

Horizons

SHTM Magazine

Official Magazine of the School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

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Always Ahead of the Curve



- ✦ Launch of Innovative BSc Scheme
- ✦ A New, 100% Online Master's Degree
- ✦ Congregation Marks New Journey for Graduates
- ✦ Stepping Up Engagement with Industry

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Leading through Innovation

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DEAN'S MESSAGE

The last two years have seen our industry weather extraordinary challenges and emerge stronger than ever before – smarter, more sustainable, and better prepared to face uncertainty. Having supported the industry in its time of crisis, the SHTM is now ready to shape a bold new future for hospitality and tourism.

Opening this issue of *Horizons* is the perfect example of the School's leadership in innovation. With versatility as its hallmark, our new BSc Scheme in Hotel and Tourism Management will prepare graduates for careers within and beyond the hospitality industry. No less forward-thinking is the School's new online MSc in Hospitality Business Innovation, which will be launched alongside the BSc Scheme in September. Alongside the School's highly successful online MicroMasters, the 100% online MSc will provide a fresh pathway for career development in the digital age.

Looking ahead was also on the agenda at the 27th PolyU Congregation (SHTM) last November, when the latest cohort of graduates joined the ranks of our crisis-hit industry. Their achievements inspire enormous confidence in the future of the industry – especially in Asia, whose unique paradigm of hospitality is attracting students from around the world. Shedding light on this exciting new trend, five European students explain why they decided to study in Asia and why the SHTM was the right choice.

As a pioneer and leader in the "Asian Wave" of hospitality, the SHTM strives to bring stakeholders together to support and revitalise the industry. To this end, the School co-organised three important international conferences in 2021, namely the 15th UNWTO/PATA Forum on Tourism Trends and Outlook, IMPACT2021 and the 2nd GBA Smart Tourism Forum.

The fruits of partnership were showcased again in the School's recent alliance with the World Travel and Tourism Council, with the mission of sharing knowledge to serve the industry. Last year also saw the SHTM establish a tourism-focused Think Tank with the University Alliance of the Silk Road, alongside numerous other industry engagement activities.

Highlights of this issue also include state-of-the-art research by SHTM faculty, a packed calendar of student-run events, and a smörgåsbord of food and beverage activities.

Never have I been more proud of the students, faculty and staff of the SHTM, whose passion, resilience and spirit of togetherness will continue to lead the industry out of crisis and into a bright future. **H**



Professor Kaye Chon

Dean and Chair Professor

Walter & Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in
International Hospitality Management
School of Hotel and Tourism Management
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

LEADING HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM IN THE DIGITAL AGE



Never before has the hospitality and tourism industry had to adapt to such immense change. Other than the global social and health issues of late, technology has advanced at breakneck speed in recent years – especially during the pandemic. Aware that overcoming these challenges will mean meeting them head-on, the SHTM is thrilled to announce an evolution in its curriculum. A new Bachelor of Science (BSc) scheme in Hotel and Tourism Management (HTM) will commence in September 2022.

As a leader in innovation, the SHTM understands the importance of reinvention in a constantly evolving industry. The new BSc programme reflects the School's pledge to nurture first-rate graduates, capitalise on the very latest opportunities, and ensure that the industry continues to march onward. "This is an opportune time for us to invest in education, so we can equip ourselves for the further development of the industry", said Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation

Professor in International Hospitality Management.

Students enrolling in the new BSc in September can look forward to acquiring a versatility that will be crucial for their career success. Likewise, the SHTM has every faith that the industry will bounce back. "Tourism continues to be a sunrise industry with continuing employment growth", said Dean Chon, "and past experience has shown us that the industry is amazingly resilient."

Hospitality as a "Tool"

Innovation and adaptability will be at the heart of the BSc in HTM. One core concept underlying the programme's design is that the rich experience, skills, and knowledge obtained can be transferred to professions outside the hospitality industry. "Students can use this spirit of hospitality as a tool to be successful in not only the hotel, tourism, and event industries, but also many other service industries", said Dean Chon.

In the spirit of moving with the times, the 4-year HTM degree will replace the Hotel Management and Tourism and Events Management BSc programmes, which will be discontinued at the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. The new curriculum will continue to provide exciting training and internship opportunities that will cultivate an on-the-ground understanding of the industry and offer insights into many different professions – in hospitality and tourism and beyond. As always, students will be taught by international faculty of the highest calibre. Their expertise and experience will ensure that

graduates of the new programme emerge as the next generation of industry leaders.

The integrated programme will offer students the option to specialise in one of three areas – Hotel Management, Smart Tourism and Hospitality, or Event and Experience Management. Students who are passionate about hotel management can immerse themselves in resort management, hospitality asset management, and revenue management, to name but a few topics. Those who choose to specialise in smart tourism can learn about AI and smart service design in tourism and hospitality, and much more. Students with aspirations in event management can explore wedding planning, luxury management, and medical services experience management, among other pathways.

Creating Bright Futures

Recent history has taught us that it is impossible to know what the future holds. However, it remains vital to anticipate industry needs and update curricula accordingly to leave graduates in good stead for the future. "Those who are trained to provide excellent service, leading to delightful experiences, will be in high demand", said Dean Chon. Recognising the need for flexibility in the face of change, the multi-disciplinary BSc programme has been carefully designed to prepare students for management and leadership positions in today's digital age.

The new programme will impart the skills needed to achieve

excellence in a huge range of professions. For example, students who choose to specialise in Hotel Management can look forward to leadership roles in the front office, food and beverage, sales and marketing, and human resources departments, as well as in business strategy and revenue management. Students who choose to specialise in Smart Tourism and Hospitality can expect a similar professional trajectory, plus a deep understanding of technology integration.

Exceptional future careers are also in store for those who wish to specialise in Event and Experience Management, including positions as event supervisors and wedding planners. "Our graduates," added Dean Chon, "are highly sought after by other service sectors, such as finance and luxury businesses". One of our graduates recently embarked on a career in the healthcare industry, for example, having gained valuable experience in the hotel environment.

Despite the trials caused by COVID-19, hospitality and tourism have already begun to regain momentum, spurred on by people's universal desire to travel. The SHTM therefore reassures students that the future is bright. "SHTM graduates are precisely what the industry needs to thrive", said Dean Chon, "and students should feel confident about their future prospects." Students of the innovative new BSc programme can look forward to great success, whichever dreams they choose to pursue. **H**

EARN A MASTER'S DEGREE ONLINE • 100%

The SHTM has always taken pride in its ability to adapt to adversity in an ever-changing industry, and this is now more important than ever. Motivated by the trials of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to keep up to speed with industry trends, the School is delighted to announce

specific education needs of industry practitioners, with industry trends placed at the forefront. It will offer a particularly valuable opportunity for mature and experienced hospitality professionals who continue to work during their studies at the SHTM, as the skills,

of their own learning journeys. Not only will the online nature of the course make it accessible to professionals worldwide, but additional flexibility will be afforded by the option to complete the MSc in part-time mode.

A Fully Online Offering

the launch of a new online MSc in Hospitality Business Innovation. This 100% online programme, which will commence in September 2022, is expected to nurture exceptional industry leaders in the digital era.

One ambition of the SHTM is to bridge the gap between higher education and the workplace. To this end, the new MSc programme has been designed to meet the

knowledge, and confidence that they acquire during the programme can be progressively applied in the workplace.

Students can look forward to a rich array of experiential exercises, seminars, lectures, and group work. The course will be delivered entirely in English, and its participant-centred teaching methods will enable students to take control

The syllabus will cover an impressive variety of subjects, with the following compulsory courses: Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics in Hospitality Business; Hospitality Asset Management; Hospitality Business Research Methods; Hospitality Business Strategies; Hospitality Financial Management; Pricing Strategy and Revenue Management in the Hospitality Industry; Hospitality

Leadership and Human Capital Development; Innovation and Technology Management in Hospitality; Integrated Hospitality Marketing; and Project Management in Hospitality.

MicroMasters in International Hospitality Management

Speaking to the School's previous success in online learning initiatives is the existing PolyUx MicroMasters in International Hospitality Management, hosted on the edX platform. For more than 5 years, this programme has catered to huge demand worldwide, moulding outstanding graduates with bright futures in the international hospitality industry.

The online nature of the MicroMasters offers a "flexible and innovative" learning opportunity, according to MicroMasters Star Ms Kesska Choi, an SHTM student now enrolled in the MSc in International Hospitality Management. As well as instruction from expert professors from all around the globe, Ms Choi's experience was enriched by online discussions with classmates.

Another advantage of hosting the programme online is that it "allows students to gradually engage in the course anywhere, and at an individual's own pace", said another MicroMasters Star, Ms Iye Ip, who is now pursuing an MSc in International Hospitality Management at the SHTM. "This

accredited postgraduate course enabled me to strive for a balance between work and professional upskilling", added Ms Ip.

The hugely popular programme covers four key areas of management in the hospitality and tourism industry: managing human resources, managing innovation and technology, managing marketing, and luxury management. Ms Hibiki Nagano, MicroMasters Outstanding Learner from Japan, completed the Luxury Management course as part of her undergraduate curriculum. "I was able to expand my knowledge via various activities such as a luxury hotel analysis presentation and essay writing", she said.

Another major appeal of the MicroMasters is that it offers a gateway to on-campus MSc programmes. Graduates can apply for credit transfer to the School's flagship MSc programmes in International Hospitality Management, International Tourism and Convention Management, International Wine Management, and online Hospitality Business Innovation. "I have gained tangible credits to take me closer to my goals", said MicroMasters Star Ms Azia from Pakistan, who now looks forward to pursuing an on-site MSc at the SHTM.

Surmounting Challenges

The SHTM prides itself not only on keeping abreast of industry trends but also on adapting to logistical challenges faced by industry professionals and students alike. In the wake of COVID-19, the School recognises how crucial it remains to provide for an increasingly online learning community. The pandemic has been a time of reflection for many, and it presents an opportune moment for career development. Offering an online MSc is a natural next step for the School to meet the needs of the industry and today's digitally savvy students.

Needless to say, the impressive track record of the SHTM's MicroMasters bodes well for the future of the new online MSc in Hospitality Business Innovation. The SHTM expects continuing success during this period of adjustment, and is overjoyed to nurture more talent in the hospitality industry. The School's dedication to providing high-quality education both offline and online inspires confidence in the future of the industry and its next generation of leaders. **H**

MicroMasters in International Hospitality Management



Pride, Perseverance, & Passion

The SHTM is exceedingly proud of the talented students who graduated at the 27th PolyU Congregation (SHTM) on 9 November 2021. Their resilience and passion in the face of unprecedented challenges have not ceased to astound the School, and they inspire confidence that the next generation of graduates will revitalise the industry.

The graduation ceremony celebrated the class of 2021, which included 10 Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), 36 Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management (D.HTM), 207 Master of Science (MSc), and 249 Bachelor of Science (BSc) graduates.

Opening the ceremony, Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, welcomed the graduates to the proud ranks of the School's alumni. "Have passion in what you do, have pride in what you do", he urged them.

This passion brings innumerable opportunities to make a difference, according to Guest of Honour Ms Winnie Chiu, President and Executive Director of Dorsett Hospitality International. "It is your responsibility to use your passion and skillset to help others", she said.

Ms Chiu described the pandemic as a stark reminder of what "really matters". She explained how she and her colleagues have risen to the occasion by transforming hotel lobbies into vaccination centres and using vacant rooms to house victims of domestic abuse and Afghan refugees. "New meaning has been injected into the industry", she concluded.



Dreams Worth Chasing

Following the presentation of doctoral, MSc, and BSc awards, a valedictory speech was delivered by postgraduate representative Mr Kenneth Wong, who graduated with distinction from the MSc in International Hospitality Management.

Stepping out of his comfort zone, Mr Wong decided to study hotel management at the SHTM after selling his law firm. "My original intention was to set an example for my daughter, to show her that it's never too late to pursue your dreams. But I gained so much more", he said.

The value of new experiences was also stressed by undergraduate representative Miss Onyx Wong, a first-class honours graduate of the BSc in Hotel Management, who received the SHTM Student of the Year Award 2020/21. During her "journey of discovery", Miss Wong participated in an exchange programme to Griffith University in Gold Coast, Australia. "The SHTM has nurtured in us the aptitude to explore a bigger world", she said.

To end the morning session, the Outstanding PolyU SHTM Alumni Award 2021 was accepted by Dr Benson Tang, Executive

Director, Corporate Travel of Informa Markets, who described his choice to study at the SHTM as a "milestone decision" in his life. In his encouraging speech, Dr Tang shared three tips with those graduating: persevere, be adaptable and innovative, and be passionate. To finish the morning session, Miss Weiqi Xia, BSc graduate in Hotel Management, was awarded the Best Undergraduate Honours Thesis Award 2020/21.

Belief in Better Days

The afternoon session was opened by Guest of Honour Dr Aron Harilela, Chairman and CEO of Harilela Hotels Ltd. He shared his strong faith that the industry will "come back with a bang". This belief is perfectly embodied by his decision to open the Hari Hotel in Hong Kong during one of the pandemic's worst waves, against the advice of his stakeholders. "Hong Kong remains richly placed for both business and leisure travel", Dr Harilela told the assembled graduates. "Fear not: the hotel business plays a long game".

Following the presentation of doctoral, MSc, and BSc awards, a moving valedictory speech was delivered by postgraduate representative Miss Vivian Liang,

who graduated with distinction from the MSc in International Wine Management. Miss Liang described the privilege it had been to study alongside world-class scholars. "The pandemic has forced us to treasure being alive, to be grateful, and to be honest with ourselves", she added.

Optimism was also central to the valedictory speech of undergraduate representative Miss Karen Ma, a fresh graduate of the BSc in Tourism and Events Management. "I still remember a question I asked an SHTM professor during the university admission interview: 'What is Hong Kong's competitive advantage over tourism destinations that are rising in importance?'" she said. "He answered, 'It is you, our students'".

Other highlights included the presentation of the Best Ph.D. Thesis Award 2020/21 to Dr Antony Wong; the Best D.HTM Thesis Award 2020/21 to Dr Xinru Liu; and the Best MSc Dissertation Award 2020/21 to Miss Rui Guo.

