

Horizons

SHTM Magazine

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

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SHTM

Lifetime Achievement Award

- ♦ Pioneering Hotelier Honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award
- ♦ Deans of Hospitality Schools Worldwide Come Together
- ♦ SHTM Team Breaks New Ground with Tourism Monitoring Tool
- ♦ Talented Young Alumni Under the Spotlight

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CONTENTS

2

Message from
Dean of School

3

Pioneering Hotelier
Honoured

The SHTM pays tribute to a
leading light in the industry
with the Lifetime
Achievement Award

5

Scaling New Heights

Deans of hospitality schools
worldwide came together at
the 2nd World Summit for
Deans

7

Cutting-edge Tool for Tourism Recovery

A novel cloud-based system for
monitoring tourism sentiment and
offering timely evidence-based policy
recommendations

9

Flagship Wine Workshop

Pioneering research
showcased at the
SHTM-hosted 5th Wine and
Hospitality Management
Workshop

11

Coming Together for the
Industry

Hoteliers, staff and students
share insights at the "SHKP
Hotels x SHTM Hackathon"
event

13

Spotlight on High Achievers

Inspirational talks by alumni in
the Young Alumni Career
Spotlight

15

Postgraduate Perspectives

Students share their unique
experiences at the SHTM

RESEARCH HORIZONS

Highlights of recent SHTM research, exploring the potential of
the Metaverse to transform the hospitality industry; how to turn
website views into real-life restaurant visits; the complex
emotional responses of Hong Kong residents to visitors from
Mainland China; the stress and coping strategies of airline
employees during the pandemic; tourists' perceptions of service
robots; and the impact of hosts' profile pictures on consumer
decision making in the peer-to-peer accommodation market.

17

Reshaping the Future

Inspiring events held
for alumni of the
School's Mainland
China programmes

19

Igniting Knowledge Transfer

Pioneering professional
development training
provided by SHTM+ICON
Consultancy

20

In Brief

A snapshot of the
SHTM's latest
undertakings and
achievements

23

Students Fly High

A packed roster of student
activities in 2023

25

The Taste of Success

A series of unique
dining and learning
events held in Bistro
1979

26

Congratulations to
Outstanding Students

Undergraduate students
honoured with the
Academic Achievement
Award

27

Setting the Best Example

Hospitality leaders matched
with student mentees

29

Climbing to the Peak

A memorable activity for
alumni and notes on former
students

31

Professor-for-a-Day
Programme

Industry experts
give up their time as
professors for a day

33

Upcoming Events

What lies ahead for
the SHTM



Defining Tomorrow

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DEAN'S MESSAGE

As we prepare to welcome a new academic year, there is no better opportunity to take stock of the achievements of the past and contemplate the path ahead. What unites the SHTM community is the commitment of the School and its students, faculty and staff to building on past successes and finding new ways to guide the industry into a stronger and more sustainable future.

Lifelong excellence is celebrated in the opening story of the issue, which honours the pioneering hotelier Dr Ho Kwon Ping, worthy recipient of the 2023 SHTM Lifetime Achievement Award. The theme of inspirational leadership continues with the 2nd World Summit for Deans, an initiative organised and hosted by the SHTM that brought together deans from hospitality and tourism schools worldwide to share their wisdom in the wake of COVID-19.

Another forward-thinking initiative led by the School takes centre stage with "TOUROMETER", a newly launched cloud-based system for monitoring tourism sentiment and providing timely policy recommendations. Next up, readers can find out more about two flagship events hosted by the SHTM: the 5th Wine and Hospitality Management Workshop, which showcased leading-edge research on the wine trade; and "SHKP Hotels x SHTM Hackathon", which brought together top hoteliers and SHTM staff and students for an afternoon of networking and exchange.

High-achieving students and alumni also come under the spotlight in the issue, with a series of inspiring talks by alumni of the BSc in Hotel Management and sharing by current students of our doctoral and Master's programmes.

After an opportunity to delve into the latest cutting-edge studies by SHTM faculty in our "Research Horizons" inset, readers can learn more about the School's world-leading educational offering and the impressive achievements of its current and former students. Learning does not stop after graduation, as we learn from alumni of the School's Mainland Programmes.

Readers will also find highlights of students' rich extracurricular calendar in 2023, including a once-in-a-lifetime "study abroad" trip to the United Arab Emirates, and the SHTM's latest food and beverage activities. Those wishing to learn more about the School's engagement with the industry will be inspired by the latest professional development training initiatives developed by SHTM+ICON Consultancy. Rounding off the magazine are snapshots of the year's most memorable events and staff updates in our "In Brief" section.

As this issue of *Horizons* demonstrates, the SHTM unflinchingly strives to expand its own horizons for the benefit of hospitality and tourism. My thanks go to all readers and contributors for accompanying us on this journey! #

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



A Pioneering Hotelier Honoured

On 22 May, the School paid tribute to a leading light of the hospitality industry by announcing this year's recipient of the annual SHTM Lifetime Achievement Award. Over 300 guests from around the world watched as the honour was bestowed on Dr Ho Kwon Ping, Founder and Executive Chairman of Banyan Tree Holdings and Laguna Resorts and Hotels, and Executive Chairman of Thai Wah Public Company. On the same day, Dr Ho was also inducted into the SHTM Gallery of Honour.

Inaugurated in 2016, the Lifetime Achievement Award is presented by the School in recognition of individuals from across the globe who have made outstanding contributions to the hotel and tourism sectors. Inductees are immortalised with a specially commissioned portrait on permanent display in the Gallery of Honour. This year's ceremony and accompanying gala dinner were particularly special, as they marked the return of the award since 2020.

As proudly noted in the ceremony's opening speech, delivered at Hotel ICON by Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, the title is reserved for recipients of the highest calibre. This year's commendation goes to an individual who not only represents the best in hospitality but even provided inspiration for the award in the first place. Expressing his joy and gratitude upon accepting the honour, Dr Ho recalled that "ironically, it was long ago, during my tenure as chairman of the International Advisory Board of the SHTM, that I suggested the creation of the Lifetime Achievement Award".

A Loyal Supporter

With such a remarkable connection to the School, no recipient could be more deserving. Indeed, Dr Ho has enjoyed a career of unparalleled distinction in

Dr Ho Kwon Ping (far left) was inducted into the SHTM Gallery of Honour. He is pictured with Ms Claire Chiang (middle) and Dean Kaye Chon (far right).

hotel leadership and management. His lifetime's dedication to the Asian and global hotel scenes is immediately evident from his list of professional achievements and awards. Apart from founding Banyan Tree and Laguna, he made a lasting contribution to tourism management education in his home country as founding chairman of Singapore Management University.

For these and myriad other accomplishments, Dr Ho has previously received the London Business School Entrepreneurship Award, the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the National University of Singapore, and the title of CEO of the Year at the Singapore Corporate Awards. He has also chaired Singapore Power and MediaCorp Singapore, and he has served on the boards of several major firms. He is the only recipient of two awards from the Hotel Investment Conference Asia Pacific, and he holds the Meritorious Service Medal and Distinguished Service Order of the Singapore government.

In his speech at the award ceremony, Professor Wing-tak Wong, Deputy President and Provost of PolyU, praised Dr Ho for his remarkable achievements. "Dr Ho is a visionary entrepreneur and innovator in the hospitality industry, a respected industry leader, and a passionate advocate for sustainable tourism", said Professor Wong. "He is a stellar role model for all SHTM students, and, indeed, all hospitality students around the world".

At the gala dinner, Dr Ho spoke warmly and humorously about the highlights of his career. Describing his motivation for proposing the original launch of the SHTM Lifetime Achievement Award, Dr Ho explained that the rise of Asia as the global hub of hospitality had made such a recognition

apt and necessary. "Let's honour some Asian hoteliers", he recalled having said to Dean Chon. "They do it in Europe and America; we must honour some of our own". Moreover, Dr Ho's contribution to the SHTM did not stop there. Since the School's founding, he has generously provided undergraduate internships and even collaborated in the operation of Hotel ICON's spa.

An outstanding highlight of the award dinner was the session "Dr Ho's dialogue with SHTM students". Aiming to inspire the next generation of industry leaders, Dr Ho took the stage with a group of SHTM students to share invaluable insights from his lifetime's experience. Taking their cue from Dr Ho's book, *Asking Why*, the three students raised thought-provoking questions about his multi-cultural background, the reasons for his success and his thoughts on the industry. Throughout the dialogue, Dr Ho stressed the importance of wisdom and humility, stating that "in an increasingly globalised world, the ability to not only function effectively but to truly empathise with different cultures is critical to our success".

As tourism's centre of gravity moves eastward, Asia is growing as not just a host but a source of international travellers. Remarking

on how this trend has transformed the sector since his early days, Dr Ho spoke about the rise of "rainbow tourism", calling it "the most momentous phenomenon in my era". Formerly, he recalled, "tourism was one direction. Europeans came here". However, in the last 20 years, people around the world have started travelling "in numbers never before seen". He noted that even the battle with COVID-19 did not halt this process.

Inspiration for the Future

With Asia becoming, as Dr Ho observed, the beating heart of global tourism, the SHTM's mission has never been more important – nor has our geographic location been more strategic. As Dr Ho rightly noted, "an entire generation of Asian hospitality leaders owe much of their achievements to the education which Dean Chon and his colleagues provided them". Now more than ever, it is up to the School to set new standards of excellence for Asian hospitality – and we could hope for no finer inspiration than Dr Ho Kwon Ping. **H**



Dr Ho shares his life experiences with SHTM students



Dean Kaye Chon delivers opening remarks

In the last four decades, the SHTM has risen through the ranks of hospitality and tourism schools worldwide to become an internationally recognised centre of excellence. Never resting on its laurels, the School is constantly seeking new ways to live up to its motto of "Leading Hospitality and Tourism" – always with the guidance of its own visionary leader.

In May this year, thanks to an initiative spearheaded by Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, we orchestrated another milestone in the history of hospitality and tourism education: bringing together under one roof the deans of close to 40 universities in 16 countries and regions.

They may be oceans or even continents apart, but schools of hospitality and tourism in comprehensive university settings across the globe have common

opportunities and face similar challenges – especially as the industry rebounds and rebuilds after COVID-19. Keenly aware of the value of forging connections with partner institutions worldwide, the SHTM was delighted to host the 2nd World Summit for Deans of Independent Schools of Hospitality

Scaling New Heights

and Tourism at Hotel ICON on 20–22 May 2023. This provided an exceptional platform for exchange between the world's foremost thinkers, experts and innovators in hospitality and tourism education.

Driving Change Together

This historic event kicked off on 20 May with an optional tour of the SHTM, a cocktail reception and a welcome dinner for guests. The next morning, the attendees gathered in Hotel ICON's Silverbox Ballroom for an opening ceremony hosted by Professor Wing-tak Wong, PolyU Deputy President and Provost, and Dean Chon.

"There are no doubt changes and challenges for the global business of hospitality and tourism in the post-pandemic era", said Professor Wong. "It is instrumental for hospitality and tourism schools to connect with each other, learn from each other, charting the way forward for education and research for the betterment and advancement of the industry."

Dean Chon was in full agreement. In his opening remarks, he invited the Summit's attendees to contemplate some of the most pivotal moments in the development of hospitality and tourism in the last century – including the founding of the SHTM and its exponential growth in the last four decades. He stressed the importance for hospitality and tourism schools of developing autonomy and “standardising and professionalising our field”.

This was also the topic of the next session, in which Dean Chon joined Dean Donald Farr of Dedman College of Hospitality, Florida State University in discussing the status of hospitality and tourism programmes at autonomous schools, colleges and faculties within the comprehensive university setting.

After refreshments and an opportunity to network, the morning's programme resumed with a thought-provoking talk on the quality of teaching and learning and student development by two of the assembled deans: Dean Michael Cheng of the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Florida International University and Dean Marion Garaus of the Department of International Management (Undergraduate Degree Programmes) at Modul University Vienna.

Next on the agenda was luncheon, from which guests

returned refreshed to enjoy a talk by Dr Nicholas Thomas, SHTM Visiting Associate Professor, on “Tomorrow's Guestrooms”. This unique initiative, undertaken by the School in partnership with Hotel ICON, serves as a platform for innovation in new technologies, hotel design and business concepts in hotel management. Continuing the theme of innovation, SHTM Chair Professor Cathy Hsu introduced the Summit's guests to the School's pioneering MicroMasters programme.

The next topic under the spotlight was “Research Enhancement and Research Administration”, with insights offered by Professor Haiyan Song, SHTM Associate Dean, Chair Professor and Mr and Mrs Chan Chak Fu Professor in International Tourism, and Dean Pornpisanu Promsivapallop of the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism, Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus. After refreshments and another networking break, the final talk of the day was delivered by Dr Tony Tse, SHTM Professor of Practice and Programme Director (Industry Partnerships), and Dean Cihan Cobanoglu of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at the Muma College of Business, University of South Florida. Dr Tse and Dean Cobanoglu shared their wisdom and expertise regarding the development of alumni relationships and industry partnerships.

The final day of the Summit, 22 May, began with an inspiring talk on the potential for internationalisation and international collaboration in the hospitality and tourism industry. The attendees gained enriching insights from Dr Catherine Cheung, SHTM Associate Dean, Dr Sebastian Filep, SHTM Assistant Dean, and Dean Lin Wang of HNU-ASU Joint International Tourism College, Hainan University.

The assembled deans and other attendees gathered for the Summit's final inspiring exchange of ideas on the day. Speaking on the timely topic of “Collective Future Strategies for Hospitality and Tourism Schools” were Dean Ben Goh of the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Macau University of Science and Technology and Dean Stowe Shoemaker of the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

With this focus on the bright future of the world's hospitality and tourism schools, it is difficult to imagine a more fitting conclusion to the 2nd World Summit for Deans. The School extends its sincere gratitude to the participating deans and honoured guests and to the talented group of undergraduate students from the SHTM's Special Events Class who formed the organising committee for this important event. **H**

Attendees of the 2nd World Summit for Deans of Independent Schools of Hospitality and Tourism



Cutting-Edge Tool for Tourism Recovery

As the industry emerges from the long winter of COVID-19, the SHTM remains dedicated to supporting its swift recovery and building a safer, smarter and more sustainable future for hospitality and tourism. This was precisely the topic of a public seminar held on 28 April, at which the School announced the fruits of a study entitled “A Decision Support System for Post-COVID Tourism Policy Formation and Monitoring”.

The study developed a cutting-edge cloud-based tool, TOUROMETER, to measure Hong Kong residents' sentiment towards visitors and tourism development as well as visitors' sentiment towards Hong Kong tourism. This timely research project was spearheaded by Professor Cathy Hsu, Principal Investigator and SHTM Chair Professor, who also delivered April's seminar.

The team's illuminating results emphasise that, moving forward, it will be crucial to listen to the voices of local residents. The novel

TOUROMETER tool will help practitioners and policymakers to do just that.

Listening to Local Voices

The hospitality and tourism industry may be on the road to recovery, but are local voices being heard? “Understanding and monitoring residents' and visitors' sentiments is critical for effective policy formation and timely amendments to avoid detrimental and irreversible conflicts”, said Professor Hsu, speaking at April's seminar. Importantly, ensuring Hong Kong's sustainable post-pandemic recovery requires a deeper inspection of the policies currently in place to attract mainland Chinese tourists. After all, travellers from the mainland are Hong Kong's dominant source market, representing 78% of arrivals in 2018.

Yet tensions between Hong Kong residents and tourists from the mainland have intensified in recent years. “The huge influx of mainland Chinese tourists has facilitated exponential tourism growth”, explained Professor Hsu at the seminar, “but has simultaneously imposed a heavy burden on local lives”. Combined with the reopening of the border between Hong Kong and Mainland China, this is an opportune moment to take stock of the situation and balance various stakeholders' interests for long-term competitiveness. Only when hosts are happy can guests truly be satisfied.

To find out exactly how locals (and visitors) feel about Hong Kong tourism, Professor Hsu and her team – made up of the SHTM's Dr Nan Chen, Dr Christine Zeng, Mr Gary Tan and Mr Ziyang Zhan – developed a cloud-based “social listening” platform named TOUROMETER. Funded by the Public Policy Research Funding Scheme, Policy Innovation and

Co-ordination Office, the project collected and analysed historical data from Hong Kong residents and mainland Chinese tourists on popular social media platforms (e.g., Twitter) and 19 major newspapers in Hong Kong from 2003.

The rigorous research methods deployed – including meta machine learning of big data and statistical modelling using economic, environmental, tourism and census data – ensure that TOUROMETER captures up-to-date information that could prove pivotal to industry revival.

