Hoteliers encouraged to look outside of the industry in order to make change at this year’s Hotel Leadership Conference



Sustainability, the economy and inspiring positivity and change were just some of the many topics at the annual Hotel Leadership Conference hosted by the Master Innholders this week.

Over 400 hoteliers attended the two-day event at JW Marriott Grosvenor House London for the Beyond the Bubble programme.

Opening the conference was Professor in Economics Linda Yeuh, who spoke on the UK’s current economic outlook and what lessons history can teach us about our economic future.

Yeuh urged hoteliers to keep an eye on the bottom line and invest well, assuring delegates that there is a recession, but it will be a shallower one than seen in the 1970s.

Executive Vice President & Partner Relations at Internova Travel Group, Albert M. Herrera, spoke about how the hospitality industry can capitalise on its strongest asset – human connection. Herrera said: “Connection is so important – how are you telling your story to guests, both internally and externally? You all have a story to tell, you have to find out what it is. People don’t want facts – they want stories.”

There was a bigger focus on sustainability this year with presentations throughout the paper free conference with Graham Ramsbottom from Greensphere Capital, Co-Founder and CEO of Positive Luxury, Diana Verde Nieto, and Founder and CEO of Zero Carbon Forum, Mark Chapman stressing its importance and reminding the audience to stop thinking about carbon offsetting as the solution but focusing on reducing it as a priority instead.

Concluding the first evening saw the perfect opportunity for attendees to enjoy a sumptuous black-tie dinner, in which the awards of General Manager of the Future and Hotelier of the Year were presented to Karen Weisheit and Adrian Ellis respectively.

With a line-up of speakers, which included a number from outside of the hotel industry, delegates were encouraged to look at the value that can be taken by looking outside of the hospitality bubble to gain insights.

Award-winning keynote speaker and author, Brendan Hall, spoke about the importance of building and maintaining trust in a community and how it is key to a team’s success.
Hall said: “As times get tougher, give more reassurance to staff. It’s a journey and it’s the tough moments that define us and through hard experiences, you will learn how to overcome.”

A regular feature of the conference, CEO of UK Hospitality Kate Nicholls OBE, provided a realistic yet optimistic outlook for the year ahead.
Nicholls said: “There are mountains we must climb over in the next six months; however, we will emerge strong and be able to capitalise.”

Commenting on the success of the conference, Master Innholder Chairman Dan Rose-Bristow said: “Everyone in attendance here over the past few days has come looking for fresh perspectives and bold new ideas for the hospitality industry and I know I for one am leaving with exactly that.

“Each year this conference aims to provide a welcome opportunity for the industry to come together to tackle the real issues that affect us all, with this year’s event focusing on how we can all push ourselves and think ‘Beyond the Bubble.’

“Now more than ever we as an industry need to ensure we are ready for the year ahead, and I hope this year’s conference has provided ample opportunity for all those in attendance to share ideas and inspire each other to achieve greatness.”

Next year's conference will be held on 15/16 January at Park Plaza London Riverbank. For more information about the Master Innholders, including applications for Innholder Scholarships and Aspiring Leaders Diplomas, becoming a Master Innholder, as well as other news and events, visit the website or sign up for the newsletter for regular updates.

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The Master Innholders

The Master Innholders is a prestigious force within the hospitality industry developing managers, influencing standards and promoting study, discussion and research.

The formation of the Master Innholders in 1978 was the first step taken by the Worshipful Company of Innholders towards renewing its traditional links with the hotel industry. The award of membership is open to practising hoteliers by application each year. With the full support of the Worshipful Company of Innholders and the Institute of Hospitality, Master Innholders have slowly grown in number and have increased their influence and charitable activities within the hotel industry.

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