The tenacity of graduates under such extraordinary circumstances inspires enormous hope in the future of the industry, both in Hong Kong and abroad. Without a doubt, their determination and ardour will carry hospitality and tourism into a brighter future. The SHTM is immeasurably proud of the class of 2021. **H**



Miss Carla Vennin



Miss Yana Fomenko

Bound for the East: Hospitality Students Flock to Asia



Mr Pierandrea Falchi



Miss Melanie Muhlmann

For a long time, students from Asia travelled west to learn about hospitality and tourism, joining schools in Switzerland, the UK and the US. Recently, however, the pendulum has begun to swing in the opposite direction, as more and more students from the West seek to learn from Asia's unique paradigm of hospitality.

With the gravitational centre of the hospitality and tourism industry shifting toward Asia, Hong Kong is an increasingly attractive location for international hospitality students. As a pioneer and leader in this new "Asian Wave", the SHTM is receiving mounting interest from European students. We asked some of these students to explain why they chose the SHTM and why it was important to them to study in Asia.

Miss Melanie Muhlmann, originally from Switzerland, joined the BSc in Tourism and Events Management programme. "I chose Hong Kong for its uniqueness", she said. The same quality attracted her to the SHTM, as the "world renowned hospitality school fully integrated in a university". Now a senior-year student in the Special Events class, Miss Muhlmann is grateful for the opportunities the School has offered her. "Events Management is an intense and practical programme", she said. "It has given me insights into real-life work situations, preparing me for a career in this field".



The pursuit of real-life industry experience also led Miss Yana Fomenko, a Ukrainian student enrolled in the BSc in Hotel Management programme, to apply to the SHTM. "I was fascinated with how everything works inside a hotel", she explained. She feels "very lucky and very happy" to have been given the chance to study here. The School not only offers a "wide selection of subjects and courses", she explained, but also allows students to gain practical experience through internships at Hotel ICON.

After completing his Bachelor's degree in Hotel Management at the SHTM, Mr Pierandrea Falchi, from Italy, stayed on to pursue the MSc in Global Hospitality Business. This programme enables students to study at three world-class institutions: the SHTM in Hong Kong, the University of Houston in the US, and the EHL Hospitality Business School in Switzerland. Despite his extensive international experience, Mr Falchi described Hong Kong as the ideal place to learn about the hospitality industry. "Hong Kong is truly Asia's World City", he said. "The population is increasingly heterogenous, allowing for a deep interculturalising experience while attending classes".

Miss Carla Vennin, who recently graduated from the SHTM with an MSc in International Hospitality Management, felt that she had gained a good understanding of the European tourism market during her Bachelor's degree in France, but she wanted to build on this by discovering how things work in other cultures. "Hong Kong was of course my first choice for this exciting journey", she said, "as it is undeniably one of the leaders in hospitality in the Asian and the international market".

For many of our European students, the most important reason for coming to Hong Kong is to gain first-hand experience of a different culture – particularly Asia's famed model of hospitality. When Miss Fomenko first arrived in Hong Kong, she found the culture "breath-taking". She believes that it is the "huge contrast in cultures, climate and food", combined with the preservation of "many customs and traditions", that makes the city so special and attracts so many international tourists.

Although culture shock can be daunting, Miss Vennin reassured prospective students that "if you are curious and willing to discover, it is not hard to get immersed in a new culture". Hong Kong is particularly welcoming, added Miss Muhlmann. "It is a city where you will feel safe and at ease, no matter your background".

Asia, the Future of Tourism

Looking more broadly at the Asian hospitality and tourism industry, Miss Fomenko highlighted that the "ethos and willingness to give excellent service are a very strong pillar of Asian hospitality". She was particularly impressed by how staff make guests feel at home by greeting them by name and anticipating their needs.

Miss Vennin noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has made people realise how much they "love travelling, staying in hotels and living exceptional experiences". Hospitality professionals need to "reshape the image of our industry,

become leaders of change and build the foundations of the new hospitality", she said. Asia, more than any other market, embraces such changes, and Miss Vennin is convinced that Asia will "gradually expand its footprint in the hospitality and tourism industry".

Advice for Prospective Students

Asked what advice he would offer to prospective students from Italy who are thinking of applying to the SHTM, Mr Falchi urged them to "prepare for the unconventional, have high expectations for a world leading education, and dive in with an open mind".

While acknowledging that Europe has many "great institutions for hospitality studies", Miss Vennin emphasised that "none of them will give you the same impetus to start an international career" that the SHTM does. Miss Fomenko reminded prospective students of the wide range of subjects on offer at the SHTM, as well as the chance to learn from both teachers and guests with first-hand experience of the Asian hospitality industry.

Miss Muhlmann had the perfect last words for all European students thinking of applying to the SHTM. "I would tell them it is an incredible opportunity to broaden their perspectives", she said. "It will definitely be a memorable experience, providing them with life-long benefits". ■

IMPACT2021

New Tourism, New Directions



Confidently Facing the Future

Leading the hospitality and tourism industry into a bright future has always been a priority for the SHTM. Eager to tackle head-on the challenges brought by COVID-19, the School recently co-organised and hosted two major forums that united academics, industry professionals and policy makers with the shared mission of revitalising the industry. Thanks to the hard work of the SHTM and its valued partners, both events were a resounding success.

On 16 December 2021, the School and its Hospitality and Tourism Research Centre, together with STR, organised

the IMPACT2021 conference. This year, the theme was "New Tourism, New Directions". Planned and orchestrated by a team of undergraduates from the School's Special Events Class and delivered in hybrid mode, the conference attracted delegates from around the world to explore post-pandemic pathways for hospitality and tourism.

"We are still facing the challenges of the pandemic", said Professor Jin-Guang Teng, PolyU President, in his welcoming remarks. "But this conference aims to shed light on new opportunities arising from advanced technology, new trends in global tourism and hospitality, as well as the development of smart tourism".

Embracing new opportunities was also the goal of the 2nd GBA Smart Tourism Forum, held on 17 December. Themed "Connectivity and Sustainability for Better Travel", this hybrid forum focused on the development of smart tourism in the Greater Bay Area (GBA).

The spirit of both events was perfectly summed up by Ms Elizabeth Randall Winkle, STR Chief Strategy Officer, who delivered online opening remarks at IMPACT2021. "What makes our industry so special is its resilience", said Ms Randall Winkle. "We are moving forwards, even though the path is filled with obstacles".

New Tourism, New Directions

Kicking off IMPACT2021 was an Opening General Session chaired by Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor, and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. In his opening remarks, Dean Chon set the scene for the event. "The IMPACT conference was conceived to translate research papers into layman's terms", he explained, "and thus have a great impact on the industry".

Taking the stage from Dean Chon, five distinguished speakers addressed broad pandemic-related questions. "Where do we go from here?" asked Mr Steve Hood, Senior Vice President, Research, STR. Some answers were proposed by Ms Liz Ortiguera, CEO, Pacific Asia Travel Association, who presented ideas for an Asia-Pacific tourism recovery plan.

In the late morning, SHTM Visiting Professor Dimitrios Buhalis and Associate Professor Ada Lo chaired a two-part panel discussion on new directions for the industry. Attention then turned to research nurtured by the SHTM, with two parallel sessions devoted to Impact Presentations by SHTM faculty and Hotel ICON Projects.

In the first set of Impact Presentations, chaired by the School's Associate Professor Jinsoo Lee, SHTM presenters took stock of issues such as room pricing and loyalty programmes and hotels' carbon footprint. The second set of presentations was similarly forward-thinking. "How can airlines secure travellers' satisfaction and loyalty in the post-pandemic era?" asked Research Assistant Professor Hyoungun Moon. According to Professor Sam Kim, who also chaired the session, COVID-19 may have changed hotel guests' preference for robot vs human services.

More rich insights were offered in the first set of presentations on Hotel ICON Projects, chaired by SHTM Associate Professor Vincent Tung. Inspired by the unique setting of Hotel ICON, a crucible for innovative teaching and research, researchers from the world over discussed topics ranging from environmental sustainability to website browsing behaviour.

Attendees learned about another five Hotel ICON Projects in a session chaired by SHTM Professor Basak Denizci Guillet. Designing

healthier hotel menus for children was the focus of research by SHTM Associate Professor Mimi Li. According to SHTM Assistant Professors Lisa Gao and YooHee Hwang, handwriting may affect hotel guests' environmentally friendly behaviours.

Connectivity and Sustainability

On 17 December, soon after IMPACT2021, delegates from time zones across the world flocked to the 2nd GBA Smart Tourism Forum. This year, the forum's focus was on promoting connectivity and sustainability to enhance travel experiences in the GBA. Indeed, connection is at the heart of this important annual event. Organised by the SHTM and its Hospitality and Tourism Research Centre, together with STR, the forum was supported by Sun Yat-sen University and the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies and sponsored by the University Grants Committee, Hong Kong Tourism Board and Pacific Asia Travel Association.

The forum began with a warm welcome from Dean Kaye Chon and PolyU President Jin-Guang Teng, followed by a knowledge-sharing session chaired by Professor Haiyan Song, SHTM Associate Dean and Chair Professor and Mr and Mrs Chan Chak Fu Professor

in International Tourism. Three featured speakers discussed the road ahead for smart tourism research and applications.

Next up was a panel discussion on designing smart tourism products and services. The panellists included Associate Professor Zhuowei Huang, School of Tourism Management, Sun Yat-sen University, who spoke on virtual travel experiences, and Assistant Professor Cindia Lam, Macao Institute for Tourism Studies, who asked what AI means for hospitality and tourism employees.

After lunch, SHTM Associate Professor Dan Wang chaired a panel discussion on developing "connected" travel experiences. Immersiveness will play a big part in the future of tourism, according to both the SHTM's Associate Professor Mimi Li and Ms Christine Cheng, Founder and CEO, Lushu Technology.

The forum ended with a keynote session on the challenges and opportunities ahead for smart tourism, with insights into smart cities and technologies from major industry players such as the World Tourism Organisation and TripAdvisor.

The School thanks its partners, sponsors and all those who attended these very rewarding forums. We vow to continue connecting stakeholders at every level of hospitality and tourism, especially as we emerge from the pandemic into a "new normal". **H**



2nd GBA Smart Tourism Forum



15th UNWTO/PATA Forum on Tourism Trends and Outlook held in Guilin

Joining Hands Across the Asia-Pacific

In unprecedented and uncertain times, it is more important than ever to come together to confidently map out the future of the hospitality and tourism industry. This was precisely the goal of the 15th UNWTO/PATA Forum on Tourism Trends and Outlook, the latest in a series of prestigious forums co-organised annually by the SHTM, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), and the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA).

Taking the theme of "Tourism and Rural Development", the Forum was held in Guilin, China in a hybrid format from 15 to 17 October 2021. The SHTM was represented on the Organising Committee by Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor, and Walter and

Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, and SHTM Professor Honggen Xiao.

Every year, the UNWTO/PATA Forum brings together policy makers, senior officials, researchers and industry professionals across the Asia-Pacific region to take stock of global and regional trends in hospitality and tourism. For the last couple of years, mitigating the devastating impact of COVID-19 has been at the top of the agenda for all participants. Today, the industry is on the eve of recovery, ready to transform itself to meet the needs of the "new normal". It has never been more important to prepare for a more sustainable and resilient future.

With this in mind, 2021's Forum provided a comprehensive platform for all sectors of the industry to exchange views on, prepare for, and promote the development of tourism in rural areas in the wake of the pandemic. Compared with their more resource-rich urban counterparts, rural tourism communities are likely to face more challenges in recovering from COVID-19. Yet rural tourism has the potential to become a key driver of the industry's regrowth, as tourists look for more open-air experiences and less populated destinations. As visitor numbers increase, it is becoming ever more important to ensure the sustainable, resilient, and ethical growth of the rural tourism sector – both in Asia and beyond.



Revitalising Rural Tourism

Following an Official Welcome Dinner on the eve of the Forum, the event proper commenced on 15 October at Guilin's Shangri-La Hotel. In an Opening Ceremony moderated by Mr Chu Li, Mayor of Guilin, Dean Chon was joined by Mr Zurab Pololikashvili, UNWTO Secretary General, Ms Liz Ortiguera, PATA CEO, and others in welcoming the attendees to this history-shaping event.

Kicking off the Forum's busy schedule was a keynote presentation on rural tourism in the Chinese provinces of Guangxi and Yunnan, delivered by Professor Jigang Bao of Sun Yat-sen University, Director of the Monitoring Center for UNWTO Sustainable Tourism Observatories. This was followed by a panel discussion on the theme of "Placing Tourism as a Strategic Pillar in Policies for Rural Development", which brought together leading figures in the UNWTO, the South Pacific Tourism Organisation and

Malaysia's Centre for Innovative Planning and Development.

Next, panellists shared their ideas for promoting rural tourism and development through sustainability, innovation, and technology. Professor Joseph Cheer of the Center for Tourism Research, Wakayama University, Japan explored the potential role of tourism as a mechanism for rural revitalisation. The topic of resilience in rural tourist areas was addressed by Mr Graham Harper, Advisor, Sustainability & Social Responsibility, PATA. Rounding off the discussion was a video presentation of landscape photography by Mr Russel Wong, with special arrangement by PATA.

How to rebuild the rural tourism sector was next on the agenda, with a keynote presentation entitled "Rural Revitalisation through Tourism Development – The Next Stage of Tourism-Based Poverty Alleviation". This insightful presentation was delivered by Secretary General Shijun Liu of the World Tourism Alliance.

The third panel discussion, moderated by the SHTM's Associate Professor Qu Xiao, showcased the

role of education in promoting rural tourism and development. Dean Chon shared his insights into innovation and leadership in rural tourism development, while other panellists spoke on villager training systems and internships for rural tourism communities.

The SHTM's Professor Xiao moderated the fourth and final panel discussion, which took a more local focus, examining short-range source markets for Guilin tourism. The SHTM's Ms I Man Chan presented market research on tourists from Macao visiting Guilin, and Miss Carla Vennin, also of the SHTM, discussed Hong Kong tourists in the city.