Ambivalence: A Novel Measure

To best capture the opinions of tourists and residents, the study introduced a more refined measure than simply “positive” or “negative” attitudes. Namely, the researchers assessed “ambivalence”, which refers to simultaneously held positive and negative views. The first finding was that on social media, compared with the news, Hong Kong residents tended to be less positive and more ambivalent about mainland Chinese tourists and tourism development.

Second, Hong Kong residents’ disposition towards Hong Kong tourism development was significantly correlated with their disposition towards mainland Chinese tourists. Namely, more ambivalence towards visitors from the mainland meant more ambivalence towards tourism development overall.

The third major finding was that the economy, the environment and quality of life significantly influenced Hong Kong residents’ dispositions towards mainland Chinese tourists



Members of the research team at the public seminar: (from left) Dr Nan Chen, Dr Christine Zeng, Professor Cathy Hsu, Mr Gary Tan and Mr Ziyang Zhan. Pictured with Dean Kaye Chon (third from right).

and tourism development. For example, when GDP per capita was higher and when air pollution was more severe, residents felt less positive and more ambivalent about the influx of tourists from the mainland.

Finally, the team found that mainland Chinese tourists’ perceptions of Hong Kong tourism were significantly correlated with the local economy, the environment, and resident sentiment. When GDP per capita was higher, perceptions of Hong Kong tourism were less positive, and when the unemployment rate was higher, mainland Chinese tourists reported less ambivalence about Hong Kong tourism. When residents were felt to be more negative, however, visitors from the mainland felt less positive about Hong Kong tourism.

Balancing Interests

TOUROMETER serves as a public policy decision support system that will help industry practitioners to recognise and manage social issues. The system can regularly update its dataset to monitor changes in ambivalence among Hong Kong residents and thereby offer timely evidence-based policy recommendations. When their

ambivalence exceeds a certain level, appropriate actions should be taken to promote residents’ understanding of the importance of tourism to cultivate more positive views.

This will ultimately enable the government and other stakeholders to monitor and integrate the opinions of local people into public policymaking. “This study provides important information to better enable the Hong Kong government to effectively support the sustainable development of Hong Kong tourism”, said Professor Hsu.

This represents a significant addition to the SHTM’s ongoing efforts to bridge the gap between theory and practice to serve the industry. Collaborative planning through state-of-the-art tools like TOUROMETER will help cultivate positive sentiments in residents and, ultimately, help the industry to prosper.

“The SHTM is proud to be able to support the development of the tourism industry in this significant way”, concluded Professor Hsu. **H**



Flagship Wine Workshop



In April, the SHTM was honoured to host the 5th Wine and Hospitality Management Workshop. This flagship event of the Alliance for Research on Wine & Hospitality Management (the Alliance) has been showcasing the work of top researchers in the field since 2017. Attendees at the 2023 edition enjoyed a full two days of paper and abstract presentations, discussions, and – of course – top-notch hospitality.

Notably, this year marks the first time that the Workshop has been held in Asia, after four previous events in Europe and North America. After an enforced three-year gap, the annual event resumed last year in Bozen-Bolzano in the mountainous north of Italy. Going back further, the inaugural 2017 edition was hosted by France’s KEDGE Business School, whose Professor Olivier Gergaud was also in attendance this year at the SHTM.

A cocktail reception on the evening of 10 April, held at Bistro 1979, the SHTM’s training restaurant, set the ball rolling. Such a relaxed setting was an ideal occasion for wine professionals to catch up with old

acquaintances and forge new bonds ahead of the main programme. Indeed, connection was the watchword: the Alliance described the event as “a small-scale, high-quality workshop, allowing for intense interaction between participants and practitioners”.

Strengthening Global Ties

The next day, opening remarks were given by Professor Haiyan Song, Associate Dean and Chair Professor and Mr and Mrs Chan Chak Fu Professor in International Tourism. Professor Song expressed gladness that, as hoped, the Workshop could go ahead face-to-face following the end of pandemic restrictions. “I was optimistic, seeing that in April, Hong Kong would be fully opened”, he stated, adding that a back-up plan to hold the event in Singapore was not needed.



Attendees of the 5th Wine and Hospitality Management Workshop

Following Professor Song's introduction, Professor Honggen Xiao, SHTM Assistant Dean, underlined the global nature of this year's workshop. He proudly pointed out that attendees had journeyed not only from the Alliance institutions in Italy, France, and Switzerland but also from New Zealand and China. "I'm really happy to bring this event home to Hong Kong", he remarked, setting the stage for an event that showcased the best hospitality offerings of the SHTM and our city.

Professor Gergaud then spoke about the academic benefits of the Workshop. Bringing together leading researchers in the intimate SHTM setting was an ideal way to foster productive meetings between industry professionals. Besides networking and presentations, there would be plenty of opportunities to discuss the nitty-gritty of research with fellow experts: "The idea of the workshop is to promote discussions among us to make our papers stronger for publication".

Research and Hospitality Excellence

With the scene set, the Workshop's busy academic

schedule commenced. The first day's 12 presentations touched on a wide array of hot topics in wine management around the world. Professor Gergaud, together with Florine Livat, enlightened attendees with a talk on "The rice of winery cellar visits". From wine cellars to wine sellers, other speakers presented research on the themes of "Social media strategies in international wine trade" and "Who likes it digital? Insights on the demand for online wine experiences".

On 12 April, the second day of talks highlighted, among other things, the growing importance of China in the wine trade. Four presentations, including all three in the post-lunch session, focused on the Chinese wine market, from aspects such as consumer segmentation, industry perspectives on wine tourism, the role of wine tourism in rural revitalisation, and the importance of brand reputation.

Other presentations on day two broadened both the geographical and theoretical scope of the attendees' research. Wine consumption in the Danish and Austrian markets was the focus of two talks, respectively, the latter of which included a comparison between wine/cheese pairing in Austria and France. Elsewhere, such diverse issues as responsible wine consumption, the determinants of online wine purchasing, and optimal portfolio strategies for the hotel and catering industries were covered.

Closing remarks to the academic session were given by Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. After thanking all those present for their participation and welcoming them back to Hong Kong in the future, Dean Chon encapsulated the eternal link between the themes of wine and hospitality: "Wine cannot be complete without hospitality, and good hospitality cannot be complete without wine".

Fittingly, the event culminated in a gala dinner at Crown Wine Cellars, an exclusive venue tucked away at Shouson Hill near Deep Water Bay. Those who had time to stay a little longer were treated to a memorable programme of SHTM hospitality on the following day, when a post-workshop tour of Stanley Market and the Peak was followed by lunch on a junk boat. Some of the participants even travelled farther afield to experience Chinese wine production and hospitality, with a post-workshop trip to the Ningxia Wine Region that took in prominent wineries such as Xi Ge, Legacy Peak and Halan Seoul. **H**

Coming Together for the Industry

The SHTM hosted a unique event early in 2023, featuring managers of five hotels owned by Hong Kong's Sun Hung Kai Properties (SHKP). On 24 February 2023, the "SHKP Hotels x SHTM Hackathon" – also known as Sun Hung Kai Day – brought together top hoteliers, School staff, and prize-winning students for a successful afternoon of talks and networking.

The gala event commenced with motivational speeches by Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, and Mr Tasos Kousloglou, CEO of the Hotel Division, SHKP Limited. These talks underlined the closeness of the

ongoing SHTM–SHKP relationship.

The five hotels represented by the managers were Alva Hotel by Royal; Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong; Hyatt Centric Victoria Harbour Hong Kong; Ritz-Carlton (Hong Kong); and Royal Garden (Hong Kong). They were joined via video link by Mr Isadore Sharp, Founder and Chairman of Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, and Mr David Marriott, the Chairman of the Board, Marriott International.

These experienced hoteliers contributed their time to participate in a panel discussion moderated by Dr Qu Xiao, SHTM Associate Professor, and Dr Abbie Johnson, SHTM Assistant Professor. "Hospitality is such a fun and

dynamic business," said Mr Marriott. "It brings people together from all corners of the globe. We continue to grow, both in Asia Pacific and around the world, bringing more opportunities for our associates to grow and thrive".

There were plenty of rousing words for our students on the prospects of the industry. "It gives me great hope to think of the future hospitality leaders of tomorrow", said Mr Sharp, adding that "as I've always said, the best is yet to come". Addressing our young cohort, Mr Marriott inspiringly pledged that "we are dedicated to helping you to be the best version of yourself".



Panel discussion at the SHKP Hotels x SHTM Hackathon

Winners of the Hospitality Challenge

A major highlight was a presentation by the winners of the SHKP Hospitality Challenge 2023. In January–February, teams of SHTM students devised proposals for the participating SHKP hotels to improve guest satisfaction or revenue through innovative in-room or F&B offerings. On offer for the winners was a staycation and dining at one of the five hotels.

A team of two talented students shared the First Prize. Ms Yue Chen and Ms Danni Wang proposed that the historic, luxurious Royal Garden Hotel should enhance its culinary profile through authentic local cuisine with balanced nutrition. To appeal to young diners, they imagined a Royal Garden-themed afternoon tea with a special limited menu and wine/sake pairing.

Winning a buffet dinner or set dinner for two was the First Runner-Up team, comprising Mr Nooa Yuki Santeri Kilupy and Mr Juan Mendieta Gallego, MSc students in Global Hospitality Business. Their high-end concept was to revamp the rooftop entertainment programme of the Ritz-Carlton's

Ozone bar. In their vision, "Art@Ozone" would host well-chosen artworks from Kowloon's renowned museums to showcase our city's unique creative culture.

The Second Runner-Up prize went to Ms Yuqing Chen, Ms Kehan Wang, and Ms Shuwen Tan, all Year 2 Students in the BSc in Tourism and Events Management. They envisaged two theme nights for the Ritz-Carlton: "Cyberpunk Style" and "Explore the Universe". They even came up with ingenious ways to improve the landmark hotel's customer service and sustainability.

Professor Kaye Chon and Ms Jenny Chan, General Manager, The Royal Garden, Hong Kong were delighted to present the awards and certificates for First Prize. We also thank Dr Catherine Cheung, SHTM Associate Dean and Associate Professor, and Mr Pierre Perusset, General Manager, The Ritz-Carlton, Hong Kong, for bestowing on the Runner-Up teams their prizes and certificates.

An Enduring Partnership

Following the panel discussion and prize-giving, the memorable event closed with a Meet Up

Session. Our students benefited not only from the hotel managers' profound knowledge but also from the exceptional opportunity to network with them for their professional development. It is a testament to the importance of the School in the hotel and tourism sectors that these business leaders were so keen to join the event.

This chance to meet with SHKP hotel managers was a golden opportunity for students to establish lifelong connections in hospitality. As pointed out by Mr Sharp, our industry is coming back stronger than ever. The post-pandemic era is a time for hotels to strategise and grow, building on their strengths to cement competitive advantages and appeal to new customers. Today's SHTM students will join the hotel sector during an exciting period.

The participation of hotel leaders also speaks to the strength of the bonds between the School and SHKP. The SHTM wishes to thank SHKP Limited for their unfailing support and commitment to nurturing the next generation of hospitality leaders to advance the industry. This continued partnership will help the industry to recover and thrive in the new era following COVID-19. **H**



(from left)
Mr Freeman Fung
Ms Amanda Wantono
Ms Kathy Li

An SHTM education opens many doors. This was recently brought to life in the Young Alumni Career Spotlight, a series of live-streamed talks by alumni aiming to inspire current and recent students. To give back to the SHTM community and pass on the baton of excellence, three alumni of the BSc in Hotel Management shared their career highlights and offered advice and encouragement to the next cohort.

Kicking off the series on 20 January was Mr Freeman Fung, a marketer and diversity advocate. Freeman's talk, hosted by SHTM Assistant Dean and Associate Professor Sebastien Filep, was delivered from his current home of Sydney, Australia. Raised in Hong Kong with a lifelong passion for travel, Freeman described his AIESEC placement in Romania as "a transformative experience allowing me to get outside my Hong Kong bubble".

Freeman once gave a TEDx talk aged just 22 and has already written an acclaimed book. He now works for Merlin Entertainments and as a life coach for fellow high achievers. His secret? "If we want to succeed, the formula is 'No matter the challenge, I'm willing to come face-to-face with it'". His presentation offers inspiration for all those grappling with how to launch or diversify their careers.

Freeman fondly recalled many SHTM benefits that he had never expected, such as an internship in our flagship Hotel ICON. He thanked Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, for "awakening the global citizen in me" and "playing an integral part in my personal journey".

The Sky's the Limit

Proving that an SHTM background can take you anywhere, our second speaker, Ms Kathy Li, described her jet-setting choice of career in a talk on 30 March. Her inspirational seminar was hosted by SHTM Assistant Professor Faye Hao.

Like Freeman, Kathy is a born-and-raised Hongkonger. Since graduating from the SHTM, however, her career has traversed the globe – and the skies! On joining Cathay Pacific as a flight attendant, a few words from the pilot on her very first flight changed her life forever. “Welcome to Cathay, Kathy. Would you like to come to the cockpit for take-off and landing?” She accepted, and her dream of becoming an airline pilot was born.

Amazingly, Kathy earned her wings as a Cathay Pacific pilot in just one year. Her achievement is a shining example of what SHTM graduates can accomplish with hard work, dedication and the skills and expertise nurtured by the School. Naturally, piloting jets is not the only high-powered career that our graduates can branch into. Kathy's example teaches a broader lesson. “You're still young, you've got so much time”, she said. “You will realise what you really want to do. I didn't plan to be a pilot when I was a student!”

Having served as external Vice President of the SHTM Students' Association, Kathy is keenly aware of the diversity of our students' skills and passions, as well as the challenges and opportunities awaiting them after graduation.

She offered some important advice for all those unsure what to do next. “Attend as many career talks as possible!” she said. “Talk to people in the industry”. Such words of wisdom from our alumni will undoubtedly help students to get their own careers off to a flying start.

Strategy for Success

The skills acquired in an SHTM degree are invaluable well beyond the hotel and tourism sectors. Just ask Ms Amanda Wantono, the third of our spotlighted alumni, who spoke on 3 April. Her impressive talk, hosted by SHTM Assistant Professor Daniel Leung, should give confidence to the budding strategic thinkers in our ranks.

Amanda is now an Assistant Manager at the global consultancy firm Protiviti. Before that, she held associate and management positions at other major firms. However, she had not originally planned to be a strategist. “I always thought I wanted to be in Operations”, she told attendees. However, midway through her 11-month internship at Hotel ICON, she realised that her heart was pulling in another direction.

“I wanted to learn something more strategic, more back-office”, she recalled. She had two choices. “I could stick with my decision and not ruffle any feathers. Or I could explain why I want to move, which entails uncomfortable discussions, stepping out of my comfort zone”. She made the second choice, requesting a transfer to the sales and marketing department, and has never looked back.

Amanda's story also speaks to the virtues of getting involved in campus life. While at the SHTM, she took full advantage of the opportunities available by entering global student competitions, joining societies and participating in various events. Alongside her extracurricular activities, her academic performance won her the SHTM Most Outstanding Student Award 2018–2019. Looking back, she said that “the most valuable skill set I learned in that time was communication and presentation”.

How to sum up our alumni's advice to fresh graduates? Look around, take your time, and talk to others. When COVID-19 hit Hong Kong soon after Amanda finished her degree, she decided to broaden her scope. She soon realised that “the possibilities are endless!” She reminded future graduates that it's never too late for a career move: “If you have a genuine interest in anything, time is not an issue”. H



Postgraduate Perspectives

Each year, the SHTM draws high-calibre students, academics and professionals from across the world to enrol in its prestigious taught postgraduate programmes, which equip them with the skills and experience they need to achieve their academic and career goals. To find out what makes these programmes so special, the School invited current postgraduate students to share their unique experiences at the SHTM.

Learning from the Best

Many students highlighted the excellence of the School's faculty. Mr John Zhuang from Mainland China, an MSc student in International Wine Management (IWM), praised his instructors for going the extra mile. “They not only delivered

concepts, knowledge and theory from textbooks”, he said, “but also enlightened, directed and inspired me to explore as much as possible about wine and relevant issues”.

Students also expressed their appreciation for the high quality of the programme courses. Mr Hisham D. Macaraya, a MicroMasters (MM) student from Peru, said, “The courses in the programme were very in-depth and taught by world class

experts in the fields of marketing, management, technology and hospitality". Mr Alex Leung, another MM student, was in full agreement. "I was able to learn from genuine IT experts along with tourism professionals and industry leaders", he said.

Elaborating further, Mr Stanley Wan from Hong Kong, an MSc student in International Hospitality Management (IHM), told us that he valued the opportunity to learn from experts worldwide. "All the professors possess hospitality industry managerial experience and a wealth of academic knowledge, providing me with valuable advice, opinions and industrial insights", he said.

