exploring the Cultural Heritage: G20 Hampi Visit

Harihara Kamal Charan | Senior Manager /Brand Ambassador – JSW, Admin, Facilities and Hospitality

Last year, India had the honour of hosting the prestigious G20 Summit, showcasing not only its economic prowess but also its rich cultural heritage. Among the lesser-known historic and culturally rich locations highlighted during the summit was Hampi, Karnataka. This ancient city, steeped in history and adorned with architectural marvels, played host to two significant events: the Third G20 Culture Group (CWG) meet and the meeting of G20 Sherpas.

G20 Culture Group (CWG) Meet in Hampi

The Third G20 Culture Group (CWG) meet commenced in Hampi, Karnataka, emphasising the importance of cultural diplomacy and heritage preservation in global forums. The Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, Govind Mohan, briefed the media, highlighting the significance of Hampi as the venue for the 3rd Culture



Working Group Meeting under India's G20 presidency. The event, held during 9-12 July, fostered dialogue and collaboration among G20 nations to promote cultural exchange, heritage conservation, and sustainable tourism.

G20 Sherpas Meeting in Hampi

The G20 Sherpas meeting, chaired by the Indian G20 Sherpa - Amitabh Kant, convened in Hampi from during 13-16 July, 2023.

Hampi's historic ambiance provided an inspiring backdrop



for discussions on key global issues, emphasising the need for inclusive and sustainable development.



The meeting facilitated strategic deliberations among Sherpas from G20 nations, setting the stage for collaborative initiatives to address global challenges.

JSW acted as a host and contributed significantly. Being the host for both these events, we are proud to have such events of national importance to give our international guests and dignitaries an incredible experience in hospitality and the capability to hold such global events. It was a great honour to host and being able to facilitate such an event, simultaneously working with the top government officials addressing their protocols, security requirements and the tight timelines.

Impact on tier-3 cities and smaller towns

Better infrastructural development: The G20 Summit resulted in significant infrastructural development in tier-3 cities and smaller towns, enhancing accessibility and amenities for tourists and locals alike.

Enhanced visibility and cultural awareness: Hampi's inclusion in the G20 Summit spotlight increased its visibility as a cultural and historic destination, leading to greater cultural awareness among global audiences.

Inflow of tourists in India: The exposure from the G20 Summit attracted a surge in tourism to India, with Hampi witnessing a notable increase in tourist footfall,

contributing to the economic growth of the region.

Preservation of historic importance: Increased awareness of Hampi's historic significance and cultural richness among G20 delegates and attendees promoted heritage preservation and sustainable tourism practices.

The G20 Hampi visit underscored the importance of cultural diplomacy, heritage preservation, and inclusive development in shaping global agendas. It left a lasting impact on tier-3 cities and smaller towns, elevating their status as cultural destinations and fostering international cooperation for sustainable development. ■

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HICSA 2024: All eyes on India

As Industry leaders continued to express confidence in India, foreseeing a bright outlook for the coming decade, the HICSA Conference highlighted in which direction the growth would pan out. With sessions on technology, expansion, investments and FnB, the two-day conference brought forward some key points on what to expect from the Indian market

BY SALONI BHATIA

The 19th edition of HICSA recently concluded in Bengaluru at the JW Marriott Bengaluru Prestige Golfshire Resort & Spa. The two-day conference brought together industry leaders who continued to express confidence in India, foreseeing a bright outlook for the coming decade. Fueled by internal factors and regional trends, the Indian hospitality segment is poised for substantial expansion in the coming years accelerated by technology. With his introductory

session, Manav Thadani, MRICS, Founder Chairman, Hotelivate, celebrated an impressive year for the Indian

need to outsource restaurants and bars. He stated, “While FnB constitutes about 30 - 60 per cent of hotel revenue many brands continue to rely on wedding and conferencing. The FnB outlets of a hotel need a more innovative approach, government intervention, and industry collaboration.”

Jesper Palmqvist, Area Director, Asia Pacific, STR, dived into the growth trajectory of India vs APAC region, forecasting a positive GDP growth enabling more investments in the country followed by an informative



hospitality industry. He brought forward the key points highlighted by the owners of hotels expressing the



session on global sustainability rules by Liz Ortiguera, Managing Director, Asia Pacific & Senior Advisor.