On the final day of the Forum, the attendees had the chance to discover Guilin for themselves as tourists. They marvelled at ancient stone inscriptions in the Guihai Forest of Steles and visited the Longji Terraced Fields, which resemble a dragon's backbone.

The School is proud to have once again provided a platform for collaboration and exchange on the most urgent issues facing the hospitality and tourism industry today. **H**

Research Horizons

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The Next Frontier in Hotel Service

Self-service technologies (SSTs) have simplified many aspects of everyday life. However, their relatively recent introduction means that the pros and cons of SST adoption in the hotel industry are still being explored. The potential advantages of SSTs notwithstanding, hotels in China seem to have some reservations, say the SHTM's Professor Kam Hung and her co-researcher. Without a clear understanding of how preferences for SSTs over human staff are formed, hoteliers are perhaps right to be wary. Moving beyond previous work, this ambitious study integrates individual-level and organisational-level data on the construction of SST preferences. The researchers' comprehensive findings offer a starting point for hoteliers wishing to effectively introduce SSTs.

Self-service Technologies

SSTs allow customers to enjoy services completely free of interaction with service providers. They are "high-tech and 'low-touch' interfaces", explain the researchers, "in contrast with traditional interpersonal encounters, which are generally high-touch and low-tech". Self-check-in systems, robots, smart speakers and self-ordering gadgets are becoming increasingly common in hotels. Some are even testing AI-based SSTs such as facial recognition check-in kiosks. In China (and beyond), the pandemic has undoubtedly also accelerated hotels' SST adoption in attempts to limit customer-employee contact. "As of October 2020, more than 3000 hotels in China were equipped with robots from Yunji Technology, a service robot provider", report the authors.

SST interfaces allow hoteliers to provide services in the physical absence of service employees, with the clear benefits of reducing operating costs and increasing profits. Whilst some have predicted a continuing boom in these technological trends, SST adoption in hotels has remained surprisingly low, perhaps because it all but eliminates customer-employee interaction. "As a people-oriented service industry, hotels face difficult decisions regarding whether to introduce SSTs," say the researchers. For hotels to make more informed decisions, it is crucial to discover what influences SST preferences. This new knowledge could in turn help ease the technological transition to SSTs for both hoteliers and guests.

Most research on SST adoption has focused on the individual-level factors that underpin technology acceptance, such as a person's thoughts, feelings and behaviours. However, this completely overlooks the possible consequences of external or managerial actions. "Most technology adoption situations involve phenomena at multiple levels, including individuals, organisations, industries, and societies", stress the authors. Yet theories based on individual-level data have often been applied to organisational contexts. To tackle this problem, the researchers built a hierarchical framework to better reflect the multi-level situation of SST adoption and bridge the micro-macro divide.

Hoteliers and Guests

The researchers conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with 30 hoteliers who had implemented

innovative SSTs in their hotels and 29 customers who had used hotel SSTs. The SSTs discussed included robots, check-in and check-out kiosks, mobile tablets, and smartphones. The majority of the 59 face-to-face interviews were conducted in Shenzhen, Hangzhou and Hong Kong. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed, allowing the researchers to conduct a thorough content analysis to identify and categorise major themes contained within the interviews.

The four major themes that influenced customers' and hoteliers' SST preferences were environmental factors, the organisational context, service task attributes, and customer experiences. Environmental factors included public familiarity with SSTs, government regulations, and concerns about environmental protection. The organisational context included the relationships between hotels, technology companies, and other hotel stakeholders. The theme of service task attributes reflected how customers co-produced services with the service channel, be that SSTs or service employees. Finally, customer experiences during service encounters included aesthetic, affective, cognitive, actional, and social experiences.

Self-service Preferences

As an initial finding, the interviews revealed that for both hoteliers and guests, the preference for SSTs was swayed by the belief that SSTs are environmentally friendly. However, another environmental factor posed a problem for hoteliers. "The Chinese government mandates that

hotels upload guests' identifying information in real time", the researchers explain, "making self-check-in impossible without government approval". Both the hoteliers and the customers were sceptical about introducing technologies to the service industry. "Many commented that hotel service is a human-oriented business", say the researchers. "The use of emotionless technologies may result in indifference".

Insights For Hotels

Within the theme of organisational context, both hoteliers and customers spoke of the economic benefits of SSTs for hotels, such as decreased workload and enhanced efficiency. They considered SSTs to be better suited to new, business-focused and non-luxury hotels with more rooms, especially in the case of check-in and check-out kiosks. "Moreover, SSTs were seen as conducive to brand marketing," report the researchers. For example, both hoteliers and customers agreed that innovative SSTs such as robots can be a selling point to attract guests.

Concerning service task attributes, both hoteliers and customers criticised SSTs for their lack of customisation and personalisation. Both groups also noted instances in which SSTs fell short of human-delivered services, largely owing to the lack of any two-way communication. That said, both groups regarded SSTs as reliable, punctual, available 24/7, and less likely to make mistakes than service employees. "Hoteliers stated that SSTs do not need rest, cannot fall ill, and cannot resign; rather, they are always on call, enabling hotel guests to receive service at any time", add the researchers.

Within the theme of customer experiences, the preferences of both hoteliers and customers were influenced by whether the SST experience was superior to that of human services. Customers' preferences were also guided by the device's appearance and voice, its usefulness, convenience, and cleanliness, as well as its ability to evoke pleasure, surprise, and relaxation. Respect, trust, safety, and privacy were also major

contributors to SST preferences in both groups, although customers' opinions on this were more divergent. "In some cases, they felt relieved and safer when tackling problems on their own rather than depending on service employees", the researchers explain. "Others, however, worried about their personal safety or the privacy of their information".

In pinpointing differences between customers and hoteliers, the researchers were able to provide critical observations that might be instrumental for efficient SST introduction. In some cases, hoteliers placed importance on factors not even mentioned by customers. Moreover, hoteliers paid more attention to environmental and organisational factors, such as incompatibility with existing features and technology company contributions. Guests tended to focus on customer differences and the importance of consistency far more than hoteliers did. Hoteliers wishing to deliver desirable consumer experiences should pay more attention to guests' opinions, the authors conclude.

Armed with this formidable body of data, the researchers then developed a hierarchical framework that integrated both individual- and organisational-level variables to explain the development of SST preference. This framework reflected the interplay between the external environment, the organisational context, internal service encounters, and core customer experiences in the development of preferences for SSTs over human staff.

"The findings can help hotel practitioners make more rational SST adoption decisions", conclude the authors, such as collaborating with technology companies, involving other hotel stakeholders in SST promotion, thoroughly testing SSTs before procuring them, and giving consideration to the time needed to introduce SSTs.

Future Customer Acceptance

This innovative study could support the introduction and implementation of SSTs in the hospitality industry in China. Its findings call for hoteliers to promote SST features that are desirable and important to their guests. The novel framework presented by the authors provides a springboard for hotel managers to better market SST-infused hospitality services and promote customer acceptance. Certainly, if service management can successfully consider customers' SST-based experiences, this will "contribute to organisational profitability and success in a competitive marketplace", note the authors. Beyond that, the proposed hierarchical framework is the first attempt to explain the multi-level determinants of technology adoption, and could potentially be adapted to specific innovations and individual or organisational situations.

POINTS TO NOTE

- The adoption of self-service technologies (SSTs) by hotels is surprisingly low.
- Individual, organisational and social factors affect the preferences of hoteliers and hotel customers regarding SSTs in hotels.
- Hoteliers should consider guests' experiences and preferences more fully when implementing SSTs.
- To capitalise on SST adoption, hoteliers could also collaborate with technology companies and thoroughly test SSTs before procuring them.

Liu, Chun and Hung, Kam (2021). A Multilevel Study on Preferences for Self-service Technology versus Human Staff: Insights from Hotels in China. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 94, 102870.

The Healing Power of Trust

In today's globalised world, more and more hotel firms are expanding their business overseas. Yet success in the international arena may not translate into success at home, warn the SHTM's Dr Alice H. Y. Hon and Mr Emmanuel Gamor. With skilled managers from overseas paid 10 times more than local employees, frontline and service-oriented hotel workers are feeling increasingly disillusioned. With service standards falling, how can multinational hotel corporations build harmony between their local and overseas employees? The answer lies in trust, say the researchers, whose study offers timely and important insights for the Chinese hospitality industry.

A Widening Pay Gap

The last four decades of globalisation have seen radical changes in the organisational management and human resource composition of hotel firms in China. To compete in the international service market, firms are increasingly filling key strategic positions with skilled workers from abroad. "In the modern hospitality industry, multinational hotel corporations rely on expatriate managers to succeed", say the researchers.

To attract, motivate and retain these valuable employees from overseas, it is standard practice to set their wages to the market conditions in their home country. Their salaries can be an astounding 10 times higher than those of local workers, whose pay is calculated according to local labour market conditions. Unsurprisingly, note the authors, this can lead to "perceived injustice among employees," especially given that compensation goes beyond money—it can represent an employee's worth, status and power.

The problem of disgruntled local employees is not trivial, and multinational hospitality corporations should not underestimate the extent to which this might threaten their own survival. Local employees who resent their expatriate superiors and the organisation are less satisfied, motivated and committed. They may engage in "deviant behaviours, service sabotage, or antisocial behaviours affecting service quality", report the researchers. Faced with this problem, multinational hotel companies must find ways to mitigate the negative effects of the compensation gap on local employees' work-related outcomes.

The Importance of Trust

In multicultural environments with a vast chasm in pay grades between local and overseas employees, it can be challenging to develop and maintain local employees' trust in their expatriate superiors – and even in the organisation as a whole. Companies must satisfy the salary expectations of highly skilled expatriate managers while addressing any potential bitterness felt by local employees. Successfully fostering trust can reduce the negative outcomes associated with a sense of inequity. High levels of trust "can positively influence several work outcomes, such as job performance, organisational citizenship behaviour, and productiveness", say the authors.

Referring to well-established theories of the different forms of trust, the researchers surmised that trust in expatriate supervisors and the organisation can be knowledge-driven or emotion-

driven. Knowledge-driven "cognitive trust" is based on a track record of competence, reliability and fair treatment, and might allow local employees to see beyond the pay gap. The researchers reasoned that instilling cognitive trust "gives the impression that expatriate managers have the competency, key knowledge, and ability to work at a high level, and so it is right that they receive more compensation than local employees".

Emotion-driven "affective trust" is born from an interpersonal connectedness, through which local employees feel cared for by their expatriate managers. Affective trust in expatriate managers can be formed via friendly interactions and expressions of personal concern in local employees' well-being, which "weakens uncertainty and increases psychological safety among employees", explain the authors. Recognising the potential for these two dimensions of trust to curtail the negative effects resulting from compensation gaps, the researchers set out to define their influence on various work-related outcomes.

Hotel Employees Quizzed

To capture real-world experiences and attitudes, the authors approached team members of multinational hotel corporations in Xian, China. They included 286 front-line or low-level local employees and 32 of their expatriate supervisors, who were middle- or upper-level managers. Most of the local employees interviewed had been supervised by an expatriate manager for 1 to 5 years. The expatriate supervisors were primarily from Hong Kong or Taiwan, Europe, and North America, and 68.1% of them had lived in China for at least 6 years.

The local employees completed a comprehensive questionnaire that measured their perceptions of the compensation gap between local and expatriate employees, as well as their cognitive and affective trust in their expatriate superiors, their satisfaction with their expatriate supervisors, general work satisfaction, and commitment to their organisation.

As well as collecting these valuable data from local employees, the authors asked the expatriate supervisors to give scores for the local employees' altruism, by reporting their willingness to offer help in the workplace. A sample item was "This individual is inclined to help me find solutions to work-related problems".

The next step was to conduct a thorough statistical analysis of the interview data to measure the precise connections between compensation, work attitudes and trust among local and expatriate employees.

Promoting a Sense of Fairness

As expected, when the local employees perceived the compensation gap to be larger, they were more dissatisfied with their expatriate supervisors and less willing to help them. They were also less satisfied with their jobs and – most strikingly – less committed to their organisations. This, report the researchers, confirms the previous finding that "the compensation gap is one of the main contributors to counterproductive work outcomes among employees in the hospitality industry". Interestingly, however, local employees' resentment was mostly directed towards the organisation, rather than towards their expatriate managers.

"This may cause local employees to leave organizations with a greater perceived unjust

compensation gap", warn the authors, "contributing to high labour turnover in the hospitality industry". This finding underlines the urgent need for multinational hospitality corporations to generate a sense of fairness that counteracts the negative effects of substantial pay gaps. One possibility is the introduction of non-financial perks for local employees, such as additional training and insurance.

The researchers also found that stronger cognitive trust weakened the negative effect of a wide compensation gap on the local employees' job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Clearly, multinational hotel corporations need to develop strategies to boost local employees' faith in the abilities of expatriate managers. "Management must ensure that expatriates maintain high levels of competence, reliability, skills, professionalism, and honesty", say the authors, "by enforcing checks and balances through staff feedback and evaluation".

Affective trust also moderated the negative effects of a compensation gap. Local employees who felt more cared for by their expatriate managers reported greater satisfaction and showed more altruistic behaviour. "The management of multinational hotel corporations should encourage expatriates to show a genuinely welcoming, kind, and caring attitude towards the local employees they supervise", suggest the researchers. "Expatriates should remind subordinates of their roles, celebrate their achievements, and show how much they care about them". This will help to foster affective trust and mitigate local employees' sense of injustice.

Lessons for Chinese Multinationals

In the modern hospitality industry, multinational hotel firms rely on

expatriate managers to succeed. The findings of this novel study offer profound insights for Chinese hotel firms operating overseas, which must find effective ways to legitimise the pay gap between local workers and their expatriate superiors. This could come in the form of trust-building policies, especially those that capitalise on the distinct effects of cognitive and affective trust. Strategies for instilling cognitive trust can enhance task-related work outcomes, while promoting affective trust can improve personal work outcomes. "Trust should be considered carefully in strategic planning and academic inquiry," conclude the researchers. This will become ever more important as China's hospitality firms continue to expand overseas.