"Learning from faculty with international backgrounds in different cultural settings exposed me to a wide range of resources and broadened my horizons, which are essential for future hospitality business practitioners", added Mr Chuang Liu from Mainland China, an MSc student in Global Hospitality Business (MGH). "We have the opportunity to talk with industry leaders and combine theory with practice".

Similarly, MM student Mr Regis Manoel Kuhn told us that "SHTM students from all over the world can share knowledge and experience, which makes it a very enriching environment".

For Ms Khoi Yan Phon from Myanmar, networking is one of the highlights of the MGH, especially its "highly diverse interchanges between seasoned faculty members, industry experts, and outstanding alumni".

The opportunity to learn from others was also emphasised by IWM student Ms Moksha Wang from Mainland China. "It has been a pleasure to meet so many wonderful professors and students", said Ms Wang.

Another IHM student, Ms Lena Bresean, stressed the rich cultural knowledge that she had gained. "I've been fortunate enough to have worked with many students from diverse academic and professional backgrounds", she said, "and to have made great friends".

Real-World Advantages

Many students expressed how greatly they valued being able to flexibly balance their education with their careers. Mr Thanh Trung Nguyen, an MSc student in Hospitality Business Innovation (HBI), was initially hesitant about undertaking the programme while working full-time. However, this concern was unfounded. He commended "the support and active responses from the professors and the tasks and lectures that you can take at your own pace", which made his experience extremely positive.

"Getting the opportunity to pursue my education while continuing to work on my career has been the chance of a lifetime", said HBI student Ms Azia from Pakistan. MM student Ms Yi Fan of Mainland China was in full agreement, stating that "the online programme allows me to plan my study time independently, which is very suitable for working people".

Numerous students told us that the programmes had considerable practical value for their careers. Ms Joyce Zhao from Mainland China, a Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management (D.HTM) student, said, "All of the courses combine theory with practice, providing students with many years of career experience with a deeper understanding of the industry". This sentiment was echoed by MM student Ms Pei Ling Teh of Malaysia:

"My course was extremely helpful in real-life application".

Ms Heather Zhou from Mainland China, who is studying for the MSc in International Tourism and Convention Management (ITCM), also prized the real-world utility of her programme. "The graduate programme at the SHTM is closely linked to industry developments", she noted. "Students gain both theoretical knowledge and valuable practical skills" that allow them "to better plan their careers and stand out in their future jobs".

Ms Jessica Dong from Mainland China, an ITCM student, appreciated the opportunity to network with guest speakers from top hotels worldwide. "We learned practical skills and worked with brilliant, innovative classmates to solve real-world hospitality challenges", she said.

The SHTM's multicultural and global environment also supports students' career development, as highlighted by Mr Jose Luis Lucas Baptista Diniz from Portugal, an IWM student. "I was able to interact with the wine business community," he said, "and gain insight into real wine business problems and solutions".

For Mr Proychai Klakayan from Thailand, the value of the D.HTM lies in critical thinking about hospitality and tourism issues. "Incoming students will benefit greatly from the programme's intensive doctoral interdisciplinary training", he told us.

As these responses indicate, the School's postgraduate programmes offer a one-of-a-kind learning experience that equips students at all levels – from master's to doctoral degrees, and from full-time to mixed modes – to assume leadership roles in hospitality and tourism. **H**

Research Horizons

Holidaying in the Metaverse

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In the future, it may be more expensive, time-consuming, and risky to travel halfway around the world for a holiday getaway. What if we could experience a convincing virtual version of the real thing? The Metaverse – a parallel digital realm blending real and fantasy worlds – has been tipped as the next disruptive technology, on track to completely alter reality as we know it, and tourism and hospitality businesses should be preparing for the switch. The SHTM's Michael Lin and Daniel Leung and their co-author's new paper describe the Metaverse's potential to transform the hospitality customer experience and management.

Defining the Metaverse

The Metaverse is seen by some as our virtual future, the alternate reality where humans can work, communicate, and play. Today's virtual and augmented reality innovations will, in time, be considered as merely the tools by which to access and experience the Metaverse. There, users will be able to interact with avatars, virtual environments, objects, and other users in a way that transcends "simple" virtual reality experiences. Users will be free to discover countless new environments and astounding near-realistic sensorial experiences that could one day become indistinguishable from the real thing. "Metaverse will have considerable impacts on hospitality and tourism", state the authors, "bringing major opportunities and challenges for all stakeholders in

the ecosystem".

The feasibility of inhabiting such a space has become ever more obvious since the COVID-19 pandemic. The imposed lockdowns meant more video conferencing, tele-working, tele-studying, and online communication with loved ones. These activities have since become entrenched in our everyday lives as part of the "social norm". The move towards increasingly immersive experiences comes with huge benefits, including savings on resources, time, and travel cost. "Increasingly, people expect to be interoperable in both physical and virtual environments", say the authors.

The Metaverse is the next stage in our digital evolution. In the Metaverse's 3D space, users will co-create virtual experiences that overlap with the physical world, and organisations will be able to engage with customers and stakeholders both virtually and physically. This will enable them "to provide a range of immersive experiences using multisensory content as well as to scale their operations in terms of location, space, time zone, and expert capabilities", explain the researchers. In their remarkable publication, the authors explore these untapped possibilities in full.

Virtual and Physical Worlds Colliding

The Metaverse may be in its infancy, but it already has clear potential in hospitality and tourism. It will enable customised and co-created experiences that will

offer the same – if not a greater – selection of restaurant, events, and recreation options. In place of exhausting international travel to attend meetings, conferences, cultural events, and destinations, and tours, users will be able to slip on a virtual reality headset. Using virtual experiences before, during, and after trips, the Metaverse will transform the hospitality ecosystem and completely re-invent business processes and management. "Hospitality and tourism stakeholders need to gain a better understanding of how Metaverse can help co-create transformational experiences", explain the researchers.

The most attractive selling point of the Metaverse is the "seamless connections between physical and virtual worlds in the experience enhancement", say the authors. This is key, because hospitality provides both tangible and non-tangible elements. For example, guests must of course sleep in a real bed and eat real food, but atmosphere, ambience, feelings, service, connections, kindness, and emotional engagement can be provided virtually. This capacity to offer engaging experiences could prove particularly relevant in the context of social upheavals or restrictive personal circumstances.

Another huge advantage of integrating real travel experiences with virtual ones is space. In real life, investors need to buy land and build physical hotels, ideally with a good geographic positioning. "With the support of the Metaverse, people can stay at home or in other places but experience some of the intangible elements of hospitality

virtually”, say the authors. This means that hospitality investors, designers, builders, and managers can instead invest more effort in developing their digital presence to offer far cheaper simulations of the “real thing” in an unlimited geographical virtual space that is completely customisable.

Stepping into the Future

This ground-breaking paper outlines a roadmap to Metaverse use that leads us from reality to complete illusion via an increasing reliance on technology. This path includes conventional real-world experience, technology-assisted experience, technology-enhanced experience, *t e c h n o l o g y - e m p o w e r e d* experience, and, most crucially, technology-illusiv experience that “empowers users to step from the physical world to virtuality and vice versa”, explain the authors. For instance, couples could choose a “global wedding” theme that allows them to experience their special day in multiple locations from the convenience of their headsets.

According to the researchers, integrating the real and digital worlds will require multiple layers of innovation. Virtual world hospitality managers will need to design digital hotel facilities, aesthetics, and atmosphere. Designers and builders will be tasked with mapping out the virtual territory and conceptualising design concepts. Managers will need to find new ways to operate the hotel property, combine tangible and intangible experiences, and develop brand new marketing strategies. “Designing intuitive user experiences should also ensure functionality, findability, trust, value, accessibility and ultimately delight”, underline the authors.

A Taste of the Metaverse

In their vivid account of things to come, the researchers describe some of the transformative virtual experiences already out there. These have successfully blended

the physical and virtual worlds to create unique experiences. For instance, prospective travellers to Nova Scotia in Canada can already experience 360° online virtual reality videos before their visit. “These enable prospective travellers to immerse themselves in Nova Scotia attractions”, conclude the researchers, “such as a ride on the tides of the Bay of Fundy for exploring Nova Scotia’s wine country”.

For nearly 10 years, Marriott Hotels have also been experimenting with “teleportation”, whereby destinations and hotel facilities can be experienced via virtual reality headsets. In 2014, the hotel chain set up a “Get Teleported” booth outside New York’s City Hall to offer newlyweds a virtual experience of hospitality properties in Maui (Hawaii) and London. Moreover, Inamo restaurants in London use interactive table projections that allow customers to select dishes, order through a virtual menu, and watch chefs cooking in real-time. “They also allow users to set different moods and table cloths, discover the local neighbourhood, play games, and interact with others”, say the researchers.

Best Practices

In preparation for this incredible future, the authors put forward some best-practice suggestions. First, firms will need to have an active Metaverse presence. “Hospitality businesses can promote their business to consumers in a more immersive way, while facilitating co-creation to enhance experience formation”, state the authors. This means that consumers will be able to try out products and services before actually visiting, co-create with co-travellers, and share experiences with other users, similarly to “Destinations Experts” on TripAdvisor forums.

We may only be at the dawn of the Metaverse, but hotels, restaurants, and event planners will soon need to re-evaluate their relationship and engagement with consumers. To create this hybrid world, hospitality businesses must also collaborate with technology companies, and

could learn much from the gaming industry in this regard. “Different types of hospitality businesses”, add the authors, “should tailor specific business strategies to their strategic needs and requirements and plan accordingly”. A Metaverse future will also need to be fully supported by the government, which means that ethical and legal issues must be thoroughly probed and discussed.

Next-Generation Tourism

This impressive work offers a first-ever glimpse into how the Metaverse will transform the human experience. While the Metaverse will not replace in-person travel, it has golden potential to fuse physical and virtual environments. Successful introduction of the Metaverse into hospitality and tourism experiences will require businesses to consider a range of brand new organisational, regulatory, and creative possibilities. “Metaverse is an innovative concept,” conclude the authors, “and the characteristics may therefore need a long time to adjust to the needs of different stakeholders”.

POINTS TO NOTE

- The Metaverse will revolutionise hospitality and tourism as much as the Internet has done.
- Early adopters are already providing virtual experiences and these will become more immersive.
- The Metaverse will increase our reliance on immersive technology and reduce the need for physical space.
- Hospitality and tourism firms must prepare for a future of co-creating value via the Metaverse.

Buhalis, Dimitrios, Lin, Michael S., and Leung, Daniel (2023). Metaverse as a Driver for Customer Experience and Value Co-creation: Implications for Hospitality and Tourism Management and Marketing. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 35, Issue 2, 701-716.

Turning Website Views into Restaurant Visits

If you’ve visited a new city lately, you may have searched online for places to eat. Maybe you read some reviews, then clicked through to the restaurants’ own sites. New research by an SHTM team shows that in the hospitality sector, turning user clicks into dining visits depends on consistently positive messaging. By testing two competing theories of the effect of customer reviews, the study by Seunghun Shin, Hyejo Hailey Shin and Jaehee Gim will help local restaurants optimise their marketing strategy through homepage testimonials.

What Makes an Effective Testimonial?

In a crowded market like Hong Kong, restaurants have to be smart to stand out. Today, this means having an effective online presence to gain the trust of short-term visitors searching for nearby restaurants. While there are many third-party review platforms in the hospitality sector, such as TripAdvisor, restaurants often add positive testimonials to their own homepages, hoping to “seal the deal” for those whose interest is piqued by reading such reviews. “About 70% of hospitality businesses display testimonial reviews on their websites”, say the researchers, “and about 80% of diners check a restaurant’s website before choosing to visit”.

Which write-ups should a restaurant select for its testimonials? Naturally they should be positive, but there are degrees of positivity. Overly glowing reviews might be seen as biased, perhaps written by people who have a close relationship

with the business and are thus not objective. This is in line with attribution theory. “When reading a review”, the authors explain, “customers are less likely to adopt it in their decision-making if they perceive its evaluation is based on the reviewer’s personal reasons”. It might then seem more trustworthy for the restaurant to quote moderately positive reviews. Indeed, the authors mention a study showing that 5-star-rated products sell less well than 4.2–4.5-star products.

However, it could be argued that extremely positive testimonials have a better chance of providing the final push for prospective customers viewing the homepage. This fits with regulatory focus theory, which sees customers as focusing on their ideal goals, such as a satisfying experience. Indeed, there is evidence that some customers perceive unambiguously positive reviews as more credible than moderately positive reviews that also mention negative information. Where does this leave restaurants? “These two conflicting views make it difficult for hospitality businesses to determine how positive reviews need to be leveraged as testimonials”, the authors point out.

Advertising versus Word-of-Mouth

This uncertainty arises because most research has focused on the effects of reviews from third-party sites: online review communities, social networks, media-sharing platforms and search engines. The assumption is that the reviewers are independent of the firms

they rate. However, testimonial reviews may not be perceived as fully independent, despite being written by customers, because firms choose to place them on their websites. This calls into question the generalisability of earlier studies. “It remains unclear how effective positive reviews are when communicated through a business official website as testimonials”, the authors say.

Another way to think about testimonials is in terms of how consumers classify them. The researchers note that “testimonial reviews have characteristics of both electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and advertisements”. On the one hand, they are like unbiased opinions, because real customers write them without any thought of making a profit; on the other, they resemble a form of online advertising, because businesses propagate them independently of the original writers. Whether they are ultimately judged as eWOM or advertisements affects how they should be phrased: word-of-mouth relies on authenticity, implying that any negative aspects ought to be mentioned, whereas advertising is expected to focus solely on the positive.

This lack of understanding of how testimonial positivity affects customers’ decision-making was the motivation for Shin, Shin and Gim’s study. Contrasting attribution theory and regulatory focus theory, they realised that “these two conflicting views make it difficult for hospitality businesses to determine how positive reviews need to be leveraged as testimonials to get the expected outcomes”. They therefore set out to determine how review positivity affects customers’

reactions to online testimonial reviews of restaurants, and how this contrasts with the effect of reviews hosted on other types of online platform.

Finding a Restaurant Near You

The team started their study by scraping write-ups of Hong Kong restaurants from TripAdvisor. By analysing the answers to the optional question “was this review helpful?”, they found that 4-star reviews were perceived as more helpful than 5-star reviews. This set the stage for a detailed investigation of how ratings actually affect users’ visit intention. Three hundred participants were asked to search for a nearby Italian restaurant using their smartphones and confirm their choice after checking the restaurant’s website. Half of them saw fully positive 5-star testimonials on the homepages, while the others saw 4-star reviews that were mostly positive but noted caveats such as “a bit crowded”.

Considering that real-life restaurant websites might contain a mix of extremely and moderately positive testimonials, the researchers then studied the effects of such a mixture. Another 200 participants were recruited and tasked with settling on a local Italian eatery. This time, however, when they landed on a restaurant’s homepage, they saw either three 5-star reviews and one 4-star review, or vice versa. As in the above-mentioned experiment, the participants were subsequently asked about their intention to visit the restaurants that they had investigated using their phones, and their overall feelings about them.

The Power of Positivity

Extremely positive testimonials were found to improve both the participants’ view of the restaurants and their actual visit intention. When the restaurants’ homepages carried unambiguously positive reviews, with nothing but praise for the food, prices and service, potential diners were more likely to rate their attitude towards the establishments as favourable and state that they would be likely to visit them. “A hospitality business should make potential customers who visit its website feel confident about their pre-decision by displaying glowing testimonial reviews”, the researchers infer.

When the participants saw mixed positive reviews (some including minor criticisms and others not), the results were consistent with the first experiment. Those who saw mostly the extremely positive reviews had more favourable attitudes and higher visit intention than those who read mostly the tempered positive write-ups. Evidently, according to the researchers, “it is more strategic for a hospitality business to display extremely positive reviews on their websites as testimonials”.

The strategic advantage of extremely positive reviews also indicates that the readers of testimonials tend to think of them as advertisements rather than eWOM. Consumers expect eWOM to be mixed, and there is evidence that they are more strongly influenced by moderately positive than extremely positive reviews on sites like TripAdvisor. However, they react less well when businesses mention criticisms on their own websites. Rather, when reading homepage testimonials, “customers want to be certain about their pre-choice when following up on the product of interest”, the authors conclude.

Tips for the Trade

The next time you search for a restaurant online, your reaction to positive reviews may depend on whether you read review communities or the establishments’ own sites. If the restaurants have their strategy right, they will carefully choose their homepage testimonials and include only the most positive reviews to give interested diners the final push. The study’s authors suggest that restaurants could boost their visit rates by prioritising advert-like content over general information on the pages that users see when clicking through from a search app. In summary, this research fills an important gap in our understanding of testimonial review strategy and should aid hospitality businesses going forward.