The session on how to differentiate between owned and managed, moderated by Vineet Verma, MRICS, Director, Brigade Hospitality featured Dillip Raja Karier, Group CEO, Minor International; Patu Keswani, Chairman & MD, Lemon Tree Hotels and Priya Paul, Chairperson, Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels on the panel that mutually agreed that it's the time to go 'Asset Right' evolving from the 'Asset Light' concept. In conversation with Thadani, Federico J. González, Executive

Vice Chairman - Radisson Hotel Group CEO, Louvre Hotels Group shared how Radisson envisions being among the top 3 hotel companies in the world defined not by the number of Hotel Rooms rather, than by the people's perception.



The concurrent sessions paved the way for sustainable planning and growth of local brands with

Fueled by internal factors and regional trends, the Indian hospitality segment is poised for substantial expansion in the coming years

industry leaders diving straight into the various dynamics affecting the Indian market. Another keynote by Pieter Elbers, Chief Executive Officer, IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation Ltd) addressed how India is going to become an aviation hub with government support backed by the right infrastructure and Indigo is already planning strategic partnerships with international airlines to improve

connectivity. Kapil Bhatia, Executive Chairman, Interglobe Technologies was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award which received a standing ovation from the industry. The day ended with the Culinary Carnival making its debut at HICSA with some top brands showcasing at the event.

The second day highlighted this year's theme 'Savouring South Asia: Innovation in Food, Tech & Design.' While the morning sessions

discussed what truly creates the magic to make an FnB outlet stand out, some crucial inputs by Forsite Creative and Hotstats showed the current trends in the APAC region and the potential of the Indian market. The panel on restaurant concepts creating magic brought together Stefan Breg, Managing Partner, Keane Consult & Create; Christian Gradnitzer, Vice President, International Business Development and Operations, Rikas Hospitality Group; Panchali Mahendra, Chief Executive Officer, Atelier House Hospitality; Peter John, Founding Partner, Joi Design; Rohit Sachdeva, Founder & CEO, Soho Hospitality





and Zorawar Kalra, Founder & MD, Massive Restaurants. The panel shared views on how the right approach in design, concept and thought can completely change the revenues for a hotel restaurant.

More concurrent sessions highlighted

With the pace of changes, every owner acknowledged the role of technology and data in hospitality

the challenges of Indian hospitality be it creative marketing or the talent pool. With the pace of

changes, every owner acknowledged the role of technology and data in hospitality. Therefore afternoon sessions focused on how to align with India's next-gen dining and innovations in hotel technology. The day ended with the General Manager of the Year Awards.

Since its inaugural event in 2005, the Hotel Investment Conference-South Asia (HICSA) has established itself as an unparalleled gathering platform

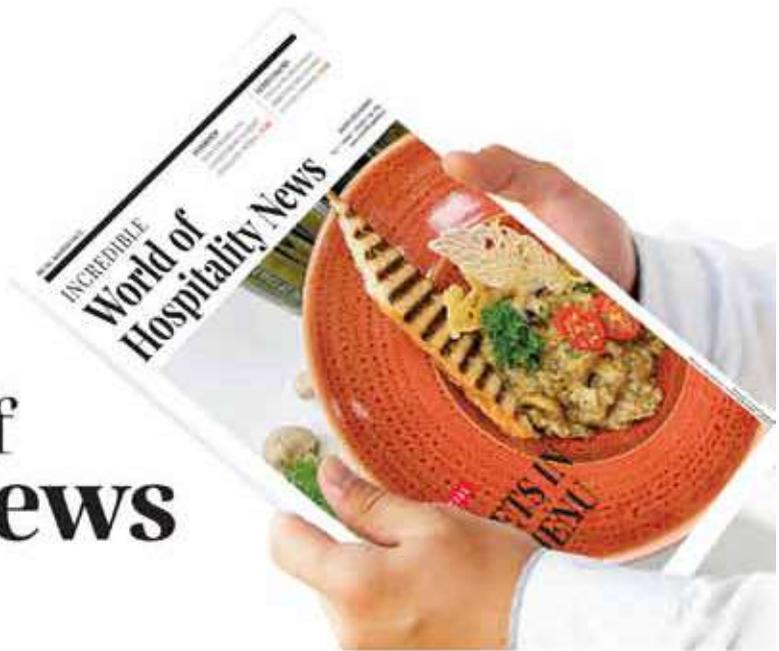
for the global hospitality industry. Renowned for its content-rich sessions and exceptional networking opportunities, HICSA consistently draws top brands, hotel owners, financiers,