POINTS TO NOTE

- Multinational hotel firms rely on expatriate managers to thrive, but managers from overseas tend to have poor relationships with their local subordinates.
- Highly skilled expatriate managers usually earn much more than local frontline workers, creating resentment and reducing service quality.
- Hotels should seek to legitimise the compensation gap by building local employees' trust in their expatriate supervisors and organisations.
- Promoting cognitive trust can improve task-related work outcomes; promoting affective trust can improve personal work outcomes.

Hon, Alice H.Y. and Gamor, Emmanuel (2021). When My Pay is Lower than My Expatriate Colleagues: Where Do the Hospitality Managers Go from Here? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 95, 102953.

Building an Older, Wiser Workforce

Sad to say, hotel managers – unwittingly or not – often hold negative perceptions of older workers. People older than 50 make up less than a fifth of all hotel employees. Where does this apparent aversion to employing older people come from? As a vital first step in addressing the low employment rate of older people in this sector, the SHTM's BSc graduate Sau Yin Cheung and Assistant Professor Linda Woo explored age stereotypes and job suitability assessments among hotel managers in Hong Kong. As well as putting age-related discrimination under the microscope, this pivotal advance towards age-inclusive recruitment could help to offset the negative economic impact of Hong Kong's rapidly aging population.

Age Stereotypes in Hotel Firms

The number of hotels that employ an older workforce is decidedly small, with only 3.1% recruiting people aged 65 years or over. However, "promoting the employment of older workers is an important way to reduce the negative economic impact of population aging and labour shortage problems of hotels", say the researchers. If the industry is to increase these shockingly low figures, barriers to the employment of older people must first be identified.

One possibility is that some hotel managers hold negative perceptions of older workers and so prefer to hire younger people. A common "age stereotype" paints older workers as having poorer "hard" skills, such as physical and mental competence and willingness to adapt to technological changes.

That said, age stereotypes can also be positive. For example, older employees are often considered to outperform younger workers in terms of "soft" qualities, say the authors, "such as reliability, commitment to the organization, social and customer-oriented skills, accuracy, and emotional stability".

Given the mixed bag of positive and negative age stereotypes, managers' perceptions alone seem not to be able to fully explain the low employment rate of older workers. Drawing on existing models of decision making, the researchers attempted to delineate how age stereotypes are used by managers to staff their hotels.

Age and Job Suitability

In an ideal world, a candidate is suitable for a job when their experience matches the job requirements. Inevitably, however, job suitability assessments are also swayed by subjective perceptions of a candidate, including age stereotypes. "For instance, older applicants may be considered unsuited to the position of front desk agent", explain the authors, "because this position is usually held by young people". In other cases, "managers may expect older workers to be unable to meet the requirements of physically demanding jobs," say the authors, "on the grounds that their physical condition is generally weaker."

However, managers' perceptions of older workers' unsuitability for front-of-house positions and assigning older workers to physically challenging roles such as housekeeping are not well understood. To complicate matters further, the researchers tell us, "managers have been found to give socially desirable responses". This

may lead to inaccurate findings.

The researchers conducted in-depth interviews with hotel managers in Hong Kong to explore how age stereotypes might affect job suitability assessments in the hospitality industry and how to achieve a more age-inclusive industry.

In-Depth Interviews with Hotel Managers

In face-to-face interviews conducted from February to August 2018, the researchers quizzed hotel managers about their perceptions of older workers and how age impacted their job suitability assessments. The managers worked at 20 hotels in Hong Kong, where the hotel industry faces serious labour shortages. They were aged between 28 and 75 and had at least three years' experience of managing 3- to 5-star independent or chain hotels. By including such a diverse profile of managers, the researchers were able to gain insights across experience levels, ages, and working environments.

During the semi-structured interviews, which each lasted for 30 to 60 minutes, the managers responded to five questions about their perceptions of employees aged over 50. The first three questions prompted managers to share their positive and negative perceptions of older workers. The final two questions encouraged the managers to express views about job suitability, such as which jobs they considered to be more appropriate for older candidates, and why. Transcripts of the interviews were examined in detail and content analysis was applied to unearth core themes and shared opinions.

A Fairer Deal for Older Workers

The managers described both positive and negative stereotypes of older employees. On the positive side, older workers were believed to have a lower turnover rate and better work attitudes. The managers also valued the savings made in training costs from employing older workers. Unfortunately, the hotel industry tends to be less invested in developing the skills of older workers, who are unfairly thought of as less “trainable”. To address some of these issues, the researchers recommend that employees of all ages be given access to on-the-job training, which “should be designed to facilitate cooperation between younger and older employees”.

The managers also reported skewed negative perceptions of older workers, whom they believed to have more health problems, longer recovery times, and higher insurance and medical costs. In fact, such age-related differences in health insurance costs are negligible for hotels. They may even be offset by the savings brought by the lower turnover rate of older workers. “This stereotype may deter managers from employing a greater proportion of older workers in the future”, warn the authors.

Job suitability assessments were commonly influenced by the perceived appropriate age for a job. The roles of laundry attendant, kitchen porter, and security guard were considered best suited to older workers. In the hotel sector, a large proportion of back-of-house roles are already held by those aged over 50. Some of the managers claimed that older employees feel more comfortable with and communicate better with colleagues of a similar age. However, as stressed by the researchers, opportunities for older

workers should not be limited in this way; they should be fairly considered for “every position, including guest contact positions, if their qualifications match the job requirements”.

Many of the interviewees regarded older workers as better suited to low-skilled jobs and younger workers as better suited to highly skilled and front-of-house jobs. They severely underestimated the competence and experience of older workers. Indeed, although older workers were perceived as having strong customer service skills, resulting from their rich experience, managers rarely regarded them as suitable for front desk positions, potentially due to their “less youthful physical appearance”.

This reveals a need for much more fairness in the recruitment process. “Hotel managers should reduce their age stereotyping and focus more on a person’s abilities, knowledge, and previous work experiences when making hiring decisions”, recommend the researchers.

Towards a More Inclusive Industry

Facing the economic burden of population ageing, it is becoming increasingly important for Hong Kong and other ageing societies to boost the employment rate of older people. The hospitality industry is no exception. Employing older workers would not only reduce turnover but also help hotels to respond to the needs of senior customers, a rapidly growing market segment. To offset managers’ skewed perceptions and suitability judgments, diversity training programmes should be provided for all employees. “This would increase employees’ understanding of and improve their

attitudes toward age diversity,” the researchers conclude.

POINTS TO NOTE

- People aged over 50 make up a very small proportion of hotel employees.
- Hotel managers report negative stereotypes of older people that damage their appraisal of the job suitability of older applicants.
- Employing older workers would reduce turnover and help hotels meet the needs of senior guests, a rapidly growing segment.
- Hotels should focus on eliminating age stereotyping in the application process and provide diversity training for all employees.

Cheung, Sau Yin and Woo, Linda (2021). Age Stereotypes and the Job Suitability of Older Workers from Hotel Managers’ Perspectives. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 92, 102932.

Saving the Planet, One Hotel at a Time

Despite the urgent need to reduce global carbon emissions, the hotel industry faces numerous barriers to implementing carbon reduction programmes. Why is it so difficult for hotels to reduce their carbon footprint, and why do so many hotel managers remain bystanders in the fight against global warming? To help answer these questions, the SHTM’s Dr Eric Chan conducted in-depth interviews with senior hotel executives in Hong Kong. The findings provide novel insights into barriers to carbon reduction by hotels and – perhaps most importantly – strategies to overcome them.

A Global Problem

Every industry worldwide needs to contribute to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to build a more sustainable planet. Tourism is responsible for around 8% of global GHG emissions, and hotels play a big part in this problem, notes Dr Chan. Every day, they consume “large amounts of energy, water and non-recyclable products” to provide high-quality services for hotel guests “around the clock”.

There are many types of GHGs, but carbon dioxide emissions are “the main factor leading to global warming”, explains the author. Although hotels are making efforts to reduce their carbon emissions, progress so far has been limited. Most hotels aiming to shrink their carbon footprint focus on reducing the energy consumed by heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. However, this may not be enough. Dr Chan points out that carbon reduction should also target other hotel services, such

as laundry services, production processes and transport, which are rarely considered.

“Not many hotels emphasise comprehensive carbon footprint reduction in their environmental programmes”, adds Dr Chan. Given the sheer variety of hotel services and amenities, assessing carbon emissions in the hotel context can be a lengthy process. Hotel managers may be reluctant to introduce such initiatives because of a lack of environmental knowledge or the need to involve multiple stakeholders. “Anecdotal evidence indicates that hotel managers have begun to discuss their carbon footprint”, says the researcher, “but very few know how to implement a comprehensive programme that optimises reduction”.

Clearly, as Dr Chan notes, “many hotels are still standing at the crossroads” in terms of carbon footprint reduction. Yet few studies have attempted to “investigate what prevents hotels from implementing various carbon footprint reduction programmes”. Without such knowledge, there is little chance of persuading hotels to join other sectors in the fight to reduce carbon emissions.

Hotel Managers’ Perspective

To help fill this gap in the literature, Dr Chan conducted a qualitative study to find out exactly “what prevents hotel managers from focusing on carbon footprint reduction in the hotel context”. He interviewed 22 hotel managers, executives and other experienced employees who

were “highly involved in hotel environmental policy planning and implementation”. The majority of the respondents worked in four- or five-star hotels in Hong Kong, ranging from independent hotels to local and international chains.

The interviews were designed to get a better understanding of the hotel managers’ personal views and perceptions of the barriers that prevented them from implementing reduction programmes and to identify “possible remedial actions”. Drawing on the literature, the researcher rigorously coded and analysed the interview transcripts. He identified seven main barriers – four industry barriers and three organisational barriers – to implementing a comprehensive carbon footprint reduction programme.

Industry Barriers

The difficulty of measuring a hotel’s carbon footprint was mentioned by “almost all” of the informants, reports Dr Chan. This problem is certainly not unique to the hotel industry. Many organisations struggle to reduce emissions due to the “absence of relevant systems and standardised approaches to carbon auditing”. However, there are so many items and areas to consider in a hotel’s operations that “many hotels do not know how and where to start”.

It is clear that a formal method of measuring hotels’ carbon footprints needs to be developed to enable hotels to “track the GHG emissions and carbon footprint of different operations and service delivery processes”. Dr Chan suggests that

industry representatives such as the Hong Kong Hotels Association could help to set up “carbon footprint certificates” and lead the development of methods to “quantify carbon footprint inputs and outputs”.

Another important industry barrier was the lack of a strong mediator in the hotel industry to “help drive and promote carbon footprint reduction”. This barrier could be reduced by identifying a strong mediator, such as an association of hotel owners, to promote carbon reduction and provide appropriate training.

Changes to hotel amenities and services to reduce carbon emissions may affect guests’ hotel experiences. Therefore, balancing the interests of different stakeholders is also important for the successful implementation of a reduction programme. “Hotel managers need to promote the advantages of reducing the carbon footprint to their target stakeholders”, says Dr Chan, “perhaps by developing a green hotel marketing programme”. It is important to communicate “reliable and user-friendly” information on the benefits of carbon reduction to encourage both internal and external stakeholders to participate in the implementation process.

The hotel managers interviewed generally agreed that a carbon reduction programme represents a risky investment because it is unlikely to lead to cost savings. Hotel managers must consider the return on investment for the business, which can make them reluctant to invest in a programme with no immediate return. Given the costs of retrofitting existing hotels, Dr Chan proposes that more effort should be put into designing “green hotels” with all of the “necessary facilities and technologies” from the outset.

Organisational Barriers

Some informants identified a lack of understanding about carbon emissions and carbon reduction as a significant organisational barrier to implementing reduction programmes. One informant noted, “If the concept was simplified and more people learnt about it, I think it would then be widely applied”. According to Dr Chan, more education may be needed to help industry professionals understand the various ways they can reduce their carbon footprint. One informant suggested that international hotel brands could take the lead by developing a “model and carbon footprint manual or audit”. Hotels associations should also be encouraged to “organise more relevant activities” such as workshops and sharing activities.

The lack of initiative from hotel owners due to the extra resources and investment needed to implement a reduction programme represents a further barrier. Although guests might appreciate such a programme, it is unlikely to be their main concern, so investing in new equipment and technology is not seen as a priority. The informants also expressed the view that more government support is needed to help owners implement new initiatives.

The third organisational barrier to be identified through the interviews was the lack of stakeholder coordination and support, which is necessary for the implementation of carbon reduction programmes involving “many different areas, items and delivery processes”. Dr Chan suggests that managers need to consider the characteristics of external stakeholders such as suppliers and hotel guests to develop engagement programmes. They should also consider promoting shared responsibility for carbon reduction among hotel staff.

Furthermore, notes Dr Chan, senior executives “could demonstrate their commitment by actively participating in the programme to model the behaviour required and influence their subordinates”.

A Step towards Sustainability

Reducing the hotel industry’s carbon footprint is no easy task: the issues are complex and numerous barriers need to be overcome. Nevertheless, Dr Chan’s study is an important step towards understanding the specific challenges facing hotels and identifying ways to overcome them. The recommendations of the study will hopefully encourage hotel executives to consider how they can develop and implement more comprehensive carbon footprint reduction programmes by “improving their understanding of the main barriers and possible strategies to reduce them”.

POINTS TO NOTE

- The hotel sector needs to make more effort to reduce its carbon footprint.
- To do so, the industry must overcome numerous challenges at both the industry and organisational levels.
- Internal and external stakeholders need to be engaged to support and implement carbon reduction programmes.
- Hotel managers and staff need more education about how to assess and reduce hotels’ carbon footprint.

Chan, Eric, S.W. (2021). Why Do Hotels Find Reducing their Carbon Footprint Difficult? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 33 No. 5, pp. 1646-1667.