POINTS TO NOTE

- Researchers are uncertain about how hospitality firms should use online testimonial reviews.
- Diners are more likely to choose restaurants with extremely positive than moderately positive homepage testimonials.
- Extremely positive reviews are more valuable in testimonials than on review community sites.
- Restaurants could convert Web visits to real visits by highlighting positive testimonials on their homepages.

Shin, Seunghun, Shin, Hyejo Hailey, and Gim, Jaehee (2023). How Positive Do Testimonials on a Restaurant Website Need to Be? Impact of Positivity of Testimonial Reviews on Customers’ Decision-making. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 108, 103382.

Tourist-Triggered Emotions

How to Measure Emotions

How do tourists in your town make you feel? A study co-authored by the SHTM’s Nan Chen, Shiqin Zhang and Cathy H. C. Hsu shows that Hong Kong natives have complex emotional responses to visitors from the mainland. The paper may help improve host–visitor relations in Hong Kong and abroad as tourist numbers pick up in the post-pandemic era. The study setting is particularly relevant as mainland Chinese tourists become more adventurous travellers.

Making Sense of Feelings

The importance of emotions in tourism cannot be overstated. Improving our subjective state of mind, whether through joy, excitement or relaxation, is the essential goal of leisure travel. Notably, local populations in tourist areas play a key role in shaping visitors’ environment and in turn the emotional experiences of visitors. However, this is a two-way relationship that also depends on locals’ own disposition towards tourists.

Currently, research on hosts’ emotional responses to tourists lags behind the study of tourists’ emotions. To address this, tourism researchers need to not only broaden their scope but also learn from psychologists. “Emotion research in tourism as a whole”, say the researchers, “is still in its infancy compared to that in psychology”. They propose that hosts’ multi-layered emotional reactions arise from the interplay between desires and stereotypes.

As discussed in detail by the authors, we may not know our own emotions as well as we think. Befitting their role in both regulating

behaviour and signalling thoughts, emotional responses are highly complex. For one thing, emotions consist of both mental components, such as cognitive appraisal, and physical components, such as physiological arousal. Thus, the researchers tell us, “combinations of various psychophysiological measures (e.g., EEG, EDA and facial expressions) and self-reports are strongly encouraged”.

Furthermore, some emotional reactions happen so quickly that they can evade conscious notice. This complicates the attempts to measure emotional reactions to tourist behaviour. As “a complex state that can be expressed through various channels”, the researchers note, emotion requires objective measurement techniques in addition to the subjective methods that are used in conventional tourism research.

Another way to classify emotions is based on explicit vs. implicit expression. As the researchers argue, “explicitly expressed emotions are more like cognitive or conscious responses toward triggers”. Such emotions, also described as “conscious”, “deliberate” or “reflective”, can be easily noticed and described by the subject, making them accessible to researchers using questionnaire or interview techniques.

In contrast, when we feel an implicit – or “automatic”, “spontaneous” or “raw” – emotion, we cannot control it and may even fail to observe it. Implicit responses can only be measured using real-time experimental methods such as pulse monitoring. This makes it problematic that “emotion research in tourism, even in marketing and psychology, has a long tradition of relying on self-report methods”, in the authors’ words.

Many psychologists recognise at least six basic emotions: anger, happiness, surprise, disgust, sadness and fear. Nonetheless, tourism researchers have often overlooked this diversity, instead measuring emotional responses on a simple two-dimensional scale of valence (positive/negative) and arousal (activated/non-activated). “While this approach is useful”, the authors write, “it hides the various roles of discrete emotions in tourism encounters”.

Social encounters, such as those between tourists and locals, may give rise to a rich set of emotions. These are likely to be deeply rooted in the cultural context of the host community and the socialisation of individual people. Given the rich social nature of host–tourist interactions, the SHTM team realised that “more efforts with full considerations of basic emotions combining implicit measures in a tourism context are needed”.

Hence, to objectively measure locals’ reactions to tourists, the researchers used facial expressions as cues. The study of faces to read emotional states is not only intuitive but has a scientific basis stretching back to Darwin. However, despite the variety of the human emotional palette, “the limited number of tourism studies that examined discrete emotions, unfortunately, only measured one or a few specific emotions”, the researchers tell us.

Facial expression analysis also avoids the social and psychological biases that bedevil self-reports. “Self-reported methods could have cognitive and social desirability bias and thus limit the understanding of emotions to those explicitly

expressed”, the authors write. This is because we can simply deny feeling socially undesirable emotions, to others and even to ourselves.

However, we cannot fully suppress our facial micro-expressions, which give away information on how we react to our surroundings. Hence, if we conceal our feelings for the sake of social harmony, the implicit emotions showing on our faces may be more reliable than the explicit emotions we choose to report. Thus, due to the discrepancies caused by biases, research has validated implicit measures as “effective and necessary to complement self-reports”.

What If This Happened to Me?

To get to the truth, the researchers recruited 14 Hong Kong residents who all identified fully or partly as “Hongkongese”. These participants were shown short (1–2 minute) video clips, presenting interactions between locals and mainland tourists, based on real anecdotes from a different set of Hongkongers. Three scenarios portrayed the tourists in a positive light, while the rest depicted various forms of unsocial behaviour, such as queue-jumping, loudness and a young child urinating in public.

As the participants watched the scenes (no more than three per person), their facial expressions were video-recorded to capture their implicit emotions. Using specialised software, the researchers analysed the subjects’ faces to determine their dominant emotion at each time point throughout the viewing. Afterwards, the viewers answered a survey on the intensity of their explicit emotional responses, and

the researchers interviewed them to dig deeper into how they felt about the scenarios and why.

Words versus Faces

The results showed that the self-report method and facial analysis revealed different information. The self-report surveys and interviews were heavily outperformed by the software in measuring the participants’ happiness, sadness and anger. However, the self-report methods encountered no such difficulties with disgust, surprise and fear, “implying a higher consistency between the two approaches when identifying these three emotions compared with the others”.

These differences sometimes led to contrary outcomes. One older woman, watching tourists in a shop trying on cosmetics in a selfish and unhygienic way, showed a low intensity of all facial emotions. Afterwards, however, she reported having strongly felt sadness and disgust. If even specialist AI failed to register her displeasure from visual clues, one can imagine that real-life tourists would fail to realise how she felt. In the researchers’ words, “when tourists encounter this resident, they may not find her unfriendly or being offended”.

The study identified happiness, sadness and anger – revealed by facial expressions – as “desires-driven” emotions rooted in the unconscious mind. They are founded on an implicit expectation of good social outcomes. In contrast, disgust and surprise, which the participants revealed verbally after watching the clips, arise from the confirmation or violation of stereotypes about mainlanders. Negative emotions were amplified in the self-reports, such as when the older woman

described the cosmetics shoppers as “selfish, self-centred, and arrogant”.

Tackling Negative Stereotypes

Hong Kong residents hold ambivalent views of mainland tourists, as revealed by verbal reports and face tracking. In the authors’ words, “facial expressions and words can tell different stories”. Given that emotions can drive behaviours, the authors suggest that the tourist board and media promote positive stereotypes of mainland Chinese to influence the explicit emotional reactions of locals during host–guest interactions. This study, the first of its kind, pushes forward tourism research towards a richer understanding of ways to boost harmonious relations.

POINTS TO NOTE

- Facial and verbal expressions reveal different emotional responses to tourist–host interactions.
- Hong Kong residents’ facial expressions conveyed more happiness, sadness, and anger in response to tourist–host interactions.
- Hong Kong locals verbally expressed stronger disgust after watching bad behaviour.
- Positive stereotypes of tourists can encourage favourable responses to them based on explicit emotions.

Zhang, Shiqin, Chen, Nan, and Hsu, Cathy H. C. (2021). Facial Expressions Versus Words: Unlocking Complex Emotional Responses of Residents Toward Tourists. *Tourism Management*, Vol. 83, 104226.

Fight or Flight? Coping with Stress in the Airline Sector

During the COVID-19 pandemic, airline employees experienced unprecedented levels of work-related stress and job uncertainty. However, their coping strategies and cultural differences in their responses to work-related stress remain understudied. In a timely recent study, the SHTM’s Seongseop (Sam) Kim and co-authors explored the relationships between job stressors, psychological stress and coping strategies amongst airline employees in Hong Kong and South Korea during the pandemic. Their work provides fruitful insights that could help airlines minimise employees’ psychological stress and provide resources to support coping strategies. Crucially, their results also show that national culture should be considered when adopting such measures.

Airline Job Stressors

COVID-19 crippled business operations in a multitude of sectors, and air travel was amongst the hardest hit. Airlines are no stranger to economic or health and safety challenges, but the international travel restrictions imposed in 2020 dealt the sector an unprecedented blow. With mass lay-offs, rescheduling and furloughs, airline employees faced severe job insecurity and ambiguity. “Consequently”, say the researchers, “it makes sense to predict that work-related conditions caused by the pandemic may increase stress and anxiety among airline employees in a way that is different from work-induced stress prior to the pandemic”.

To date, however, studies have done little to elucidate the specific psychological and behavioural repercussions of industry-level events like COVID-19 for workers in this sector. “How airline employees perceive work-related stress is not fully understood”, say the authors.

Furthermore, scant attention has been paid to their coping strategies in response to such stress.

Context is another important factor. As employees’ reactions to work-related stress may differ between countries and cultures, the findings of Western studies of job stress may not be generalisable to other contexts, such as Asia. Although the pandemic affected airline employees worldwide, East Asian settings such as South Korea and Hong Kong may differ in their job stress predictors and outcomes relative to Western countries, and even relative to each other. “Airline employees from these two nationalities may experience and manage work-related stress differently”, say the authors.

With these considerations in mind, the researchers set out to provide “a systematic understanding of coping strategies in relation to work-related stress for airline employees during the tourism crisis”.

Theoretical Model of Stress and Coping

Generally, we experience psychological stress when we feel that too much is being demanded of us. Common job stressors include excessive work demands, role conflict and job insecurity. According to “conservation of resources” theory, stress poses a threat to our resources, and we respond by seeking to conserve our existing resources and obtain new ones. “Exemplifying this point”, say the researchers, “studies have shown that service-oriented employees adopt appropriate coping strategies to conserve their resources (e.g. well-being, self-esteem) and alleviate stress”.

Accordingly, the authors note, “coping styles play a crucial role in understanding how employees

adapt to stressful work events”. This raises the question of what airline employees can do to counteract resource loss during an industry-wide crisis like COVID-19. However, we still know little about which coping strategies airline employees use to deal with work-related stress. The researchers’ first step in tackling this question was to establish a theoretical model linking job stressors to psychological stress and coping strategies. “In the model”, the authors say, “multiple job stressors are anticipated to increase the psychological stress levels of airline employees. Psychological stress, in turn, determines their coping strategies”.

Various possible coping strategies are available to employees. Task-oriented coping attempts to find a solution to the root cause of stress, such as devising a plan to solve the problem. Emotion-oriented coping aims to regulate the emotional distress caused by the stressor, such as through self-revelation or self-blame. Avoidance-oriented coping involves a deliberate attempt to disengage from the stressful situation. If we feel that we have control over a stressful situation and possess the resources to deal with it, we are likely to adopt task-oriented coping. “Emotion-oriented coping and avoidance-oriented coping are more dominant when both control and coping resources are perceived to be low”, say the researchers.

During COVID-19, airline employees had no control over the stressors they faced, such as international travel restrictions, the slow progress of virus containment and economic slowdown. Therefore, the authors hypothesised that airline employees experiencing job-related stress during the pandemic engaged primarily in emotion-oriented and avoidance-oriented coping. They also hypothesised that as national culture affects people’s responses to stress, airline employees

from different cultural settings experienced and managed work-related stress differently during the pandemic.

Cross-Cultural Empirical Data

To test their theoretical model, the authors empirically examined the relationships between job stressors, job strain and coping strategies amongst airline employees in two Asian cultural contexts during the global tourism crisis caused by COVID-19. A cross-sectional survey was completed online by 366 airline employees in South Korea and Hong Kong in summer 2020.

Psychological stress was measured by the participants' self-reports of difficulty relaxing, nervous arousal and being easily upset, irritable and impatient. The survey also measured the airline employees' perceptions of job stressors such as "forced labour policies", "concern about layoffs", "forced unpaid leave" and "lack of appropriate training and knowledge about the prevention of virus transmission". Coping strategies were assessed using a battery of scales measuring task-oriented, emotion-oriented and avoidance-oriented coping.

Impact of Culture on Stress and Coping

Rigorous statistical analysis of the questionnaire responses identified three major work-related stressors associated with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the airline industry. First, psychological stress was related to work schedules and demands – reflecting the major operational changes that airlines had to impose during the pandemic. Companies can mitigate this source of stress through timely and transparent communication with employees, say the researchers.

Second, job insecurity and financial concerns were found to be a major source of stress. Although cost-saving measures are unavoidable during crises like COVID-19, airline companies should be transparent about their decisions concerning lay-offs, salary cuts and forced unpaid leave. "It is important for the airline industry to emphasize its efforts to ride out the hardship together with its employees", argue the researchers.

Third, stress was caused by role conflict. "Employees may suffer job strain when performing multiple roles and responsibilities other than those normally anticipated", note the researchers. "Therefore, airline management should consider the willingness of airline employees and provide alternatives instead of implementing forced policies".

For both the Hong Kong airline employees and the South Korean airline employees, psychological stress was linked to heightened emotion-oriented coping. However, job stressors and coping strategies differed between the two cultures. Hong Kong airline employees – whose perceived stressors related to work schedules and demands, job security and financial concerns, and role conflict – were more drawn to emotion- and avoidance-oriented coping strategies. South Korean airline employees reported only work schedules and demands as contributing significantly to their psychological stress, and this elicited primarily emotion-oriented coping strategies.

"This delivers an important message to the global airline industry", say the authors. As employees from different countries/cultural settings may respond differently to the same work-related stressors, airline management should implement culturally appropriate measures to regulate employees' work-related stress during industry-wide crises. Based on this study's findings, for example, airlines in Hong Kong should promote both emotion-oriented and avoidance-oriented coping strategies, whilst South Korean airlines should focus on the former.

Supporting Airline Employees

The COVID-19 pandemic provides a unique setting for examination of job-related stress in the airline sector. Airlines can learn from this crisis and better protect their invaluable human resources by communicating more transparently with employees, mitigating sources of job-related stress, and equipping employees with culturally specific coping skills. Emotion-oriented coping strategies could be reinforced by organising workshops or employing on-site psychological therapists, and avoidance-oriented strategies could be fostered by subsidising recreational activities and hosting social gatherings.

POINTS TO NOTE

- During COVID-19, South Korean and Hong Kong airline workers faced various job stressors.
- Job insecurity and financial concerns were the biggest causes of psychological stress, along with work schedules/demands and role conflict.
- Stress led to emotion-based coping strategies in South Korea and both emotion-based and avoidance-based strategies in Hong Kong.
- As national culture affects responses to stress, airlines should promote culturally specific coping strategies amongst employees.

Chua, Bee-Lia, Al-Ansi, Amr, Kim, Seongseop (Sam), Wong, Antony King Fung, and Han, Heesup (2022). Examining Airline Employees' Work-Related Stress and Coping Strategies During the Global Tourism Crisis. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 34, Issue 10, 3715-3742.

Prime Time for Service Robots

The COVID-19 pandemic catapulted the hospitality industry into a more digitised future. Coupled with the vast social changes and prominent safety concerns, this wave of technological innovation could transform the hospitality workforce, according to Seongseop (Sam) Kim of the SHTM and co-authors. Service robots could solve many of the safety concerns felt to this day, but how are they perceived by customers? To probe these issues in more depth, the researchers investigated how feelings of safety and the intention to visit an establishment are shaped by the presence of robot baristas, as well as the influence of vaccination status and mask-wearing.

New Safety Priorities

Before 2020, the hospitality industry prided itself on providing a warm welcome through close interpersonal contact between guests and service staff. After the outbreak of COVID-19, safety became the critical box to tick for hospitality managers, inevitably overriding the more "human" experiences of the past. Confronted with infection risk, customers need more reassurance than before. Contactless services, self-check-in devices and service robots have become staples of the post-COVID-19 service landscape. "Managers of numerous establishments have focused on enhancing safety, hygiene and cleanliness and alleviating public concerns", explain the authors.

As a result, customers' pre-pandemic preferences for human staff over robots have been flipped on their head. Driven more than ever by fear of infection, travellers and guests preferred contactless AI

technology during the pandemic period. Research at that time found that robots were more positively viewed than human staff during COVID-19 infection rate peaks. "This suggests that the unprecedented global pandemic and long-lasting concerns about safety have substantially influenced consumer perceptions of service robots", say the researchers.