developers, and professional advisors from all corners of the world. This was the conference's second year in the Silicon Valley of India. ■



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Rossari Professional: Your partner for superior airport cleanliness

S Vanchinathan | Head Sales (SAARC), Rossari Professional

Rossari Professional has emerged as a leading provider of cleaning solutions for airports, offering a comprehensive range of cleaning chemicals, tools, equipment, paper products, and dispensers. With a strong commitment to quality and innovation, Rossari Professional has positioned itself as the go-to avenue for airports looking to meet their cleaning requirements efficiently and effectively. With a commitment to excellence and innovation, Rossari Professional diligently services over 35 airports across India, including Mumbai, Chennai, Leh & Ladakh, Srinagar, Chandigarh, Amritsar, Varanasi, Bhubaneswar, Kochi, Vizag, Madurai, Delhi T3/T2, Udaipur, Goa, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, and Maharishi Valmiki International Airport - Ayodhya, upholding the highest standards of cleanliness and

hygiene to provide passengers and staff with a safe and comfortable environment. Across these airports, Rossari Professional delivers its comprehensive range of offerings, ensuring that each airport receives customised solutions to meet its unique cleaning



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requirements.

Airports are high-traffic environments that require rigorous cleaning and maintenance to ensure the safety and comfort of passengers and staff. Rossari Professional understands the unique challenges faced by airports in maintaining cleanliness and hygiene standards, and has developed a range of specialised products to address these needs.

Extensive cleaning approach

One of the key strengths of Rossari Professional is its extensive range of cleaning chemicals tailored for airport environments.

From sanitary, floor, carpet, steel, etc., Rossari Professional offers solutions that are effective in combating a wide range of contaminants commonly found in airports. These chemicals are formulated to meet industry standards and regulations,



ensuring that airports can maintain a clean and sanitary environment for all stakeholders.

In addition to cleaning chemicals, the company also provides a variety of tools and equipment designed to streamline the cleaning process. From high-performance vacuum cleaners to scrubbers and polishers, Rossari Professional offers solutions that are both efficient and user-friendly, allowing airport staff to maintain cleanliness with ease.

Furthermore, Rossari Professional supplies a range of paper products and dispensers that are essential for maintaining hygiene standards in airports. From paper towels to toilet paper, Rossari Professional's products are made from high-quality materials that are both absorbent and durable, ensuring that airports can provide a clean and comfortable experience for passengers. Concord and Greenworld brands have set high benchmarks in quality, reliability, and trust in this arena.

Addressing in-flight catering needs

Freshee, as one brand of Rossari Professional, offers a range of products including aluminium foils, aluminium containers, and more, making it an ideal choice for inflight catering where hygiene and freshness

are paramount. The individually wrapped packaging of Freshee products ensures that each item is hygienically sealed, preventing contamination and maintaining freshness. This is especially important in the confined space of an airplane where maintaining hygiene standards is crucial to prevent the spread of germs and ensure the well-being of passengers. By using Freshee products in inflight catering, airlines can offer passengers a safe and hygienic dining experience. Moreover, the use of Freshee products contributes to maintaining overall hygiene standards of the airport by reducing the risk of foodborne illnesses and promoting cleanliness throughout the catering process.