Dining Out During a Pandemic

COVID-19 has devastated the global restaurant industry. Developing effective strategies to recover from this major blow will be crucial in the coming months and years. One such strategy, according to the SHTM’s Professor Brian King and co-researchers, may be media coverage. Public confidence in eating out can only be regained if and when restaurants and diners cooperate to reduce the spread of COVID-19, such as through sanitation- and hygiene-related measures. However, the precise influence of the media on the emotions, thoughts, and behaviours of diners has not been properly characterised. With crucial implications for the global restaurant industry, this timely study explores the potential of media messages to encourage COVID-19 preventive behaviours among restaurant-goers in Taiwan.

Reopening Restaurant Doors

Restaurants have had a rough ride during the past couple of years, with grievous losses in both sales and jobs. “Consumers have shown extreme reluctance to dine out”, note the researchers, “due to lockdowns, social distancing measures, and general caution towards places where people congregate”. In Taiwan, food and beverage sales saw the steepest drop ever recorded in 2020. Clearly, restaurants in Taiwan and beyond must now regain lost ground and salvage what remains following the crisis.

Improvements are anticipated as restaurants finally begin to resume operations. “Strong, pent-up consumer demand has been forecast as dining room doors start re-opening”, the authors report. Yet public confidence in dining

out can only be restored if and when measures for preventing the spread of COVID-19, such as hand-washing and social distancing, are fully implemented. This will require effort from diners as well as restaurants.

“However, customers are reluctant to change their habits”, the researchers warn, “thereby challenging the effectiveness of restaurant efforts to communicate their COVID-19 preventive measures”. If communication is key, the media may offer a useful channel. By making people more aware of the risk posed by COVID-19, the researchers hypothesise, media coverage may encourage restaurant-goers to behave prudently to reduce that risk.

So far, however, this topic has received surprisingly little attention in the literature. To fill this gap, the researchers set out to determine whether the preventive behaviours of restaurant-goers in Taiwan were influenced by exposure and attention to media coverage of COVID-19. “Understanding public perceptions of COVID-19 risks that have been acquired through media is critical for shaping future behavioural changes”, say the authors. Their findings enhance our understanding of “the deployment of media by and about hospitality in managing crises”.

Media Messages

In the absence of first-hand knowledge of COVID-19, individuals usually turn to the media for advice. Restaurant-goers are no exception. Many people in Taiwan, for example, have encountered guidance on dining out that has been released to the media by the Taiwan Centers for

Disease Control. This public health body recommends “choosing restaurants that enact prevention and safety measures”, report the researchers.

Other than fulfilling their duty to disseminate practical public health information, media outlets can magnify “the importance of what the public sees and/or hears in the news”. This, explain the authors, can bring about intense emotional reactions, such as fear. Reports that emphasise certain components of an issue can also stimulate public interest in and attention to those components.

Attention to media is distinct from simple media “exposure”. These two dimensions of media engagement could play completely different roles in shaping risk perceptions and preventative behaviours. It is thus essential to scrutinise the effects of both. “Media exposure measures whether individuals have come into contact with some form of media”, assert the authors, “whereas media attention provides a more deliberate measurement of content”. Yet few studies have compared the effects of media attention and exposure, usually opting to examine one or the other.

Noting the lack of research on the impact of media communications on the hospitality industry, the researchers sought to determine how media exposure and media attention, respectively, affected the preventive behaviours of restaurant customers during the COVID-19 pandemic. To gain more detailed insights, they also probed the roles of risk perception and fear in these relationships. Using the established Stimulus–Organism–Response model, the researchers predicted that exposure and attention to media coverage of COVID-19

would affect customers' preventive behaviours through affective and cognitive pathways (fear and perceived risk).

An Online Survey

In May 2020, the researchers administered a survey in Taiwan. Given the pandemic situation, the survey was completed online to limit face-to-face contact. The participants were 366 adults living in Taiwan. Most dined out one to three times per month (48.1%), followed by four to six times per month (23.3%).

In the 32-question survey, the respondents were quizzed about their fear of COVID-19 and their perceptions of the risks associated with the virus. Their views on risk-prevention behaviours in restaurants were also recorded. For example, the diners were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the following statements: "While dining out in a restaurant, I try to wash my hands or use hand sanitizer more often to prevent the risk of COVID-19 infection" and "I am willing to choose restaurants that follow preventative measures". Finally, to assess the respondents' COVID-19 media exposure, they were asked to indicate the frequency with which they engaged with traditional media, including newspapers, radio and TV, as well as new media, such as social networking sites. Media attention was measured by asking the respondents to describe their interest in and attention to media reports on COVID-19.

Stimulating Safe Restaurant Behaviours

As expected, greater exposure to COVID-19 media coverage increased customers' fear of the disease and their perception of the associated risks. This was also true for media attention, such

that consumers who paid more attention to COVID-19 content reported more fear and perceived risk. These findings suggest that media coverage of the pandemic not only elicits an emotional response, fear, but also has the power to shape more rational or logic-based responses, such as risk perception.

Risk perception was further magnified by fear of COVID. "Because fear is one of the strongest emotions, it is unsurprising that the perceived seriousness of COVID-19 risks is magnified when it is present", say the authors. In turn, this fear-induced increase in perceived risk boosted customers' adoption of preventive behaviours in restaurants.

Interestingly, only customers' perceptions of the risks posed by COVID-19 – not their fear of COVID-19 – directly contributed to their preventive actions. Therefore, "the management of health crises should take into account the cognitive responses of restaurant consumers", say the researchers.

A key difference between media attention and media exposure was identified. Paying attention to COVID-19-related information resulted in more fear and perceived risk than simply being exposed to such information. This shows that these constructs should indeed be treated separately by researchers and practitioners investigating the role of media engagement in managing crises in the hospitality industry.

More generally, this work could help restaurants to develop media communication strategies that ensure appropriate preventive behaviours, using both new and traditional media channels. Restaurant businesses will benefit greatly from this, as "the incidence of restaurant closures may fall when governments, health authorities, and consumers

are assured about careful and deliberate operations", add the authors.

Helping the Industry to Recover

In examining both exposure and attention to media coverage of COVID-19 risk, this study affords timely and actionable guidance for both restaurants and policy makers on developing communication strategies to ensure customers' compliance with COVID-19 preventive measures. Effective and targeted media coverage is especially valuable today, as the restaurant industry takes its first steps on the path to recovery, because its success will rely heavily on public confidence. Taking a wider perspective, strategies for encouraging customers to proactively safeguard themselves and others against COVID-19 will aid not only restaurants but every sector of the tourism and hospitality industry.

POINTS TO NOTE

- In the COVID-19 era, public confidence in dining out can only be restored if guests and restaurants cooperate on preventive measures.
- Media reports on COVID-19 can increase customers' awareness of risk and thus encourage them to comply with restaurants' preventive measures.
- Attention to media and exposure to media play different roles in helping restaurants to handle crises.
- Restaurants should work with the government and health authorities to develop effective media communication strategies.

Sung, Yung-Kun, Hu, Hsin-Hui Sunny, and King, Brian (2021). Restaurant Preventive Behaviors and the Role of Media during a Pandemic. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 95, 102906.

When Nothing Is Normal: Managing Hotel Revenue during COVID-19

For hotels worldwide, the last year has been marked by countless empty beds and cancelled bookings. The plummet in demand for hotel stays caused by COVID-19 has sent standard revenue management practices into a tailspin. Faced with this unprecedented scenario, hotels can no longer rely on past patterns to forecast demand. They must find entirely new ways to manage revenue. In the first study of its kind, the SHTM's Professor Basak Denizci Guillet and Ms Angela Mai Chi Chu comprehensively evaluate the relative importance of various core processes that feed into revenue management. Their study offers data-driven guidance for hotel executives in the post-pandemic world.

Hotels in Crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic has been disastrous for the hospitality and tourism industry. Demand for hotel stays has plunged worldwide, with a huge increase in room cancellations and financial losses, as well as massive uncertainty in the short- and long-term demand for hotel rooms. "As of March 21, 2020, occupancy has decreased by 96% in Italy, 68% in China, 67% in the UK, and 59% in the US compared to 2019," report the researchers. Crucially, this slump in demand has also disrupted demand-based pricing, which includes the standard practice of setting higher room prices when the expected demand is high or exceeds a hotel's capacity.

Demand-based pricing is a fundamental element of revenue management (RM), which is a powerful forecasting method

used by hotels and many other businesses to maximise revenue. Revenue managers in hotels carefully analyse historical data to predict room demand and availability and make long-term strategic decisions on pricing. Given that RM strategies rely heavily on demand, how can hotels optimise their future pricing when little or no demand exists, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic?

When disaster strikes, it is clearly vital to formulate strategic action plans that minimise disruption and help businesses to recover. Yet there have been few studies of the capacity for RM in times of crisis. Amidst the unprecedented circumstances of COVID-19, this is unknown territory. To meet the urgent need for effective RM strategies in an industry ravaged by the pandemic, the researchers carefully examined the current importance of various RM processes. They sought to determine "how and to what extent RM can be implemented in the hotel industry during low-demand periods, particularly during the COVID-19 crisis".

A Revenue Management Cycle

To identify the most important elements of RM for hotels facing low and highly uncertain demand, the researchers adopted an established framework for RM in the hospitality industry. This cyclical framework involves seven core RM processes, beginning with business analysis. "Business analysis is the most crucial activity", say the researchers. Analysing data on business operations enables

the hotel to set the right pricing strategy, such as demand-based pricing or discounting.

The key stage of demand modelling and forecasting often relies on historical data, which is a challenge when there are no prior reference points, as in the present crisis. "RM systems learn the trends about 8–15 weeks after there is some demand for them to learn from", write the authors. Following forecasting in the cyclical RM process is inventory and price optimisation. These steps are optimised through booking controls and channel management. The cycle then returns to business analysis via performance analysis and evaluation. "This is an ongoing process that requires up-to-date information for optimal results", say the researchers.

By considering the seven core processes one by one, the researchers set out to determine their relative importance to hotels during the pandemic. They also considered eight external factors that influence the RM cycle, ranging from competition to legal factors and employees.

Interviews with Experts

To gain up-to-date insights from industry insiders, the researchers chose a qualitative approach – in-depth interviews. "The participants had to be experienced revenue executives who made daily RM decisions and were involved in developing RM strategies for their hotels", the authors report. Holding interviews during the pandemic, between January and March 2020,

they gathered the opinions of 26 RM executives, consultants and system providers working in hotels across the world, from Hong Kong to Turkey and the US.

During the interviews, the participants were invited to describe how COVID-19 had impacted their hotel RM practices. To systematically guide their responses, the researchers asked about the relevance of the seven core RM processes – business analysis, pricing strategy, demand modelling and forecasting, inventory and price optimisation, setting booking controls, distribution channel management, and performance analysis and evaluation. The interview transcripts were analysed to identify common themes, facilitating the researchers' "thorough examination of RM implementation in hotels during the pandemic period".

Changing RM Practices

All seven steps in the RM cycle were mentioned by the RM experts, suggesting that the cycle generally remained relevant after the outbreak of COVID-19. However, the relative importance of these processes had changed as a result of the crisis, due to the uncontrollable impact of COVID-19 on hotel operations. As one interviewee said, "There is very little you can do in crises such as social unrest and the coronavirus crisis; both prevent travel".

Most of the interviewees emphasised the continued importance of business analysis, pricing, and demand forecasting. However, they found forecasting extremely challenging during the pandemic, due to "the irrelevance of historical data". Instead, the researchers report, the participants tried to forecast demand using 2003 SARS data or "relied on manual forecasts through the development of 'what

if scenarios". Meanwhile, the lack of any demand meant that the RM executives considered inventory control and segmentation to be largely redundant during the pandemic.

Based on these insightful findings, the researchers were able to offer specific guidance for hotels' RM strategies amidst crisis. First, hotels should regularly perform business analysis to keep up to speed with the fast-changing environment and to prepare for recovery from the crisis. This is particularly important considering that external factors in the RM framework, such as legal, economic and social-cultural factors, "are much more influential during the COVID-19 crisis and require ongoing business analysis."

Second, the interviewees all agreed that demand-based pricing is unhelpful during the pandemic, due to the lack of demand. Hotels could instead opt for cost-based pricing strategies, suggest the authors. Third, the challenges surrounding forecasting in these unprecedented times could drive the adoption of "manual forecasts and scenario analysis based on the evaluation of feasible outcomes of the COVID-19 crisis", suggest the authors.

Based on other opinions flagged as critical during the interviews, the researchers also recommend that hotels focus on marketing strategies as the industry starts to recover, especially those that will reassure customers of hotels' cleanliness and safety. Relationships with online travel agencies, which have superior digital marketing and data analytics power, may help hotels to recover from the impact of COVID-19. The authors also stress that it would be helpful for revenue leaders to work alongside the hotel's sales and marketing team. As demand picks up, "cross-departmental collaboration is more essential than ever," they say.

From Crisis to Recovery

This is the first study to systematically examine the extent to which the core processes of RM can be implemented during a crisis. Reassuringly, its findings suggest that RM can still be undertaken when demand is low. As the industry begin to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, hotels should make well-timed, evidence-based decisions about their RM practices. Faced with conceivably permanent changes in consumer behaviour and the uncertain future of the global economy, hotels should continuously monitor business and leisure trends. "The full breadth of consequences of the COVID-19 crisis in hotel RM will likely manifest gradually", conclude the authors, "Therefore, the core RM processes should also be examined when the crisis is over".

POINTS TO NOTE

- Different approaches to revenue management may be needed at times of low demand, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Hotels should use cost-based pricing instead of demand-based pricing during crisis.
- In the absence of relevant historical data, hotels may need to focus on manual forecasting and scenario analysis.
- When managing revenue during crisis, hotels should regularly monitor the business and social environment.
- In the wake of the pandemic, hotel managers should develop marketing strategies to reassure guests that their hotels are clean and safe.

Denizci Guillet, Basak and Chu, Angela Mai Chi (2021). Managing Hotel Revenue amid the COVID-19 Crisis. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 33 No. 2, pp. 604-627.



Members of the SHTM Mainland Alumni Network celebrating PolyU's 85th anniversary

A Voyage of Celebration

As well as celebrating new initiatives and journeys ahead, the 85th anniversary of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) was, for many alumni, a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with each other. In a heart-warming event themed "Gathering in the Greater Bay Area", SHTM alumni spent a delightful afternoon on a cruise ship. The event was organised by the School's Mainland Alumni Network and was held on 27 December 2021.