Robots could be of great value in a post-COVID-19 world, as concern about the virus remains rife among travellers. However, given the recency of both the pandemic and related technological advances, it remains unclear which features of service robots drive a preference over humans. It is critical to understand this, say the researchers, because service robots can, by decreasing health risks, increase the feeling of security and inspire "increased visiting intentions and a willingness to use and pay more". Moving forward, it will be crucial to create human-computer interactions that can offer as much as – if not more than – person-to-person service interactions.

An Infection-Free Solution

Person-to-person contact could soon begin to be replaced by "robot baristas, receptionists and concierges, together with facial scan check-ins, voice-activated guest control and other contactless services", say the researchers. Already, service robots are an emerging trend in restaurants and cafés worldwide, from San Francisco's Café X to the robot mixologist of Switzerland's F&P Robotics and Hong Kong's one-of-a-kind milk-tea silk stocking-straining robot. The continued emphasis on hygiene and

cleanliness means that integrating service robots into the service environment seems the way forward.

However, there is still no thorough understanding of how human-robot interactions shape leisure experiences, or which safety-related attributes are most valued by customers. "To successfully adopt service robots in service delivery environments", explain the researchers, "it is important to understand what makes customers feel safer and how the perception of safety influences their behaviour". For this reason, they investigated whether customers would feel safer with a robot or human barista, and how this affected their intention to return.

More human-like robots reportedly drive more satisfying guest experiences. This could be particularly important given the post-pandemic norm of mask-wearing, which provides a sense of reassurance. "No empirical study has been conducted on whether the use of masks moderates how human and robot staff are perceived during the COVID-19 pandemic", say the authors. While mask-wearing by human employees could increase perceived safety, robots wearing masks might cause anxiety.

Finally, the investigators examined how customers' vaccination status fed into their assessments of safety. "There may be differences in consumers' perceived safety of masked robot baristas depending on the customer's COVID-19 vaccination status", say the authors, "because unvaccinated consumers may have a lower perception of safety regarding masked robot staff compared with fully vaccinated consumers". Customers who are not fully vaccinated were expected

to feel less safe when confronted with unmasked human staff.

Three Innovative Studies

Three successive studies investigated the preference for robots over humans and the moderating roles of mask-wearing and vaccination status. In the first study, 135 participants were presented with a theoretical scenario involving trying out a new coffee house. They were then shown one of two sets of photos. In the first set, a robot was shown preparing and serving a cup of coffee. In the second set, a human barista was shown preparing and serving an identical cup of coffee. The participants then completed a questionnaire to assess their intention to visit the coffee shop and perceived safety.

In study 2, 300 participants were shown photos of either masked or unmasked robot/human baristas, and completed the same questionnaire. An additional 300 participants were recruited to complete Study 3, which measured the additional effect of the participants' vaccination status, for which the participants indicated whether they were fully vaccinated or not.

Safety Signals or Warning Signs?

Overall, robot baristas were consistently perceived as safer than human baristas. Moreover, perceived safety was identified as a key factor explaining the preference for robot baristas over human baristas. The participants also reported being more likely to visit the café when perceived safety was highest. "When customers' attention to safety is heightened", report the researchers, "the

adoption of service robots could be a strategic way to increase customers' visit intention to restaurants".

The studies also delved into the psychological response to masks, and how this alters perceived safety in human-computer interactions. Thus, this work uniquely elucidates how human-like behaviour by robots is interpreted, and how it affects subsequent customer behaviour. "Interestingly, mask-wearing produced seemingly opposite types of heuristics (e.g. safety and risk) for human baristas and robot baristas", report the researchers. In other words, the same visual cue of a mask resulted in contradictory perceptions of safety for robot and human baristas. According to the authors, this is because masks are practical and protective when worn by humans, but a symbolic warning sign when worn by robots.

The vaccination status of customers also influenced how mask-wearing was perceived. For human baristas, vaccination status had no effect on perceived safety. For robot baristas, fully vaccinated customers tended to rely more on visual cues, and non-fully vaccinated customers tended towards interpreting the "symbolic" meaning of the mask. "Vaccinated consumers experience higher levels of perceived safety when interacting with masked robot staff than with unmasked robot staff", state the researchers. Given the increasing numbers of vaccinated customers, the use of robot staff wearing face masks could be an effective management strategy.

A Future for Service Robots

This pioneering study places itself within the context of modern-day trepidation surrounding COVID-19. The results deepen

our understanding of human-computer interaction and show that robots could well have a place in the recovering hospitality sector. With a new spotlight on safety in the hospitality industry, the use of AI, such as contactless services, is proving more popular than ever before. By deciphering the impact of vaccination status and feelings about mask-wearing on preference for service robots, the findings are ultimately expected to help businesses recover following the pandemic period, and to propel the industry into a more technologically driven future.

POINTS TO NOTE

- During a pandemic, robot baristas are perceived as safer than humans and boost visit intention.
- Mask-wearing by human hospitality staff increases perceived safety.
- Mask-wearing by service robots increases perceived safety for vaccinated but not unvaccinated customers.
- Hospitality firms need to understand perceptions of high-tech services in the post-pandemic period.

Choi, Miju, Choi, Youngjoon, Kim, Seongseop (Sam), and Badu-Baiden, Frank (2023). Human vs Robot Baristas during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Effects of Masks and Vaccines on Perceived Safety and Visit Intention. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 35, Issue 2, 469-491.

The Power of a Profile Picture

Booking the perfect getaway has never been so easy. As China's online peer-to-peer accommodation market continues to grow, so too does curiosity about how hosts can drive up their listings, popularity, and earnings. In exciting recent work, the SHTM's Hengyun Li, Qian Wang, and Danting Cai, along with their co-author Gang Li, investigated how hosts' profile picture attractiveness, reputation, and self-disclosure sway consumer decision making in the peer-to-peer accommodation market. More open, accurate, and high-quality information could help hosts – and platforms – to win the loyalty of new, satisfied guests.

A Reliance on Facial Beauty

The world of temporary accommodation is dominated by peer-to-peer platforms such as Airbnb and the China-based platform Tujia. However, renting that all-important holiday getaway from total strangers and paying online comes with risks. There is no guarantee that your accommodation will be as advertised, no real assurance that hosts will fulfil promises, and sometimes blind faith that the desired services will even be available at all. "Transactions on these platforms often occur among people who do not know each other; therefore, uncertainty pervades consumers' decision-making", note the researchers.

Red flags for potential guests can come in many forms – maybe there is a worrying lack of reviews, the occasional 2-star rating, or a cartoon profile picture that says nothing about the host's personality, reliability, or moral values. Faced with these worrisome signs, guests scramble to find more information that will allow them to gauge

hosts' reliability and, as a result, to reduce uncertainty. Sometimes, however, all they have to go on is hosts' profile photos. "Hosts are already encouraged to share authentic personal photos to mitigate consumers' concerns", say the authors. "Therefore, it is worth exploring how photo disclosure influences consumers' attitudes and behaviour".

The "beauty premium" is a phenomenon in which people respond positively to beautiful things – including faces. This means that we tend to perceive attractive people as having desirable qualities such as kindness and trustworthiness. Research has already shown that hosts' facial attractiveness positively influences Airbnb listing prices, but it remains to be seen how judgements of hosts' beauty influence consumer decision making when booking accommodation. "Most work has overlooked the role of consumption vision, evoked by the visual stimulus of hosts' facial attractiveness in profile photos, during the pre-booking stage", report the researchers.

According to stimulus-organism-response theory, a "stimulus", such as a profile photo, elicits a "response", i.e. customers' booking intention and willingness to pay. This theory could explain the beauty premium effect. Delving deeper, the researchers explored the role of guests' perceived enjoyment and threat. They reasoned that the "mental imagery" of a positive or negative future stay underlay the influence of hosts' facial attractiveness on booking intention. "When consumers see an attractive host on Airbnb, they are likely to imagine a more positive future stay", they hypothesised. Envisioning an enjoyable stay could increase booking intention and willingness to

pay for accommodation, whereas an anticipated negative experience, often triggered by less attractive host photos, could reduce booking intention and willingness to pay.

Overriding Superficial Judgements

It is natural for us to avoid uncertainty and threat, and to be less willing to invest in a situation that could jeopardise our enjoyment, finances, and time. We already know that access to more information decreases uncertainty surrounding purchases. In the accommodation context, we also know that host reputation and self-disclosure are integral to guests' booking decisions. To probe this topic further, the researchers examined whether perceived threat and perceived enjoyment mediated the effect of profile photo attractiveness on booking intention and willingness to pay. "When confronted with a less attractive host, people might imagine greater threats during their experiences", predicted the authors. Nonetheless, there may be ways to overcome these snap judgements.

Information on hosts' reputations could reduce uncertainty and lessen the indirect effect of host facial attractiveness on booking intention and willingness to pay through perceived enjoyment and threat. With more salient information, "the tendency to form subjective judgments based on the consumption vision evoked by hosts' facial attractiveness declines", explain the researchers. Similarly, the degree of hosts' self-disclosure was predicted to moderate the mediating effect of perceived enjoyment on the influence of facial attractiveness. "According to social penetration theory", say the authors, "interpersonal

relationships become closer when people voluntarily open up". Thus, greater breadth and depth of self-disclosed information could reduce uncertainty and stranger-danger bias, foster trust, and aid decision making.

Three Experimental Studies

In three in-depth studies conducted in China, the participants were asked to imagine that they were about to book accommodation for an upcoming trip before viewing an online accommodation option. To determine the effect of facial attractiveness on consumer decision making, the participants were presented with host profile photos that were either "unattractive" or "attractive". Initial results confirmed that the varying degrees of facial attractiveness within the host profile pictures, designated as attractive and unattractive, were indeed perceived as such by the participants, and this perception influenced their booking intention.

Study 1 additionally investigated the mediating roles of perceived enjoyment and perceived threat – the "organism" factors within the stimulus-organism-response paradigm – with 125 participants using a questionnaire. Study 2, which included 212 participants, measured how hosts' "reputation", including the presence or absence of a Superhost badge, the number of online reviews, and the average rating, impacted the attractiveness-based willingness to pay and booking intention. Study 3 assessed the effect of hosts' text-based self-disclosure on 210 participants. Hosts' self-disclosure was manipulated in terms of (a) the length of the self-description and (b) the number of topics covered in the self-description.

Reputation Outweighs Beauty

As expected, consumers tended to book more and pay more for accommodation when it was offered by an attractive host. Additionally, hosts' facial attractiveness had less influence on purchase decisions when reputation information was available. This indicates that the initial impressions based on hosts' profile images can be quashed by the host's reputation. "Thus", say the authors, "hosts whose faces are not dominant in profile photos should seek to improve their personal reputations on the platform to compensate". They can do so by attaining more Superhost badges, more positive reviews, and/or higher ratings by providing excellent services.

The researchers also found that self-disclosure weakened consumers' reliance on hosts' facial attractiveness when making purchase decisions. When self-descriptions contained less information, consumers were more likely to make appearance-based decisions. This shows that hosts should consider writing more in-depth self-descriptions that will help prospective consumers learn more about them. "The identity, characteristics, and emotions displayed in hosts' self-disclosure increase multi-perspective information and thus facilitate guests' rational thinking when making decisions", explain the authors. In other words, providing plenty of self-disclosure information means that booking decisions become less reliant on hosts' profile pictures alone.

Onboarding for Hosts

Taken together, these striking results show that online peer-to-peer booking platforms could play

a more proactive role in helping hosts. For instance, platforms could offer more opportunities for hosts to showcase themselves with vivid information to reduce consumer uncertainty and enhance guest-host communication. "Airbnb generally allows hosts to upload only pictures; however, videos would provide a more comprehensive introduction to the host and their property", suggest the researchers. Actively giving advice on hosts' profile photos and listing content during their onboarding could encourage hosts' self-disclosure and thus facilitate the provision of clearer information, less uncertainty, and more positive imagery.

POINTS TO NOTE

- The facial attractiveness of hosts on online accommodation booking platforms positively affects guests' intention to stay.
- The effect of attractiveness is weaker for hosts with better reputations, i.e., positive reviews and badges.
- Hosts can also overcome the effect of attractiveness by disclosing more about themselves.
- Facial attractiveness works by influencing guests' mental imagery of their upcoming stay.

Li, Hengyun, Wang, Qian, Li, Gang, and Cai, Danting (2023). Do Looks Matter for Hosts on the Peer-to-Peer Sharing Accommodation Market? *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 98, 103510.



Reshaping the Future

Partnership and mutual empowerment are the backbone of the SHTM's unique educational offering. This is exemplified by its two Mainland China programmes, the Master of Science in Hotel and Tourism Management (HTM) and Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management (D.HTM), which are jointly offered by the School and Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, Mainland China. Working together, these two world-respected institutions nurture globally minded leaders, educators and researchers for the global hospitality and tourism industry – all within the unique Asian context.

This spring, alumni of the Mainland China programmes seized the opportunity to reunite and reconnect with their peers and SHTM faculty, forge new connections and discuss the future of the industry, thanks to three Information Seminar Cum SHTMer Forums held in Shanghai, Beijing and Chengdu. These unique events

were organised by the recently established – and flourishing! – SHTM Mainland Alumni Network, with support from alumni in Mainland China.

Themed "Reshaping for the Future", the mission of the three Forums was to combine an introduction to the SHTM and its programmes with wide-ranging discussion of key trends in hospitality and tourism today, along with opportunities for networking.

Three Inspirational Events

On 4 March, alumni, faculty and industry leaders gathered at the luxury hotel Cordis Shanghai Hongqiao to attend the first

Information Seminar Cum SHTMer Forum Spring 2023.

The event kicked off with welcoming remarks by Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management. Next came an introduction to The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) and the SHTM by Dr Qu Xiao, SHTM Associate Professor and Programme Leader for the D.HTM (Mainland China).

Also representing the School was Professor Kam Hung, Programme Leader for the MSc in International Tourism and Convention Management and MSc in International Hospitality Management, who described our Hong Kong-based MSc offering in the third session. Next, Dr Deniz Kucukusta, SHTM Associate Professor and Programme Leader, introduced the SHTM's pioneering

D.HTM in Hotel and Tourism Management.

After a Featured Presentation by Professor Hung on the Chinese luxury hotel experience, attendees enjoyed a panel discussion entitled “How to Motivate Lifelong Learners”, moderated by Dr Ziqiang Huang, CEO of MOTI Culture and Tourism.

After lunch, registration opened for the SHTMer Forum 2023 (Shanghai). A highlight of the Forum was a presentation by Dean Chon on the future of hospitality in Asia, followed by a discussion featuring panellists including Mr Elton Sun, Chairman of the Alumni Network, Vice President of Hyatt Hotels China and CEO and Managing Director of UrCove; and Dr Ray Wang, CEO of Haozhu Technology. Panel discussions also addressed critical topics such as elevating the capabilities of the industry and supporting the evolution of hospitality and tourism education.

The second Information Seminar Cum SHTMer Forum was held at Wanda Vista Beijing on 15 April. After a Featured Presentation by Dean Chon, an invaluable industry perspective was provided by Dr Jeff Ning, Chief Vice President of Wanda Commercial Management Group and President of Wanda Hotels & Resorts.

Attendees gained more insider insights from Mr Zhidang Ding, Vice Chairman of the China Hospitality Association, who spoke about the industry's post-pandemic future, and Dr Peng Shen, Founder and CEO of China Hospitality Association, who discussed lifelong learning and entrepreneurship.

Female leadership was addressed in a panel discussion moderated by Dr Susan Zhao, General Manager of Beijing Hetai Zhiyan Management Consulting Co., Ltd. The last session of the day was a panel discussion constituting the Young Hoteliers

Forum Spring 2023 (Beijing), which focused on the development of young talents for the future hotel industry.

On 19 April, the third and final Information Seminar Cum SHTMer Forum, held in Grand Bay Hotel Chengdu, began with welcoming remarks by Dr Catherine Cheung, SHTM Associate Dean and Associate Professor. Next came a Featured Presentation by Mr Yan Xuewei, Vice Chairman of the China Tourist Hotel Association and Chairman of the Sichuan Tourist Hotel Association.

Subsequently, Dr Cheung and Dr Wang introduced the attendees to the SHTM's Hong Kong-based MSc programmes and its Hangzhou MSc programme, respectively. After a Q&A session and remarks from Mr Sun, Chairman of the Alumni Network, guests enjoyed a Featured Presentation by Ms Julia Zhang, General Manager of Internal Control, The Grand Bay Hotels.