Clean & hygienic solutions

Rossari Professional also offers Airoseal, a premium fragrance range that further enhances the airport hygiene experience. Airoseal provides a touch of luxury and freshness to airport facilities, creating a pleasant and inviting atmosphere for travellers and staff alike. With a variety of captivating scents, Airoseal adds a sensory element to the overall hygiene management,

Together, the brands under Rossari Professional's portfolio are reshaping the way airport hygiene is approached. By leveraging the expertise, innovation, and quality products of Freshee, Naturesani, Concond, Green World and Airoseal, Rossari Professional is setting new benchmarks in airport cleanliness and safety



ensuring that airports not only look clean but also smell delightful. The inclusion of Airoseal in Rossari Professional's hygiene solutions underscores the company's commitment to providing a comprehensive and holistic approach to airport cleanliness and well-being.

quotient. These innovative products are designed to address the common challenges associated with traditional urinals, such as odour and water wastage. By using cutting-edge technology and patented design, Naturesani urinal bowls provide a hygienic and eco-friendly solution for airports looking to enhance their restroom facilities.

This innovation has won various awards, Golden Peacock Award for Innovative Product/Service 2024, and FICCI - Special Jury's Award in "Innovation in Water Technology" 2023. Each

Naturesani Urinal bowl saves around 1,50,000 Liters of water annually, provides 5X germ reduction using Symrise technology and up to 97% less chemical usage. Additionally, it helps to save on

the electricity cost since no sensors are required. The plumbing is very simple and no additional expenses to be incurred.

Together, the brands under Rossari Professional's portfolio are reshaping the way airport hygiene is approached. By leveraging the expertise, innovation, and quality products of Freshee, Naturesani, Concord, Green World and Airoseal, Rossari Professional is setting new benchmarks in airport cleanliness and safety. Travelers can rest assured that their well-being is prioritised, thanks to the dedication of these brands to deliver excellence in airport hygiene solutions.

All in all, Rossari Professional stands out as the best avenue for airports seeking top-quality cleaning solutions. With a comprehensive range of products specifically tailored for airport environments, Rossari Professional offers a one-stop solution for all cleaning requirements. The company's commitment to quality, innovation, and sustainability makes it a trusted partner for airports looking to maintain cleanliness and hygiene standards effectively. ■



One of the standout offerings from Rossari Professional is Naturesani, which is an innovative odourless and waterless urinal bowl and range of other products which amps up the ecological

FSCAI hosts a confluence at AAHAR 2024



IWOH News

THE FOOD SERVICE CONSULTANTS Association of India, a three-year young professional organisation, brought together some of the top food service and hospitality consultants of India along with select well-established brands of the HoReCa segment, at AAHAR 2024. Aahar is one of the most successful trade fairs and expos of the Indian Hospitality Industry, and its 38th edition in March 2024 was by far the largest in terms of the number of exhibitors.

FSCAI Confluence 2024 was held on 9th March 2024, at the prestigious Bharat Mandapam, in continuation of the goals of FSCAI to bring together all stakeholders of the food service and hospitality industry for the common benefit of the industry and profession. Consultants from Ahmedabad, Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Pune, Kochi, Dubai and other cities joined the

brand heads and country heads of some of the finest food service equipment and solution providers on the occasion to discuss the common issues and to find solutions for improvement and betterment.

Speaking on the occasion, Rajesh Chowdhury, Founder & Director, stated, “Since inception of the FSCAI about three years ago, we have worked to bring together the consultants in a spirit of collaboration and cooperation, and I am happy to state that, this is surely happening. Never in the past, so many leading consultants have shared a common platform. This is a unique accomplishment and the credit goes to all our members, and the industry stakeholders, who have put their trust in us. Adding to this, the presence of some of the finest brands of the HoReCa sector, coming together to share the current and emerging trends and technologies, is a hearty welcome note”, he said.

P Sraavan Kumar, President, FSCAI, highlighted the value addition the association brings to the profession. He said the coming together of consultants is an indication that the future belongs to those who believe in seamless working, combining the domain-specific talents of each consultant. ■



Event

NFCI Group hosts National Culinary Challenge

NFCI GROUP OF EDUCATION recently hosted the National Culinary Challenge - 2024 (NCC 2024), positioning itself as a leading institution in hotel management and culinary arts education in India. The event garnered participation from over 800 enthusiastic culinary talents, representing 20 campuses across Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka.