Symbolising their shared journey at the SHTM, over 50 alumni, travelling from Beijing, Suzhou, Shanghai, and Guiyang, boarded the Greater Bay Area No. 1 cruise ship to renew their friendships and honour their experiences as students at the School. After leaving Shekou Cruise Terminal, the alumni party made merry in an unforgettable celebration of their alma mater's 85th anniversary.

The cruise was the first event organised by the Mainland Alumni Network to celebrate PolyU's 85th anniversary. Despite the many challenges imposed by the pandemic, the Network was able to successfully organise the event thanks to generous sponsorship and support from alumni. As well as designing a unique event logo and providing participants with matching t-shirts, the Network made a delicious 85th birthday cake to be enjoyed by all. This occasion followed the equally successful alumni networking events on 27 March 2021 in Guangzhou and on 15 May 2021 in Shanghai.

During the cruise, Mr Elton Sun, President of the Mainland Alumni Network, presented an annual report on behalf of the Executive Committee and announced some of the other exciting activities planned for the coming year. Among these, alumni can look forward to a series of celebrations in Beijing, Shanghai,

Changsha, and Chengdu. The broader aims of the Network were also underscored, namely to aid the development of young alumni, establish effective industry guidance programmes, and support the innovative enterprises of alumni.

After their brief yet heartening reunion on board the cruise ship, the alumni said their goodbyes. This gathering was emblematic of the warmth that alumni feel for the School, even on the coldest day of 2021, and the enduring friendships formed on campus. Most importantly, this memorable event allowed alumni of the School's Mainland China Programmes to express their lasting appreciation to their teachers and to the University.

H



shtm
SCHOOL OF HOTEL &
TOURISM MANAGEMENT

The team of SHTM+ICON consultants:
(front row from left) Dr Tony Tse,
Mr Richard Hatter, Prof Kaye Chon,
Prof Cathy Hsu and Mr Ian Lee;
(back row from left)
Prof Basak Denizci Guillet,
Prof Haiyan Song,
Prof Brian King and
Dr Qu Xiao



Synergy for Success

Collaboration for a Sustainable Industry

A brighter future in the travel and tourism industry is, without question, a more sustainable one. Sustainable growth of global travel and tourism remains a core value of the SHTM, whose most recent alliance is with the prestigious World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). This exciting new collaboration was formalised in a new Memorandum of Understanding signed last year.

"This Memorandum of Understanding is a further step to strengthen our collaboration, reaffirming the industry's support for us", said Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. This sentiment is reciprocated by Ms Maribel Rodriguez, Senior Vice President of the WTTC: "We

are excited to partner with the SHTM in the Greater China region".

As a much respected voice in the sector, the WTTC's mission is to raise awareness of the economic, social, and environmental impacts of travel and tourism. To this end, the WTTC disseminates expert knowledge garnered from its members, who include chairs, presidents, and chief executives of the world's leading private sector travel and tourism businesses.

Armed with these insights, the WTTC works with governments and international institutions to cultivate environments that will create jobs, drive exports, and generate prosperity. Meaningful change can therefore be achieved through the WTTC's guidance of government policy and decision-

making, making this an especially meaningful partnership for the SHTM.

Thrilled to embark on this venture, the School has been entrusted with the role of Knowledge Partner. It will share research data freely with the WTTC team, allowing joint research and insight reports to be disseminated to WTTC members. "One of the important roles of the SHTM is to feed research findings and other forms of expertise back to its principal base – the industry we serve", said Dean Chon.

Also on the agenda for this partnership is mutual support for well-attended conferences such as the WTTC Global Summit. This will help the fruits of this collaboration to reach a wide audience of experts.

United by their ongoing commitment to promoting ethically responsible tourism, the two organisations hope that this partnership will help the industry recover and thrive in the coming years. The SHTM is proud to collaborate with this valued partner. "We look forward to working more closely with our WTTC counterparts", said Dean Chon. **H**

Since 2018, the SHTM+ICON Consultancy has offered unparalleled consultancy and professional advisory services to the hospitality and tourism industry worldwide. Its unfaltering track record, team of highly accomplished consultants, and industry-focused initiatives underpin the Consultancy's huge success to date. As well as continuing to break new ground in tourism development and education, the Consultancy is dedicated to supporting the recovery of the crisis-hit hospitality and tourism industry.

The Consultancy's unique strengths are rooted in its integration of the SHTM's research prowess with Hotel ICON's practical experience and endeavour. "By combining people, resources and expertise through a dedicated consultancy, SHTM+ICON, we are setting new standards to support the hospitality sector in an innovative way," said Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management.

The consultancy services offered are comprehensive, falling into four key categories. The Hospitality Management category includes everything from project appraisal to staffing and marketing. Executive Education in Hospitality and Other Service Industries comprises executive development programmes and management and education incentives. Hospitality Development concentrates on

SHTM+ICON
Defining the Future

strategic planning and feasibility studies for tourism and hotel projects. Finally, Higher Education in Hospitality covers the design of academic programmes, certification, and quality assurance.

The Consultancy's competence, commitment, and creativity have attracted clients from all around the world, including King Abdulaziz University, the University of Tabuk, Greaton Ribbon Australia, Korea Telecom, the Korea Tourism Organization, Korea Telecom,

Indonesia's Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education, the Jamaican Ministry of Tourism, Gingko College of Hospitality Management, Chimelong Group, Wanda Hotels, the Dengfeng Culture and Tourism Bureau, the Asia Tourism Exchange Center, the Hong Kong Tourism Board, the Travel Industry Council, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Nina Hospitality, and Sailors Home and Mission to Seafarers.

The Consultancy looks forward to its next 4 years of success, and remains dedicated to its ongoing mission to share management know-how, creative solutions, and industry best practice with both public and private organisations. With its innovative marketing approaches, strategic tourism planning, and contemporary vision, the Consultancy has all of the tools to help industry professionals emerge ever stronger from the pandemic. **H**





Building a Shared Industry Vision

The hospitality and tourism industry is constantly evolving, and organisations must stay up to date to thrive. To help them do so, the SHTM provides high-quality training programmes that allow professionals to collaborate, broaden their knowledge, and upgrade their skills. A plethora of industry engagement events were hosted by the School in the last academic year.

One highlight was the School's delivery of two Executive Development Programmes for Chimelong Group, which operates theme parks, hotels, and restaurants in China. An exclusive Demand Forecasting and Financial Management workshop was held on 19 November 2021. Dr Neil Li, SHTM Assistant Professor, and Dr Michael Lin, SHTM Assistant Professor, provided a thorough overview of current forecasting practices, financial and cost control, hotel operation budgeting and characteristics, analysis of corporate financial reports, and financial management analysis tools. The participants were brought up to

speed on forecasting and financial management, which are critical in the fiercely competitive world of hospitality and tourism.

Also on the agenda for Chimelong Group executives was a Conflict Management workshop held on 2 December 2021. Conflict in the workplace is commonplace, and it needs to be handled with tremendous care. During immersive discussions, participants shared their experiences, explored contemporary management issues, and learned how best to resolve conflicts and anticipate problems. The workshop was taught by Dr Pearl Lin, SHTM Associate Professor.

In association with the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute, the SHTM's annual Certified Hospitality Educator Workshop was held on 3-7 January 2022. This workshop was tailored to instructors with a strong industry background who wished to sharpen their interactive teaching skills. Eighteen SHTM faculty members, SHTM doctoral students, and Hotel

ICON executives attended five 3.5-hour sessions led by Dr Fred Mayo.

The SHTM is also delighted to have established a Think Tank in October 2021, under the Tourism Sub-Alliance with the University Alliance of the Silk Road. Marching alongside the SHTM are the three University Alliance of the Silk Road founding members, namely Xian Jiaotong University, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, and Mae Fah Luang University.

Led by Professor Haiyan Song, SHTM Associate Dean, Chair Professor and Mr and Mrs Chan Chak Fu Professor in International Tourism, the Think Tank was put in place to share research insights into tourism economics and policy, sustainable tourism and community-based tourism, tourism planning and development, and cultural, heritage and rural tourism. Perfectly reflecting the SHTM's dedication to industry engagement, the members of the Think Tank share a vision of propelling policy and planning along the Silk Road. **H**

In Brief...

Welcoming Day

On 23 August 2021, the SHTM greeted nearly 600 new students from across the globe at a **Welcoming Day** to kick off the new academic year. **Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management**, welcomed the students and introduced them to SHTM staff members.

Another highlight of the event was the **Dean's Distinguished Lecture**, delivered by **Syed Asim Hussain, Founder of Black Sheep Restaurants** and a spokesperson for the industry at large. His passionate speech, entitled "Confessions of a Hospitality: What Actually Matters", inspired students and staff alike.



Dress Orange Day



Every year, the SHTM celebrates World Tourism Day by organising its own **Dress Orange Day**. This academic year, the event was held on 27 September 2021. SHTM staff and students dressed in orange, the School's colour, to join the fun and demonstrate solidarity with the global industry.

All SHTMers were invited to take part in the "Dress Orange Fashion Show" Contest. The winners were BSc students Ms Katharina Zechmeister and Ms Yan Zhang, who entered as individual contestants, as well as Ph.D. students Ms Mehrnaz Alizadeh, Ms Provia Kesande and Ms Hakimeh Nasiri, who entered as group contestants.

Book Publication by SHTM Faculty

The School is delighted to announce the 2021 publication of the book *Strategic Perspectives from Hospitality Leaders*, authored by **Professor Brian King, Dr Catherine Cheung**, and a co-author. This insightful study, published by China Travel & Tourism Press, sheds new light on the strategies of Chinese hospitality leaders, both within and outside the country.



Young Scholar Grant



The SHTM congratulates **Dr Crystal Shi** on obtaining a **Young Scholar Grant** from the National Natural Science Foundation of China for her study entitled "**An Actor-Centric Approach of Abusive Supervision: A Cross-Culture Investigation of Short-Term and Long-Term Influences on Managers**".

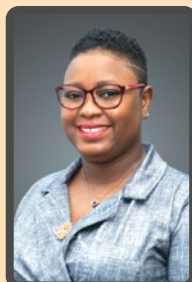
Project of Strategic Importance

The School commends **Professor Cathy Hsu** on obtaining a HK\$1 million research grant for a project entitled "The Construction of a Multi-Perspective Social Listening Platform for Smart Tourism Development in the Greater Bay Area" under **PolyU's Projects of Strategic Importance Scheme 2021/22**.



Targeted Scholarship Scheme

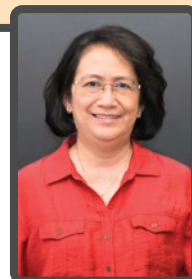
The School is proud to announce that Ph.D. student **Ms Alice Kondja** received the **Targeted Scholarship Scheme – Belt and Road Scholarship** under the HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund 2021/22 and the **Legacy Society Scholarship** funded by the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA). This will give her the invaluable opportunity to attend the PCMA's flagship conference in the US.



D.HTM Student Receives Scholarships

Ms Joselyn Sison Goopio was this year's proud recipient of the **Prof. Bob McKercher Scholarship**, which was established to assist students pursuing the D.HTM programme at the SHTM.

Ms Goopio also received **The Padma and Hari Harilela Scholarship 2020/21**. This scholarship was established in 2011 by Dr Hari N. Harilela, head of the Harilela Group, to nurture exceptional hotel industry professionals.



2021 Intercollegiate Wine Business Invitational Competition

Congratulations to the talented team of MSc in International Wine Management students who won **third place** in the 2021 Intercollegiate Wine Business Invitational Competition. This prestigious wine business plan development competition is hosted annually by Wine Business Education in the US.



Competing with students from well-known hospitality programmes around the world, the SHTM's **Mr Chun-yau Chan, Ms Yingying Dong, Ms Natalie Lee, Mr Leo Yau, and Ms Zheng Zhou** developed an innovative Chinese white wine named Mirage. The wine is made from red Beichun grapes from Yunmiao, inspired by Blanc de Noir from the Champagne region of France.

Managers of the Future

SHTM undergraduate students **Miss Charlotte Chen, Mr Anthony Liu, and Miss Missy Zou**, together with **Mr Xavier Pan**, a student from the Department of Computing, won **second place** in the 2021 Guangdong Hong Kong Macau Greater Bay Area Integrated Resort Sustainable Business Case Study Competition – "Start Young" Hospitality Management Professional Challenge on 12 December.

Organised by the University of Macao, the competition brought together 23 teams from universities across the Greater Bay Area. The SHTM team demonstrated excellent business analytic skills and won recognition from the judges during the Q&A section. The School congratulates the students and their faculty advisor, **Dr Michael Lin**, on their outstanding achievement.



Celebrating Excellence

The SHTM is proud to announce the following recipients of SHTM Staff Excellence Awards 2020/21.

- **Dr Mimi Li** received the **SHTM Teaching Excellence Award**.
- **Dr Neil Li** received the **SHTM Research Excellence Award**.
- **Ms Katrina Li** received the **SHTM Service Excellence Award**.

Congratulations also go to the SHTM staff receiving School Awards for **Outstanding Achievement in Knowledge Transfer** in 2021.

- **Professor Haiyan Song** was honoured with the **Knowledge Transfer: Industry (Individual) Award** for a project entitled "The Asia Pacific Visitor Forecasting System".
- **Professor Kaye Chon, Professor Cathy Hsu, Professor Brian King, Dr Tony Tse, Dr Karin Weber, Dr Barry Mak, Dr Henry Tsai, Dr Eric Chan, Dr Ada Lo, Dr Norman Au, Dr Daniel Leung, Professor Bob McKercher and Ms Anny Ho** won the **Knowledge Transfer: Society (Team) Award** for a project entitled "Developing Hospitality and Tourism Education in Saudi Arabia".

People



Dr Emily Chen joined the School as a Research Assistant Professor on 22 November 2021.



Mr Henry Ho was promoted to Information Technology Officer with effect from 1 December 2021.