The last two sessions of the day were panel discussions on the opportunities and challenges facing the post-pandemic hotel industry (moderated by Mr Simon Tian, CEO of Menduner and Huomiao) and the innovative operation of urban luxury hotels (moderated by Ms Flora Liu, General Manager of West Region, Delonix Group).

Promoting the School

The success of these three events testifies to SHTMers' support for their alma mater and the hard work of the Alumni Network, as well as to our shared commitment to ensuring the industry's recovery post-COVID-19. This commitment was further demonstrated by a whole host of activities in Mainland China this year, which included two memorable talks by Dr Dan Wang, SHTM Associate Professor.

On 29–30 March, Dr Dan Wang participated in a roundtable dialogue on improving hotel efficiency through digital intelligence at the 2023 AHF Asia Hospitality and Tourism Forum and 18th China Hotel Starlight Awards Ceremony. Other colleagues also attended the event and seized the opportunity to promote the School and its programmes. Another highlight came on 12 April, when Dr Wang introduced our pioneering MSc in Hotel and Tourism Management to nearly 3,000 attendees joining an online info seminar. **H**

Dean Kaye Chon (second from left) and SHTM alumni at the Featured Presentation & Discussion



Attendees of the Executive Course on ESG in Hospitality and Tourism

Igniting Knowledge Transfer

The SHTM pioneers ground-breaking content and programmes, revolutionising professional development in hospitality. Testament to this is the SHTM+ICON Consultancy collaboration, which has been in force since 2018. The Consultancy's goal is to ignite vibrant knowledge transfer from academia to the industry, offering cutting-edge management expertise, creative solutions, and practical experiences. Two of the Consultancy's most recent initiatives include the Executive Development Programme on ESG in Hospitality and Tourism and professional development training for over 260 hospitality secondary school teachers in Hong Kong.

The Executive Development Programme on ESG in Hospitality

and Tourism, held in March 2023, was supported by Hotel ICON and Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International Asia Pacific. The School welcomed a range of participants, who explored the topics of sustainable practices, community engagement, and ethical decision-making. On completion of the three modules, entitled “Caring for the Environment”, “Creating Positive Impact on Society”, and “Upholding Good Governance”, the participants earned a certificate of completion.

Held both in person and online, the modules were led by SHTM Associate Professor Dr Deniz Kucukusta, SHTM Assistant Dean Dr Sebastian Filep, and SHTM Assistant Professor Dr Michael Lin, respectively. Drawing on their wealth of experience and expertise in hospitality and tourism, the module leaders gave the participants invaluable insights into industry principles, including data analysis, risk assessment, and responsible decision-making.

As we look ahead to a more sustainable future for hospitality and tourism, it has never been more important to take stock of ESG

issues. The Programme provided participants with the knowledge they will need to contribute to both organisations and society, in Hong Kong and beyond.

In a second initiative, the SHTM is honoured to have been invited to propose and develop an enriching professional development programme for more than 260 teachers of hospitality in secondary schools in Hong Kong. The training – which combines immersive seminars and workshops with on-site learning, including a field visit to Hotel ICON – exposes participants to the latest developments in our dynamic industry, ranging from technological solutions to environmental issues and property management systems.

Such insightful and engaging learning experiences prepare students to make their own mark on the industry in the era of the “new normal”. With its enduring commitment to excellence and industry sustainability, the School is shaping a transformative educational journey for tomorrow's leaders of hospitality and tourism. **H**

In Brief...

A Legacy of Academic Excellence

For the sixth consecutive year, the SHTM has been recognised as **no. 1 in the world in the "Commerce, Management, Tourism and Services" category in the University Ranking by Academic Performance 2022/23**. This year also marks the SHTM's seventh consecutive year as **no. 2 in the world among university-based programmes in the "Hospitality and Leisure Management" category in the QS World University Rankings by Subject**. This is but the latest addition to the splendid showcase of the SHTM's achievements, as the School took the top spot in ShanghaiRanking for 6 consecutive years. The SHTM gratefully attributes this continued recognition from international organisations to its dedicated faculty, diverse student body, supportive alumni and strong industry partnerships.



Promising Partnerships



On 28 February, Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean and Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mr. Jerome Qiu, Chief Operating Officer of Greater China of InterContinental Hotels Group (Shanghai) Ltd. This agreement will pave the way for a mutually beneficial industry partnership and open up more opportunities for the School's various knowledge transfer activities.

On 5 April, Dean Chon signed an MoU with Associate Professor Dr. Chayaporn Wattanasiri, President of Mae Fah Luang University in Chiangrai, Thailand. The two institutions pledged to collaborate in the areas of student exchange and internship at the undergraduate level. Dean Kaye Chon also gave a special talk on the topic of "Innovations and Leadership in Hospitality and Tourism" under the MFU Visiting Scholars Programme.



On 15 April, Dean Chon signed an MoU with Dr. Jeff Ning, Chief Vice President of Wanda Commercial Management Group, President of Wanda Hotels & Resorts and Chairman of the Board of Wanda Hotel Development Company Limited. This MoU paves the way for collaboration to drive advancements in knowledge dissemination and nurture next-generation talent.

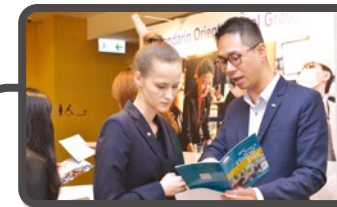
On 17 April, Dean Chon and Dr. Songtao Gao, President of the Beijing Hospitality Institute, signed an MoU that marks the beginning of exciting future collaboration on the MicroMasters in International Hospitality Management. This strategic partnership will facilitate the exchange of knowledge, foster talent development and elevate the standards of graduate education.



Lifetime Research Achievement



Professor Haiyan Song received the **Lifetime Research Achievement Award** from the International Council of Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (ICHRIE), recognising his lifetime contributions to outstanding scholarship and research in hospitality and tourism. The award was presented at the 2023 I-CHRIE Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, USA in July.



2023 Career Expo

The SHTM's **2023 Career Expo**, held on 24 March, showcased the wealth of opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students in the hospitality and tourism industry. Exhibition booths were set up by 39 leading companies, both local and international. The event left a lasting impression on students, empowering them with valuable insights, networking connections and newfound inspiration. Adding an extra touch, the School offered free professional portraits to attendees. The SHTM thanks the many contributing organisations, including Marriott International, Cathay Pacific, McDonald's Hong Kong and Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong.

SHTM Scholar Placed World 25th According to Australian Business Deans Council



Professor Sam Kim placed **25th in the world** among top 1,000 contributors in Business Research according to the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) Journal Quality List. The rankings are published in a study entitled "P-Rank 2023 – the Top 1000 contributors, the Top 1000 Collaborators, and the Top 250 Individuals in Business Research" in the journal of "Annual Snapshots of P-Rank: a publication ranking, 2023".



Celebrating Student Excellence

In recognition of her academic and extracurricular excellence, **Miss Lian Chan**, a final year student in the BSc in Tourism & Events Management programme, was honoured with the prestigious **SHTM Outstanding Student Award 2022**. She received this award at the Presentation Ceremony for Outstanding Student Award & Presidential Student Leadership Award 2022 on 20 March 2023.

During the same illustrious event, **Mr Anthony Liu**, a final year student in the BSc in Hotel Management, received the esteemed **SHTM Presidential Student Leadership Award 2022**. This award is only offered to students who show exceptional leadership skills and a passion for serving the community.



International Strategy of the Year



The SHTM is delighted to announce that its **MSc in Global Hospitality Business (MGH)** degree has been named **"International Strategy of the Year" in the prestigious THE Awards Asia**. The School launched the one-of-a-kind MGH programme in 2015, collaborating with the EHL Hospitality Business School, Switzerland and the Conrad N. Hilton College of Global Hospitality Leadership, University of Houston, USA.

The award recognised the programme's outstanding success in establishing institutional partnerships and globally focused approach to education.



Inspiring Women in Travel (Asia) Award

Professor Cathy Hsu was honoured with a **Women of Virtue** award, which was given in the Essence of Women category of the inaugural Travel Daily Media – Inspiring Women in Travel (Asia) Awards 2023 on 24 June. These awards honour women who have made outstanding contributions to the travel industry by demonstrating exceptional leadership, innovation and a commitment to driving positive change.



New Elite Management Trainees

On 29 May 2023, Miss Stephanie Chan, Miss Audrey Kwong, Mr Mikul Manocha, Mr Ricky Ngan and Mr Sam To, Year 2 students in the BSc (Hons) in Hotel Management programme, signed up to become the latest group of **Elite Management Trainees** at Hotel ICON. As the brightest and most promising SHTM students, they will undergo vigorous training for 11 months to gain the experience needed to work as supervisors or managers upon graduation.



Student Club of the Year Award 2022/23

The Club Managers' Association (CMA) Student Chapter received the **Student Club of the Year Award 2022/23**. This award is presented annually to a student club that demonstrates outstanding performance. The CMA is committed to offering student members a well-rounded set of experiences to increase their interest in the private club industry, boost their industry awareness and prepare them for career success.



Mr Anthony Wang (right) delivering his presentation at the Young Hotelier Summit 2023

Students Fly High

This year, SHTM students seized the fresh opportunities afforded by the industry's post-pandemic recovery to explore the hospitality and tourism industry outside the classroom. What united students' extracurricular activities in 2023 was a passion for learning beyond borders – whether at home or a continent away.

The theme of this newly rebranded annual event was "Circularity", inspired by the people-centric vision of the hospitality industry and its commitment to continuous learning and technological development. Teams of students were challenged to create a sustainable circular concept for the "vertical city" – generating a human-first urban living experience while preserving the surrounding environment.

clarity and confidence. "These skills are essential for any future leaders", concluded Yubin.

People



Ms Linda Law joined the School as an Executive Assistant on 27 February 2023.



Dr Lisa Gao was promoted to Associate Professor with effect from 1 July 2023.



Dr Simone Bianco joined the School as an Assistant Professor on 1 August 2023.



Ms Annie Wong joined the School as an Executive Assistant on 3 April 2023.



Dr Daniel Leung was promoted to Associate Professor with effect from 1 July 2023.



Dr Antony Wong joined the School as an Assistant Professor on 1 August 2023.



Dr Jason Zhang joined the School as an Assistant Professor on 2 May 2023.



Dr Neil Li was promoted to Associate Professor with effect from 1 July 2023.



Mr Nordin Bin Mohd Yassin joined the School as an Instructor on 1 August 2023.



Ms Suelly Yeung joined the School as an Administrative Assistant on 22 May 2023.



Dr Sung Gyun Mun was promoted to Associate Professor with effect from 1 July 2023.



Professor Bela Stantic joined the School as a Visiting Professor on 31 August 2023.



Professor Basak Denizci Guillet left her role as Professor at the SHTM on 23 June 2023. She has taken up a new professorship in the Department of Tourism, Sport and Hotel Management, Griffith Business School, Griffith University.



Ms Anita Chan joined the School as a Senior Executive Officer on 3 July 2023.



Dr Mimi Li was promoted to Professor with effect from 1 July 2023.



Professor Ki-Joon Back joined the School as a Visiting Chair Professor on 1 August 2023.

Leaders of Tomorrow

Kicking off the year's packed roster of student activities was the Young Hospitality Summit (YHS) on 13–15 March. As the world's most influential student-organised hospitality forum, the YHS attracts student delegates and industry experts from across the globe. This year, 70 top hospitality students from 26 countries and regions travelled to EHL Hospitality Business School in Switzerland to work on a real-life project and learn about current industry trends from some of the world's foremost hospitality and tourism practitioners.

Student delegates Mr Anthony Wang and Ms Yubin Nam, who are both studying Hotel Management, had the honour of representing the SHTM at the Summit this year.

"My team came up with the ideas of an 'Aquaponic System' and an 'Interact Floor System'", said Anthony. "With the help of these interactive floor projection systems, humans can create dynamic, sensory-rich settings and enter a new, immersive world of interactive experiences". This was Anthony's favourite part of the Summit experience.

The Challenge Presentation was not the only learning opportunity for our delegates. "Another highlight of the summit was the Round Table sessions", said Yubin. In less than 30 minutes, teams had to design and pitch a 24-hour itinerary in Uruguay with a limited budget. "This activity was challenging yet very interesting", Yubin explained, "as it required great teamwork skills as well as creativity". Moreover, listening to other teams present their ideas offered students invaluable insights into pitching with

A "Miraculous" New Chapter

On 28 April, guests flocked to PolyU's Chiang Chen Studio Theatre to celebrate the inauguration of the 19th Session of the SHTM Students' Association (SHTMSA). Since 2005, the SHTMSA has sought to safeguard members' interests and promote mutual understanding and exchange by providing welfare support and organising diverse enriching activities. This year, the Association has 783 members.

After welcoming cocktails, the SHTMSA Inauguration Ceremony 2023 began with a congratulatory message from Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management.

"The theme of the inauguration ceremony, 'Miraculous', is perfectly apt", said Dean Chon. "Life is,

indeed, full of miracles. Over the years, our shared values at the SHTM have helped bring us through many challenges.” Dean Chon thanked the SHTMSA for “cultivating a sense of belonging among our students, fostering team spirit and acting as a bridge between our School and the student body”.

Studying Abroad for Success

A highlight of the year for 35 lucky students was the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to travel to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to experience its unique hospitality and tourism setting. Led by Dr Nicholas Thomas, SHTM Visiting Associate Professor, fourth-year undergraduate students enrolled in the International Tourism Studies subject took a “study abroad” trip to Dubai and Abu Dhabi on 8–18 May.

For many of the students, this was their first visit to the UAE. However, they were well prepared, thanks to an earlier visit from a UAE dignitary. On 10 March, UAE Consul General H. E. Shaikh Saoud Ali Almualla delivered a guest lecture to students on the latest developments in the UAE’s tourism sector. Mr Nasser Bahloq, Area Head Hong Kong

of Emirates Airlines, also presented on the pivotal role of aviation in the UAE economy, as well as how innovation has made Emirates an industry leader.

Primed with these insights, the students were ready to embark on the trip of a lifetime. The first stop was Dubai. “Dubai is a cosmopolitan city famed for its towering skyscrapers, luxurious shopping malls, and world-class attractions”, explained BSc student Mr Andy Kan, who is studying Tourism and Events Management. “The city is a popular destination for tourism due to its unique combination of traditional Arab culture and modern innovation”.

In both Dubai and Abu Dhabi, Dr Thomas coordinated inspiring tours and leadership presentations involving firms such as Marriott International, Grand Hyatt and Etihad Airlines. Additionally, the students had the chance to network at the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, where Director-General Mr Damian Lee discussed the important bilateral relationship between Hong Kong and the UAE.

Reflecting on the industry-focused aspects of the trip, graduating student Ms Beatrice Yu (BSc in Hotel Management) noted that “we were extremely lucky to have the honour to pay visits to world-leading hospitality and tourism companies to interact with industry professionals”. Being able to go behind the scenes and understand how they “bring the magic to life” was particularly inspiring. “The excitement that brought me piqued my interest in the hospitality and tourism industry even more”, added Beatrice.

As well as visiting key hospitality and tourism site visits, the students learned about the unique culture and heritage of the UAE through visits to notable sites such as the Sheikh Mohammed Centre for Cultural Understanding and The Louvre Abu Dhabi.

The SHTM applauds its students for engaging with passion and dedication in such remarkable extracurricular activities in 2023. **H**

SHTM Students’ Association
Committee Members



SHTM students on a field trip to the United Arab Emirates

The Taste of SUCCESS

Reflecting on the SHTM’s latest exciting food and beverage (F&B) activities, spotlight falls on the School’s very own student-run restaurant, Bistro 1979. This one-of-a-kind multifunctional venue not only treats guests to an unforgettable dining experience but also provides students with real-world industry experience and training, supported by international teaching professionals.

Bistro 1979 has been delighting diners and honing students’ critical skills for almost four decades, and this year has seen yet another milestone in its impressive history. Between 13 and 31 March, F&B students organised a series of themed dinners featuring a glorious fusion of Italian, French and American flavours.

As well as treating diners to dishes from across the globe, the series represented an invaluable learning experience. As the students’ final-year project, it gave them the perfect opportunity to showcase the F&B knowledge and expertise they have accumulated at the SHTM.

Kicking off the series was a four-course “Grand Opening” event on 13 March, which marked the first of five consecutive nights of Italian themed suppers. Guests lucky enough to attend the Grand Opening were treated to Italian favourites such as meatballs and classic carbonara. Five courses were served on the second night, themed “Trattoria del Venezia”, with a standout “dolci” of chocolate mousse cake with baked banana and espresso jelly. The next three nights featured menus inspired by Milanese, Venetian and Lombard cuisine, with themes such as “Canal Grande” and “Serenio”.