The competition, organised in three theme-based rounds showcased the culinary brilliance of students. The first round witnessed 800 students engaging in the revival of old and lost recipes. The subsequent round featured the top 200 students preparing Millet-based main courses from international cuisine. The grand mega final round, attended by the best 45 students, revolved around traditional Indian cuisine, challenging participants to prepare three courses in one hour and thirty minutes, including a millet-based dish. Eight prestigious awards were distributed, recognizing outstanding culinary achievements.

The event's success can be attributed to the visionary leadership of NFCI's esteemed Directors - Brijinder Kaur



Nagpal, Peminder Singh Nagpal, Dr Anjna Joshi, and Sanjeev Kashyap, along with Executive Director - Naveen Dua. The grand finale witnessed the presence of distinguished hospitality chefs who served as judges, evaluating the culinary masterpieces crafted by the participants. ■

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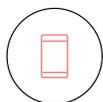
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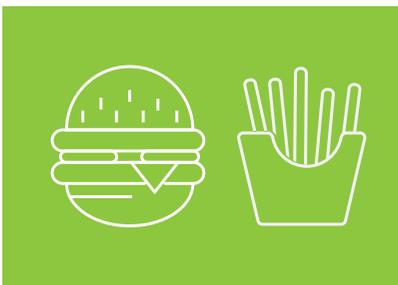
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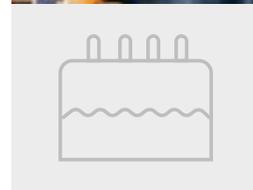
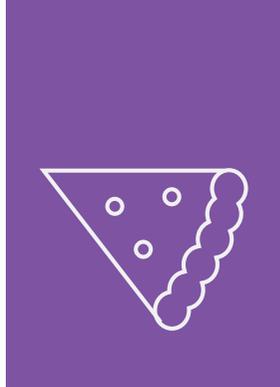
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Movements

Fortune Select Global, Gurgaon

● **Ajinkya Salunkhe** has been appointed as General Manager, Fortune Select Global in Gurgaon. Salunkhe embarked on his illustrious journey in hospitality at the iconic Taj Mahal Mumbai. Since then, he has worked with renowned brands, including InterContinental The Lalit Mumbai, The Westin Pune Koregaon Park, Marriott Hyderabad, J W Marriott Bengaluru, J W Marriott Mumbai Juhu, Courtyard Marriott Pune, Hyatt Regency Kolkata, and most recently, The Waverly Hotel & Residences Bangalore, where he served as General Manager.



Sheraton Grand Pune Bund Garden Hotel



● Sheraton Grand Pune Bund Garden Hotel has announced the appointment of **Sagar Kulkarni** as the new Director of Food & Beverage. In his previous role at Hilton Mumbai International Airport, he demonstrated exceptional proficiency in overseeing Food & Beverage operations, excelling in forecasting, budgeting, ownership handling, and successful relaunches of key outlets. However, it was during his tenure at Sofitel Luxury Hotels Mumbai BKC where he truly made his mark, spending nearly 7 years honing his skills and achieving remarkable milestones.

Aloft Bengaluru Outer Ring Road



● Aloft Bengaluru Outer Ring Road has appointed **Qadir Khan** as Executive Chef, who brings over two decades of unparalleled culinary expertise and a rich and diverse background in hospitality to the Aloft family. Chef Qadir honed his culinary skills while spearheading large-scale kitchen operations and crafting intricate menus for prestigious brands such as JW Marriott, The Westin, Le Méridien, and Holiday Inn.

Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield



● Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield has appointed **Avishek Singha** as the Executive Pastry Chef. With an illustrious career of 13-years, Singha embarked on his culinary odyssey in 2011 as an Operational Trainee at Oberoi Hotels and Resorts. In 2019, Avishek's affiliation with Marriott commenced at JW Marriott, Pune.

Parag Milk Foods



● Parag Milk Foods, has announced the appointment of **Sumit Jain** as President of Finance. A Chartered Accountant, Jain achieved All India Rank 18 in 2012 and All India Rank 22 in Cost Accountancy in 2013. He was twice recognised as one of India's top 40 CAs under the age of 40 by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India.

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Dan Androne, Head Chef,
The Forest Hotel:

" In the next ten years everyone will own a High Speed Steamer "

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