Dr Giovanni Angelini was appointed as a Professor of Practice (Hotel Management) with effect from 1 January 2022.



Professor Peter Kim joined the School as a Visiting Professor on 3 January 2022.



Ms Sophia Tai joined the School as an Administrative Assistant on 10 January 2022.



Mr Murphy Tang left the role of Senior Information Technology Officer at the SHTM on 8 October 2021. He took up the new role of IT Manager (User Services) in PolyU's Information Technology Services Office.



Ms Hayley Chan joined the School as Restaurant Manager of Bistro 1979 on 26 October 2021.



Ms Brigid Yau was promoted to Executive Officer with effect from 1 November 2021.



Dr Hanna Lee joined the School as a Research Assistant Professor on 9 November 2021.

Students in the Casino and Gaming Management class teaching the rules of a game to members of the Institute for Active Ageing



A Busy Year for Students

In 2021, as the world emerged slowly from crisis, SHTM students were busy preparing to seize the opportunities that lie ahead. The year's roster of student activities spanned multiple sectors of the hospitality and tourism industry, with a particular emphasis on the value of collaboration and knowledge sharing – across borders, between cultures, and even between generations. From a summit for outstanding young hoteliers to an immersive gaming class and a video contest, students had countless chances to develop their professional skills while gaining a more diverse outlook.

Industry Connections

At the Virtual Young Hoteliers Summit (YHS) on 22-25 March 2021, ambitious student delegates from the SHTM quizzed experienced hoteliers about emerging

challenges and the future of the industry. Attended by professionals worldwide, the summit links today's industry leaders with young people on the brink of their careers in hospitality. This was an "intense but fruitful" experience, said SHTM delegate Mr Horace Kwan, who was a fourth-year BSc in Hotel Management student at the time of the YHS. "The summit covered everything from traditional well-known hotel brands to the new generation of hotels".

Another key goal of this student-organised summit is to connect the industry's most exceptional students with each other. This was a particular highlight for 2021 student delegate Miss Elly Cheung, who was also in Year 4 of the SHTM's BSc in Hotel Management. "I learned a lot through working with teammates from various parts of the world, including the US, Croatia, and Belgium", said Miss Cheung. "My team had to cope with the difference between four time zones, which helped to sharpen my communication and time management skills".

Networking with peers and the industry was also on the agenda for members of SHTM student clubs and societies in 2021. On 20 September, the School's eight Student Chapters – run by students, for students – kicked off a new recruitment drive. With the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, they were able to plan an array of exciting face-to-face activities for the coming year. To name just one of these many stimulating opportunities, The Bacchus: SHTM Wine Society organised a once-in-a-lifetime tour of Hong Kong's only underground private members' club, the Crown Wine Cellars, on 4 October.

Innovation and Diversity

In autumn 2021, students taking the new Casino and Gaming Management class were able to immerse themselves in a rapidly emerging sector of the tourism and hospitality industry. Due to COVID-19, the class could not visit Macau, the world's foremost destination for casino and gaming tourists. Dr Linda Woo, SHTM Assistant Professor, came up with the perfect alternative: collaborating with the Institute for Active Ageing (IAA) to learn directly from older adults, who are the main consumer group for casinos. "I wanted my students to have more experience with diverse people, including all ages and beyond the university", said Dr Woo. This is perfectly in line with the SHTM's vision of fostering a globally minded and inclusive industry.

For two weeks, beginning on 21 October 2021, the 61 students taking the Casino and Gaming Management class joined hands with 10 older adults from the

IAA to learn about the gaming behaviours of different generations. The students gained hands-on experience of playing and presenting real casino games, ranging from poker to baccarat. "This was a gaming presentation activity that cannot be experienced in other classes", said Dr Woo.

Internationalisation at Home

In another exciting 2021 incentive, the SHTM hosted a video contest named "Internalisation @ Home" to nurture curiosity about cultures outside Hong Kong. Working either as teams or individually, undergraduate students were invited to create a short video depicting a culture or country that intrigued them. Prizes were awarded to the most creative videos with the richest content and highest production quality. On 22 November, the winners were announced. First prize went to Miss Melanie Muhlmann, who is now in Year 4 of the BSc in Tourism and Events Management programme, for a video showcasing Pakistan's colourful culture, scenery and food.

Importantly, this competition inspired interaction and collaborative learning. Some students, for example, produced videos featuring special guests from their chosen cultures. This initiative feeds into PolyU's ambition of encouraging a global vision and intercultural competence – qualities that have never been more important than today, as the world gradually re-opens.

In 2021, a year poised between crisis and opportunity, our students continued to impress in the face of ongoing challenges. The School is proud of their resilience and dedication, and it has every faith that their innovative mindset will help the industry to emerge stronger from the pandemic. In return, the SHTM will spare no effort to ensure that its students continue to grow and thrive in today's ever-changing industry environment. **H**



Students at the Virtual Young Hoteliers Summit

A Cultural Smörgåsbord

Culinary traditions and customs express people's cultural identity, history, lifestyle, values, and even beliefs. Reflecting its enduring commitment to promoting cultural understanding, the SHTM organised a medley of food and beverage events celebrating diversity last year. A particular highlight was the Dining Manners Workshop, held on 12 October.

This unique lunchtime event, facilitated by Ms Tak Kanchanawat, presented food cultures and etiquette from around the world. The undergraduate attendees learned about table manners, the dos and don'ts of dining etiquette, and how to make a good first impression during meals, all the while savouring a delicious four-course lunch.

After an Italian baked Portobello mushroom appetiser and a Japanese roast kabocha and honey soup, the participants were treated to a main course of either Australian herb-roasted rack of lamb or Turkish pan-seared sumac-spiced cod fillet. For dessert, they enjoyed an American-style Maltesers cheesecake.

The workshop was held at the student-run Bistro 1979 training restaurant, where the food was prepared and served by third-year Hotel Management students enrolled in the Managerial Concepts in Food and Beverage Operations course. This added to the value of the workshop, with learning happening on both sides of the dining experience.

Last year also saw as many as 40 events hosted by the SHTM's Food and Wine Academy. On 25 June, Mr Valentin Maurel held a workshop entitled Chateau d'Astros – Heritage of the Rose Wine. Attendees learn about the production, distribution, and future of the famous pink wine. In another rich sensory experience, Le Petit Beret unmasked meal-pairing options for its non-alcoholic wines on 14 and 15 July.

A two-day Discover Irish Whiskey workshop in June presented the history and craftsmanship of whiskey from the Emerald Isle. June also saw a workshop on the Swedish social tradition of *fika*, which included tips on how to make the perfect cinnamon bun. Another focal event in June was an online Discover the Wonderful Indonesian

Cuisine workshop, which explored traditional Indonesian recipes, including traditional fragrant soup.

A tasting workshop, on 2 September, marked the 50th anniversary of Cap Classique, a premium South African bubbly made using the traditional bottle-fermented method. Four dates in September were dedicated to local craft beer workshops. Craft beer introductions and masterclasses were provided by Black Kite Brewery, which brews spiced Hong Kong beer, and Tai Wai Brewery, which infuses Asian beer with Western tea leaves, as well as the Hong Kong Beer Co., and Heroes Beer Co. A workshop dedicated to the uniquely South African grape, Pinotage, was held on 5 October.

The SHTM is proud to have introduced students and staff to such a varied assortment of culinary experiences. With COVID-19 travel restrictions still in place, maintaining connections with other cultures has never been more important. **H**



Alum-notes

1990s		
Ms Charis Yim	HD in Hotel Management 1995	Deputy General Manager – Sales and Marketing at Nina Hotel Tsuen Wan West
2000s		
Mr Tommy Yeung	HD in Hotel, Catering and Tourism Management 2004	Restaurants Manager at The Hong Kong Club
Ms April Lam	MSc in Hotel & Tourism Management 2006	General Manager of Hong Kong & Kowloon Ferry Holdings Limited
Mr Benjamin Ng	HD in Hotel, Catering and Tourism Management 2007	Executive Assistant Manager – Rooms (Hong Kong) at Shangri-La Group
Ms Serina Fong	MSc in Hotel & Tourism Management 2009	Lecturer at Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Haking Wong)
2010s		
Ms Sylvia Chung	MSc in Hotel and Tourism Management 2010	Chief Business Impact Officer at the Chinachem Group
Ms Connie Chu	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2010	Learning and Development Manager at the Langham Hospitality Group
Mr Jason Fong	HD in Hotel Management 2008 BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2010	Human Resources Manager at Grand Hyatt Hong Kong
Ms Kirsten Leung	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2011	Senior Manager, Global Sales at Shangri-La Group
Prof Erdogan Ekiz	Ph.D. in Hotel and Tourism Management 2012	Dean of Faculty at TEAM University
Dr Carol Zhang	MSc in Hotel and Tourism Management 2012	Associate Professor in Tourism Marketing & Management at Nottingham University Business School
Ms Caren Ip	HD in Hotel Management 2010 BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2012	Office Manager at Eight Partnership
Ms Marble Ip	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2012	Guest Relations Executive at The Peninsula Hong Kong
Ms Adriane Li	HD in Hotel Management 2011 BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2012	Senior Asset Manager – Hotel Division at the New World Development Company Ltd
Ms Esther Cheung	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2014	Senior Sales Manager at Conrad Hong Kong
Mr Kevin Chan	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2015	Rooms and Residences Operations Manager at Four Seasons Hotel London at Ten Trinity Square
Ms Akina Li	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2015	Cluster Learning & Development Officer at Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group
Ms Clara Lui	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2015	Sales Executive at Hong Kong Trade Development Council
Ms Tracy Ng	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2015	Front Office Manager at Ritz Carlton Hong Kong
Mr Kenway Tai	BSc(Hons) in Tourism Management 2015	Sales Support Specialist at Checkout.com
Mr Benjamin Kot	HD in Hotel Management 2014 BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2016	Senior Wealth Management Manager, Manulife

Mr Stephen Tai	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2016	Assistant Human Resources Manager at the Hong Kong International Airport Services Holding Ltd
Dr Michael Ahn	Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management 2017	Executive Vice President at Pakkojae Corporation and Founder and CEO of House of Heritage Distillery in Korea
Ms Kristy Cheng	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2017	Administrative Secretary at AnyDesk Software GmbH
Ms Crystal Ho	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2017	Partner Operations Specialist at Foodpanda
Ms Man-Ting Wong	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2017	Assistant Customer Business Support Executive, The Hong Kong Electric Company
Ms Tobey Chau	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2018	Sales Coordinator at JW Marriott Hong Kong
Ms Esther Lee	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2019	Assistant Learning & Development Manager at The Peninsula Hong Kong
Ms Hazel Tsang	HD in Hotel Management 2019	Sales and Marketing Executive at Artvend
Mr Sam Lee	BSc(Hons) in Tourism and Events Management 2020	Concierge at K11 Artus
Ms Rainbow Li	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2020	Associate Butler at Rosewood Hong Kong
Ms Wincy Lung	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2020	Customer Service Officer at Swire Properties
Ms Cindy Mak	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2020	Marketing Executive at Tom Lee Music Hong Kong
Ms Donna Cheung	MSc in International Hospitality Management 2021	Restaurant Duty Manager at Fortnum & Mason
Mr Chun-Nam Kwan	MSc in International Tourism and Convention Management 2021	Digital Marketing Officer at Fruit Union Company Ltd
Mr Kevin Li	MSc in Hotel and Tourism Management 2021	Director of Sales – China at Rosewood Hong Kong
Ms Vivian Liang	MSc in International Wine Management 2021	Deputy Director and Fine Wine Account Manager at Sotheby's Wine
Mr Kenneth Wong	MSc in International Hospitality Management 2021	Chief Legal Officer & Company Secretary at Link REIT
Ms Evelyn Wu	MSc in International Hospitality Management 2021	Receptionist at Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group
Ms Xenia Zhou	MSc in International Hospitality Management 2021	Assistant Project Manager, SHTM+ICON Consultancy, PolyU
Ms Dorothy Chan	HD in Hotel Management 2019 BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2021	Human Resources Assistant at Hyatt Regency Hong Kong, Sha Tin
Ms Jocelyn Chan	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2021	Hospitality Young Leader at Sino Hotels
Ms Elly Cheung	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2021	Operations Management Trainee at The Temple House, Chengdu
Ms Emma Fung	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2021	Marketing Communications and Loyalty Coordinator, Asia Pacific at Hyatt Hotels Corporation
Mr Shing-Yuen Lam	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2021	Executive Club Lounge F&B Ambassador at JW Marriott Hotel Hong Kong
Ms Karen Ma	BSc(Hons) in Tourism and Events Management 2021	Club Concierge at Ritz Carlton Hong Kong
Ms Jane Park	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2021	Senior Food and Beverage Executive at Hotel ICON
Ms Onyx Wong	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2021	Human Resources Assistant at Hong Kong Christian Service

Joining Hands with Industry Experts

The SHTM and its students sincerely thank the industry professionals who recently imparted their wisdom and experience as professors for a day.