Five USA-themed dinner events took place on 20–24 March. Showcasing delicacies from Alaskan scallops to short ribs, the menus covered “New York”, “Texas-style”, “En Caballo”, “Picoso”, and “Maverick” themes. Between 6:30 pm and 9 pm each night, F&B students also served welcome variations on American classics, such as meatloaf, “surf and turf” tacos and macaroni cheese. The dinners were sponsored by Try Finnish and

included vegetarian options—as did all of the menus throughout the series.

The final theme was French cuisine, with five memorable dinners hosted from 27 to 31 March. Debuting the theme was a “Côté Jardin” menu, followed by “Garden Blanc”, which offered a spectacular lobster tail thermidor, “Colmar Winery” and “Le Jardin Provence”. Variations on quintessential French dishes—from faux foie gras to crème brûlée—featured on every thoughtfully created menu, and the perfectly executed haute cuisine and second-to-none service brought the series to a triumphant end.

This March, Bistro 1979 and its passionate, talented student staff offered guests a unique dining experience, which also represented a pivotal landmark in students’ learning journey at the SHTM. The School is honoured to host such diverse F&B activities, especially those that prepare soon-to-be graduates to excel in the restaurant sector and beyond. **H**



Congratulations to Outstanding Students



On 26 June 2023, the School held an Academic Achievement Award presentation ceremony to honour students who had demonstrated outstanding performance in Semesters 1, 2 and 3 of the 2022–2023 academic year.

The SHTM extends its sincere congratulations to the following awardees on their dedicated pursuit of academic excellence. **H**

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN HOTEL MANAGEMENT

CHAN CHERYL
CHAN SUNG YAN
CHEUNG KONG FAI
DAI WENXUAN
HAN MINGJIE
KIM JISU
KOO SO YEON
LAM YAN GAAK
LEUNG PUI LAM
LEUNG PUI MAN
LIU LIZHU
LIU SHANGSHU
LU MINGXUAN
LUO HANZHI
MANOCHA MIKUL
SMITH AMELIA JANE
SO TSZ HIN
SUN JIASUI
WONG WUI SZE

YIN YUAN
YU CHIN YAN BEATRICE

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN TOURISM AND EVENTS MANAGEMENT

AU YONG HON LAM
CHAN LIAN
CHOW WING HO
HE ZHAOTANG
KAN WING TUNG
KWOK JESSICA MEI YEE
LAI TIN WING
LAU MAN KI
LEUNG SHUN YAN GRET
NG HO YIN
NG TSZ YAU
TUNG WING TUNG
WONG NGA YIN
YICK WAI KING
YU KA LOK
YUAN JASON

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) SCHEME IN HOTEL AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

FONTANILLA GILLIANNE CHLOE B.
LIM WEI XIANG
MEAN CHAN VATEY
YIN QI

Setting the Best Example

As students hone their skills and prepare for their future careers in the hospitality and tourism industry, what better examples to follow than industry practitioners at the top of their professions? For more than a decade, the SHTM has paired full-time students with alumni and other seasoned professionals as part of its annual Mentorship Programme. With tailored advice and guidance from their mentors, students can chart the path ahead to career success.

This year's programme kicked off on 18 March, when more than 130 attendees gathered at the SHTM Mentorship Programme Award Presentation cum Luncheon Meeting. First on the agenda was an opportunity to celebrate the successes of last year's mentors and mentees. After welcoming the participants, Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Dean, Chair Professor and Walter and Wendy Kwok Family Foundation Professor in International Hospitality Management, presented the SHTM Outstanding Student Mentor of the Year Award 2022 to Mr John Drummond, General Manager, InterContinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong. The recipient of the Outstanding Student Mentee of the Year Award 2022 was Miss Yana Fomenko, a Year 2 student in the Bachelor of Science in Hotel Management programme.

In 2023, 94 student mentees were matched with 78 student mentors from Hong Kong and beyond. They will remain in close contact for the rest of the academic year to achieve their agreed-upon learning objectives. Our students will benefit immeasurably from the wisdom and practical experience that their mentors have gained from building prestigious careers in hotels, travel agencies and other tourism and service establishments.

The SHTM extends its sincere gratitude to the following industry leaders for supporting the School as mentors in 2023. **H**



2023 Mentors

AU Michael
Executive Director, Realty Travel Service Ltd.

BRIDLE Symon
Director-Hotel Development and Asset Management, Hang Lung Properties

CHAN David
Golf Operations Manager, The Clearwater Bay Golf & Country Club

CHAN Edward
Human Resources Manager, Bishop Lei International House

CHAN Lawrence
CEO, Park Lane Hotel

CHAN Purple
Vice President – Hotel Audit, The Great Eagle Group

CHAN Patrick
Director of Human Resources, Sheraton & Four Points by Sheraton Hong Kong Tung Chung

CHAN Fai
Head of BD – Greater China, Travelport

CHAU Carie
Account Director, Marriott International

CHEN Sampson
Regional Director APAC, PizzaExpress (HK) Limited

CHENG Cindy
Vice President, People & Culture, COMO Hotels and Resorts

CHENG Hugo

Director of Food & Beverage, The Parklane Hong Kong, a Pullman Hotel

CHU Anna

Senior Talent Development Manager, Rosewood Hotel Group

CHUNG Nixon

Managing Director, Camloy International Ltd.

CHUNG Novem

Assistant Director of Learning & Development, Marco Polo Hong Kong Hotel

DRUMMOND John

General Manager, Intercontinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong

FALCHI Pierandrea

Operations and Control Manager, Pirata Group

FAN Vivian

Director of Human Resources, The Park Lane Hong Kong, a Pullman Hotel

FOK Jennifer

Deputy General Manager/Controller, Panda Hotel

FONG Mike

Director of Human Resources, The Langham Hong Kong

GALLAS Guillaume

Cluster General Manager, Accor Hotels Group

HANG Ronald

Director of Commercial Strategy/Head of Revenue Management, K11 ARTUS

HO Ronald

Director of Finance, JW Marriott Hotel Macau & The Ritz-Carlton, Macau

HOONG Chris

Managing Director, Far East Consortium Int'l Ltd.

JONES Andrew

Guardian, Sanctuary Resorts

KO Byron

General Manager, Hong Kong Ocean Park Marriott Hotel

KO Kevin

Front Office Manager, Mira Moon Hong Kong

KOLAXIS Dimitrios

Senior Asset Manager, Sun Hung Kai Properties – Hotel Division

KONG Maurice

Assistant General Manager, New World Development Company Limited

KOUSLOGLOU Tasos

CEO – Hotel Division, Sun Hung Kai Properties

KWOK Margaret

Director of Human Resources, Le Meridien Hong Kong, Cyberport

KWOK Philip

Senior Human Resources Manager, Hong Kong Gold Coast Hotel

KWONG Cherisa

Director of Revenue Management, New World Millennium Hong Kong Hotel

LAM April

General Manager, Hong Kong and Kowloon Ferry Holdings Ltd.

LAM Jonathan

Assistant Director of Event Management, W Hong Kong

LAU Cherie

Head of Central Operations, PizzaExpress (HK) Ltd.

LAU David

Chief Executive Officer, Ocean Sky Hotel Management Limited

LAU Elise

Director of Human Resources, The Ritz-Carlton, Hong Kong

LEE Ivan

Executive Vice President, Hospitality Operations, HKR International Ltd.

LEE Wilson

General Manager, Hyatt Regency Hong Kong, Shatin

LEUNG Maggie

Human Resources Manager, Hong Kong Ocean Park Marriott Hotel

LI Adriane

Senior Asset Manager – Hotel Division, New World Development

LI David

Senior Operations Manager, Maxim's Caterers Ltd.

LI Ricky

Facilities Manager, Centre of Development and Resources for Students, The University of Hong Kong

LI Wallace

Director of Racecourse Management, The Hong Kong Jockey Club

LO Andrew

Senior Vice President, Langham Hospitality Group

LO Cecilia

General Manager, K11 ARTUS

LUI Dino

Director and General Manager, Jardine Aviation Services

MCCARTHY Jeremy

Group Director of Spa & Wellness, Mandarin Oriental

NG Joyce

Information Officer, HKSAR Government

NG Ringo

Director of Operations, InterContinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong

PARK Patrick

Director of Front Office, Marco Polo Hongkong Hotel | Gateway Hotel | Prince Hotel

PUN Hawkins

Assistant Director of Rooms, Hotel & Serviced Apartment, Hopewell Hotel (Wan Chai) Management Ltd.

SHAM Signory

Director of Human Resources, The Hong Kong Country Club

SHAO Wilson

General Manager – Jing Jin Ji, MTR Corporation

SHEK Jason

Vice President, Business Development, Canvas Land

SINGH Dalip

Area General Manager, Marco Polo Hotels – Hong Kong

SIU Winnie

Front Office Manager, Marco Polo Hotels

SOUTON Anaïs

Manager, Employee Experience, Rosewood Hotel Group

SUN Bo

Chief Marketing Officer, Trip.com Group

TAI Mandy

Director of Human Resources, InterContinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong

TAM Cici

Assistant Manager, New Ventures, Chinachem Group

TANG Benson

Executive Director – Corporate Travel, Informa Markets

TANG Tom

Director of Operations, NINA Hotel Causeway Bay

TSE Roni

F&B Manager, Harbour Grand H.K. Ltd.

VETRY Hoss

Vice President of Operations, APAC, Rosewood Hotel Group

WAI Kenneth

Head of People and Culture, The Fullerton Ocean Park Hotel Hong Kong

WANG Anvy

Sales & Marketing Manager, Silvermine Beach Resort Ltd.

WIPPER Julian

General Manager, New World Millennium Hotel

WONG Catherine

Digital Experience Manager – Shopping & Wellness, Cathay Pacific Airways

WONG David

Vice President of Human Resources, Dorsett Hospitality International

WONG Dennis

Director of Talent and Culture, Rosewood Hong Kong

WONG Elaine

Senior Project Manager, OPPA System Limited

WONG Julian

Deputy Manager, Hopewell Centre

YAU Edmund

Executive Consultant, Brighten Coffee Limited

YIP Lawrence

Director & SVP North Asia, Millennium & Copthorne Hotels

YU Philip

Vice President – Operations, Greater China, Hyatt Hotels & Resorts

YUEN Calvin

Senior Manager, Headquarter Food & Beverage, Shangri-La Group



Climbing to the Peak

For decades, the SHTM Alumni Association (SHTMAA) has worked tirelessly to forge lifelong links between the School and its alumni. By organising activities to connect former students with their alma mater and with fellow graduates, the SHTMAA fosters a spirit of loyalty and commitment to the School while providing invaluable opportunities for networking. Underpinning these activities are the Association's core values – synergy, hospitality, teamwork, mentorship, aliveness and achievement.

These values were perfectly illustrated by an alumni event organised by the SHTMAA earlier this year. Resuming a team-building tradition, the Association invited alumni to enjoy an invigorating morning's exercise while

catching up with friends on a hike to one of Hong Kong's most spectacular destinations.

On previous hikes arranged by the Association, alumni have marvelled at the coastal views from Plover Cove Country Park and enjoyed local village cuisine at Lai Chi Wo. This April, the destination was Victoria Peak (known to Hongkongers simply as "The Peak"), which towers over the city and offers iconic views of Victoria Harbour, Kowloon Peninsula and much more.

On the morning of Saturday 15 April, the event began with breakfast at The Helena May, an elegant and unique Hong Kong private members' club. With their appetites sated,

the hikers set out on their journey to The Peak, passing through the Botanical Garden and enjoying views from the Old Peak Road – a steep but well paved route. On arriving at The Peak Tower, one of the city's most stylish architectural attractions, the alumni had the chance to circle around The Peak on the scenic Lugard Road.

This inspiring activity allowed alumni to renew old bonds and reminisce about their time at the SHTM while enjoying stunning panoramic views of the city that is home to their alma mater. The SHTMAA is delighted to have organised another successful hike and thanks the participating alumni for their continued loyalty to and support for the School. **H**

Alum-notes

1980s		
Mr Sidney Tse	BA 1986	Group Director of Purchasing, Regal Hotels International
2000s		
Mr Ivan Chak	BA(Hons) in Hotel, Catering and Tourism Management (Tourism Management) 2007	Manager, Attraction Operations at K11 Concepts Limited
Ms Inasa Yick	BA(Hons) in Hotel, Catering and Tourism Management (Tourism Management) 2008	Marketing Communications Manager at Shangri-La Group
Ms Sue Wong	HD in Hotel Management 2008	Assistant Learning & Development Manager at The Langham Hong Kong
2010s		
Mr Desmond Chow	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2010, HD in Hotel Management 2008	Catering Manager at The Hong Kong Jockey Club
Ms Joyce Kwok	BSc(Hons) in Tourism Management 2010	Regional Corporate & New Business Manager, APAC at American Airlines
Ms Katie Shu	MSc in Hotel and Tourism Management 2011	Honorary Doctorate in Social Sciences at Hong Kong Metropolitan University
Ms Samantha Chau	BSc(Hons) in Tourism Management 2011	Marketing Officer, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Hong Kong Office
Mr Zelotes Lam	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2011	Assistant Director – Operations & Efficiency at Swire Hotels
Ms Catherine Wong	BSc(Hons) in Tourism Management 2011	Digital Experience Manager at Cathay Pacific Airways
Ms Florence Yeung	BSc(Hons) in Tourism Management 2011	Marketing Communications Manager at Regal Hotels International
Dr Rosanna Leung	Ph.D. in Hotel and Tourism Management 2012, MSc in Hotel and Tourism Management 2005	Associate Professor at National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism
Mr Ronald Hang	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2012, HD in Hotel Management 2010	Director of Commercial Strategy at K11 ARTUS
Ms Carrie Mok	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2012	Group Marketing Communications Manager at Regal Hotels International
Ms Cyan Tsang	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2012	Administration Executive, Membership at International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Asia Pacific
Ms Gloria Chan	M.Phil. in Hotel and Tourism Management 2013, BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2009, HD in Hotel, Catering and Tourism Management 2007	Senior Director – Development Planning and Feasibility at Marriott International
Dr Yvonne Chen	Doctor of Hotel and Tourism Management 2015	Associate Director, Li Ka Shing School of Professional and Continuing Education at Hong Kong Metropolitan University
Mr Wai On Chong	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2015	Financial Planner at AIA Company Ltd
Ms Cyrina Chan	Executive Master in Global Hospitality Leadership 2016	Area Director of Human Resources at Marco Polo Hotels – Hong Kong
Ms Trasimene Chan	MSc in International Hospitality Management 2016, HD in Hotel Management 2008	Director of Human Resources at New World Millennium Hong Kong Hotel
Mr Vinson Kong	MSc in International Hospitality Management 2016	Group Assistant Manager, Human Resources (Learning and Development) at Shangri-La Group
Mr Benjamin Kot	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2016, HD in Hotel Management 2014	Market Manager at Agoda
Ms Heidi Chan	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2017	Assistant Manager Human Resources (HR Shared Service), Shangri-La Group
Mr Simon Zhao	MSc in International Hospitality Management 2018	Director, Strategy & Planning, Global High-End Brands Business Group at H World Group
Ms Riley Tsai	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2018	Senior Operations Manager, Salisterra at The Upper House
Dr Elaine Zhang	Ph.D. in Hotel and Tourism Management 2019, BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2011	Assistant Professor at Macau University of Science & Technology
Mr Vic Sham	MSc in International Tourism and Convention Management 2019	Community Supervisor at Lanson Place Waterfront Suites, Hong Kong
Ms Vanessa Cheung	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2019	Market Executive – Hotel Business, Trip.com Group
Mr Justin Mak	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2019	Senior Learning and Development Officer at Sheraton Hong Kong Tung Chung Hotel
Ms Amanda Wantono	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2019	Assistant Manager at Protiviti Hong Kong
2020s		
Ms Sophie Lee	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2020	Assistant Restaurant Manager of Cruise at Hyatt Centric Victoria Harbour Hong Kong
Mr Martin Li	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2020	Executive Officer II (Lotteries Fund) at HKSAR Social Welfare Department
Dr Antony Wong	Ph.D. in Hotel and Tourism Management 2021, MSc in International Hospitality Management 2017, BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2011	Assistant Professor at the SHTM, PolyU
Ms Angela Chen	MSc in International Hospitality Management 2021	Director of Corporate Business Development at Coinstreet Partners Limited
Mr Gordon Chum	BSc(Hons) in Hotel Management 2022	Revenue Analyst at Marriott International
Mr Adil Ali	BSc(Hons) in Tourism and Events Management 2022	Community Coordinator at The American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong
Ms Kim Gordon	BSc(Hons) in Tourism and Events Management 2022	Event Assistant at The Legal 500

Professors for a Day

The School extends its thanks to the industry professionals who generously gave up their time to serve as professors for a day in 2023.