Speaker	Title and Company	Topic
Mr Sahaj AGARWAL	Director, Digital Consulting - South Asia, Marriott International	Digital Marketing for Hotels in the New Normal
Ms Helen ALNAR	Bakery Chef	The Art of "Fika" and the Perfect Cinnamon Bun
Mr Eshan ARIF	Head of Business Development, Hong Kong Beer Co.	Building Relationships on Beer
Mr Christopher BEROS	Asia Director, California Wine Institute	Reds and Whites of California
Mr Federico BOGNA	Chairman, Forum of Responsible Drinking	Are you FReD-Sponsible?
Ms Vivi BONG	Korean Language Tutor & Author	Imagine Your Korea: Hallyu 4.0 and Travel Essentials
Ms Elaine Chukan BROWN	Wine Writer	Reds and Whites of California
Mr Kenneth CHAN	Vice President, Culture Homes	Consultancy Project
Ms Jenny CHEN	Vice President, Atlantis, Sanya	Leadership and Strategy Execution
Mr Mike CHEN	General Manager, Beijing Ru-Yi Life Hotel Investment & Management Co., Ltd	Strategic Management and My Career Path
Prof Philip CHEN	Professor of Practice in Hospitality and Tourism Strategies, SHTM, PolyU	Great Cities of the World
Ms Christine CHENG	CEO, Lushu (Beijing) Technology Co., Ltd	How SaaS Applications and Digital Professional Networks Affect Tourism Services Industry
Mr Dane CHENG	Executive Director, Hong Kong Tourism Board	Embracing the New Tourism Landscape
Mr Franko CHENG	Analyst, Savills	Consultancy Project
Mr Paul CHENG	General Manager, Hong Kong International Airport	Hotel and Tourism Senior Executive Seminars
Ms Cissy CHOI	General Manager, Nina Hotel Island South & Group Director of Sales & Marketing, Nina Hospitality	Strategic Marketing and Markets
Mr Vallois CHOI	Director of Digital Marketing Strategy, Hotel ICON	Digital Marketing Trends – A Case of Hotel ICON
Mr Tony CHOW	Senior Manager, Content Development, Hong Kong Tourism Board	Winning Hearts, Influence the Minds and Get Their Wallets with Immersive Content
Mr Manuel CIPRIANI	Director, Digital Consulting - Australia, New Zealand & Pacific Islands, Marriott International	Digital Marketing for Hotels in the New Normal
Dr Jennifer CRONIN	President, Wharf Hotels	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia - China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies
Ms Celine DU	Vice President Sales, Asia Pacific, Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia - China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies
Mr Stephen FAGAN	Concierge Manager, Sandals Resorts International	Club Services: The Past, The Present, The Future
Dr Daisy FAN	Senior Lecturer, Bournemouth University	Customer Behavior in Hospitality and Tourism
Ms Jacqueline FAULKNER	Founder, URBNPerma	Urban Permaculture & Design
Mr Julien GARDIN	General Manager, Ando	Food Trends, Service Trends, Opinion on the Food Scene in Hong Kong and the Rest of the World
Ms Grace GUO	Vice General Manager, Conrad Hotel Shenzhen	Leadership and Strategy Execution – Hotel Owner's Perspectives
Mr Richard HATTER	General Manager, Hotel ICON	Hospitality and Tourism Marketing Environment
Ms Gina HO	Senior Director, Sales & Marketing Operations, InterContinental Hotels Group South China	Revenue Management: The Ways of Working of IHG & Beyond
Mr Stephen HO	President – Growth and Operations, Asia Pacific, Hyatt Hotels Corporation	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia – China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies
Mr Steve HOOD	Senior Vice President and Founding Director, SHARE Center, STR	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia - China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies
Mr Anand JINDAL	Group Director, Revenue Management & Distribution, Wharf Hotels	Hotel Sales & Marketing and Revenue Management: Driving Success through Technology and Innovation
Mr Peyami KALYONCU	Consul General, Turkish Consulate General in Hong Kong	Turkish Cuisine Culture
Dr Damiannah KIETI	Associate Professor, Moi University	Pro-poor Tourism Development in Developing Countries: Dilemma, Opportunity and Emerging Scenarios
Ms Jennifer KLAR	Corporate Sustainability Manager, Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas	Sustainability in Luxury Hospitality – Just a Trend or Inevitable?
Mr Tasos KOUSLOGLOU	CEO, Hotel Division, Sun Hung Kai Properties Limited	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia – China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies
Mr Frankie KWOK	Events & Entertainment Project Manager, Ocean Park Corporation	Special Events Management in Ocean Park
Mr Nicky KWOK	Business Development Director, KKday	Challenges and Strategies in Distributing Products in the New Normal: The Case of KKday
Mr Benson KWONG	General Manager, Customer Services Devepment, Fairwood Fast Food Limited	The Challenges of The Fast Food Industry in Hong Kong
Ms Oliph LAU	General Manager, Le Petit Beret Asia	Combining Non-Alcoholic Wines with Food: A Sensorial Experience
Mr Wilson LEE	General Manager, Hyatt Regency Hong Kong, Sha Tin	Hotel and Tourism Senior Executive Seminars
Ms Monica LEE-MULLER	Managing Director, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre	Hotel and Tourism Senior Executive Seminars
Mr Larry LEUNG	Vice President & Site-In-Charge of 11 SKIES, K11 Concepts Limited	Hospitality and Tourism Products - Co-creation of Service
Mr Richard LEWIS	Founder, What3Words	Trends and Innovations in Hospitality and Tourism
Ms Helen LIANG	General Manager, Luxemon Hotels Group	Leadership and Strategy Execution – Leading a Mid-scale Hotel Group
Ms Christine LIU	Regional Manager, North Asia, STR	Leadership and Strategy Execution – The STR Story
Mr Haidong LIU	Project CEO, Chengmao Residential Accommodation	Minsu and Strategic Entrepreneurship
Mr Vincent LIU	Human Resources Manager, Conrad Hong Kong	The Success of Conrad
Ms Yvonne LO	Chief Marketing Officer, Lify Wellness	Consultancy Project
Ms Jennifer LUK	Wine Educator & Wine Judge for Argentina Wine Awards 2016	Online Wine Masterclass - Malbec World Day
Ms Jenny MA	Assistant Events & Entertainment Project Manager, Ocean Park Corporation	Special Events Management in Ocean Park
Ms Karolyn MA	General Manager, Hong Kong Beer Co.	Building Relationships on Beer
Mr Brian MAGILL	Chef Lecturer, South Eastern Regional College, Bangor Campus	Taste of Northern Ireland – A Demonstration of Traditional Irish Flavours Combined with Contemporary Techniques and Presentation
Mr Valentin MAUREL	Co-Founder, Vines and Terroirs Ltd	Chateau d'Astros – The Heritage of the Rose Wine
Mr Thomas MCCLUNEY	Chef Lecturer, South Eastern Regional College, Bangor Campus	Taste of Northern Ireland – A Demonstration of Traditional Irish Flavours Combined with Contemporary Techniques and Presentation
Ms Shirley MENG	Director, SUNAC	Hotel Acquisitions and Mergers in China
Mr Ryo MIURA	Director of Housekeeping, Island Shangri-La, Hong Kong	Housekeeping Management Amidst the Challenges Faced in Hong Kong Hotel Industry

Speaker	Title and Company	Topic
Ms Cynthia MO	Director of Marketing and Business Development Section, HKSAR Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Some Reflections on Museum Branding: The HKMoA Case
Ms Daphne MOK	In Charge-Principal Programme Secretary, Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong	Recreation Policies and Development in Hong Kong
Prof Alastair MORRISON	Research Professor, University of Greenwich	Customer Relationship Marketing & Customer Loyalty
Ms Ivy NG	Bourgogne Wine Ambassador	Discovering the Red & White Wines of Bourgogne
Mr Samuel NG	Director of Operations, Travel Industry Authority	Introduction to the Travel Industry Authority
Ms Yoyo NG	General Manager, iClick Interactive Asia Group	Digital Marketing – What Do Vendors Do to Support Hospitality and Tourism Companies
Mr Jorge NUNES	Asia Pacific Market Manager, Symington Family Estates	The Essentials – A School of Port Masterclass
Prof Peter O’CONNOR	Professor in Strategic Management, University of South Australia	Distribution Strategy and Channels/Pricing & Revenue Management
Ms Elfani PRASSANTI	Consul, Information and Socio-Cultural Section, Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia	Discover the Wonderful Indonesian Cuisine
Mr John RHODES	Whisky Expert, Consulate General of Ireland	Discover Irish Whiskey Masterclasses
Ms Marjolaine ROBLETTE-GERES	Wine Consultant, Wine Educator & Wine Writer	The Art of Tasting Loire Valley Wines
Ms Nicole SANTOS	Project Manager, Symington Family Estates	The Essentials – A School of Port Masterclass
Chef Stefu SANTOSO	Executive Chef, Aprez Catering	Discover the Wonderful Indonesian Cuisine
Ms Ayu SAPTANINGTYAS	Vice Consul for Information and Socio-Culture, Indonesian Consulate General in Hong Kong	Discover the Wonderful Indonesian Cuisine
Ms Tersina SHIEH	Winemaker, Wine Educator, Wine Marketer	Cap Classique, South African Champagne Pinotage, Uniquely South African
Mr Mark SHRIVES	Senior Director, Client Services - Asia Pacific, Marriott International	Digital Marketing for Hotels in the New Normal
Mr Gregory SILVA	CEO, Le Petit Beret Asia	Combining Non-Alcoholic Wines with Food: A Sensorial Experience
Mr Hongfang SONG	Vice President, Huazhu Technology Center	Digital Competitiveness in Huazhu
Chef Supawadee Connie SURINKAS	Tourism Authority of Thailand, Hong Kong Office	Amazing Thailand, Amazing Moment
Ms Cherry TANG	Senior Cluster Revenue Manager, RMCC Asia Pacific, Hilton	Revenue Management Out of Tradition
Mr Matthew TSANG	Senior Learning and Development Officer, Conrad Hong Kong	The Success of Conrad
Mr James TUNG	Vice President, Travel Trade Development, K11 Concepts Limited	Hospitality and Tourism Products – Co- creation of Service
Mr Tom TURNER	Head Brewer, Black Kite Brewery	Craft Beer Masterclass with Black Kite Brewery
Mr Simon TYE	Executive Research Director, CSG Worldwide	China Luxury Forecast 2021 Thoughtful Luxury
Mr Hoss VETRY	Regional Vice President & Managing Director, Rosewood Hotels & Resorts	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia – China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies
Mr Arthur WANG	Managing Director, Hotel Mvsa and Inno Hospitality	Innovations in Hospitality
Mr Liang WANG	General Manager, Jinjiang International Hotel Ganzhou	Strategic Issues of State-owned Hotels in China
Ms Minmin WANG	Vice President, Beijing Shiji Information Technology Co., Ltd	Challenges and Opportunities in Digital Transformation
Mr Ray WANG	CEO, Haozhu Technology Co., Ltd	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia - China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies
Ms Ada WONG	Director of Human Resources, Conrad Hong Kong	The Success of Conrad
Mr Chris WONG	Founder, Heroes Beer Co. & General Manager, Carbon Brews	Brewing on an Island
Mr Joe WONG	Chief Executive, Ocean Park Corporation	Hotel and Tourism Senior Executive Seminars
Mr Henry WU	Founder, Tai Wai Beer	A Journey through Craft Beer
Mr Nong XIA	Group Executive Vice President and CEO, Global High-end Hotels, Huazhu Group	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia - China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies
Mr Haochun XU	CEO, Hanting Inns and Hotels	Cost Leadership Strategy of Hanting Hotels
Mr Yong XUE	Training Manager, Huazhi Wine Company	Wine Business and Market in Mainland China
Mr James YAN	Chief Development Officer, UrCove by Hyatt	Innovations in Hospitality
Mr Steven YANG	Director – Hospitality Industry, Oracle China	Innovations in Hospitality
Mr Renny YIP	Senior Director, Revenue Management, South China, Hong Kong, Macau & Taiwan, InterContinental Hotels Group	Revenue Management: The Ways of Working of IHG & Beyond
Mr Calvin YUEN	Manager, F&B, Shangri-La International Hotel Management Ltd	Managing Food Waste in Hotels: Challenges & Opportunities
Mr Samson ZHANG	Vice President, SUNAC	Strategic Alliances between SUNAC and Huazhu
Mr Mars ZHAO	Senior Director, Feasibility & Strategic Planning, Huazhu Group	Consultancy Project
Mr Simon ZHAO	Senior Project Planning Manager, Huazhu	Consultancy Project
Mr Murphy ZHU	President, Yongle Huazhu Hotels Group	Innovations in Hotel Companies

Upcoming Events

2022

25 March

Event: Career Day 2022
Organiser: SHTM
Contact: Ms Adelaide Lau
Email: adelaide.lau@polyu.edu.hk

12 June

Event: SHTM Alumni Homecoming
Organiser: SHTM

13-14 June

Event: 5th Global Tourism and Hospitality Conference
Organiser: SHTM
Contact: Ms Leslie Fung
Email: leslie.fung@polyu.edu.hk
Website: <https://www.gthc2022.com/>

6-9 July

Event: 27th Asia Pacific Tourism Association Annual Conference, Chiang Mai, Thailand
Organisers: APTA & Chiang Mai University
Contact: Dr SooCheong (Shawn) Jang
Email: jang12@purdue.edu
Website: <https://www.apta2022.org>

**Dr Alexander
Grunewald**
(Ph.D. 2010)
Managing Director
Accenture

Dr Daisy Fan
(Ph.D. 2016)
Principal Academic
Bournemouth
University

**Dr Edward
Rockaert**
(D.HTM 2014)
Rector
Peruvian University
of Applied Sciences

Mr David Lau
(MSc 2013)
CEO
Ocean Sky Hotel
Management Ltd

DO YOU KNOW US?

You might see some familiar faces because we're all graduates of the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Ranked No. 1 in the world in the "Hospitality and Tourism Management" category in ShanghaiRanking's Global Ranking of Academic Subjects 2021, placed No. 1 globally in the "Commerce, Management, Tourism and Services" category in the University Ranking by Academic Performance in 2020/2021, rated No. 1 in the world in the "Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism" subject area by the CWUR Rankings by Subject 2017, and ranked No. 1 in Asia in the "Hospitality and Leisure Management" subject area in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2021, the SHTM ensured that we would gain international recognition for the calibre of our learning. Over the years, we've put the knowledge and skills we gained into practice as proud professionals in the hotel, travel and tourism fields. The cosmopolitan mix of our classes - with participants hailing from Denmark, Hong Kong, Korea, mainland China, Peru, Romania and the USA - is further testament to the SHTM's well-earned international reputation.

We invite you to advance your career in a dynamic global industry by enrolling in one of the SHTM's highly tailored programmes, led by a strong international team of over 80 faculty members from diverse cultural backgrounds. The various programmes in hotel and tourism management lead to Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management, and Master of Science degrees.

Find out more about this world-class hotel and tourism school by visiting <https://shtm.polyu.edu.hk>.

You too can be recognised!

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