Speaker	Title and Company	Topic
His Excellency Shaikh Saoud ALI ALMUALLA	Consul General, Consulate General of the United Arab Emirates in the Hong Kong SAR	The Role of Tourism in the United Arab Emirates
Mr Giovanni ANGELINI	Former President, Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts and Advisor & Consultant, Angelini Hospitality	Global Markets
Ms Nopparat AUMPA Mr Nasser BAHLOOQ Mrs Shenika BENNETT-RAMSAY	General Manager, Banyan Tree Bangkok Area Manager for Hong Kong, Emirates Airlines Business Development Management, Jamaica Tourist Board in the United Kingdom	Asian Paradigm in Hospitality Management The Role of Tourism in the United Arab Emirates Marketing for the Travel Sector – DMOs and their Relations in the UK
Mr Maurice BRYAN Dr Kevin BURNS Professor Liping CAI	Acting Director of Sales, Courtleigh Hospitality Group Lecturer, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Ireland Professor & Director, Purdue Tourism & Hospitality Research Center, Purdue University	Marketing Communications – A Caribbean Perspective Festivals and the City: The Contested Geographies of Urban Events Female Leadership in Chinese Tourism Context
Mr Peter CAPREZ Ms Porn-tipa CHAINIMIT Mr Ivan CHAK Mr Clarence CHAN Dr Fai CHAN Mr Michael CHAN Mr Patrick CHAN	Cluster General Manager, JW Marriott Hotel Bangkok Training Manager, Centara Grand & Bangkok Convention Centre at CentralWorld Manager, Attraction Operations, Themed Experience and Attractions, 11 Skies Club Manager, China Club Regional Sales Manager – Greater China, Travelport Learning & Development Manager, Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers Director of Human Resources, Sheraton Hong Kong Tung Chung Hotel & Four Points by Sheraton Hong Kong, Tung Chung	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia – China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia – China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies Career Development in the Attractions Industry & “IAAPA” Introduction and Sharing Wine Branding in Hong Kong Travelport as an Online Travel Distribution Channel Interview Skills Interview Skills
Dr Yufai CHAN Mr Rohaan CHANDRA Mr Angelo CHEUNG Ms Candy CHEUNG Ms Hanan CHIANG	Regional Sales Manager, Greater China, Travelport General Manager, COMO Metropolitan Bangkok Co-Founder, Planet For All Senior Manager – Sustainability, Langham Hospitality Group Consular & Citizen Affairs Specialist, Consulate General of the United Arab Emirates in the Hong Kong SAR	How Does the Hong Kong Hospitality Industry Retain Talents? Innovations in Distribution Channels Service Management at COMO Hotels and Resorts Responsible Choices of Food Sustainability in Hotel Business – Challenges and Opportunities The Role of Tourism in the United Arab Emirates
Ms Dora CHOI Mr Zacharias DIAMANTAKIS Ms Jennifer DOCHERTY Mr Chanin DONAVANIK Ms Tracy DONG Mr Martin DONOVAN Mr Franck DROIN Ms Katherine ESTEY Ms Katy FOK Mr Franklin FUENTES Mr Wei GUO	Co-Founder, Planet for All Chief Winemaker, Diamantakis Winery Head of Product and Commercial, Summergate Chairman of the Board, Dusit International Principal Industry Consultant, IDEaS Publisher Editorial Director, MIX Meetings General Manager, Mandarin Oriental, Macau Director of People and Culture, Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong Director of Human Resources, Regent Hong Kong Regional Director, Hotels Alibaba Fliggy Business Development Director, KANTAR	Responsible Choices of Food Greek Wine Workshop – Crete China Wine Market: Importer's View Asian Paradigm in Hospitality Management Machine Learning, Forecasting and Strategic Pricing Marketing MICE to GBA & the World Branding and Growth Strategies of Mandarin Oriental Hotels Research Ability and Career Advice in the Hospitality Industry The Trend of Talent Acquisition Fliggy and the Travel Industry in China Basic Concepts and Practical Issues in Marketing Research (with a Focus on Data Collection)
Mr Harry HA Ms Livian HAR Ms Yona HE-PODA Mr Gary HO Dr Kwon Ping HO Mr Stephen HO Mr Yinwu HUANG Mr Eddie HUI Ms Becky IP Dr Shaojun JI Dr Joanne JIA Mr Anand JINDAL	Assistant Manager, Valuation & Advisory Services, Colliers International Hong Kong General Manager, Marketing & Communications, Kai Tak Sports Park Head of Client Development & Customer Experience, Humansa Assistant Vice President, Procurement, Shangri-La Group Founder and Executive Chairman, Banyan Tree Holdings President Growth & Operations Asia Pacific, Hyatt Hotels Corporation Associate Professor, School of Design, Shanghai Jiao Tong University Director, Frasers Hospitality Hong Kong Deputy Executive Director, Hong Kong Tourism Board Associate Professor, Beijing Union University Vice President Development – Greater China, Hilton Hotels Group Group Director, Revenue Management & Distribution, Wharf Hotel	Career Landscape in the Consultancy Sector Introduction to Kai Tak Sports Park You Are the Brand – Understanding Luxury and Personal Branding Business Ethics in the Hospitality Industry Asian Paradigm in Hospitality Management Asia Pacific Strategies of Hyatt Hotels Cultural Landscape System of Ancient Towns in Dali Corporate Travel – What Is It? Hong Kong Tourism Board's Quality Tourism Services (QTS) Scheme Role of Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors Development Strategies of Hilton China Pricing – BAR and Discounts and Business Response During COVID-19 Executive Presence in Revenue Management Quality Service Management for the Hospitality & Tourism Industry Interview Skills
Ms Pitchaya JIRATHUMTANAKUL Mr Bernard KAM Dr Annie KO Mr Charles KUNG Ms Wendy LAI Mr Hon IAM Ms Jenny IAM Ms Louise LAO Ms Elise LAU Ms Ingrid LAU Mr Adrian LEE Mr Kenneth LEE Mr Perry LEE	Director of Rooms, Banyan Tree Bangkok Director of Human Resources, Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers Teaching Fellow, Department of Management & Marketing, PolyU Director, Rocco Design Architects Associates Ltd Vice President, Global Sources Exhibitions, Global Sources General Manager, Hong Kong, Southern China & South East Asia, Air Canada Assistant Librarian (Research Support), PolyU Director of Hotel Operations, Hong Kong Disneyland Director of Human Resources, The Ritz-Carlton, Hong Kong Assistant HR Manager, Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers Assistant Project Manager, Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts Hotel Owners Representative, East Pacific Group Multi-property Director of VIP and Guest Services, Grand Lisboa Palace Resort Macau	Active Learning: Fun or Not Fun? A Learning Styles Perspective Hospitality Real Estate and Development Sharing Experience of Strategic Management Sharing Experience of Strategic Management How to Search the Literature in PolyU Library Resources Hotel and Tourism Senior Executive Seminars Employee Training and Development Opportunities Interview Skills How to Apply Research in Real Life – Cases from the Four Seasons Career and Professional Goals Gaming Operations in SJM Holdings Ltd Macau Hotel Revenue and Rate – The Influence of COVID-19, Border, and Holiday
Ms Kathy LI Ms Vivian LIANG Mr Steven LIEW	Pilot, Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd Deputy Director & Fine Wine Account Manager, Sotheby's Director of Public Policy, APAC, Airbnb	Career and Professional Goals Wine Branding and Wine Auction The Importance of Public Policy in Operating Airbnb

Speaker	Title and Company	Topic
Ms Alland LIU	Assistant Education Manager, AWSEC	Branding in Wine Education
Ms Regina LOURENCO	Commercial Director, Regent Hong Kong	Relaunch of a Legendary Brand – Regent Hong Kong
Mr Quinton LU	Asset Director, GCP Hospitality (Gaw Capital Group)	Hotel Project Development Management
Mr John LUI	International Brand & People Director APAC, Pizza Express	Managing a Restaurant Chain: A Franchising Model
Mr Andy LUK	Senior Vice President, Informa Markets Asia Ltd	Career Development in the Convention and Exhibition Industry
Mr Jason MA	CEO & Executive Director, Evollove Group Ltd	Industry Expectations
Ms Katherine MA	Animal Welfare Campaigner, Planet for All	Responsible Choices of Food
Mr Franklin MAK	Senior Vice President, Marriott International, Inc	Hotel Operations and Asset Management
Ms Kelly MAK	Director, The Art of Chocolate Hong Kong	Sharing Experience of Strategic Management
Ms Ourania MARGOMENOU	Tour Operator, Margo Wine Routes	Greek Wine Workshop – Crete
Ms Daphne MOK	In Charge-Principal Programme Secretary, Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong	Recreation Policies and Development in Hong Kong
Ms Ben MONTGOMERY	Vice President, Thai Hotel Association and Director of Business Relations Management, Centara Hotels & Resorts	Hospitality Business Strategies in Asia – China Hotel and Tourism Business Studies
Ms Karine NG	Sales Manager, MICE, Club Med Resorts	Club Med's Future Development in Asia
Ms Nora NG	Director of Residences, Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong	Challenges and Strategies at the End of the Pandemic: The Case of the Rooms Division of Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong
Mr Samuel NG	Director (Operations), Travel Industry Authority	Hospitality and Travel Agent Ordinance in Hong Kong
Ms Cherie NGAI	Human Resources Manager, JW Marriott Hotel Hong Kong	Application Letter and Resume Writing
Ms Nanar NGOSON	Sales Manager Asia Pacific, ReviewPro	Working with Hospitality and Tourism Companies to Manage Their Brand Reputation
Mr Sébastien NOYELLE	Executive Assistant Manager, F&B, The Peninsula Hong Kong	Marketing Management in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry
Professor Sangwon PARK	Professor, Kyung Hee University	Beyond COVID-19: Smart Tourism in Design Thinking
Mr Eric POON	Director of Sales & Marketing, The Peninsula Hong Kong	Marketing Management in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry
Mr Ronald POON	IT Talent Development Manager, Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd	HR Re-Mapping: How New HR Model Brings Success to Business Organisations
Mr Ashley POWELL	Chairman of Board of Directors, HK Forum for Responsible Drinking and Managing Director, Moët Hennessy Diageo Hong Kong & Macau	Responsible Serving
Ms Tersina SHIEH	Wine Educator, South African & German Wine Ambassador	South African Pinotage Workshop
Professor Noam SHOVAL	Visiting Professor, SHTM, PolyU	The Environmental Planning and Management of Tourism
Ms Marian SPIGGOS	Founder & Manager, Grapefool	Greek Wine Workshop – Crete
Ms Winnie TAM	Assistant Director of People & Culture, Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong	Challenges and Strategies at the End of the Pandemic: The Case of the Rooms Division of Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong
Mr Max TANG	Sales Executive, MICE at Club Med Resorts	Club Med's Future Development in Asia
Dr Nicholas THOMAS	Visiting Associate Professor, SHTM, PolyU	Utilizing Servant Leadership to Develop a Human Resources Competitive Advantage
Ms Penny TSAI	Business Development Executive, Klook	Business Development at Klook
Ms Cyan TSANG	Administration Executive, Membership, IAAPA Asia Pacific – Hong Kong	Career Development in the Attractions Industry & "IAAPA" Introduction and Sharing
Ms Gigi TSANG	Founder, My Little Coffee	From Hobby to Entrepreneurship + Social Responsibility of a Local SME
Mr Kevin TSANG	Hotel Manager, The Peninsula Hong Kong	Shaping the Future of Hotels in the Digital Age
Professor Eric TSUI	Senior Educational Development Officer, Educational Development Centre, PolyU	How to Transform Physical and Virtual Learning Spaces to Facilitate New Pedagogies in an Era of Digital Transformation
Dr Natthira TUPTIM	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University	Community-based Tourism Development
Mr Anthony TYLER	Area Vice President, Operations & General Manager, Mandarin Oriental Bangkok	Quality Service Management for the Hospitality & Tourism Industry
Mr Hoss VETRY	Vice President, Asia Pacific, Rosewood Hotels	Asian Paradigm in Hospitality Management
Ms Sandra WATERMANN	Managing Director, Rosewood Bangkok	Global Strategies
Dr Walanchalee WATTANACHAROENSIL	Associate Professor, Mahidol University International College	Branding and Growth Strategies of Rosewood Hotels
Dr Alexandra WITTE	Lecturer, Edinburgh Napier University	Asian Paradigm in Hospitality Management
Ms Elaine WONG	Senior Project Manager, Connexus Travel Ltd	Domestic Walking Tourism on China's Ancient Tea Horse Road
Mr Ken WONG	Director of Revenue Management, Hotel ICON	A Journey to Become a Professional Event Planner
Ms Mandy WONG	Director of Quality and Learning, Regent Hong Kong	Revenue Management after COVID
Mr Stephen WONG	Deputy Chairman, Ocean Park	The Trend of Talent Acquisition
Dr Bow WU	Research Assistant Professor, School of Design, PolyU	Co-Creation of Experience – Ocean Park
Ms Goodspeed WU	Senior Manager, Hotel Openings & Transitions, Hilton	Service Design
Mr Michael WU	Chairman and Managing Director, Maxim's Group	Social Networking
Mr Tommy WU	Digital Marketing Manager, The Peninsula Hong Kong	Hotel and Tourism Senior Executive Seminars
Mr Nong XIA	Executive Vice President & CEO of Global High-End Hotels Business Unit, Huazhu Group	Shaping the Future of Hotels in the Digital Age
Dr Wei XIANG	Founder, H&T Negotiations	Development Strategies of Huazhu Group
Ms Christine YANG	Director of Learning and Development, Wharf Hotel	Hotel Ownership Companies and Management Contracts in Asia
Ms Margie YANG	Chairperson, Esquel	Pricing – BAR and Discounts and Business Response During Covid-19
Mr Shibing YANG	Founder, Chi & Homme	Executive Presence in Revenue Management
Dr Steven YANG	SVP & Chief Information Officer, Funyard Hotels & Resorts	Strategic Leadership
Ms Florence YEUNG	Senior Manager, Marketing Communications, Etymon Communications & Brand Management Consultants Ltd	Multi-Unit Hotel Management
Mr Patrick YEUNG	Professor of Practice, SHTM, PolyU	Digital Transformation of Hotel Companies in China
Dr Lawrence YIP	Managing Director, Millennium Hotel Groups	Managing Marketing in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry
Mr Christophe YOUNES	Brand Manager, Paul Lafayet	Challenges Faced by the Hong Kong Airline Industry
Mr Toni YOUNES	Founder & CEO, Paul Lafayet	Hotel Development
Mr Brian YUEN	Deputy Director, Museum Operations, Hong Kong Palace Museum	Experience Sharing on Strategic Management
Dr Weizheng ZHANG	Lecturer, Edge Hotel School, University of Essex	Experience Sharing on Strategic Management
Ms Qian ZHAO	Curator, Liquid Market	Visitors Behaviour – Hong Kong Palace Museum
		Entrepreneurial Responses to Risks and Uncertainties During Covid-19 Recovery
		Cultural Landscape System of Ancient Towns in Dali

Upcoming Events

2023

7 November

Event: 29th PolyU Congregation (SHTM)
Organiser: SHTM

7–8 December

Event: IMPACT2023, Hong Kong
Organiser: SHTM
Contact: Professor Honggen Xiao
Email: honggen.xiao@polyu.edu.hk

7–8 December

Event: Undergraduate Student Research Competition – IMPACT2023 Conference
Organiser: SHTM
Contact: Dr Vincent Tung
Email: vincent.tung@polyu.edu.hk

2024

4–6 January

Event: 29th Annual Graduate Education & Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality & Tourism, USA
Organisers: SHTM and The Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management, Florida International University

6–8 May

Event: 14th Asia Tourism Forum, Indonesia
Organisers: SHTM and Palembang Tourism Polytechnic
Contact: Dr Tony Tse
Email: tong.tse@polyu.edu.hk

12–14 June

Event: 20th Asia Pacific Forum for Graduate Students Research in Tourism, Thailand
Organisers: SHTM and Prince of Songkla University, Phuket

14–16 October

Event: 43rd ISTTE Annual Conference, Hong Kong
Organiser: SHTM

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

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

**Dr Edward
Roekaert**
(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 2022, placed No. 1 globally in the "Commerce, Management, Tourism and Services" category in the University Ranking by Academic Performance in 2022/2023, rated No. 1 in the world in the "Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism" subject area by the CWUR Rankings by Subject 2017, and ranked No. 2 in the world among university based programmes in the "Hospitality and Leisure Management" subject area in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023, 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 90 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://www.polyu.edu.hk/shtm>.

You too can be recognised!

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